FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 10, 2020

Contact: Phyllis Kennedy, Program Coordinator
505-476-0520, 800-879-4278 (statewide)
phyllis.kennedy@state.nm.us

NEW MEXICO STATE CHAMPION WILL TAKE PART IN THE FINALS OF
POETRY OUT LOUD: NATIONAL RECITATION CONTEST IN WASHINGTON DC

Santa Fe, NM – Zoe Sloan Callan, a student at Native American Community Academy in Albuquerque will represent New Mexico in the national finals of Poetry Out Loud: National Recitation Contest April 27 - 29 in Washington DC. This was her third trip to the state finals and second time as state champion.

Callan beat out seven other finalists on Sunday, March 8, 2020 in the 15th Annual New Mexico State Finals of Poetry Out Loud, sponsored by New Mexico Arts, the state arts agency and a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs. Judges evaluated each student performance on criteria including physical presence, dramatic appropriateness, voice and articulation, evidence of understanding, and accuracy.

Callan, a junior, recited three poems from the Poetry Foundation anthology: Abecedarian Requiring Further Examination of Anglikan Seraphym Subjugation of a Wild Indian Rezervation, by Natalie Diaz, To be of use, by Marge Piercy, and “Hope” is the thing with feathers, by Emily Dickinson. For her win, she receives $200 and an all-expenses-paid trip with chaperone to Washington DC to represent New Mexico at the national finals. Her school will receive a $500 stipend to purchase poetry books for the school library.

Other state finalists who participated included: runner-up Maysie Kilgore, Public Academy for Performing Arts, Albuquerque; third place winner Simran Grover, Arrowhead Park Medical Academy, Las
The event took place at the New Mexico Museum of Art in the historic St. Francis Auditorium. New Mexico Poet Laureate Levi Romero and State Senator Bill O’Neill performed original poems. Burque Revolt, a team of activists, outreach coordinators and poets looking to make change using the power of spoken word, was a local sponsor.

On April 28, students grouped in three geographic regions will compete in semifinal competitions to be held at the Lisner Auditorium on Tuesday, April 28th. Nine students (three from each region) will advance to compete in the National Finals on April 29 at 7pm. The National Finals will take place in the Terrace Theater at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. The top prize in the National competition is $20,000.

_Poetry Out Loud_ is a partnership of the National Endowment for the Arts, the Poetry Foundation and state arts agencies. The New Mexico portion of the national poetry recitation contest is sponsored by New Mexico Arts, a division of the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs.

_Poetry Out Loud_ encourages high school students to learn about great poetry through memorization and performance and is the creation of the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation. New Mexico students were among approximately 365,000 students nationwide who took part this year at the classroom level.

###

_New Mexico Arts_, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, is the state arts agency. New Mexico Arts administers the state’s One Percent for Public Art program, awards grants to nonprofit organizations for arts and cultural programs in their communities across the state, and provides technical assistance and educational opportunities for organizations, artists, and arts educators throughout New Mexico.

The _National Endowment for the Arts_ is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts – both new and established – bringing the arts to all Americans, and providing leadership in arts education. Established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government, the Endowment is the nation’s largest annual funder of the arts, bringing great art to all 50 states, including rural areas, inner cities and military bases.

The _Poetry Foundation_, publisher of Poetry magazine, is an independent literary organization committed to a vigorous presence for poetry in our culture. It has embarked on an ambitious plan to bring the best poetry before the largest possible audience.

Photo by Lilli Tichinin
2020 New Mexico Poetry Out Loud State Champion Zoe Sloan Callan, Native American Community Academy, Albuquerque

:///END///