THE NATION’S HIGHEST HONOR FOR YOUTH POETS PRESENTING ORIGINAL WORK
Letter from the First Lady of the United States
As Honorary Chair of the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, I am pleased to congratulate the National Student Poets, Class of 2014.

Each year, the National Student Poets Program bestows the nation’s highest honor on five outstanding high school poets. With this award, we celebrate the exceptional creativity, dedication to craft, and promise of this generation of leaders. Your courage, compassion, and creativity is shaping the world around you and galvanizing a culture of discovery, exploration, and unity around the act of writing poetry. As literary ambassadors to Americans across the country, you have the opportunity to set an example and inspire audiences of all ages with your written work, readings, and service projects. We believe your generation can achieve great things, and it gives me such hope for our collective future. Please know that we will continue to support you as you pay it forward through service to others.

Again, congratulations, and I wish you all the best!

Sincerely,

Michelle Obama
# Table of Contents

1. Letter from the First Lady
2. Letter from the NSPP Partners
3. Weston Clark, Midwest
4. Madeleine LeCesne, Southwest
5. Ashley Gong, Northeast
6. Cameron Messinides, Southeast
7. Julia Falkner, West
8. 2014 Jurors
9. Special Thanks
10. Eligibility
Letter from the National Student Poets Program Partners

We are honored to join First Lady Michelle Obama in congratulating the Class of 2014 on receiving the nation’s highest honor for youth poets. The National Student Poets Program identifies our country’s most promising talents and provides them with resources to develop their own skills as poets and fulfill their role as ambassadors who engage and inspire young and old alike.

The two previous classes of young poets have used poetry to reach Alzheimer’s patients, to teach lessons of tolerance, and to explore other students’ native languages and cultures as a path to mastering English. Speaking to a group of incarcerated women last spring, one National Student Poet remarked “each of us has our own unique language, which means anyone can be a poet, but no one can be a poet like you.” The service projects and events held throughout the year in communities across America illuminate how talent and dedication can open up new horizons for youth and help shape the future of our culture and language.

As partners in carrying out the National Student Poets Program, the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH), the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), and the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers seek to ensure that the talents of young people are nurtured and recognized so as to sustain our nation’s cultural life. We are therefore proud to share a sample of their work in this publication.

Congratulations to these five outstanding poets! We applaud the creativity of America’s youth.

George Stevens, Jr., Co-Chair
President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities

Margo Lion, Co-Chair
President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities

Susan H. Hildreth, Director
Institute of Museum and Library Services

Virginia McEnerney, Executive Director
Alliance for Young Artists & Writers
Weston Clark has been writing poetry since he was in first grade. He initially wrote Shel Silverstein–style poetry and has enjoyed exploring other styles, including free verse. Weston was born in Indianapolis and attends Park Tudor School. Although he lives in central Indiana, southern Indiana and the rolling red hills of Kentucky are his favorite places. Through his writing, Weston tries to evoke emotions in people. He strongly agrees with Maya Angelou’s philosophy: People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel. 📖
Flames

Against my thighs, my hands throb like my father’s footsteps. Black smudges on my fingernails and a bubbling wound on my thumb betray my sinful revenge.

My town is a Denny’s, a Shell, a hunting lodge carved into the side of a red cliff. In summer, at the lodge, the antlers mounted above the door frown like brows.

My sister’s dollhouse is a spectacle of light, a half-inch of gasoline from the can in the garage, the scrape of the match-head who bites the flesh off my thumb, the heat of a bittersweet smell erupting into the air.

Flames blossoming upon the tiny doors and windows (through which my sister’s dolls blankly stare) like unattended wisteria.

When I show my sister the blackened dollhouse, she looks at me, and in silence she turns away, so that I must pick up the ruined toy and throw it in the rusty blue dumpster behind our house.

Two summers past, the air was dwindling at the fair where the goldfish sat idly in their bowls. We were throwing balls to win a fish. I won, she cried. In the parking lot, I gave her the fish who swam in his bag like a tiny flame.
South on Main Street

In the forsaken lot
south of the Dairy Queen,
the sticky smell of ice cream
mingles with the taste
of street dust kicked up,
and I feel myself slipping
on a layer of weathered tile.
I cannot help but think
that I have found the hiding place
of something long forgotten.

