



**** For Immediate Release ****

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Brilliant Young Minds Speak Up at the 19th Annual Brave New Voices International Youth Poetry Slam in Washington D.C.

Washington D.C. and The John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts to play host to the world's largest and most diverse spoken word event. Tony Award Winner and Hamilton star Daveed Diggs to host grand slam finale.

Washington D.C. – June 27, 2015 – Youth Speaks, a world leader in youth development and spoken word performance, will host its [19th Annual Brave New Voices International Youth Poetry Slam Festival](#) from July 12-16th. The festival will play home to over 550 powerful young voices, representing 55 cities and organizations from around the world, while empowering the most outstanding youth poets to address critical topics and themes through the channel of spoken word.

The subject of a hit HBO series, this year's world renowned competition will aim at redefining what it means to be an American in the 21st Century and will showcase 75 events and workshops spread throughout the nation's bustling capital. These individual events will highlight the creative genius of these poets, shining a spotlight on young educators, artists, and emerging leaders from around the world as they lead up to the grand-slam finale performance at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, hosted by Tony Award Winner and *Hamilton* star Daveed Diggs.

In addition to the slam competition, festival participants will have the opportunity to engage in special poetry sessions with renowned poets, writers and thought leaders, that will allow them to address critically important specific issues such as mass incarceration, the state of the environment and gender equality.

Taking place in a different city each year, Washington D.C. is proud to host the groundbreaking festival for the second time since its inception. Artfully conceived by Youth Speaks after the inaugural Youth Poetry Slam in San Francisco, Brave New Voices is the first youth-centric poetry slam in the nation's history and is now the largest and most diverse annual spoken word event in the world. Since 1997, the festival has grown as a cornerstone of Youth Speaks' programming and represents youth from across the United States, Canada, Africa, the Polynesian Islands, and Europe.

About Youth Speaks:

Founded in 1996, Youth Speaks is one of the world's leading presenter of Spoken Word performance, education, and youth development programs. Youth Speaks has long championed a national and increasingly global movement of young people stepping proudly onto stages, declaring themselves present.

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