



News for Immediate Release

March 15, 2010

PA Council on the Arts: Monroe County Student is 'Poetry Out Loud' State Champion

Harrisburg – Angela Goldberg, a Pleasant Valley School District senior from Monroe County, today won the state finals of the 2010 Poetry Out Loud: National Recitation Contest, according to the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts.

Goldberg was selected from among 12 regional finalists by a panel of judges in a day-long competition at the Governor's Residence in Harrisburg. Second place went to DeVonna Smith, a Reading School District student from Berks County; and Kelly Kohlman of Derry Township School District, Dauphin County, won third place.

"The students competing in today's Poetry Out Loud state championship demonstrated talent, intelligence, competitive spirit, and a determination to excel," said council chairman Diane Dalto. "We've seen Pennsylvania's participation in this exemplary national program grow into the second largest in the nation and the commonwealth can be very proud of students like today's competitors, and especially state champion Angela Goldberg."

As state champion, Goldberg will receive \$200 from The Poetry Foundation and an expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. to compete for the national championship during the final week of April. The Poetry Out Loud national championship will award a total of \$50,000 in scholarships and school stipends, with at least one \$20,000 college scholarship for the Poetry Out Loud national champion.

Each competitor in the state championship memorized and prepared to perform three poems selected from print and online poetry anthologies. Evaluation criteria included voice and articulation, physical presence, appropriateness of dramatization, evidence of understanding, level of difficulty, overall performance, and accuracy. The other 11 regional winners were:

- Clara Allison, Grade 8, Delta Program, State College Area School District, Centre County;
- McKenzie Anderson, Grade 11, West Perry School District, Perry County;
- Michael Bahn, Grade 10, Central York School District, York County;
- Katelyn Clarahan, Grade 9, homeschooled, Venango County;
- Kanan Gole, Grade 11, West Chester Area School District, Chester County;
- Judson Greene, Grade 9, homeschooled, Columbia County;
- Tori Hirata, Grade 11, Winchester Thurston School, Allegheny County;

- Töve Marie Johnson, Grade 11, Indiana Area School District, Indiana County;
- Kelly Kohlman, Grade 10, Derry Township School District, Dauphin County;
- Amanda Rucker, Grade 9, Montrose Area School District, Susquehanna County; and
- DeVonna Smith, Grade 11, Reading School District, Berks County.

The panel of judges for the event were cultural leaders, writers and poets, including: First Lady Judge Marjorie O. Rendell; Karen Farmer White of Pittsburgh, a council member on the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and a member of the State Board of Education; Chris Estevez, a student at Stony Brook University in New York and Pennsylvania's first Poetry Out Loud state champion in 2006; Lara Brenckle, a municipal reporter for The Patriot-News of Central Pennsylvania and a three-time Pennsylvania Newspaper Association award winner for excellence in journalism; poet and playwright Maureen McGuigan, deputy director for arts and culture for Lackawanna County; and Brett Keyser, writer, performer and director for Nightjar Apothecary, a Philadelphia-based production company specializing in performances created for museum exhibitions. JoBeth McKee and Jamie Kasper of the Department of Education served as accuracy judges.

The National Endowment for the Arts and The Poetry Foundation created the Poetry Out Loud: National Recitation Contest to encourage high school students to learn about great poetry through memorization, performance and competition. Nine-thousand students in 90 Pennsylvania high schools across the state participated at the classroom level in this year's competition, vying to compete at one of the 12 regional competitions hosted by the PCA's Arts in Education Partners and the Pennsylvania Parent Teacher Association.

The Pennsylvania Council on the Arts is a state agency under the Governor's Office that works to foster the excellence, diversity and vitality of the arts in Pennsylvania and to broaden the availability and appreciation of those arts throughout the state.

The agency received a National Leadership Award from the National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts in 2009 for its innovative leadership in increasing lifelong learning opportunities in the arts. The council started the Pennsylvania Arts in Education Partnership in 1995 to enhance efforts to foster educational excellence through participation in the creative process in schools and community settings.

For more information on the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, visit www.pacouncilonthearts.org or call 717-787-6883. For further information on Poetry Out Loud, visit www.poetryoutloud.org.

Media contact: Heather Doughty, 717-787-1517

###