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## ***National Student Poets Amplify the Teen Voice for National Poetry Month***

***Selected by White House Committee, Student Poetry Ambassadors Connect Youth Across the Country to the Dynamic Art of Literary Self-Expression***

New York, NY — April 1, 2014 — During their tenure as teen [literary ambassadors](#), the second annual class of the [National Student Poets Program](#) (NSPP) has been actively participating in readings and workshops across the country to share their work and amplify the youth voice in poetry. To celebrate [National Poetry Month](#) in April, each of the five poets will participate in a full calendar of events that promote an appreciation of poetry and encourage youth to embark on their own creative journeys. The month of literary events marks a high point in their year of service, which began in September 2013 when they were awarded this nation's highest honor for youth poets during a White House ceremony by First Lady Michelle Obama.

"This year's National Student Poets are literary ambassadors to people across our country and around the world, and their work exemplifies the extraordinary outcomes that come from encouraging our youth to use their imaginations, be creative and pursue their passions," said Honorary Chairman of the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, First Lady Michelle Obama.

Since their appointment, the National Student Poets have reached a diverse group of audiences through events at locations ranging from the White House to military bases to teacher conferences to local libraries and more. As part of events, these young poets have stood alongside and interacted with former National Poet Laureate Billy Collins and former Washington State Poet Laureate Kathleen Flenniken, among other literary figures. This pattern of service and professional growth for the Class of 2013 is the hallmark of their ambassadorial year and will be embodied in all their April events, which further their reach, inspire new audiences of all ages to embrace poetry and showcase the essential role of writing and the arts in academic and personal success. Upcoming April NSPP events include:

- **April 4–5: [Nathan Cummings](#), 18, Workshop/Presentation, Salt Lake City Public Library and Bryant Middle School, Salt Lake City, UT**  
Nathan will host an entire day celebrating poetry through media, Twitter and poetry competitions at the main Salt Lake City library branch.
- **April 10–12: [Michaela Coplen](#), 18, Presenter, Vermont State House, Montpelier, VT**  
Michaela will also visit Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility for women in South Burlington, lead workshops with local high schools and read with Vermont Poet Laureate Sydney Lea at the Vermont College of Fine Arts.

- **April 11–13: [Louis Lafair](#), 18, Featured Scholar, Round Top Poetry Festival, Round Top, TX**  
Louis will be a Round Top Poetry Festival scholar at this annual event. He will read his work with other featured poets including Jane Hirshfield and Gregory Orr on Friday evening, April 11.
- **April 24: [Aline Dolinh](#), 16, Featured Reader, Kentucky Arts Council’s Kentucky Writers’ Day, Frankfort, KY**  
Aline will read and present at the Kentucky Arts Council’s Kentucky Writers’ Day in the Capitol Building in Frankfort with readings by poets such as Kentucky Poet Laureate Frank X Walker to celebrate the birthday of the nation’s first poet laureate, Robert Penn Warren, a Kentucky native.
- **April 24–25: [Sojourner Ahebee](#), 18, Ohio Center for the Book “Poem in your Pocket Day,” Cleveland, OH**  
Sojourner will participate in a day-long celebration of writing with workshops, readings and activities at three Cleveland library branches, including the Carnegie West Library, the Main Library downtown and the Langston Hughes Library.
- **April 24: [Michaela Coplen](#), Featured Reader, Poetry & the Creative Mind Gala, New York, NY**  
Michaela will read onstage at Lincoln Center at the annual Poetry & the Creative Mind Gala, hosted by the Academy of American Poets, the nonprofit organization behind National Poetry Month. Other special guest readers will include Tina Fey, Patrick Stewart and Meryl Streep.

For up-to-date information about National Student Poet events celebrating National Poetry Month, please visit the [NSPP website](#) and follow them on [Facebook](#).

The 2013 National Student Poets were selected by a jury of literary luminaries and leaders in education and the arts from among students in grades 9–11 who received national medals in the [Scholastic Art & Writing Awards](#), the nation’s most prestigious recognition program for creative teens presented by the nonprofit [Alliance for Young Artists & Writers](#). The National Student Poets Program is a signature initiative of the [President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities](#) in partnership with the [Institute of Museum and Library Services](#) (IMLS) and the Alliance. Each National Student Poet receives an academic award of \$5,000, funded by the Bernstein Family Foundation, and serves as a resource for the U.S. Department of Education and the Library of Congress. The next class of National Student Poets will be introduced in late summer. More information can be found at [www.artandwriting.org/NSPP](http://www.artandwriting.org/NSPP).

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**The National Student Poets Program** is a signature initiative which reflects the national imprimatur of the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities in advancing arts education, links the National Student Poets with audiences and resources in their neighborhoods through the Institute of Museum and Library Services’ community-based network of libraries and museums, and builds upon the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers’ long-standing work with educators and creative teens through the prestigious Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. The program works in coordination with the Library of Congress and the U.S. Department of Education and the academic awards are generously provided by the Bernstein Family Foundation. More information on the Program can be found at [www.artandwriting.org/NSPP](http://www.artandwriting.org/NSPP).

**The President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities** (PCAH) is an advisory committee to the White House on cultural issues. Its core areas of focus are arts and humanities education, cultural exchange, and community revitalization. First Lady Michelle Obama, like other first ladies before her, serves as honorary chairman of the committee. [www.pcah.gov](http://www.pcah.gov)

**The Institute of Museum and Library Services** is the primary source of federal support for the nation’s 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. Our mission is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning, and cultural and civic engagement. Our grant making, policy development, and research help libraries and museums deliver valuable services that make it possible for communities and individuals to thrive. To learn more, visit [www.imls.gov](http://www.imls.gov) and follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

**The Alliance for Young Artists & Writers**, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, identifies teenagers with exceptional creative talent and brings their remarkable work to a national audience through the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. Founded in 1923, the Awards program is the longest-running, most prestigious initiative of its kind, having fostered the creativity and talent of millions of students through recognition, exhibitions and publications. Over the past six years alone, students have submitted more than a million works of art and writing and more than \$30 million has been made available in scholarships and awards to top winning participants. [www.artandwriting.org](http://www.artandwriting.org).