I am standing on an electrical-wire spool
that, now bare, sits lonely in the lot.
To step forward is to fall
but stepping backwards
leads me ever onwards
to an old gas station

where a child could come
to the raspy woman at the counter
with a handful of sticky change
and a pack of Big League Chew
from the shelf near the gritty bathroom,
while outside his parents
refilled the parched tank
of their mud-spattered Ford
from crusty red pumps
sheathed in plastic nozzles.

My thoughts are like a faucet.
Too fast for me to
capture them all at once.
While the veiny old lady
still sits behind the counter
spitting wet wads of tobacco
into an unseen wastebasket,  
and smiles toothily  
at children who look her way.

To escape the sun,  
I stepped inside  
where the Slim Jims  
and Baby Ruths sat tiered  
as if on bleachers at the park.  
When I took one, the lady smiled  
and said that she remembered  
when she was my age.

There is a spider  
in a crevice in the lot.  
In shadow, it scuttles on  
its web that breathes  
like a sleeping beast.  
How sick it must be  
of the walls closing in around it,  
of the invisible labyrinth of fibers  
by which it earns its way.  
How sick it must be of the insects  
cocooned in silky coffins,  
whose slowly throbbing bodies  
send weak exhales whispering  
through the hairs on its back.  
How sick it must be of the hard sunlight  
beating down on the old lot  
south of the Dairy Queen,  
of the sticky smell of ice cream,  
and the taste of street dust.  
The footprints of children,  
ghosts left to haunt the rubble  
that is now its home.  
How sick it must be of paradise.
Madeleine LeCesne is a senior at Lusher Charter School in New Orleans, Louisiana. Madeleine began writing poetry when she was six years old, after her parents gave her an antique bed. Every night, her mother and father would find her crouched behind the headboard scribbling lines into the wood. Madeleine lost this work in 2005, when the headboard and her home were washed away by Hurricane Katrina. The city of New Orleans is her one great love. Gumbo is Madeleine’s identity: a stew of random fixings. She is Hispanic, Native American, and African American, and, because of her mixed bloodline, is interested in genealogy as well as the history of New Orleans. Madeleine’s work deals with unscrambling her identity. Among the writers she looks to for guidance are Anne Carson, Kimiko Hahn, and Anna Moschovakis.
Things I Think About When There Is a Needle in My Arm

1. The smell of alcohol when they rub my skin with that little white square.
2. The color red when they draw blood.
3. If I really need a Band-Aid when it’s all finished.
4. If I could be one of those people whose life changes after an injection of a vaccine. One lady got so messed up she can’t even form sentences now.
5. That I’ll eventually have to get used to the feeling of a needle in my arm.
6. That I never want to get pregnant. My mother stuck herself every day to make it happen.
7. The bruises on my arm from that time when I was eight. The nurse’s nails bit my skin as she held me down.
8. My twin brother crying like he did when I did as the doctor took my blood.
9. How my mother called the needle a butterfly. She created my fear of butterflies.
10. The doctor when he told me the blood was like Kool-Aid coming out of me.
11. When the nurse made the mistake of sitting in the rolling chair. The shot went into my father’s thigh after I kicked her away.
12. Age fourteen, when the doctor told me I still wasn’t grown enough to get the HPV vaccination all my friends had gotten when they turned eleven.
13. The time my mother asked me why I was so interested in getting the HPV vaccine.
14. My mother telling me she and my grandmother both had cervical cancer.
15. The hatred for my grandmother that developed after she told me I have child-bearing hips.
16. That a tattoo needle is really still a needle.
17. Why you’d go through sticking yourself with a needle every day.
19. The nurses always saying I have baby veins.
20. My mother always offering to give me the shot herself.
21. My grandfather, the ob-gyn.
22. My mother, working in her father’s office every day after school when she was my age.
23. All the reasons I couldn’t practice medicine.
24. The way someone looks when they’ve been shot dead in a movie.
25. How I’d rather face words on a page than an actual human body.
26. How once my mother wanted to be a doctor.
27. How I missed school for this.
28. How I don’t want to be like my mother.
29. How I still punch my mother’s arm until the needle comes out of me.
30. How my mother tells me I’m brave as we leave the doctor’s office.
31. How my mother has known our pharmacist for sixteen years. She made my mother’s pills when no one else would because the prescription was rare. The pharmacist sat in front of her television late at night and put together the pills that keep fetuses alive when their mother’s body can’t.
Virgins

When I was six, I went to Catholic school, where nuns explained the world to us. We were solved puzzles of birds flying nowhere, ensnared in a white sky. I wondered if our hair would grow beneath our habits. Humans have only the five senses in common: taste and sight, hearing and smell, touch.

