

The Washington State Arts Commission Presents:

**POETRY OUT LOUD**



**2023 Washington State Final**

March 11, 2023

Tacoma Little Theatre





## Welcome to Poetry Out Loud 2023

When the *Poetry Out Loud* program first started in 2005, 8 schools in a single Washington county participated. This year, 38 schools from 18 counties in Washington State participated in *Poetry Out Loud*.

After classroom-level competitions and school-wide competitions, these schools sent their top students to participate in one of four regional finals, held virtually this year in the Central, Eastern, Northwest, and Southwest regions of Washington state.

In addition, six students from around the state registered for Poetry Out Loud Virtual, under the coordination of Tacoma Little Theatre. This program is available to individual students from non-participating schools and home-schooled students. These students participated in their own final competition.

**Top scoring students from each of these finals are competing today for the title of Washington State Poetry Out Loud Champion for 2023.**

The winner of the State Final will receive \$200 and the winner's school will receive a \$500 stipend for the purchase of poetry books. The second-place finalist will receive \$100, with \$200 for their school library. The state champion will represent Washington State in the National Finals in Washington D.C. May 8-10, 2023.

The *Poetry Out Loud* National Finals will award a total of \$50,000 in scholarships and school stipends, with a \$20,000 college scholarship for the National Champion.

**Tacoma Little Theatre** recognizes that they teach and perform on Indigenous land: ꞵukʷədiitəb ꞵuhigʷətəb čəł txʷəl tiit ꞵa čəł ꞵal tə swatxʷixʷtxʷəd ꞵə tiit ꞵuyaləpabš dxʷəsłəłlils gʷəl ꞵutxʷəlšucidəbs həlgʷəꞵ. "We gratefully acknowledge that we rest on the traditional lands of the Puyallup People where they make their home and speak the Lushootseed language."

## About Poetry Out Loud



*Poetry Out Loud* invites the dynamic aspects of slam poetry, spoken word, and theater into the classroom.

The National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation partner with State Arts Agencies across the United States to support Poetry Out Loud, a program that encourages the nation's youth to learn about great poetry through memorization and performance. This program helps students to master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about their literary heritage.

Over 12,000 students from across Washington participated in the program this school year, reciting poems selected from an anthology of more than 1,100 classic and contemporary poems.

Thank you to everyone who has come to enjoy great poetry and to support our state finalists. Enjoy!

## About ArtsWA



[arts.wa.gov](http://arts.wa.gov)

The Washington State Arts Commission (ArtsWA) is a state agency, established in 1961, whose purpose is to conserve and develop the State's artistic resources, as essential to the social, educational, and economic growth of the State of Washington. One of our strategic goals is to strengthen K-12 arts education as part of, and fundamental to, basic education. For more information: [www.arts.wa.gov](http://www.arts.wa.gov).

The Washington State Arts Commission is committed to values of inclusion, diversity, equity, and creative expression.

We believe in diverse forms of artistic expression, and we believe in access to arts and arts education for all individuals in our state. The arts can and should play a role in addressing inequities, modeling inclusion, and teaching empathy.

