

Hello Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am Ben Melby, a teacher with the RRVWP. The **RRVWP is a local network of teachers** devoted to improving writing and the teaching of writing in North Dakota schools and communities. The writing project is funded primarily by a **DPI passthrough grant on SB 2013**. Historically, the DPI budget for RRVWP was \$90,000/biennium. It is now \$25,000/biennium. This has meant **significant cutbacks** to writing project support for both teachers and student writers, especially in terms of outreach to smaller, rural, and underserved schools around the state.

What does the writing project do with 25K per biennium (or 12.5K per year) of taxpayer money?

The writing project serves teachers through teacher training workshops focused on writing. The **Summer Institute** is the flagship training program. I participated in a SI in 2015 and co-led the past two. The power of the SI comes from bringing together the widest variety of teachers—new teachers, experienced life-changing teachers, kindergarten, high school, and college teachers, English, Social Studies, Special Ed, teachers across the curriculum. The power of the SI is that it creates a space for teachers teaching teachers, mentoring one another, sharing strategies, building our teacher toolkits. We study best practices for teaching writing, share teaching demonstrations with each other, learn from watching the best, and improve from receiving feedback and advice. You're all familiar with the saying "Those who can't do, teach." Not in the writing project. A core tenet of our philosophy is you can't be a good writing teacher if you are not yourself a writer and continually work on your own writing ability. That's why the SI also focuses on teachers as writers and requires substantial writing practice.

Outside professional development organizations will charge a single ND school \$12K of taxpayer money to have access to their "web workshops" and "remote coaching." The writing project uses a fraction of that money to train local teachers (f2f) to become the teacher leaders for their own schools and districts. Wouldn't it be smarter to invest in our own local teachers teaching teachers? Compared to paying some Education Solutions.com who comes into ND to take advantage of state money with generic national education plans?

But that's only half of what the writing project does with taxpayer money! The other half of \$12.5K is serving student writers with writing camps, workshops, and our flagship program for ND teen artists and writers, the **Scholastic Art and Writing Awards**. The RRVWP is the affiliate for the entire state of North Dakota. We promote this competition in every school; we collect and judge writing submissions from every corner of the state; we celebrate and showcase award-winning writing at a reading event, award-winning art in a gallery exhibition at the Plains Art Museum; and we host a state awards ceremony attended by hundreds of people to acknowledge student writing—it is truly the state championships for creative teens in ND. And as a beautiful touch that is so important to these teens, we publish their art and writing every year in an anthology, "Best Teen Art and Writing of North Dakota" – here are some examples of ND teens published in a real book. For some, it makes a lasting impact on their lives.

\$12.5 per year. The writing project has had to trim back its outreach to teachers, and it has had to seek out private donors like John Deere, who recognizes the importance of creativity and writing for ND businesses and innovation. But the writing project still does a lot of meaningful work. Without a DPI passthrough grant from SB 2013, we couldn't do this work. The state competition, ceremony, and anthology would be gone. The summer institute of teachers teaching teachers, gone. At a time when youth writing and communication is sinking, the writing project is a life raft for many. SB 2013 has the potential to keep it afloat.

Thank you.

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

2023 Teen Creative Writing Camps

All students entering grades 7-12 may participate, regardless of skill level. Graduated seniors are welcome as well. Daily sessions include fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, fantasy, screenwriting, song writing, cartooning, and Zine making.



FARGO SESSION #1: JUNE 26 - JUNE 30
FARGO SESSION #2: JULY 24-28
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Register at