All is sensation. We stroked the beads around our necks—devout femininity. They let us outside. The sky overtook us—that cloud must be heaven, I said. We kept spinning and I found others, crying when every cloud began to look just like salvation.
Ashley Gong grew up surrounded by language, as her parents, first-generation immigrants, would often read Chinese poems to her when she was a toddler. Despite this early exposure to poetry, her first venture into writing came in the form of prose. It wasn’t until more recently that she discovered her passion for poetry, which is currently her go-to medium for creative expression. She has learned to always keep a pen at hand, as she can often be found bursting into spontaneous spurts of poetry at any given place or moment. A junior at Newtown High School in Sandy Hook, CT, Ashley channels her love for writing, reading, reaching out, and leading into all aspects of her life. She’s the founder/president of the Latin Club, co-president of Global Voice (a human-rights club), and founder of the Newtown Middle School Latin Learning Program, which strives to instill a love for the Latin language in middle school students in her community.
Allegro

we all hold primordial gas
in our pockets, little bits of
unfurling supernovas
waltzing at dusk, that fall
gently in our neuron expanse
and reverberate lightly
in the spaces between synapses,
where axons are strung
like harps humming siren songs
under gaslights.
we are all vagabonds
somewhere inside, nomads
who move against the plate
tectonics, who graze
the ripe syllables of words
for breakfast and who know
that home is not where the
heart is, but where the
heart longs to go.
let the songs of migrants
echo in your ears,
starry-eyed dreamers
who don’t spend nights
counting the rings, the ages,
of tree trunks, who know
that gravity will always
catch you, hold you in its
embrace, but that inertia
is the train that leaves
promptly at 6.
so please go, go now.
i once heard that salmon
return to their birthplace
at least once in their lives.

i'll be here waiting
when you return,
waiting with the crackled
static from the radio
and the old beat-up truck,
its red paint peeling in strips.
the hems of your clothes
are unraveling, snaking
towards blue-veined rivers,
hollering over undulating
peaks and valleys,
the dimples and noses
of the landscape.
so go, go now.

listen to your metronome
pulsating in the walls
of your ribcage, the stereo
soundtrack of your steps.
here. listen to it beat:
60, 100, 200:
adagio, moderato,
allaegro.
Goldfish

her bones are sharp and angular,
steel beams jutting out from taut canvas
and her eyes are two quivering seawater orbs
staring agape like light bulbs ordered a size too large.

she’s 42, but shrinking, a T-shirt left to shrivel
on Nebraska telephone wires, the grayed soap water
leeched by one hundred thousand thirsty pixels of sky.

at home, she’s smaller.
she wraps fabric threads around her waist and calls it a dress
(she had to use the others to mend his plaid shirt).
she walks in whispers, bows to the Lord at 6 pm,
and sells the beads on her anklet to follow him
across dead-end roads and cornfield highways.

home is not a sanctuary,
but a bird’s nest of contradictions: old keys rusted
from caustic engine breath, crumpled bits of Styrofoam
in days-old tea, a timeworn vacuum cleaner in the corner,
(always wheezing)
spools of blue-eyed lace ribbon, unworn.

sometimes, when she’s home alone,
she feeds the goldfish and tries to build a house of cards.
her hands are deft, as she gingerly places one on top of the other,
but the house never rises higher than the kitchen doorknob,
its peak always scraping just below it.

he pocketed the king
card long ago.
Cameron Messinides is seventeen years old and currently a creative-writing student at the South Carolina Governor’s School for the Arts and Humanities. He has been recognized with the Leonard L. Milberg ’53 Secondary School Poetry Prize, and his work has been published on The Atlantic’s website. He lives with his parents and five brothers and sisters, where, besides writing, he spends his time playing basketball, clumsily cooking dinner once a week, and helping raise the family goats.
Desperation

