



Michigan Humanities Council

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

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PHOTOS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Daniel Bellomy Of Cass Technical High School in Detroit Wins *Poetry Out Loud* State Championship

*Bellomy to receive \$200 and win a trip to national finals in Washington, D.C.;
Katie Corbit of Portage Central H.S. finishes second*

(LANSING)-----Daniel Bellomy of Cass Technical High School in Detroit won the 2009 *Poetry Out Loud* state championship hosted today in Lansing by the Michigan Humanities Council. Bellomy bested 23 other contestants from across Michigan to win the title. He is currently in the 11th grade. He will receive a \$200 cash award and an all-expenses paid trip to the national finals in Washington D.C. from April 28-29, 2008. Cass Tech High School will also receive a \$500 stipend for the purchase of poetry books. Katie Corbit of Portage Central High School was named the runner-up in the competition. She is also in the 11th grade. She will receive \$100, along with \$200 for the Portage Central High School library. The competition was held at the Michigan Library and Historical Center in Lansing.

Each student recited two poems; the top four students competed in a final, championship round. The students competing in the championship round recited a third poem. Each student's performance was judged on six categories: Physical Presence; Voice and Articulation; Appropriateness of Dramatization; Level of Difficulty; Evidence of Understanding; and, Overall Performance.

The poems recited by Bellomy were:

- ▶ *We Wear the Mask* by Paul Laurence Dunbar
- ▶ *Danse Russe* by William Carlos Williams
- ▶ *A Psalm of Life* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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, the Library of Michigan, and the Michigan Youth Arts Association, encourages high school students to learn about great poetry through memorization, performance, and competition. In 2009 – its fourth year – Michigan's *Poetry Out Loud* had its greatest participation with 24 schools and more than 1,000 students involved. Since October, Language Arts/English teachers at participating schools have prepared students to compete at the school level and advance to the state finals. Each school champion advanced to the state competition held earlier today. *Poetry Out Loud* helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about their literary heritage.

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The students competing on Saturday were:

SCHOOL	CITY	STUDENT NAME	TEACHER NAME	PHONE	E-MAIL
UPPER PENINSULA					
Big Bay de Noc School	Cooks	Tyler Root	DeeDee Thill	906-644-2773 x 127	ddhermes@dsisd.k12.mi.us
Houghton High School	Houghton	Katie Zutter	Julie Antilla	906-482-0450 x 1850	jantilla@houghton.k12.mi.us
NORTHERN LOWER MICHIGAN					
Alba Public Schools	Alba	Kristi Leitow	Judith Zimpfer	231-584-2000 x 125	zimpferj@gmail.com
Leelanau School	Glen Arbor	Taylor Maddox	Norman Wheeler	231-334-5890	nwheeler@leelanau.org
Petoskey High School	Petoskey	Kelly Robbins	Glen Young	231-348-2135	young.gd.t@petoskeyschools.org
MID-MICHIGAN					
Dansville High School	Dansville	Jessica Kean	Pauline Lee	517-623-6120 x281	leepauli@msu.edu
Holt High School	Holt	Miles Green	Nicholas Mourning	517-699-7443	nmourning@hpsk12.net
Owosso Christian School	Owosso	Chelsea Stewart	Betty Melrose	989-723-4510	bbmelrose@verizon.net
EAST MICHIGAN/THUMB AREA					
Carman-Ainsworth High School	Flint	Zaire Jackson	Amanda Sauvie	810-591-3240 x 5477	asauvie@carman.k12.mi.us
Madison Academy	Flint	Stephen Staten	Dawn Corbray	810-624-3189	dcorbray@madison-academy.org
North Branch High School	North Branch	Anabel Guerrero	Rene DeRyckere	810-688-3001 x 2186	rderyckere@nbbrncos.net
SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN					
Bradford Academy High School	Southfield	Glennika Hubbard	Melissa Hedgcock	248-351-0000, x 2045	mhedgcock@bradfordacademy.com
Cass Technical High School	Detroit	Daniel Bellomy	Marilyn McCormick	313-263-2000 x 3026	MMccass103@aol.com
Cleveland Intermediate High School	Detroit	Robin Ballard	Monique L. Guest-Schuh	313-492-8849	momskorner@aol.com
Roosevelt High School	Wyandotte	Kelly Stec	Rob Keast	734-759-5162	Robert.Keast@wy.k12.mi.us
Saline High School	Saline	Kelsey Tillman	Carolyn Kreple	734-429-8000 x 2351	kreplec@saline.k12.mi.us
Southeastern High School	Detroit	Deaira Littles	Angelia Mahone	313-866-4500 x 4792	amahone2@aol.com
University Preparatory Academy	Detroit	Desiree Marion	Cassie Williams	313-874-4340	ag4935@wayne.edu
Ypsilanti High School	Ypsilanti	Ashley Brown	Karen Siegel	734-714-1007	knappsiegel@me.com
WEST MICHIGAN					
Forest Hills Central High School	Grand Rapids	Lauren Treiber	Sarah Scobell	616-493-8700	sscobell@fhps.us
North Muskegon High School	North Muskegon	Emily Apman	Michael Schanhals & Toni Seyferth	231-719-4110	schanhmi@nmmps.k12.mi.us, seyferto@nmmps.k12.mi.us
SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN					
Gull Lake High School	Richland	Emily Nott	Karen McConnell	269-488-5020	kmccconnell@gulllakecs.org
Portage Central High School	Portage	Katie Corbit	Janet LaVasseur	269-323-5316	JLvasseur@PortagePS.org
Portage Northern High School	Portage	Kimberly Grabowski	Nancy Nott	269-323-5737	NNott@PortagePS.org

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Bellomy will compete at the National Finals, to be held on April 28-29, 2008, in Washington, D.C. 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 of the four students who competed in the championship round – Bellomy, Corbit, Zaire Jackson of Carman-Ainsworth High School (Flint), and Lauren Treiber of Forest Hills Central High School (Grand Rapids) – have been invited to participate in the 47th annual Michigan Youth Arts Festival in Kalamazoo on May 7-9, 2009.

Previous Michigan *Poetry Out Loud* winners were 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.

2008-2009 MICHIGAN CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND Finalists:

- 1st Place - Daniel Bellomy (Cass Technical HS, Detroit)
- 2nd Place - Katie Corbit (Portage Central HS, Portage),
- Finalist - Zaire Jackson (Carman-Ainsworth HS, Flint)
- Finalist - Lauren Treiber (Forest Hills Central High School, Grand Rapids)

FACTS AND FIGURES FROM 2007-2008 MICHIGAN'S *POETRY OUT LOUD*

- 906 students in Michigan participated and returned evaluations.
- 18 teachers participated and returned evaluations.
- Teachers provided 153 hours of their time in addition to 163 hours of classroom time.
- Over \$100,000 in prizes were awarded to students and schools at state and national levels.

Students who returned evaluations reported the following about *Poetry Out Loud*:

- 86% developed their own individual interpretation of poems.
- 85% saw connections between poetry and everyday culture.
- 82% understood that poetry can be a powerful tool for expression.
- 68% understood that poems meet different purposes and were led to explore challenging and unfamiliar poems.
- 67% were more confident in their public speaking from reciting poetry.
- 58% could understand and explain different poetic elements.

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