
NEWS RELEASE



Oct. 27, 2020

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Creativity wins awards in Pierce County Library System’s contest for teens

PIERCE COUNTY, Washington – Pierce County teen artists, photographers and writers win awards and show off their creative talents in the Pierce County Library System’s [Our Own Expressions Teen Writing and Art Contest](#). More than 800 students in grades 7 through 12 from schools all across Pierce County submitted their passionately crafted poems, short stories and photographs to compete in the contest.

“The depth of Pierce County teenagers’ talent continues to astonish and impress,” said Pierce County Library’s Executive Director Georgia Lomax. “Wow—to express one’s self through poetry, stories and photography takes a serious step of self-confidence and awareness. We are grateful for all of the teenagers for sharing their wit, insights, interests and part of themselves.”

The contest is part of the Library System’s Strategic Plan, which includes Enjoyment as a focus area to inspire imagination and create opportunities to pursue passions. 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.

Professional writers and authors Christina Butcher and Daniel Marks, photographer Sharon Styer and artist Jill Alayna Frey selected the winners.

Poetry Winners

Grades 7-8: 1st—Kyleigh Helland, Lakebay; 2nd—Benjamin Hughes, DuPont; 3rd—Autumn John, Puyallup

Grades 9-10: 1st—Clarence Sanders, Tacoma; 2nd—Alicia Hale, Tacoma; 3rd—Claire Ensunsa, Tacoma

Grades 11-12: 1st—Syncear Loyd, Tacoma; 2nd—Alisa Zhupanenko, Tacoma; 3rd—G Alvarado, Puyallup

Short Story Winners

Grades 7-8: 1st—Ellis Adamson, Gig Harbor; 2nd—Natalie Baker, Fircrest; 3rd—Emily Bray, Gig Harbor

Grades 9-10: 1st—Viola James, Fircrest; 2nd—Skylar Viene, Tacoma; 3rd—Jacob Lawty, University Place

Grades 11-12: 1st—Maleila Henry-Mitchell, Olympia; 2nd—Juliana Smith, Puyallup; 3rd—Savannah Guenzi, Lakewood

Photography Winners

Grades 7-8: 1st—Rachel Miloa McKeen, Milton; 2nd—Denaya Dyke, Bonney Lake; 3rd—Alivia Stuck, Bonney Lake

Grades 9-10: 1st—Amaialyne Nadine Cepeda, Tacoma; 2nd—Lauren Cryder, Puyallup; 3rd—Laurel Oelke, Gig Harbor

Grades 11-12: 1st—Millaray Lopez Salazar, Tacoma; 2nd—G Alvarado, Puyallup; 3rd—Aiden Michael, Lakewood

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Thanks to the Pierce County Library Foundation for sponsoring the Our Own Expressions Teen Writing and Art Contest. The Library System encourages teenagers to plan to participate in the Our Own Expressions 25th Anniversary contest scheduled for early 2021.

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 books, 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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