For the first time,
I watch Nana slip
in the kitchen, spill
chicken broth on the linoleum,
and now she’s screaming
your name. She wants you
the same way the alcoholic next door
wants Hawaii and an aspirin, the same way
I want my brothers to stand back
from swollen riverbanks,
the same way a man in Minnesota
wants to stay awake all night
and watch his daughter’s breathing,
so his nose, close with her cheekbone,
can create an alchemy of their exhalations.
They’ve both been breathing long enough
to fill the atmosphere. We’re inhaling
their bodies. The kitchen smells
like a dead bird. Nana could
be burning the first of a final
thousand breaths, and we only wanted

a Thanksgiving warm enough
for open doors and open windows, warm enough
for the back porch to fill with sweet
potato casserole, a sweating green Jell-O,
and the wind, flooded
with our own earth-sweet
breathlessness.
Cameron Messinides

My Father Double-Exposed a Roll of Film

For the third time, I found the shoebox of photos: no longer a surprise. Here,
the horizon of our farm, overlaid by the Sears Tower; and here
is a family reunion in a Chicago apartment coated by more-recent tracings of newborn goats;
and here, a picture of me in my grandfather’s lap, age seven, my nose hidden in his salt-shaker beard. Over this, another exposure of my face seems strained through a coffee filter of overworked film and years past. I’m old only by the standard of a mayfly, but I’m terrified because I wore two different jackets for this picture, and neither one fits anymore.

Last week, my friend raised a kiln in his backyard. Cracked plates and piles of lavender ash surround us while we trace fingers through puddles of sweet tea. He picks up a fallen bough and shows me how to stir
a bucket of glaze called soiled
morning glory. I want to make him
a new color. If he finds firewood,
we'll dump the pictures in a pot
and melt them with water, chipped
clay, aphasia. Poured into a basin,
the glaze seems white, and vases
dipped through are only a shade
darker, but once fired and tossed
upwards like babies, the light
hazes toward a layer underneath,
something blue, something
crimson, something lost
to shards.
Julia Falkner is seventeen years old and a senior at Monarch High School in Louisville, Colorado. Most of her work is about adolescence, gender, and vulnerability. She co-runs her high school’s Writers Society as well as editing and producing the school literary magazine. Additionally, she absorbs as much art as possible. In the coming year she hopes to start a film project, read the collected works of Shakespeare, and complete a science-fiction novel. When she isn’t writing, Julia keeps a loaded AP schedule, plays electric keyboards and guitar, and runs cross country for her high school. She also works as a barista. 🎬
a museum of my thirteen-year-old self

by Lizzy Goodman, with Nick Zinner, Karen O, and Brian Chase over grilled cheese sandwiches
“it wasn’t until eighth grade, which she calls ‘a psychological bloodbath’ for girls, that she really confronted what it meant to be different.”

Women’s sneakers, size 8 (2008)
manufactured by Nike: bloodstained, 9.2 oz
I became of the lactic acid, of the scratchy ponytail against your neck, of the pulse rocketing under your sweatshirt in a waltz you never learned the steps to. The back door chokes when you open it, it is dark enough to swallow your own tongue, you are here because the sky is a bruise and you are the fist that knocked it out. Watch your feet stab a path across the thin film of snow, wrist over mouth, have you ever seen anyone move so violently?

Door handle (2001)
crooked, long handle, aluminum
You will learn to take the advice that you cannot both pray to be walked in on and lock everybody out.

Passive aggressive prose poems (2010)
3,086 words total, because I did not know how to scream in a three-dimensional world
Today, I kiss your skinny angry words on the lips and send them out without a curfew.
Neck full of hope and the jugular vein connects to shoulders she never knows what to do with, connect to something in between fingers that curl like spider legs around ballpoint pens: small, desperate, dying.
Tissues (2009)
manufactured by Kleenex, count of 90 sheets
scattered carelessly by the artist around a dark room
I had a lot of nosebleeds.

Concession stand receipt (2010)
from late May, for a soft pretzel, folded and ripped
with precision along one edge by anxious fingers
Do not be a gentleman about it.
The first time she snarls into your mouth and loves you
so hard it hurts like growing pains up your back, turn away.
The first time your heart panics in a tarantella,
turn down the volume, close the door, steel your jaw.
The first time: send her away and curl
into the palm of the earth, so sick with humans,
like a lover’s; where you first learned how to spill empty,
and spill light. Spill every moment that she loved you so quiet
you forgot both of you were part of some greater cancer.

