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Kansas Arts Commission Biography

Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg

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KAC PAGE ON CARYN MIRRIAM-GOLDBERG:

Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg, Ph.D., is the 2009-2012 Poet Laureate of Kansas. Her career as a poet, fiction and non-fiction writer, teacher, mentor, and facilitator focuses on how literature can help us live more meaningful and vibrant lives. As founder of Transformative Language Arts, she also values social and personal transformation through the spoken, written and sung word.

Mirriam-Goldberg is the author or editor of more than a dozen books, including in recent years:

- ♣ Begin Again: 150 Kansas Poems, editor from the 150 Kansas Poem project, forthcoming in late 2011 by Woodley Press.
- ♣ The Divorce Girl, a novel, forthcoming in the summer of 2012 by Ice Cube Press.
- ♣ An Endless Skyway: Poetry from the State Poets Laureate, co-edited with Marilyn L. Taylor, Denise Low and Walter Bargaen, Ice Cube Press
- ♣ Landed (poetry, Mammoth Publications)
- ♣ The Sky Begins At Your Feet (a memoir on cancer, community and ecology, Ice Cube Press)
- ♣ My Tree Called Life: Writing and Living with Serious Illness editor, Turning Point of Kansas City
- ♣ The Power of Words: A Transformative Language Arts Reader, editor, TLA Press.

Mirriam-Goldberg's poetry and prose has been published in over 50 literary journals and anthologies. Founder of Transformative Language Arts at Goddard College, where she teaches in the low-residency Individualized MA Program, Mirriam-Goldberg has extensive experience facilitating writing workshops for many populations, and giving readings and presentations. She also offers writing and singing workshops and performances with singer-songwriter Kelley Hunt through their business, Brave Voice.

Mirriam-Goldberg received her Ph.D. and MA from the University of Kansas (poetry, women's studies, mythology), and she is certified in grassroots organizing from the Midwest Academy, and poetry therapy from the National Federation for Biblio/Poetry Therapy. She is the recipient of Kansas Arts Fellowship in Poetry, the Rocky Mountain National Park artist-in-residency, the City of Lawrence Phoenix Award, and other honors.

Mirriam-Goldberg's Poet Laureate projects include the following:

- ♣ Poetry Across Kansas – Reading and Writing Our Way Home
- ♣ Readings, Presentations and Workshops
- ♣ 150 Kansas Poems to celebrate Kansas's Susquicentennial.
- ♣ Special Poetry Month Activities, which include, for 2011, the Kansas Daily Poem In Your Pocket, the To the Stars Poetry Contests, and more.
- ♣ Everyday Magic, a soulful daily blog on the writing life, and Bodies and Voices, a weekly column on writing and yoga.
- ♣ Poet Laureati: A National Convergence of Poets Laureate
- ♣ An Endless Skyway: Poetry from the State Poets Laureate
- ♣ Write From Your Life Columns and Podcasts, including High Plains Public Radio shows.

POET LAUREATE REPORT: JULY 1, 2010 - JUNE 30, 2011

Here's what I've worked on as poet laureate from July 1, 2010 through the present:

- ^ **Organized Poet Laureati!: A National Convergence of Poets Laureate**, held in Lawrence Mar. 12-13, featuring 20 poets laureate (from Alaska to Alabama), 130 participants from eight states, and a whole lot of ecstatic readings, discussions, panels, workshops and more on how poetry relates to place, society, health, creativity, work, and in short, life.
- ^ [150 Kansas Poems](#): Launched website featuring 150 Kansas poems over Kansas' 150 birthday year, and edited **Begin Again: 150 Kansas Poems**, forthcoming from Woodley Press later this year.
- ^ [An Endless Skyway: Poetry from the State Poets Laureate](#): edited with Marilyn L. Taylor, Denise Low and Walter Bergen this beautiful anthology includes poetry from close to 40 writers.
- ^ **Occasional Poems for Special Events**: The Kansas Susquicentennial, Governor's Arts Awards, the Kansas City Peace at the Crossroads event, Lawrence Arts Center/940 Dance Company's Dance Dialogues, the inauguration of Goddard College's new president, and several funerals.
- ^ **Writing**: In addition to lots of poetry, I wrote prose as poet laureate: a preface to UN World Peace Congress proceedings, chapter on publishing poetry for *Women and Poetry: Tips on Writing, Teaching and Publishing by Successful Women Poets* (forthcoming from McFarland), "Mothers Lost and Found," preface to [Wisdom Has a Voice anthology](#), and "[The Imaginary Friend of the Page](#),"
- ^ **Presented readings, workshops and talks**:
 - ^ **Colleges & Schools**: Hutchinson Community College, University of Iowa, Johnson County Community College, Marysville High School, Valley Heights High School.
 - ^ [Turning Point: A Center for Hope and Healing](#) in Kansas City -- writing workshops for people living with serious illness and/or their caregivers, plus workshops for the metastatic cancer group.
 - ^ **Centers, Churches & Bookstores**: Carnegie Arts Center in Dodge City, Koester House Museum (Marysville), Country Place Senior Living (Marysville), Waterville Opera House (with Kelley Hunt and Laura Ramberg), Marysville Public Library, Ecumenical Christian Ministries, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Manhattan, The Raven Bookstore, The Writers Place, Kalona Country Store (Iowa).
 - ^ **Judging**: Poetry Out Loud!, Kansas Authors Club, National Federation of Music Clubs
 - ^ **Conferences**: Presented workshops and readings at the [Power of Words Conference](#) in VT., and the Examined Life: Writing and the Art of Medicine conference in Iowa.
 - ^ **Brave Voice**: Co-led with Kelley Hunt the 6-day [Brave Voice: Writing & Singing for Your Life](#) retreat in Council Grove.
- ^ **News**: Featured in several programs of [KPR Presents](#), [Poets & Writers Magazine](#), [The Daily Palatte](#), [Kansas City Star](#), and "Celebrate This Kansas," Susquicentennial poem, was published in many state newspapers.