# Washington State Regional Champions

## **Sydney Frost**

Mt Spokane High School, Spokane County

## **Andrea Gyimah**

Annie Wright Upper School for Girls, Pierce County

## **Oliver Jones**

Stadium High School, Pierce County

## **Elijah Kennedy-Gibbens**

Mead High School, Spokane County

## **Keegan Raub**

(POL Virtual) Lake Stevens, Snohomish County

## **Emilee Shoemaker**

Naches Valley High School, Yakima County

## **Dahami Uduwana**

Kamiakin High School, Benton County

## **Matthew Valentine**

Olympia High School, Thurston

## **Jovi Weller**

Sequim High School, Clallam County

# Washington State Final Program

## Welcome and Introductions

Emcee: Sah Pham

Introductions and Program Information

ArtsWA Arts in Education Manager: Tamar Krames

Guest: Langston Ward, 2013 State & National Champion

Presentation of the Washington State Regional Champions

## Recitations - Round One

All Students recite their first poem

**-Short Intermission-**

## Recitations - Round Two

All Students recite their second poem

ArtsWA Executive Director: Karen Hanan

Guest: Angelica Flores, Poetry Foundation

Announcement of Three Finalists

**-Short Intermission-**

## Recitations - Round Three

Finalists recite their third poem

## Announcements and Acknowledgments

Announcement of Poetry Ourselves winners and the 2023 Washington State Champion

# Student Poem Selections

Student recitations are conducted in alphabetical order by last name. For the first round of recitations, we go A-Z. In the second round, we start at the center of the alphabet and go to Z, followed by A-L. The finalists who advance to the third round present in a randomly chosen order. All poems were selected from the Poetry Out Loud anthology, available at [poetryoutloud.org](http://poetryoutloud.org).

## Sydney Frost

(First Recitation in Round One)

[\*Candles\*](#) by [Carl Dennis](#)

[\*My dad & sardines\*](#) by [Toi Derricotte](#)

[\*The Author to Her Book\*](#) by [Anne Bradstreet](#)

## Andrea Gyimah

[\*Ways of Talking\*](#) by [Ha Jin](#)\*\*

[\*This Is Not a Small Voice\*](#) by [Sonia Sanchez](#)\*\*

[\*Friendship After Love\*](#) by [Ella Wheeler Wilcox](#)

## Oliver Jones

[\*Cartoon Physics, part 1\*](#) by [Nick Flynn](#)

[\*The Arrow and the Song\*](#) by [Henry Wadsworth Longfellow](#)

[\*I Am Offering this Poem\*](#) by [Jimmy Santiago Baca](#)

## Elijah Kennedy-Gibbens

[\*The Cave\*](#) by [Paul Tran](#)

[\*Very Large Moth\*](#) by [Craig Arnold](#)

[\*First Love\*](#) by [John Clare](#)

## Keegan Raub

(First Recitation in Round Two)

[\*Dirge in Woods\*](#) by [George Meredith](#)

[\*La Figlia che Piange\*](#) by [T.S. Eliot](#)

[\*Poem\*](#) by [Jorie Graham](#)

\*\*These poems are not permitted for live streaming.

## Emilee Shoemaker

[\*On the Death of Anne Brontë\*](#) by [Charlotte Brontë](#)

[\*Siren Song\*](#) by [Margaret Atwood](#)

[\*Invisible Children\*](#) by [Mariana Llanos](#)

## Dahami Uduwana

[\*America, I Sing You Back\*](#) by [Allison Adelle Hedge Coke](#)

[\*Dawn\*](#) by [Ella Higginson](#)

[\*The Properly Scholarly Attitude\*](#) by [Adelaide Crapsey](#)

## Matthew Valentine

[\*The Mortician in San Francisco\*](#) by [Randall Mann](#)

[\*NUMBERS\*](#) by [Mary Cornish](#)

[\*And If I Did, What Then?\*](#) by [George Gascoigne](#)

## Jovi Weller

[\*Harold and the Purple Crayon\*](#) by [D. Gilson](#)

[\*I Eat Breakfast to Begin the Day\*](#) by [Zubair Ahmed](#)

[\*Epitaph\*](#) by [Katherine Philips](#)



State Finalist Aneka Siems at the 2019 State Final Competition

# Poetry Out Loud Biographies

## Sah Pham, Emcee

Sah is the Seattle Youth Poet Laureate for 2022-23, a program sponsored by [Seattle Arts & Lectures](#). Sah (she/her) is a Vietnamese-American dreamer, optimist, and essayist studying at the University of Washington. Her passions include producing short films, talking to strangers, and loving language in all its forms. She is proud to call both Seattle and Vancouver, B.C. home.

## Heidi Aijala, Judge

Heidi is the Associate Director of Secondary ELA at OSPI. She has over a decade of classroom experience at the secondary and post-secondary levels. Heidi holds a Ph.D. in English and a master's degree in teaching. Her scholarly work and pedagogical focus are invested in issues of equity, inclusion, and social justice. Moreover, as a first-generation college student, Heidi is passionate about advocating for the economic, social, and civic benefits of education.

