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Starbucks and Windward Community College Champion Literacy Through Young Poets' Contest

Sixty-seven students and their teachers from throughout the state will be honored at the 9th Annual Star Poets Celebration on Sunday, May 31 at 1 p.m. in Windward Community College's Paliku Theatre.

The event recognizes the winners of the Star Poets competition, sponsored by Starbucks Coffee and Windward Community College.

At Sunday's reading and awards ceremony, each student winner will receive a \$50 cash award and each honorable mention winner will receive a \$10 cash award. Winners include 53 from Oahu, 11 from Maui and 3 from the Big Island (see attached list). In addition, each winner's school will receive a cash award.

More than 3,500 poems were received this year from public and private school students in grades 3 – 12. The winners' poems will be published in the Star Poets Journal, available at selected Starbucks stores. The poems can also be viewed on the Windward Community College website at windward.hawaii.edu/poets.

The poems were judged anonymously so students' names and schools didn't appear on the pieces themselves.

For the first time this year, a "Poems for Peace" contest was part of the Star Poets project. This new addition was sponsored by the State Peer Mediation Conference. Four student winners will read their poems on encouraging peace in the world and receive their own \$50 cash awards.

Kealoha, founder of HawaiiSlam and host of First Thursdays, the largest registered slam poetry competition in the world, will emcee the Star Poets ceremony and perform some of his work. Kealoha's spoken word poetry has been recorded on award-winning albums and he has also represented Hawaii in national poetry slams.

"The ability to enjoy writing and reading is critical for success in today's world," said Star Poets coordinator and founder Libby Young, a Windward Community College journalism and English professor.

"We're thrilled with how the project has grown over the years. Teachers tell us how grateful they are to have an outlet for student writing. Poetry encourages students to be creative and give voice to their thoughts and feelings."

Young said while this may be the last year of Starbucks funding, she hopes to find other sponsors so the competition can continue. In fact, this year four of the participating private schools — Iolani, Punahou, Seabury Hall and Le Jardin Academy — have donated part or all of their school cash award back to the Star Poets project to make sure it continues.

"Starbucks has been a terrific partner in support of literacy, and we have appreciated their support for Hawaii's students and schools," Young said. "Now we have to find other community partners who believe in the work we've been doing."

A 36-page Hawaii Poetry Resource Guide was published with a Starbucks Foundation grant to provide classroom ideas for teachers. It is available at most school libraries or can be downloaded from the Windward Community College web site at www.windward.hawaii.edu.

For more information, contact Libby Young at (808) 235-7396 or libby@hawaii.edu.

Starbucks Coffee Company

Starbucks Coffee Company provides an uplifting experience that enriches people's lives one moment, one human being, one extraordinary cup of coffee at a time. To share in the experience, visit www.starbucks.com.

Windward Community College

Windward Community College is committed to excellence in the liberal arts and career development. We support and challenge individuals to develop skills, fulfill their potential, enrich their lives and become contributing, culturally aware members of our community.

Star Poets Winners 2009

(Top five winners chosen per grade)

3rd Grade

“Ninja” by Wyatt DeShong, Carden Academy of Maui
“Copy Cat” by Jocelyn Chen, St. Theresa Catholic School
“Poems” by Lucy Chalekian, Mid-Pacific Institute
“The Best Thing in the World” by Justin Shimazu, Mililani Ike Elementary
“Canyons” by Andrew Kobata, Iolani School

Honorable Mention

“Pogo Sticks” by Zoran Cullinan, Mid-Pacific Institute

4th Grade

“The First Time I Saw Snow” by Tadum Lee-Reyes, Kaneohe Elementary
“Little Things” by Bailey Anderson, Carden Academy of Maui
“My Dog Inky” by Tessa Joy Barbosa, Punahou School
“Guitar” by Keahi Coria, Kaneohe Elementary
“Fish” by Maurice Ellis, Honaunau Elementary School

Honorable Mention

“Night’s Song” Paige Oshiro, Hawaii Baptist Academy
“Gumball Machine” by Kendall Murphy, Mid-Pacific Institute

5th Grade

“What Brothers are For” by Lina Chung, Iolani School
“Rocky” by Dante Hirata-Epstein, Iolani School
“Ocean Waves” by Kimberly Ogata, Iolani School
“Birds” by Cloe Cadiz, Carden Academy of Maui
“Just Me” Ben Pells, Carden Academy of Maui

