
NEWS RELEASE



July 5, 2021

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Teen creativity shines in Pierce County Library System's art contest

PIERCE COUNTY, Washington – Pierce County teen artists, photographers, and writers put an exclamation point on the 25th year of the Pierce County Library System's annual Our Own Expressions Teen Writing and Art Contest! More than 700 students in grades 7 through 12 from schools across the county displayed their creativity and talent in their drawings, photographs, poems and short stories.

Professional writers Michael Magee and Brandi Douglas, photographer Lisa Roden, and artist Abrian Curington selected the winners, who were awarded cash prizes from the Pierce County Library Foundation. The award-winning young authors and artists will have their winning work displayed at expressions.pcls.us and in copies of the winners' booklet available at Pierce County Libraries through Library Curbside service.

"Thank you to the hundreds of teens who shared their talent, voice and vision in the contest," said Pierce County Library Executive Director Georgia Lomax. "Students faced many challenges this past year due to the pandemic, learning remotely and everything else about being teenagers. I'm happy to see the many teenagers who participated in the contest as a creative outlet to find and show enjoyment."

Drawing Winners

Grades 7-8: 1st—Tia Norman, Tacoma; 2nd—Chelsea Bass, Gig Harbor; 3rd—Erika Rusak, Auburn

Grades 9-10: 1st—Iris Rogel, Bonney Lake; 2nd—Julia Clarke, Gig Harbor; 3rd—Charlotte Southworth, Tacoma

Grades 11-12: 1st—Sam Johnson, Spanaway; 2nd—Chloe Brown, Gig Harbor; 3rd—Taylor Swensen, Bonney Lake

Photography Winners

Grades 7-8: 1st—Michael Fulkerson, Tacoma; 2nd—Morgan Ackerland, Gig Harbor; 3rd—Natalynn Kirkendoll-Graham, Vaughn

Grades 9-10: 1st—Sofia Anderson, Steilacoom; 2nd—Alana Rojas, DuPont; 3rd—Anna Salmon, DuPont

Grades 11-12: 1st—Jehlil Ruffner, Steilacoom; 2nd—Jade Edwards, Anderson Island; 3rd—Elliot Carlsson, Steilacoom

Poetry Winners

Grades 7-8: 1st—Kaylina Warren, Sumner; 2nd—Alexa Kotansky, Gig Harbor; 3rd—Natalie Bates, Tacoma

Grades 9-10: 1st—Clarisse Fowlkes, Puyallup; 2nd—Audrianna Rouse, Puyallup; 3rd—Olivia Lathrom, Graham

Grades 11-12: 1st—Benita Kisembo, University Place; 2nd—Lily Tamminga, Gig Harbor; 3rd—Honor Tamminga, Gig Harbor

Short Story Winners

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Grades 7-8: 1st—Audrey Douglass, Puyallup; 2nd—Gabriella Vonada, Gig Harbor; 3rd—Lia Hartley, Puyallup

Grades 9-10: 1st—Rylie Wood, Bonney Lake; 2nd—Jacob Lawty, University Place; 3rd—Nathan Schmidt, Lakewood

Grades 11-12: 1st—Mary Funches, University Place; 2nd—Honor Tamminga, Gig Harbor; 3rd—Aubren Reis, Fircrest

Thank you to the Pierce County Library Foundation for sponsoring the Our Own Expressions Teen Writing and Art Contest. The Library System encourages teens to continue their creative outlets with virtual teen library events and plan to participate in next year's contest scheduled for early 2022.

About Pierce County Library System

The nationally acclaimed [Pierce County Library System](#) serves 620,000 people throughout Pierce County with 20 libraries and online services. The system is the fourth largest in the state and is funded primarily through property taxes. People may choose from 822,000 e-books, audiobooks, movies and other materials. Pierce County Library is committed to directing services in three primary areas: learning, enjoyment and community connection. Its services and programs spark success for Pierce County residents. More than 2 million people visit Pierce County Libraries each year. The Library provides services and programs directly to people in adult care facilities, people who are homebound, and to children in childcare centers and schools. [Pierce County Libraries are located](#) at Anderson Island, Bonney Lake, Buckley, DuPont, Eatonville, Fife, Gig Harbor, Graham, Key Center, Lakewood, Milton/Edgewood, Orting, Parkland/Spanaway, Pierce County Library Administrative Center, South Hill, Steilacoom, Summit, Sumner, Tillicum and University Place. Pierce County Library is an independent municipal corporation and operates as a junior taxing district.

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