



# PRESS RELEASE

April 14, 2018

## Poets' Roundtable of Arkansas

(<http://poetsroundtableofarkansas.org>)

Encouraging poets and poetry in Arkansas since 1931

Affiliated with National Federation of State Poetry Societies, Inc. ([www.nfspss.com](http://www.nfspss.com))

Poets' Roundtable of Arkansas (PRA) announced the winners of its 2018 statewide Jeannie Dolan Carter Memorial Collegiate Poetry Contest on April 14<sup>th</sup> at its annual Dr. Lily Peter Spring Celebration in Little Rock, Arkansas. Collegiate winners read their poems at the event and received a prize check from the contest sponsor, Mr. Roger Carter.

Jake Sawyer of Mena, Arkansas won the first prize of \$500 for his poem, "In the Margins." Jake is a sophomore at the University of the Ozarks in Clarksville, where he is majoring in English and Environmental Studies and minoring in Film Studies. He loves nature writing and being outdoors, hiking, camping, floating or rock climbing in the natural state. Upon graduation he hopes to combine those interests into a career as a professor of environmental literature or a National Park Ranger. His professors described Jake as the "consummate student, poet, and human being". The judges called his poem "edgy, playful and imaginative". He is the son of Lance and Melina Sawyer of Mena, Arkansas.

Meleah Perez of Green Forest, Arkansas won the second prize of \$300 for her poem, "What I Mean When I Say My Family Is Close". Meleah is a senior at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville with a double major in Creative Writing and Journalism. She will graduate in May as the first in her family to do so. She currently serves as Managing Editor of the University's newspaper "*The Arkansas Traveler*". For her honors thesis she is writing a book of poetry on family dynamics and race. Also, she has been accepted by the "*Teach For America*" organization and will spend the next two years in Connecticut teaching English. After that she plans to pursue her MFA in Poetry. Her mother Michelle Perez lives in Green Forest, Arkansas.

Alexandra Borchardt of Monticello, Arkansas won the third prize of \$200 for her poem, "Melancholia". Alexandra is a junior at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro where she is majoring in English with a Writing concentration and minoring in Psychology. She is a member of the Alpha Delta Lambda Honors Society, Phi Kappa Phi Honors Society, ASU's Honors College, and is recipient of ASU's English Department Dr. John C. Osoinach Poetry Scholarship for the 2018-19 year. She also performs as Drum Major for the *Sound of the Natural State Marching Band*, plays alto saxophone for the concert band, and serves as Executive Board Editor of Sigma Alpha Iota music fraternity for women. She plans to pursue a Doctoral degree to teach at the university level. Her parents are Rex and Kathy Borchardt of Monticello, Arkansas.

PRA also congratulates the following Honorable Mentions:

- 1<sup>st</sup> HM – Lindsey Walker from the University of Central Arkansas in Conway (hometown Conway, AR) for her poem "Hand-Me-Downs"
- 2<sup>nd</sup> HM – Rebecca Albert from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville (hometown Little Rock, AR) for her poem "Grief"
- 3<sup>rd</sup> HM – Samuel Cross-Meredith from John Brown University in Siloam Springs (hometown Siloam Springs, AR) for his poem "Blood Hydraulics"

Poets' Roundtable of Arkansas is the oldest, non-profit poetry organization in the state, established in 1931 to encourage the art of poetry. Members are from all around the state, including past and present Arkansas Poet Laureates. Poets are encouraged to contact any PRA Branch President and visit a meeting. PRA is affiliated with the National Federation of State Poetry Societies (NFSPS), and PRA's Jim Barton of Huttig, Arkansas is the current NFSPS President. PRA and NFSPS sponsor educational poetry conferences and contests throughout the year for all ages. For more information see the website listed above and like us on Facebook. Or contact PRA President Dennis Patton ([patton\\_dr@hotmail.com](mailto:patton_dr@hotmail.com)) or PRA's JDC Collegiate Contest Chair Donna Smith ([tndsmith@live.com](mailto:tndsmith@live.com)).