



Michigan Humanities Council

*Michigan People, Michigan Places
Our Stories, Our Lives*

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Grand Rapids Student to Compete in *Poetry Out Loud* National Finals in Washington, DC

(LANSING)-----On April 26 and 27, senior Lauren Treiber of Forest Hills Central High School in Grand Rapids will participate in the *Poetry Out Loud* National Finals in Washington, DC. On Monday, April 26, Treiber will showcase her skills in poetry memorization and recitation as one of 53 contestants (champions from every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands). The event will be held at the Lisner Auditorium, George Washington University, 730 21st Street NW, Washington, DC. Nine competitors will advance to the National Finals, also held at the Lisner, on Tuesday, April 27, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Scholarships and school stipends totaling \$50,000 will be awarded at the National Finals, with a \$20,000 college scholarship for the *Poetry Out Loud* national champion. Each student's performance will be judged on six categories: physical presence; voice and articulation; appropriateness of dramatization; level of difficulty; evidence of understanding; and, overall performance.

Poetry Out Loud is a partnership between The Poetry Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts that encourages the study of great poetry by offering educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition to high schools across the country. *Poetry Out Loud* gives students an opportunity to master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about their literary heritage.

Treiber is Michigan's 2010 *Poetry Out Loud* champion. On March 6, Treiber bested 22 other contestants from across Michigan to win the state title and represent Michigan in the national finals. Treiber was awarded \$200 and an all-expenses paid trip to compete in Washington DC. Forest Hills Central High School also received a \$500 stipend for the purchase of poetry books. Treiber and three other finalists at the state competition will also participate at the 48th annual Michigan Youth Arts Festival in Kalamazoo on May 13-15, 2010.

Michigan's *Poetry Out Loud* program, a Michigan Humanities Council partnership program with the National Endowment for the Arts, The Poetry Foundation, Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, the Library of Michigan, and Michigan Youth Arts, encourages high school students to learn about great poetry through memorization, performance, and competition. More than 4,500 students from 24 high schools participated in the Michigan's *Poetry Out Loud* in 2010.

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Previous Michigan *Poetry Out Loud* winners who traveled to compete at the national finals in Washington, DC, were: Daniel Bellomy of Cass Technical High School (Detroit) in 2009, Charles White of Forest Hills Central High School (Grand Rapids) in 2008, Sarah Harris of Holt High School in 2007, and Travis Walter from Holt High School in 2006.

The Michigan Humanities Council, founded in 1974, is an independent, non-profit organization funded in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities. For additional information on the Michigan Humanities Council, please visit: www.michiganhumanities.org or call 517-372-7770.

FACTS AND FIGURES FROM 2008-2009 MICHIGAN'S POETRY OUT LOUD

An estimated 2,725 students participated in Michigan's *Poetry Out Loud* from 32 schools. Students who returned evaluations reported:

- 97% could understand and explain different poetic elements.
- 97% developed their own individual interpretation of poems.
- 87% saw connections between poetry and everyday culture.
- 67% understood that poetry can be a powerful tool for expression.
- 55% understood that poems meet different purposes and were led to explore challenging and unfamiliar poems.

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