https://www.ndsu.edu/english/creative_writing_camp/

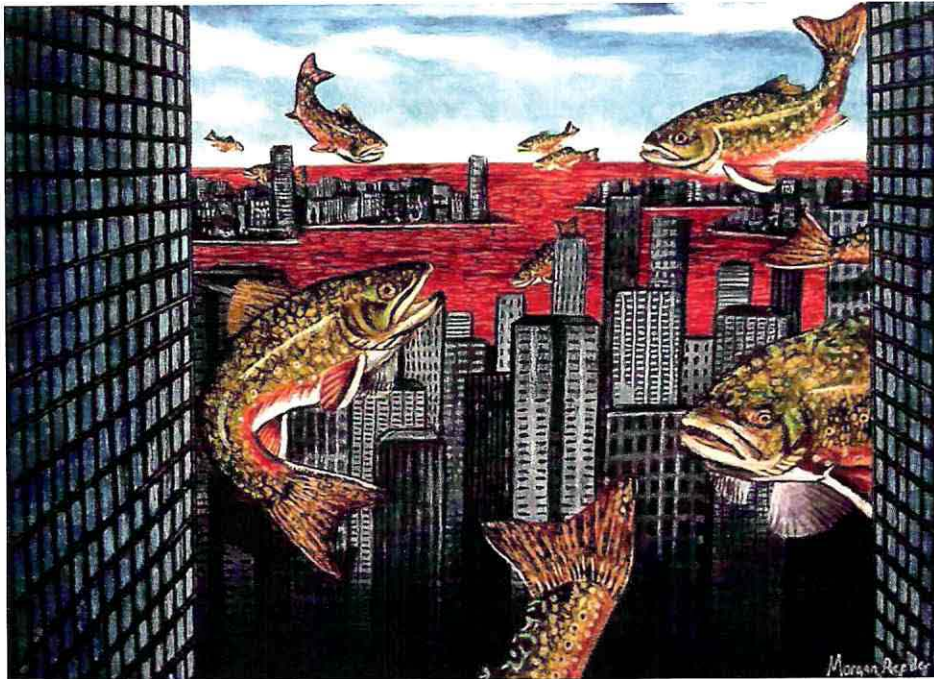


Fargo In-person cost \$220 - includes snacks, lunch,
supplies, and a camp t-shirt
Virtual cost \$170 - includes all but lunch and snacks

Contact Director Jamee Larson with any questions
jamee.larson@ndsu.edu

The 2023 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards

North Dakota Ceremony



**Plains Art Museum
March 4, 2023**

Cover art: Morgan Reeder, Fargo
Adaptation, Painting – Silver Key, Painting

The 2022 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards are sponsored by John Deere, ISG-Fargo and the Fredrikson & Byron Foundation, with support from Hornbacher's.



Fredrikson
BYRON FOUNDATION

5:30-6:30 p.m. – Reception & Exhibition Viewing
1st Floor Atrium and Starion Gallery

6:30 p.m. – Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Ceremony

Welcome

Andy Maus, Director and CEO, Plains Art Museum

About The Scholastic Awards

Ben Melby, Director of the Red River Valley Writing Project, Senior
Lecturer in English, NDSU

Amanda Heidt, Exhibition and Adult Program Coordinator, Plains Art
Museum

Keynote Speaker

Kayla Jones, ND Human Rights Coalition & NDSU Student

Presentation of Student Award Recipients

Recognition of Educators and Judges

Eric Svyertson, Assistant Professor of Art Education and Studio Practice,
NDSU

Recognition of American Voices & Visions Nominees

Jamee Larson, Senior Lecturer in English, NDSU

Eric Syvertson, Assistant Professor of Art Education and Studio, School
of Design, Architecture and Art, NDSU

Presentation of Scholarship Award Winners

Eric Syvertson, Assistant Professor of Art Education and Studio, School
of Design, Architecture and Art, NDSU

Peyton Blotsky, NDSU English major and former Scholastic winner

Closing Remarks

Ben Melby

About the Scholastic Awards

The North Dakota Scholastic Art & Writing Awards exhibition and ceremony at Plains Art Museum celebrates student artwork and writing that earned Gold Key, Silver Key, and Honorable Mention awards from the North Dakota Region of the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards.

This year, the North Dakota Region received 266 submissions from middle and high school students in public, private, parochial and home schools. Of these submitted works, 34% received awards. Five works have been named American Visions nominees, and five works have been named American Voices nominees from North Dakota. There will be one American Visions and one American Voices national winner.

Works that received Gold Keys are forwarded to the national level of the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards and adjudicated again with other Gold Key works from across the country. National award recipients will be announced on March 16 on the website: www.artandwriting.org.

This year's National Celebration will be in New York City at Carnegie Hall on June 4th.

By earning recognition in the North Dakota Awards, these students have reached a remarkable milestone. The Awards recognizes their passion, skill, and dedication to their creative endeavors. They are among North Dakota's and the nation's most talented young writers and artists.

Congratulations to our Award Winners!

