

## NEWS FROM TCA

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Sam Terry, 2015 Texas Poetry Out Loud Champion

### 2015 Texas Poetry Out Loud Winner Named

On Saturday, February 28, 2015, the Texas Commission on the Arts held the state finals competition of the [Poetry Out Loud national poetry recitation contest](#) in Austin. High school students from across Texas battled icy weather to compete for a chance to represent the state at the national contest in Washington, D.C. in April. The winner of that competition receives a \$20,000 scholarship.

The Poetry Out Loud state finals competition was hosted by the Bullock Texas State History Museum. 16 students, each having first won their school competition, were evaluated on qualities such as articulation, level of complexity, accuracy and overall performance. Nationally recognized poet Naomi Shihab Nye served as master of ceremonies for the event. The judges for the competition included poets Jenny Browne, Ryan Sharp, Gwendolyn Zepeda, and theater artist Shannon McCormick.

After two rounds, the field was narrowed to five finalists: Joseph Belcher, a senior at Grand Prairie High School; Evan Miller, a junior at the Hockaday School in Dallas; Jacquelyn Siller, a student at Judson High School in Converse; Victor Solis, a senior at Beckville High School; and Sam Terry, a junior at the Keystone School in San Antonio. Ultimately, Mr. Terry won the 2015 Poetry Out Loud state final. As state champion, he will receive \$200 and an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C. where he will compete at the national level. Additionally, his school will receive \$500 for the purchase of poetry books and materials. The Texas runner up was Joseph Belcher. He will receive \$100, while his school will receive \$200 for the purchase of poetry books and materials. We congratulate all our 2015 participants, their teachers, and their families.

## New Grants Approved at March Commission Meeting

On March 4, TCA Commissioners approved funding of 421 grants in its third funding round for fiscal year 2015. The grants total \$864,937 and will go to nonprofits and units of government in 103 cities. These grants include the second of two funding rounds for the Arts Respond Project program, the quarterly Arts Respond Performance Support program, and the quarterly Commission Initiatives and Designated Funding category. TCA's full list of fiscal year 2015 grants is [here](#).

### Arts Respond Project grants

- Fund arts-based projects that address one of the State priority areas of economic development; education; health and human services; natural resources and agriculture; or public safety and criminal justice
- 256 grants are approved to receive a total of \$647,503 in this program
- Applications came from 215 arts organizations in 53 cities.

### Arts Respond Performance Support grants

- Provide partial support to help applicants host an artist from the Texas Touring Roster in their community
- 136 grants will go to 111 organizations and units of government in 65 Texas cities
- These grants total \$120,834.

### Commission Initiatives and Designated Funding grants

- Include funding for free performances in designated rural counties by seven artists selected from the Texas Touring Roster; Young Masters grant payments; and support of the Mid-America Arts Alliance's programs, grants, and services for Texas
- The program will provide 29 grants totaling \$96,600 to 29 recipients in fifteen cities.

## Texas Legislative Session Update



Texas' 84th Legislative Session is well under way. Since our last newsletter, the House Appropriations Committee appointed a [subcommittee](#) to review items listed in Articles I, IV, & V of House Bill 1 (TCA's appropriation is made in Article I). The subcommittee,



the full [House Appropriations Committee](#), and the [Senate Finance Committee](#) have reviewed TCA's Legislative Appropriations Request and discussed all requested amounts. TCA's Legislative Appropriations Request includes the Base Appropriations Request of \$13,329,144 over the biennium, and Exceptional Items totaling \$28,024,000 over the biennium. Exceptional Items include requests for additional dollars to support programs for veterans and their families, senior citizens, and rural populations; arts education grants for busing costs for school trips to art museums and performances; and funding for designated cultural district marketing, infrastructure, and events.

TCA's Legislative Appropriations Request will be considered as part of House Bill 1 and Senate Bill 2. As filed and as recommended by the Committees, both bills recommend that TCA receive the Base Appropriations Request amount. The Legislative Session will end on June 1, 2015.

## Texas Cultural Trust Holds Texas Medal of Arts Awards

The Texas Medal of Arts Awards were presented in Austin on February 25 by the Texas Cultural Trust. Honorees included Lawrence Wright, Jamie Foxx, the Kilgore College Rangerettes, Chandra Wilson, Dan Rather, and Rick Lowe. Texas Young Masters Amber Pickens (2008) and Ani Mayo (2012) each performed dances in tribute to their alma mater, the Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, which also received a Medal of Arts Award. The event was co-chaired by Gene Jones and Charlotte Jones Anderson, with honorary chairs Governor and Mrs. Greg Abbott, Lt. Governor and Mrs. Dan Patrick, and Speaker and Mrs. Joe Straus. Event highlights are [here](#).



## Free Professional Development Webinar Series

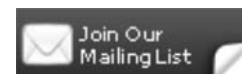
The Texas Commission on the Arts is launching a new series of free professional development webinars. Based around popular topics from the recent *State of the Arts* conference, the webinar series will feature guest speakers on topics important to arts administrators. The kick-off session, **The Power of Many Small Gifts: Making the Most of Giving Days**, will be **Wednesday, March 18 at 2 PM CDT**. This webinar will discuss the type of fundraising opportunity presented by the North Texas Day of Giving, San Antonio's The Big Give, Amplify Austin, and Giving Tuesday. These coordinated nonprofit giving days are creating new connections between donors and organizations. How can you make the most of these giving

days? Alex Alford of Austin Shakespeare will detail successes and lessons learned as one of the top arts recipients in Amplify Austin. Alex will discuss effective practices for generating excitement and developing relationships with donors before, during, and after giving days.

To reserve your spot in this webinar, go [here](#).



Texas Commission on the Arts



<http://www.arts.texas.gov>

The Texas Commission on the Arts receives funding from the Texas State Legislature, the National Endowment for the Arts, The Texas: State of the Arts license plate, Target, the Texas Cultural Trust, and Texas Women for the Arts.

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