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POETRY OUT LOUD NATIONAL RECITATION CONTEST  
NEW MEXICO STATE FINALS MARCH 6, 2016

Santa Fe – Join seven New Mexico high school students as they compete to become New Mexico’s Poetry Out Loud State Champion at the St. Francis Auditorium of the New Mexico Museum of Art on Sunday, March 6, 2016 at 1 p.m. Admission for the event is free and open to the public.

Poetry Out Loud is a partnership of the National Endowment for the Arts, the Poetry Foundation and state arts agencies. The New Mexico event is sponsored by New Mexico Arts, a division of the state Department of Cultural Affairs.

Seven schools, 304 students, and 18 teachers participated at the classroom level across New Mexico to select the seven finalists who will compete to be State Champion on March 6. Schools that will send representatives to the State Finals include: Bosque School in Albuquerque, Deming High School, La Cueva High School in Albuquerque, Oñate High School in Las Cruces, Pojoaque Valley High School, Public Academy for Performing Arts in Albuquerque, and Rio Grande Preparatory Institute in Las Cruces.

“By helping students foster creative thinking skills and inspire self-expression, we are laying a foundation for lifelong learning in the arts,” said NEA Chairman Jane Chu

The state winner will receive $200, plus $500 for their school library for the purchase of poetry books, and an all-expense-paid trip, with adult chaperone, to Washington, DC, to compete at the National Finals. The National Champion receives $20,000 in prizes.

Poetry Out Loud encourages the nation’s youth to learn about great poetry through exploration, memorization, and performance. The inspiration for this program is to promote poetry in both the classroom and the community. Performers are judged on physical presence, voice and articulation, appropriateness of dramatization, evidence of understanding, and accuracy.
“When a person is exposed to a love of poetry at an early age, he/she will most likely be a life-long reader of poetry,” said Henry Bienen, interim president of the Poetry Foundation. “After ten years and almost three million students later, Poetry Out Loud has created a new generation of poetry readers and lovers who are proof that poetry is a lively and important presence in the classroom and in the culture.”

The New Mexico Museum of Art is located at 107 W. Palace Ave. in downtown Santa Fe. For more information, contact Phyllis Kennedy, New Mexico Arts, at (505) 476-0520 or (800) 879-4278 (statewide), or email phyllis.kennedy@state.nm.us

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**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.