Gold Key winners in writing

Asiya Gedi (West Fargo), Malory Kemp (Cavalier), Trisha Mehta (West Fargo), California Yellow (Newtown), Gabby Erickson (Kindred), Nora Severance (Northern Cass), Selena Zhao (Fargo), Bre Adair (Fargo), Christina Schneider (Minnewaukan), Briar Olson (Fargo), Evelyn Lloyd (Maple Valley), Kaylee Kemp (Cavalier)

Silver Key winners in writing

Lydia Picotte (Fargo), Amelia des Marets (Fargo), Maia Gilman (Fargo), Rayna Larsen (Kindred), Sophia Dominguez (Hebron), Isabelle Palczewski (Scranton), Kyleigh Lewis (Kindred), Audra Cruff (Kindred), Briar Olson (Fargo), Augustus Grosz (Kindred), Molly Jennings (Washburn), Kaylee Kemp (Cavalier), Highley Watson (Steele), Hayden Cross (West Fargo), Abigail Dreher (Midkota)

Honorable Mention winners in writing

Katelynn Altman (West Fargo), Connor Anderson (West Fargo), Maia Gilman (Fargo), Kaylee Kemp (Cavalier), William Sickler (Grand Forks), Trisha Mehta (West Fargo), Layla Krinke (Scranton), Hope Hendrickson (Kindred), Jack Stoppeworth (Kindred), Hannah Gendron (Bismarck), McKinnlee Haberman (Wyndmere), Christina Schneider (Minnewaukan), Briar Olson (Fargo), Annika Gaebe (Bismarck), Ella Rudd (Fargo), Analise Ryan-Sypolt (Magic City)

American Voices Nominees

Asiya Gedi (West Fargo), Trisha Mehta (West Fargo), Bre Adair (Fargo), Christina Schneider (Minnewaukan), Evelyn Lloyd (Maple Valley)

Gold Key winners in art

Tyler Field (West Fargo), Soren Kaster (West Fargo), Reagan Koppelman (West Fargo), Dylan Link (West Fargo), Aiyana LoneWolf (West Fargo), Grace Maurice (West Fargo), Trisha Mehta (West Fargo), Bailey Moore (West Fargo), Kyra Narum (West Fargo), Wyatt Nelson (Fargo), Brynn Powell , Emma Rehder (Fargo), Christina Schneider (Minnewaukan).

Silver Key winners in art

Emma Almen (Park River), Lindsey Anderson (West Fargo), Theo Anderson (West Fargo), Emily Andrisen (Kindred), Sydney Beauvais (Fargo), Sydney Brandvold (West Fargo), Allie Carlsrud (West Fargo), Tyler Field (West Fargo), Tristin Folk (West Fargo), Void Herman (West Fargo), Ruby Johnson (Bismarck), Reagan Koppelman (West Fargo), Dylan Link (West Fargo), Aiyana LoneWolf (West Fargo), Trisha Mehta (West Fargo), Bailey Moore (West Fargo), Emma Rehder (Fargo).

Honorable Mention winners in art

Autumn Allard (West Fargo), Malea Berg (West Fargo), Adelyne Bienek (West Fargo), Sydney Brandvold (West Fargo), Hayden Cross (West Fargo), Julia Dalley (Hettinger), Ava Devaney (West Fargo), Hannah Dorrheim (Bismarck), Canaan Earls (Larimore), Ella Erickstad (West Fargo), Kaitlyn Erickstad (Starkweather), Alexander Fowler (Wesy Fargo), Sheridan Hagen (West Fargo).

American Visions Nominees

Tyler Field (West Fargo), Dylan Link (West Fargo), Kyra Narum (West Fargo), Wyatt Nelson (Fargo), Emma Rehder (Fargo).

Special Thanks

The Red River Valley Writing Project at NDSU and Plains Art Museum would like to thank Scholastic, Inc. and the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, and our 2022 program sponsor: John Deere, ISG-Fargo and the Fredrikson & Byron Foundation.