What territory I've covered this year comes from having wonderful guides in the form of splendid partner organizations in all the named places that invited me to come visit. What I do as poet laureate is similar to what so many of my fellow laureates do -- read about them at <http://unitedpoetslaureate.wordpress.com> -- and wherever you live, support the poet laureate program, which seeds the power of our words throughout and beyond the U.S.

POET LAUREATI: A NATIONAL CONVERGENCE OF STATE POETS LAUREATE

Twenty poets laureate from throughout the country came to Lawrence March 13-14, for “Poet Laureati: A National Convergence of Poets Laureate” for two days of readings, museum tours receptions, a silent auction to have dinner with a poet laureate, and panels on poetry as it relates to the earth, healing, spirituality, the creative process, publishing, and making a living. The gathering also celebrated the launch of *An Endless Sky: Poetry from the State Poets Laureate*, an anthology of poetry from close to 40 poets laureate, which was edited by Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg, Marilyn L. Taylor, Walter Barga and Denise Low and published by Ice Cube Books.

The gathering was organized over the last year by our own poet laureate, Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg, with assistance from Denise Low, Kansas Poet Laureate Emeritus; Mary Swander, Poet Laureate of Iowa; and Walter Barga, Missouri Poet Laureate Emeritus. Held at the Spencer Museum of Art at the University of Kansas and at the Lawrence Arts Center, the convergence attracted more than 130 participants, who found all the events, and the casual time to talk with poets laureate, to be inspiring and even, in some cases, life changing. One participant said, “Never have I felt so affirmed as a writer than at this gathering.” The poets also remarked on how welcoming they found Kansans to be, and how marvelous it was to gather in this way.

Participating poets laureate included Ted Kooser, former U.S. Poet Laureate, along with many state poets laureate: David Romtvedt (Wyoming), Karla K. Morton (Texas), Bruce Dethlefsen (Wisconsin), Marjory Wentworth (South Carolina), Mary Swander (Iowa), Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg (KS), Jonathan Holden (KS, emeritus), Sue Brannan Walker (Alabama), Peggy Shumaker (Arkansas), Walter Butts (New Hampshire), Mary Crow (Colorado), David Allan Evans (South Dakota), Norbert Krapf (Indiana, emeritus), Lisa Starr (Rhode Island), Marilyn L. Taylor (Wisconsin, emeritus), Walter Barga (Missouri, emeritus), Denise Low (Kansas, emeritus), Joyce Brinkman (Indiana, emeritus), and Carolyn Kreiter-Foronda (Virginia, emeritus).

The event was co-sponsored by the Spencer Museum of Art, Kansas Arts Commission, Lawrence Arts Center, Free State Brewery, Community Mercantile, Ice Cube Books, Raven Bookstore, Kansas Area Watershed Council, Lawrence Public Library, and Kansas Public Radio.

Please visit unitedpoetslaureate.wordpress.com for links to upcoming shows on this event to be featured on Kansas Public Radio (KPR) and Kansas City Public Radio (KCUR) in upcoming months.

KAC PAGE ON POET LAUREATE POSITION

Poet Laureate of Kansas

Since 2005, the Kansas Arts Commission has been part of the national cultural tradition of officially honoring a citizen poet of exceptional talent and accomplishment through the appointment of a Poet Laureate of Kansas. The appointee promotes and encourages a broad appreciation of poetry through their own educational outreach programming while simultaneously serving on the [Kansas Arts on Tour Roster](#).

- ♣ [Dr. Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg](#), *FY 2009-2012*
- ♣ [Dr. Denise Low](#), *FY 2008, 2009*
- ♣ [Dr. Jonathan Holden](#), *FY 2006, 2007*

Questions about this program? Contact the Kansas Arts Commission at 866/433-0688 (toll free) or 785/296-3335, or email kac@arts.ks.gov.