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CONTACT: Rebecca Cruse, Deputy Director, SDAC



HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO PERFORM AT POETRY CONTEST

PIERRE, S.D. – Nine South Dakota high school students will share their talents and the work of great poets while competing for the state title at the Poetry Out Loud recitation contest Monday, March 18, in Sioux Falls.

Poetry Out Loud, a national arts education program, starts in the classroom and encourages the study of poetry by offering educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition to high schools across the country. South Dakota's program is administered by the South Dakota Arts Council with help from Arts South Dakota and South Dakota Public Broadcasting.

The state finalists were selected from a preliminary, video round. The finalists selected include: Julia Schubert, Brookings High School; Elle Thompson, Flandreau High School; Shaina Determan, Hanson High School; Gage Gramlick, Sioux Falls Lincoln High School; Kymberlea Braun, Rosholt High School; Elise Heesch, Sisseton High School; Annika Holdhusen, Vermillion High School; Reanna Rohrer, Sioux Falls Washington High School; and Nancy Flaherty, Watertown High School.

Three students will also share their original poetry as part of a separate competition held in conjunction with Poetry Out Loud. Anna Bottesini, Vermillion High School; Natalie Kaufman, Vermillion High School; and Jada Anderson, Watertown High School, are each being recognized for their poetry.

The contest will begin at 1 p.m., CDT, March 18, in the auditorium at Edison Middle School, 2101 S. West Ave., Sioux Falls. It is free to attend and open to the public. A live-stream of the event can be viewed at <http://www.sdpb.org/poetryoutloud/>.

Poetry Out Loud was created in partnership by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation with the collaboration of state arts agencies. It is intended to foster the next generation of literary readers by building on the resurgence of poetry as an oral art form. Through Poetry Out Loud, students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence and learn about their literary heritage.

The South Dakota Arts Council, an office of the South Dakota Department of Tourism, is a state agency serving South Dakotans and their communities through the arts with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and the State of South Dakota.

The South Dakota Department of Tourism is comprised of the Office of Tourism and the South Dakota Arts Council. The department is led by Secretary James D. Hagen.