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Press Release: Celebrate National Poetry Month in April

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 31, 2010

CELEBRATE NATIONAL POETRY MONTH IN APRIL

Topeka, Kan. – The Kansas Arts Commission and the Poet Laureate of Kansas Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg, Lawrence, announce special activities for the month of April celebrating National Poetry Month. Activities include a poetry writing contest, poetry pen pal project and poetry writing podcasts.

“Reading, writing and sharing poetry are ways we can ignite our lives with greater insight and inspiration,” said Mirriam-Goldberg said. “The poetry writing contest and poetry pen pal project will help people interested in poetry throughout Kansas express themselves more vividly and connect with a larger community of writers in the state.”

The *To the Stars* Poetry Contest builds on the 2009 poetry month writing contest started by past Poet Laureate of Kansas Denise Low, and invites writers of all ages and backgrounds to submit poems during the month of April. Each week's contest will focus on the work of a Kansas poet, drawing from the new anthology *To the Stars: The Ad Astra Poetry Project*, edited by Low.

There will be two categories for each week's contest, one for professional writers (those who have published one or more books of poetry with an established press, excluding self-published books), and amateur poets. Winners will receive copies of *To the Stars*, and their poems will be published on the Kansas Arts Commission and Mirriam-Goldberg's websites.

The Poetry Pen Pal Project matches writers of diverse backgrounds and regions so

they can benefit from one another's perspectives. Pen pals will share their poetry as well as support and ideas for revision, writing and publishing with each other. Participants must be 18 or older.

For more information on the To the Stars Poetry Contest or the Poetry Pen Pal Project, visit http://arts.ks.gov/poetry_month/index.shtml.

In addition, Mirriam-Goldberg offers "Write From Your Life" monthly columns and podcasts offering writing inspiration and exercises to readers and listeners, which can be found her blog, <http://CarynMirriamGoldberg.wordpress.com>. She also offers National Poetry Month tips, links and writing exercises.

Kansas organizations also have the opportunity to book Mirriam-Goldberg to present through her poet laureate project, *Writing Across Kansas: Reading and Writing Our Way Home*. The project brings together communities and emerging poets through writing workshops and ongoing poetry circles. *Writing Across Kansas* is available through the Kansas Arts On Tour Roster. Community, school and university presenters may apply for 40% of the fees roster artists charge. Applications are accepted until May 31, 2011, or until funds reserved for the program are expended. For more information, visit <http://arts.ks.gov/grants/kat/index.shtml>.

For questions about the Poet Laureate of Kansas Program or the Kansas Arts on Tour Roster, please contact Christine Dotterweich Bial, program manager of community and artist partnerships, at 785/368-6544 or christine@arts.ks.gov.

The Kansas Arts Commission is a state agency, funded by the State of Kansas and the National Endowment for the Arts, dedicated to promoting and supporting the arts in Kansas. Its mission is to provide opportunities for the people of Kansas to experience, celebrate and value the arts throughout their lives. For more information on the Kansas Arts Commission, please visit the KAC website at <http://arts.ks.gov>.

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