Honorable Mention

“Wide Open Beach” by Casey Rehrer, Carden Academy of Maui

6th Grade

"The Potion" by River Randle, Seabury Hall
"Defying Gravity" by Anna Ezzy, Seabury Hall
"Conquering the Baby Gate" by Savannah Janssen, Seabury Hall
"Wet Black Paint" by Sophie M. Janssen, Seabury Hall
"Rising" by Rika Tamakawa, Seabury Hall

7th Grade

Oasis" by Mikiko Takato, Hilo Intermediate
"Feeding the Giraffe" by Erin Voss, Le Jardin Academy
"Creepy Parenthesis" by Kelly Kuchenbecker, Le Jardin Academy
"Good Morning, Yard" by Frishan Paulo, 'Iolani School
"Working at Elvin's Bakery" by Eugene Au, 'Iolani School

Honorable Mention

"Warm Satisfaction" by Austyn Lee, 'Iolani School

8th Grade

"A Picture" by Shakeena Powers, Carden Academy of Maui
"Randomnisticalness" by Matt Takemoto, Hilo Intermediate
"Ode to Bigfoot" by Coburn Hopkins, Le Jardin Academy
"Iris's Waipahu" by Grace Kimura, Punahou School
"Psidium Guajava" by Reid Nakamoto, Punahou School

Honorable Mention

"On the Streets" by Christian Kim, Punahou School

9th Grade

"Shy Guy" by Kenton Nakamura, Iolani School
"Answers for You" by Bridget Thorp, Mid-Pacific Institute
"A Wise Old Man" by Zalman Bernstein, Iolani School
"The Freedom of Speed" by Lexi Felix, Iolani School
"Unprepared" by Bryson Emmons, Iolani School

Honorable Mention

"Garden" by Caroline Malone, Home School
"Supper is Looking Up" by Daniel Okubo, Iolani School
"Identity" by Caitlin Hatakeyama, Punahou School
"Welcome to Rainbows" by Jon Kaneshiro, Iolani School
"Wrestling Consequences" by Kevin Benavente, Punahou School

10th Grade

"Empty Walkway" by John Zobian, Iolani School
"What Were You Thinking?" by Caitlyn Yoshina, Iolani School
"Fortune Cookie Blues" by Joana Yasui, Iolani School
"A Lonely Dress" by Jennifer Teruya, Iolani School
"Poems on a Bench" by Tom Hartwell, Iolani School

Honorable Mention

“My Name” by Uluwehi Cashman, St. Andrew’s Priory
“Crying in the Shower” by Abigail Thompson, St. Andrew’s Priory
“Sweet Pinklicious” by Victoria Wong, Iolani School

11th Grade

"The Satyagrahis" by Aldric Ulep, Pearl City High
"Harbor" by Brittany Martin, Mililani High
"Seven" by Alysya Yamada, Pearl City High
"Rain" by Lianne Chung, Iolani School
"Not Unique" by Julia Mundo-Cambra, Kahuku High and Intermediate

Honorable Mention

"The Dance" by Mark Masutani, Iolani School (Ali Stewart-Ito)
"I, Too" by Michelle Ky, Iolani School (Jane Romjue)

12th Grade

"Yearly Shot" by Kanoelani Padeken, Kahuku High and Intermediate
"Have You Ever Shaved Your Chest?" by Jonathan Lautaha, Kahuku High and Intermediate
"This Old House" by Tamir Abdel-Wahab, Mid-Pacific Institute
"Child Care" by Malia Schilling, Punahou School
"Glimpse" by Giulia Anderson, Iolani School

Honorable Mention

"City at Dusk" by Pia Rojas, Mililani High School

POEMS FOR PEACE WINNERS

3rd – 6th grade

“The Fight” by Maya Kikuchi, 5th grade, Le Jardin Academy

7th – 9th grade

“The Little Doll” by Samantha Atkinson, 8th grade, Clearview Christian Girls School, Maui

10th – 12th grade (tie)

“Peace” by Alice Kim, 10th grade, University Laboratory School
“For Darfur: Finding Love” by Asia Ayabe, 11th grade, Iolani School