## Andre Bouchard, Judge

Andre Bouchard (of Kootenai/Bitterroot Salish/Ojibwe/Pend Oreille descent) facilitates live storytelling by Indigenous performing artists across the country and around the world. He has produced, directed or choreographed almost 50 works for stage and site specific venues over the last 25 years. He is the founder of Indigenous Performance Productions, an Olympia based artist service nonprofit and a commissioner with the Washington State Arts Commission. He is a current Global Fellow with the International Society for the Performing Arts, a past Leadership Fellow with the Association of Performing Arts Professionals, and has a Masters of Arts Management from Carnegie Mellon University and a BFA in Dance and a BA in Anthropology from the University of Montana.



## **Mayra Cortés, Judge**

Mayra Cortés is a first-generation college student. She holds a master's degree in teaching. Mayra currently serves Tacoma students, families, and the community as a high school teacher. She is passionate about advocacy, equity, and social justice both inside and outside of the classroom.

## **Heide Fernandez-Llamazares, Judge**

Heide Fernandez-Llamazares is the Manager for My Public Art Portal at ArtsWA. She manages the online presentation of the State Art Collection. Previously, Heide managed a private collection, worked in Education at Tacoma Art Museum, and worked as a technical writer. She is passionate about art and collections, and loves working in an environment that includes art on a daily basis.

## **Ashly McBunch, Judge**

Ashly is originally from the Midwest and moved to Olympia in 2017 when they were stationed at Joint Base Lewis McChord. An Army retired veteran, Ashly spent many years writing for a creative outlet. They enjoy the aspects of creative collaboration, performance, and use of intuitive guidance to bring out artistic expression that leads towards healing, growth, introspection, and fun. They believe art is a tree with many creative branches that connects us all through the same nurturing soil. They are excited about exploring these inclusive artful branches with poetry and raising the poetic voices of Olympia.

## Kate Myre, Judge

Kate is a professor at Cornish College of the Arts and works nationally as a voice over artist and dialect coach. She also works with Pulitzer and Tony award-winning playwright and director, Brian Yorkey, dialect and text coaching the Netflix series *13 Reasons Why*, *Echoes* (2022) and *The Outer Banks*. In Norway, she coached the acclaimed production of *The Hamlet Complex* at the Royal Opera House, directed by Alan Oyen. She has coached for The Seattle Rep, The Seattle Children's Theatre, ACT, The Village Theater, Seattle Public Theater, Theater Schmeater, Jack Straw Foundation, and The Boston Repertory Theatre.

## The Kareem Kandi World Orchestra, Music

[The Kareem Kandi World Orchestra](#) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to providing high quality performances and music education to communities around the globe. Through concerts, workshops, composing, recording, and cultural exchanges The Kareem Kandi World Orchestra brings people together through the broad scope of music and the jazz art form.



*Finalists at the 2020 POL WA State Final*

# Special thanks to the Washington's 2022-23 *Poetry Out Loud* Leadership and Regional Partners:

## Central Washington

[Yakima Valley College](#): Mark Fuzie, Coordinator

## Eastern Washington

[Spokane Arts](#): Melissa Huggins, Coordinator

## Northwest Washington

[The Skagit River Poetry Foundation](#): Molly McNulty, Coordinator

## POL Virtual

[Tacoma Little Theatre](#): Cassie Jo Fastabend, Coordinator

## Southwest Washington

[Educational Service District 112](#): Mika Yoshida, Allison Klump, and Heidi Barnes, Coordinators

## Poetry Out Loud Teacher Liaison

Carolyn Gilman, Olympia High School, Olympia  
*2023 Capital Region ESD 113 Teacher of the Year*



*Amir Matheny, 2017 Finalist*

## Thanks to the teachers who coordinated *Poetry Out Loud* at their school this year:

### Central

AC Davis High School, Rebecca Hoover; Bickleton High School, Silvia Navarre; East Valley High School, Kristin Morrison; Kamiakin High School, Joyce Donais; Naches Valley High School, Ali Bernard; Richland High School, Jason Allen; Thorp Secondary School, Katherine Richmond; West Valley High School, Mark Burns.

