



Michigan Humanities Council

Bridging Communities and Ideas

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HIGH SCHOOLS SELECTED FOR STATE POETRY CONTEST

High schools participating in Poetry Out Loud include Alba, Beacon Day (Inkster), Beaverton, Bullock Creek, Canton, Dansville, Holt, Houghton, Ionia, Owosso Christian, Sexton (Lansing)

(LANSING)-----The Michigan Humanities Council announces that students from 11 Michigan high schools will participate in *Poetry Out Loud* program: Alba Public Schools; Beacon Day Treatment Program, Inkster; Beaverton High School; Bullock Creek High School, Midland; Canton High School; Dansville High School; Holt Senior High School; Houghton High School; Ionia High School; Owosso Christian School; and Sexton High School, Lansing.

The *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, and the Library of Michigan, encourages high school students to learn about great poetry through memorization, performance, and competition. During the next three months, Language Arts/English teachers from the schools selected to participate will earmark two or three weeks of class time to prepare students for the school competition, advancing to a state competition on March 10. Michigan's champion will compete at the National Finals, to take place on April 30 - May 1, 2007, in Washington, D.C.

Travis Walter from Holt High School was Michigan's 2006 *Poetry Out Loud* champion. Margaret Charette, Holt's language arts teacher, said, "I would like to thank you for your efforts in providing my students and Holt Public Schools with the extraordinary opportunity to participate in *Poetry Out Loud*. The lessons and competitions connected with *Poetry Out Loud* have fostered an interest in poetry that I have not witnessed before in my 16 years of teaching."

Poetry Out Loud builds on the resurgence of poetry as an oral art form as seen in the slam poetry movement and the immense popularity of rap music among youth. Through this program, students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about their literary heritage.

"The public recitation of great poetry," said John Barr, President of the Poetry Foundation, "is a way to honor the speaker, the poem, and the audience all at once. *Poetry Out Loud* brings new energy to an ancient art by returning it to the classrooms of America."

The Michigan Humanities Council is pleased and honored to partner with these outstanding organizations to bring *Poetry Out Loud* to Michigan high school students.

The Michigan Humanities Council, founded in 1974, is the state's independent, non-profit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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