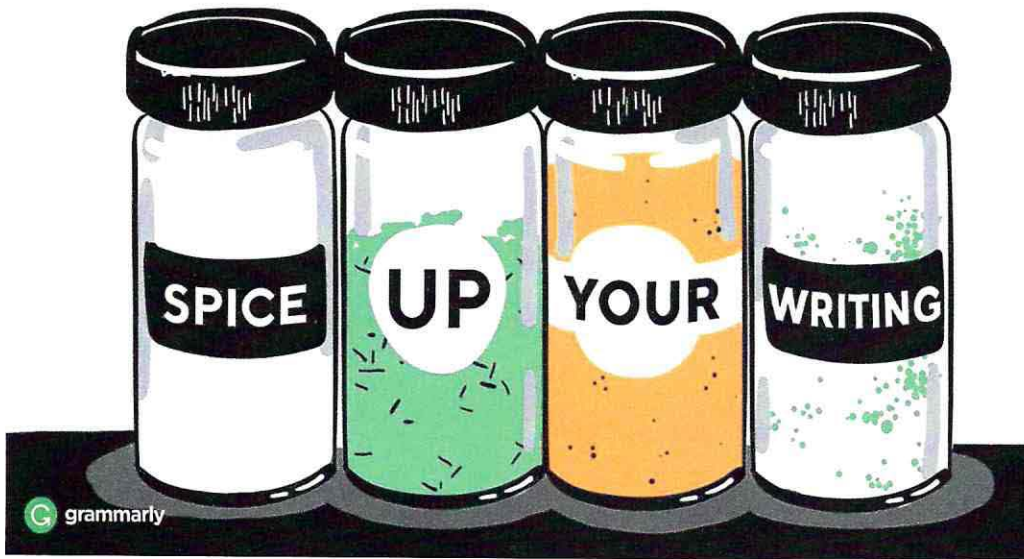
Finally, many thanks to the wonderful jurors who had the difficult task of selecting the North Dakota Art & Writing Awards recipients:

Art Judges

Emily Wrangler
Jayden Strand
Hannah Moerke
Izak Molterno
Jill Johnston
Franklin Ugochukwu
David Juarez
Brittany Ryba

Writing Judges

Lisa Gusewelle
Kayla Jones
Stephanie Lemmer
Kelvin Monroe
Payal Doshi
Emily Vieweg
Ryan Janke
Jason Fincel
Tasha Kubesh
Travis Jordan
Josh Scott



Word Herd Creative Writing Group

What is it?

A place to hang out with other students who like to write. Sometimes we do writing prompts and play writing games, sometimes we work on our writing and/or critique each other's work, and sometimes we just talk.

We are very informal, so come and go as necessary. Anyone above the age of 18 is welcome, faculty and staff included. You also do not need to be affiliated with NDSU.

Word Herd Jr.

Monday nights from 7:00-8:00 pm is designated for writers in grades 7-12. We will only meet via Zoom (same link).

When?

EVERY Thursday
from 6:30-7:30 pm


Who?

Open to all writers
at any experience
level.

Where?

Minard Hall Room
212 or via Zoom:

<https://ndsu.zoom.us/j/92816690364?pwd=cWVaUm9XdlpQRkJGZGVzTEE2VmV3Zz09>



**red river
valley
writing
project**

Scholastic Literary Reading



February 16, 2023
Plains Art Museum

Welcome

Imagine falling into a grain silo. Imagine that there is no one around to hear you. Imagine *sinking* into last fall's crop, *slowly*..."

-Amelia des Marets

Since she is a teenager, being herself is so important right now.

-Maia Gilman

Trees leaned over the area like they were trying to listen to someone speaking too softly, and a blanket of flowers in shades of soft pink and purple covered the ground.

-Trisha Mehta

It was a palace of knowledge.

-Rayna Larsen

Since now I am a young girl, I've been told to lock up. Locked away, for my safety.

-Bre Adair

All of a sudden I heard something. At first I was sure it was my imagination, because the caregivers always told me mine was overactive. But I knew I heard it.

-Briar Olson

Writer's Voices

Amelia des Marets (12th grade, Homeschool)

"Silos" (Flash Fiction), Silver Key

Maia Gilman (11th grade Fargo Davies)

"Being Transparent with Being Transgender" (Journalism), Silver Key

Trisha Mehta (10th grade, West Fargo Sheyenne)

"Monsoon Season" (Novel), Gold Key and American Voices Nominee

Rayna Larsen (12th grade, Kindred)

"Ode to Freedom" (Novel), Silver Key

Bre Adair (11th grade, Fargo Davies)

"The Division of a Woman" (Poetry), Gold Key

Briar Olson (10th grade, Fargo South)

"Corvinia: A Fairy Tale" (Fantasy), Gold Key

Jack Stoppeworth (12th grade, Kindred)

"Quite the Appetite" (Persona Essay), Honorable Mention

Other Voices Welcome to the Stage...