



For immediate release:
May 12, 2006

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MEDIA ADVISORY

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS AND THE POETRY FOUNDATION ANNOUNCE THE NATIONAL FINALS OF POETRY OUT LOUD: NATIONAL RECITATION CONTEST

State recitation champions to compete before special guest judges in Washington, DC

WHAT: The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the Poetry Foundation announce the National Finals of *Poetry Out Loud: National Recitation Contest*, a program that encourages high school students to learn about great poetry through memorization, performance, and competition. High school students who advanced from 51 poetry recitation championships in every state and the District of Columbia will gather at the historic Lincoln Theatre in Washington, DC to match their skills in poetry memorization and recitation. High school students grouped in six geographic regions will compete in three daytime semifinal rounds. From there, twelve students will advance to compete in the evening finals. At the *Poetry Out Loud* National Finals, a total of \$50,000 in scholarship prizes and school stipends will be awarded, including \$20,000 for the *Poetry Out Loud* National Champion. A Congressional breakfast will be hosted for the state finalists Tuesday morning.

WHO: Featured speakers and guest judges for the evening national finals include:

- Dana Gioia, Chairman of National Endowment for the Arts
- John Barr, President of The Poetry Foundation
- Caroline Kennedy, poetry advocate
- Scott Simon, National Public Radio, Master of Ceremonies
- Michael Dirda, Pulitzer Prize-winning critic, Senior Book World Editor, *Washington Post*
- Azar Nafisi, author, *Reading Lolita in Tehran*
- Curtis Sittenfeld, author, *Prep*

EVENT/WHEN/WHERE: Tuesday, May 16

CONGRESSIONAL BREAKFAST FOR STATE FINALISTS

- **9:00 – 10:00 am** – Congressional Breakfast for 51 state finalists at G-50 Dirksen Senate Office Building. 1st and C Streets, NE. Doors open at 8:00 am. Closest parking is Union Station.

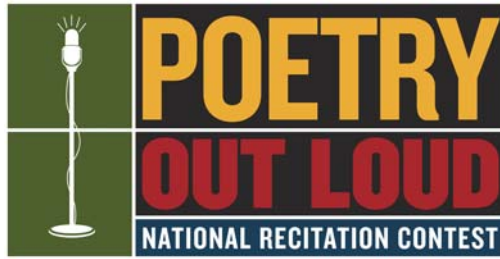
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PARTNERS

National Endowment for the Arts
1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20506
arts.gov



Poetry Foundation
444 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 1850
Chicago, IL 60611-4034
poetryfoundation.org



SEMIFINALS AT THE LINCOLN THEATRE

1215 U Street, NW between 12th & 13th Streets, NW, Washington, DC

- **8:30 am** – media may arrive at Lincoln Theatre for setup
- **9:30 am** – Doors open at Lincoln Theatre
- **10:30 am – 12:30 pm** – First semifinal round at the Lincoln Theatre, featuring students from the East Central and Northeast regions - CT, DE, DC, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, NC, OH, PA, RI, SC, VT VA, WV
- **12:30 – 1:00 pm** - interview opportunities with students, judges, NEA and Poetry Foundation
- **12:45 – 2:45 pm** – Second semifinal round at the Lincoln Theatre, featuring students from the Midwest and South Central regions - AL, AR, FL, GA, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, MI, MS, MO, NE, OK, TN WI
- **2:45 – 3:15 pm** - interview opportunities with students, judges, NEA and Poetry Foundation
- **3:00 – 5:00 pm** – Third semifinal round at the Lincoln Theatre, featuring students from the Upper Northwest and Western regions - AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MN, MT, NV, NM, ND, OR, SD, TX, UT WA, WY
- **5:00 – 5:30 pm** - interview opportunities with students, judges, NEA and Poetry Foundation

FINALS AT THE LINCOLN THEATRE

- **6:45 – 7:30 pm** – pre-finals interview opportunities with 12 finalists, judges, NEA and Poetry Foundation.
- **7:30 pm – 9:30 pm** – Poetry Out Loud National Finals at the Lincoln Theatre
- **9:30 – 10:00 pm** – post-show interview opportunities with 12 finalists, judges, NEA and Poetry Foundation.

OTHER

- See Media Restrictions below.
- The National Finals are free and open to the public. All attendees for the 7:30 p.m. event must have tickets. Free tickets may be picked up at the Lincoln Theatre box office, open Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and until 7:30 pm on May 16. Reservations are not required for this event.

CONTACT: Media must RSVP to Sally Gifford, NEA Communications, 202-682-5606





MEDIA RESTRICTIONS

NATIONAL FINALS OF POETRY OUT LOUD: NATIONAL RECITATION CONTEST

CONGRESSIONAL BREAKFAST FOR STATE FINALISTS

Tuesday, May 16, 9:00 – 10:00 am

Media restrictions at Poetry Out Loud Congressional Breakfast: ID required, multibox available.

SEMIFINALS AND FINALS AT LINCOLN THEATRE

- **9:30 am – 10:00 pm** at Lincoln Theatre

MEDIA RESTRICTIONS FOR POETRY OUT LOUD AT THE LINCOLN THEATRE

- Media are asked to be as unobtrusive as possible while documenting students as they compete.
- First-come, first-served parking available in gravel lot to the side of the Lincoln Parking lot. Ideal for TV trucks for satellite reception. No area parking lots nearby.
- Media may arrive as early as 8:30 am to the Lincoln Theatre.
- Multibox available. No booms.
- Media are not allowed to camp out in the aisles at the Lincoln Theatre.

CONTACT: Media must RSVP to Sally Gifford, NEA Communications, 202-682-5606

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