You Can’t Always Get What You Want (1969)
written by Mick Jagger & Keith Richards
recorded in London; 7 minutes, 30 seconds
Darling, you won’t believe it, but someday
you will be five foot eight and love so deeply
that she will not be able to sleep anymore.
You can’t always want; my golden-haired, hollow-lunged,
heavy-legged little ghost; barely ever.
You can’t always get what you want, darling,
but if you try sometimes, you’ll get what you need.
By god, you’ll get what you need.
Apollo and Daphne

Daphne’s grandmother river, the tongue muscle of the earth, smiled toothless and syllabic. Daph - ne, her name in my Viking daughter mouth, my blood thick with compounding scarlet Norse, citrine ankles unzipped from the heap of moss.

Contagion of her ancestors, she waded to her knees. Her father bit his shallow dragonmouth, watching his raccoon-bruised baby with fists turning in the bedsheets of her hair. She called her body injurious. Daphne, pilgrim of what it means to be skin-stained.

Gaia taught her how to recognize the ghosts, flushed arrows shot through the color of Greece. Women with bodies like subversive vibrations, crawl spaces. Told her men were like mosquito bites, elusive and irritable to the skin. Taught her how to steam her hair like vegetables, to shave her legs like cut feathers, to rope copper around her neck and create alphabets of want. Persephone carried her to the emergency rooms, peat growing thick in the birch branches of her shirt collar, a mouth full of sawdust. The wounds of Apollo’s fingernails had broken shallow into the memorial of her body. They choked serpentine into the carbon veil between laurel and skin, already forgetting the taste of her broken name, Daph - ne, Daph - ne, Daph - ne.
2014 Jurors

ESTHER BELIN, a writer and multimedia artist, won the American Book Award for her first book of poetry, *From the Belly of My Beauty*. Belin’s recent scholarship includes critical studies of Dinétah—examining identity politics, checkerboard land status, and the interplay of words and image. Recent installation work includes: “Standing on the Outside, Sitting on the Outside,” “Binding Sky,” and “Pretty Tough.” She lives in southwest Colorado with her four daughters and husband.

ROBERT CASPER is the head of the Poetry and Literature Center at the Library of Congress. He previously worked as programs director at the Poetry Society of America. He is one of the founders of the literary magazine *jubilat*, and he served as its publisher for more than a decade. He also served as the poetry chair for the Brooklyn Borough President’s Literary Council and on the board for the Council of Literary Magazines and Presses, where he worked as membership director.

MARTIN JUDE FARAWELL directs the Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival and Poetry Program. He is the author of *Genesis: A Sequence of Poems*, and his work has appeared in the *Cortland Review, Literary Review, Poetry East, Southern Review*, and a number of anthologies, including *Outsiders: Poems About Rebels, Exiles, and Renegades* (Milkweed Editions). His plays have been performed off-off-Broadway and by regional, college, community, and international theaters from South Africa to Los Angeles. A graduate of New York University’s Creative Writing Program, he has earned a writing fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and is a frequent Pushcart Prize nominee.

ANDREA GIBSON is a poet who is active in the LGBT community. Her work has been featured on media outlets such as the BBC and CNN, among others. She is known for the fearless truths in her poetry. She has released five spoken-word albums and was the first winner of the Women of the World Poetry Slam. Her work often addresses topics such as war, class, gender, bullying, and more.
TERRANCE HAYES is the author of Lighthead, winner of the 2010 National Book Award for Poetry. His other collections are Wind in a Box, Hip Logic, and Muscular Music. Other honors include a Whiting Writers Award, a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, a United States Artists Zell Fellowship, and a Guggenheim Fellowship. He is a professor of creative writing at Carnegie Mellon University and lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

JUAN FELIPE HERRERA has written twenty-nine books of poetry, spoken-word, young-adult novels, and children’s collections. His recent awards for his poetry include the Guggenheim Fellowship, the National Book Critic’s Circle Award, the Latino International Award, the PEN USA award, and the Josephine Miles Pen / Oakland Award. He is a member of the Board of Chancellors of the Academy of American Poetry and recently was appointed by California Governor Jerry Brown as the California Poet Laureate. In addition, he has worked with schools on the “i-Promise Joanna” project, which addresses bullying, and the new “Think Before Your Send” Instant Messaging Poem Placards. At the University of California in Riverside, he is a professor of creative writing.