### Eastern

DeSales High School, Christine Richard; Lakeside High School, Alecia Sing; Liberty Bell High School, Kelly Grayum; Mead High School, Drew Lohead; Methow Valley Independent Learning Center, Sara Mounsey; Mt Spokane High School, Susan Best; Okanogan High School, Dennis O'Connor; The Oaks Classical Christian Academy, Emily Woodroof.

### Northwest

Anacortes High School, Brian Backman; Annie Wright School: Upper School for Girls, Robert Scotlan; Concordia Christian Academy, Nikki Shannon; Crosspoint Academy, Lauren Healy; Coupeville High School, Jackie Calkins-Saia; Eastlake High School, Kieran Jacobson; Lincoln High School, Wayne Storer; Mercer Island High School, Jane Stafford; Mount Si High School, Daniel Mancoff; Sequim High School, Sean O'Mera; Shorewood High School, Tim Murray; Squalicum High School, Joe McAuliffe; Washington Preparatory School, Kristi Bubhna.

### Southwest

Battle Ground High School, Heather Smithline; Capital High School, Kristin Cummins; Cedar Tree Classical Christian School, David King; Hayes Freedom High School, Mark Gardner; North Thurston High School, Amy Shute; Ocosta Junior-Senior High School, Mae Thomas; Olympia High School, Carolyn Gilman; Peninsula High School, Julie Bruey; Ridgefield High School, Brittany Rodin; River Ridge High School, Emily Ehrlich; Stadium High School, Liz Jacobsen.

# Production Credits

## Emcee

Sah Pham, Seattle Youth Poet Laureate for 2022/23

## Judges

Heidi Aijala, Andre Bouchard, Mayra Cortes, Ashly McBunch,  
Kate Myre, (Accuracy) Heide Fernandez-Llamazares

## Music

[The Kareem Kandi World Orchestra](#): Kareem Kandi, Saxophone;  
Greg Feingold, Bass

## Tacoma Little Theatre

Chris Serface, Managing Artistic Director  
Dylan Twiner, Production Manager

## Photography

[Pavel Verbovski](#)

## Student Workshop

Asha Berkes

## Washington State Arts Commission Staff

Karen Hanan, Executive Director  
Tamar Krames, Arts in Education Program Manager  
Alexis Sarah, Arts in Education Project Manager  
Judy Cullen, Arts in Education Program Specialist and Poetry Out  
Loud State Coordinator  
Desiree Johnson, Arts in Education Administrative Assistant  
Michael Wallenfels, Communication Manager  
Adrienne Kerrigan, Community Relations Program Assistant

## Special Thanks

[Write253](#) and **Line Break Press** for the creation of custom  
letterpress prints to recognize this year's State Finalists.

The Poetry Out Loud Washington State Final is presented by the [Washington State Arts Commission](#), with support from the following partners:

## National Endowment for the Arts



[The National Endowment for the Arts](#) was established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government. To date, the NEA has awarded more than \$5 billion to support artistic excellence, creativity, and innovation for the benefit of individuals and communities. The NEA extends its work through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector.

Visit [arts.gov](#).

## 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 audiences.

Visit [Poetryfoundation.org](#).

## For More Information

The National *Poetry Out Loud* Program: [www.poetryoutloud.org](#).

Washington State Arts Commission (ArtsWA): [www.arts.wa.gov](#).

## About Tacoma Little Theatre

In October of 1918, a group of civic-minded community members founded the Tacoma Chapter of the Drama League of America with Tacoma Little Theatre (TLT) serving as the production wing. Over a century later, TLT is the sole remaining entity of the founding chapter. The staff and Board of Directors are committed to creating quality productions and fostering meaningful interactions among all people in their community.

Visit [www.tacomalittletheatre.com](#) to learn more.