



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BETHESDA'S LOCAL WRITER'S SHOWCASE HONORS WRITERS AND POETS ON MARCH 13 & 14

32 Local Adult and High School Writers will be Honored

February 26, 2025 (Bethesda, MD) – On March 13 and 14, 2025, Bethesda Urban Partnership will host the Local Writer's Showcase, celebrating writers from Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia. The Showcase consists of two awards ceremonies and readings, honoring the winners of the annual Bethesda Essay and Short Story Contest, and the Bethesda Poetry Contest. Both ceremonies are free and open to the public.

The Annual **Bethesda Poetry Contest Awards Ceremony** will be held on Thursday, March 13 at 7 PM at The Writer's Center, located at 4508 Walsh Street in downtown Bethesda. All of the winners will read their original poems. This year's judge is Arlington Poet Laureate **Courtney LeBlanc** a Virginia Center for the Creative Arts fellow (2022), and founder and editor-in-chief of *Riot in Your Throat*, an independent poetry. Courtney LeBlanc and Guest Poet **Alexa Patrick**, vocalist and poet, will read their poetry along with the winners.

The Showcase will continue Friday, March 14 at 7 PM with the **Essay & Short Story Contest Awards Ceremony** at The Bethesdan Hotel, located 8120 Wisconsin Avenue. Essays were judged by pushcart prize-nominated author and educator, Anna Lapera, writer and Executive Editor for *The Offing*, Vonetta Young, and writer and the author of *Midwatch*, Jillian Danback-McGhan. Short stories were selected by writers Lisa Friedman, Christine Bollow, Jarvis Slacks, John Wang, Eva Langston and Debbie Levy.

Over 700 pieces were submitted to this year's Poetry, Essay and Short Story Contests as writers competed for a chance to win up to \$500, a free class and membership to The Writer's Center and have their work published in *Bethesda Magazine's* July/August issue. A total of \$5,000 in prize money will be awarded to the 32 winners from Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia.

The 2025 Local Writer's Showcase is produced by the Bethesda Urban Partnership and sponsored by *Bethesda Magazine* and The Writer's Center. Support is also provided by The Trawick Foundation.

For more information, please call 301/215-6660 or visit www.bethesda.org.

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Essay Winners

Sarah Craven, Cabin John, MD, 1st Place
Kathy Wei, Bethesda, MD, 2nd Place
Lisa Park, Fairfax, VA, 3rd Place
Kyi May Kaung, Chevy Chase, MD, Honorable Mention
Celina Santana, Bethesda, MD, Honorable Mention
Lindsey Wray, Arlington, VA, Honorable Mention

High School Essay Winners

Logan Moran, Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, 1st Place
Caroline Easley, Walt Whitman High School, 2nd Place
Michaela Levy, Winston Churchill High School, 3rd Place
Marin Brow, The Potomac School, Honorable Mention
Eleham Salo, Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, Honorable Mention
Katja Treadwell, Walt Whitman High School, Honorable Mention

Short Story Winners

Asma Dilawari, Bethesda, MD, 1st place
Laura Kuhlmann, Rockville, MD, 2nd place
John Simpson, Germantown, MD, 3rd place
Olivia Ikenberry, Silver Spring, MD, Honorable Mention

High School Short Story Winners

Max Bakelar, Georgetown Preparatory School, 1st place
Hana Sor, Montgomery Blair High School, 2nd place
Asha Akkinepally, Richard Montgomery High School, 3rd place
Lila Grosko, Montgomery Blair High School, Honorable Mention

Poetry Winners

John Whelan, Columbia, MD 1st Place
John Heath, Washington, DC 2nd Place
Chelsea McGlynn, Walkersville, MD 3rd Place
Carol Jennings, Washington, D.C., Honorable Mention
Thu Nguyen, Gaithersburg, MD, Honorable Mention
Dylan Tran, Washington, D.C., Honorable Mention

High School Poetry Winners

Leah Bulson, Richard Montgomery High School, Youth Poet Award
Chloe Chang, Poolesville HS High School, Youth Poet Award
Madelyn Downs, Richard Montgomery High School, Youth Poet Award
Charles Gray, Richard Montgomery High School, Youth Poet Award
Katherine Parra, Paint Branch High School, Youth Poet Award
Nina Richards, Richard Montgomery High School, Youth Poet Award

Established by Montgomery County in 1994, Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc. (BUP) is a downtown management organization that markets and maintains downtown Bethesda. The BUP team works in marketing, maintenance, transportation and administration to produce cultural events and community festivals, and attend to landscaping and maintenance needs. BUP also manages Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS), the Bethesda Arts & Entertainment District, and the Bethesda Circulator as well as the non-profit art spaces, Gallery B, Studio B and Triangle Art Studios. For a closer look, please visit www.bethesda.org.