



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Youth Speaks and Oakland Public Library
To Announce 2016 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate
at Final Event - July 16, 2016**

Oakland, CA – The 2016 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate will be announced at the annual competition’s culminating event on July 16th, 2016 at Impact Hub in Oakland as part of the annual Beast Crawl festival. Youth Speaks and The Oakland Public Library are hosting this inspiring night of youth poetry where five finalists will read one of their poems for the audience. The 2016 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate will be announced at the end of the evening. The winner will be honored with a \$5,000 scholarship and the opportunity to officially represent their community through poetry, media, and public appearances.

Oakland Youth Poet Laureate program is a citywide effort to celebrate literacy through poetry and connect young writers to far-reaching opportunities. The program welcomes all poets, from the page to the stage, to represent the City of Oakland. Applicants submitted three original poems which were judged on craft, voice, and content. These talented young poets made it through a highly competitive first round juried by esteemed judges, including accomplished authors, educators and community leaders. These five finalists were then further judged on performance and leadership to determine Oakland’s next Youth Poet Laureate. These five poets represent the best of Oakland’s young talent, while also reflecting the city’s lauded diversity.

Finalists:

Azariah Cole-Shephard, 18

Lucy Flattery-Vickness, 17
Isabel Hallock, 17
Emma Talamantes, 17
Nandi Maunder, 15

Honorable Mention:
Stephanie Vega-Gallardo, 17

Past Winners: Tova Ricardo (2015), Sophie Elkin (2014), Obasi Davis (2013), Stephanie Yun (2012)

About Youth Speaks: Founded in 1996, Youth Speaks is a multi-faceted organization that understands and believes that the power, insight, creativity, and passion of young artists can change the world. Through the intersection of arts education and youth development practices, civic engagement strategies and high quality artistic presentation, Youth Speaks creates safe spaces that challenge young people to find, develop, publicly present, and apply their voices as creators of societal change. Youth Speaks exists to shift the perception of youth by combating illiteracy, alienation, and silence, creating a global movement of brave new voices bringing the noise from the margins to the core.

About Oakland Public Library:

The Oakland Public Library is a part of the City of Oakland in California and has been in existence since 1878. Locations include 16 branches, a Main Library, a Second Start Adult Literacy Program, the Tool Lending Library, and the African- American Museum and Library. The Oakland Public Library empowers all people to explore, connect, and grow.

About Beast Crawl:

Beast Crawl is an annual free literary festival featuring more than one hundred writers in a single night, spread out over three hours and numerous local galleries, bars, restaurants, cafés, and storefronts

ATTENTION CALENDAR EDITORS

Youth Speaks and Oakland Public Library to Announce 2016 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate at Culminating Event

WHO

Youth Speaks in partnership with The Oakland Public Library

WHAT

The 2016 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate to be Announced at Culminating Event

WHERE

Impact Hub – 2323 Broadway, Oakland

WHEN

Saturday, July 16, 6pm – 7:30pm

TICKETS
Free event

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