EDWARD HIRSCH, a MacArthur Fellow, has published The Living Fire: New and Selected Poems (2010), which brings together 35 years of poetry from seven previous collections, including For the Sleepwalkers (1981), Wild Gratitude (1986), which won the National Book Critics Circle Award, The Night Parade (1989), Earthly Measures (1994), On Love (1998), Lay Back the Darkness (2003), and Special Orders (2008). He has also written five prose books, including Poet’s Choice (2006), A Poet’s Glossary (2014), and the national best seller How to Read a Poem and Fall in Love with Poetry (1999). He has received a Guggenheim Fellowship and the American Academy of Arts and Letters Award for Literature, among other awards. Hirsch now serves as president of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation.

ALICE QUINN was the poetry editor at Alfred A. Knopf from 1976 to 1986 and then became the poetry editor of The New Yorker. She teaches at Columbia University’s Graduate School of the Arts and is the executive director of the Poetry Society of America. She has written and edited several books, including Edgar Allan Poe & The Juke-Box: Uncollected Poems, Drafts, and Fragments.
ROGER REEVES was awarded a 2013 National Endowment for the Arts Literature Fellowship and 2008 Ruth Lilly Fellowship. His poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Best American Poetry, Poetry, Ploughshares, American Poetry Review, Boston Review, Tin House,* and *2014 Pushcart Prize.* *King Me,* his first book of poems, was published by Copper Canyon Press in 2013. He is an assistant professor of poetry at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

PATRICIA SMITH is a renaissance artist of unmistakable signature, recognized as a force in the fields of poetry, playwriting, fiction, performance, and creative collaboration. She is the author of six critically acknowledged volumes of poetry, including *Shoulda Been Jimi Savannah,* winner of the 2013 Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize from the Academy of American Poets and finalist for the William Carlos Williams Award from the Poetry Society of America, *Blood Dazzler* (a National Book Award finalist), and *Teahouse of the Almighty* (a National Poetry Series winner), all from Coffee House Press; *Close to Death* and *Big Towns, Big Talk,* both from Zoland Books; and *Life According to Motown,* just released by Tia Chucha Press in a special 20th-anniversary edition. She also edited the crime-fiction anthology *Staten Island Noir.*
Special Thanks

The National Student Poets Program partners sincerely thank the Poetry Society of America, the Academy of American Poets, the National Writing Project, the National Student Poets Program Jurors and 826 National for their support, expertise, and enthusiasm.

The National Student Poets Program partners also gratefully acknowledge the Regional Affiliates of the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards for their dedication to supporting and coordinating the Awards on the regional level. We honor the thousands of educators who annually encourage students to submit their work.

The National Student Poets Program is supported in part by funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities with private support provided by an anonymous donor and the Bernstein Family Foundation for the academic awards.
Eligibility

For students to be considered for the National Student Poets Program, they must be in grades 9, 10, or 11 and enrolled in a public, private, or parochial school, or be home-schooled in the United States. Students must also win a National Gold or Silver Medal in poetry in the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards.

Founded in 1923, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards continues to be the longest-running, most prestigious recognition program for creative teens in the U.S., and the largest source of scholarships for young artists and writers. Deadlines for the Awards vary by region and may be found at www.artandwriting.org.

From the pool of National Scholastic Award–winning medalists in poetry, thirty-five semifinalists for the National Student Poets Program are selected in the spring. The semifinalists are notified and asked to submit additional poetry, two video introductions, and a short bio for consideration by the national jury panel.

A national jury of literary luminaries and leaders in education and the arts selects the five National Student Poets. Submissions are evaluated based on the National Student Poets Program’s three criteria: creativity; dedication to craft; and promise and personal voice.
The President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers partner to present the National Student Poets Program (NSPP), the country’s highest honor for youth poets presenting original work. Five outstanding high school poets whose work exhibits exceptional creativity, dedication to craft, and promise are selected annually for a year of service as national poetry ambassadors.

National Student Poets are chosen from among the national medalists in the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards by a jury of literary luminaries and leaders in education and the arts. Student Poets receive college scholarships and opportunities to present their work at writing and poetry events throughout their term.

The National Student Poets Program is supported in part by funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities with private support provided by an anonymous donor and the Bernstein Family Foundation for the academic awards.

artandwriting.org/NSPP
facebook.com/NationalStudentPoetsProgram