

New Mexico State Champion Will Take Part in the Finals of Poetry Out Loud: National Recitation Contest in Washington, D.C.

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SANTA FE – Zoe Sloan Callan, a senior at Native American Community Academy in Albuquerque, will represent New Mexico in the national finals of Poetry Out Loud: National Recitation Contest in May. This was the fourth time she participated in the state finals and third time as state champion.

Callan out-scored five other finalists on Sunday, March 14, 2021 in the 16th Annual New Mexico State Finals of Poetry Out Loud, sponsored by New Mexico Arts, the state arts agency and a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs. Judges evaluated each student performance on criteria including physical presence, dramatic appropriateness, voice and articulation, evidence of understanding, and accuracy.



Callan recited three poems from the Poetry Foundation anthology: "Abecedarian Requiring Further Examination of Anglikan Seraphym Subjugation of a Wild Indian Rezervation" by Natalie Diaz, "To be of Use" by Marge Piercy, and "'Hope' is the Thing with Feathers" by Emily Dickinson. For her win, she receives \$200 and her school will receive a \$500 stipend from the national sponsors to purchase poetry books for her school library.

Other state finalists who participated in the virtual event included: runner-up Jenna Tulonen, a senior at Volcano Vista High School in Albuquerque; third-place winner and two-time state finalist Michelle Montez of Taos High School in Taos; Analisa Ibarra, a two-time state finalist from La Cueva High School in Albuquerque; Barbara Akin of Los Lunas High School in Los Lunas; and Vanessa Sosa of Arrowhead Park Early College High School in Los Lunas.

The event was presented via Zoom webinar. The student recitations were video submission-based and were judged prior to the webinar by New Mexico Poet Laureate Levi Romero, ENMU Assistant Professor Lindsay Tigue, UNM Associate Professor of Creative Writing Lisa D. Chavez, and poet Debbi Brody.

New Mexico PBS show ¡COLORES! will broadcast a New Mexico Poetry Out Loud episode at 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 20, on Channel 5.1 and rebroadcast the episode at 8 p.m. on Friday, March 26, on Channel 9.1. View ¡COLORES! online at <https://www.newmexicopbs.org/productions/colores/> and on [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), and [Instagram](#).

The National semifinals and finals will also be video submission-based. The national semifinals will air May 2, 2021 and the national finals will air May 27, 2021. The top prize in the National competition is \$20,000. A total of \$50,000 will be awarded to the Semi-Finalists and Finalists. Follow the competitions on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) at New Mexico Poetry Out Loud. Poetry Out Loud is a partnership of the National Endowment for the Arts, the Poetry Foundation and state arts agencies.

Poetry Out Loud encourages high school students to learn about great poetry through memorization and performance and is the creation of the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation. New Mexico students were among approximately 365,000 students nationwide who took part this year at the classroom level.

About New Mexico Arts

[New Mexico Arts](#), a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, is the state arts agency. New Mexico Arts administers the state's One Percent for Public Art program, awards grants to nonprofit organizations for arts and cultural programs in their communities across the state, and provides technical assistance and educational opportunities for organizations, artists, and arts educators throughout New Mexico.

About the National Endowment for the Arts

The [National Endowment for the Arts](#) is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts – both new and established – bringing the arts to all Americans, and providing leadership in arts education. Established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government, the Endowment is the nation’s largest annual funder of the arts, bringing great art to all 50 states, including rural areas, inner cities and military bases.

About the Poetry Foundation

The [Poetry Foundation](#), publisher of Poetry magazine, is an independent literary organization committed to a vigorous presence for poetry in our culture. It has embarked on an ambitious plan to bring the best poetry before the largest possible audience.

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