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**POETRY OUT LOUD NATIONAL RECITATION CONTEST**  
**NEW MEXICO STATE FINALS**  
**February 21, 2010**

**Santa Fe** – On Sunday, February 21, 2010 at 1 p.m., join nine New Mexico high school students at the St. Francis Auditorium of the New Mexico Museum of Art in Santa Fe, as they compete to become New Mexico's *Poetry Out Loud: National Recitation Contest* State Champion.

This year over 1,800 youth from 12 schools around the state and 39 teachers participated at the classroom level. Schools and/or district winners that will participate in the state finals include Stav Gold of La Cueva High School, Albuquerque (school and district winner); Joseph Ulibarri of Bloomfield High School, Bloomfield; Kaitlyn Frederick of Carlsbad High School, Carlsbad; Emily Rossen of Clayton High School, Clayton; Savannah Armijo of Clovis High School, Clovis; Selene Campos of Deming High School, Deming; Nicole Bartlett of Oñate High School, Las Cruces (school and district winner); Will Liakos of Roswell High School, Roswell; and Mayra L. Mendoza of Santa Teresa High School, Santa Teresa. Judges will include Assistant Secretary of Education Jim Holloway, theater artist Tone Forrest, poet Barbara Rockman, and Debbi Brody (accuracy judge). The event emcee will be KSFR radio host Mary-Charlotte Domandi.

The state winner will receive \$200 plus an expense-paid trip with chaperone to Washington DC to compete in the national finals. The winner's school will receive \$500 to purchase poetry books for the school library. The runner-up will receive \$100, and \$200 for their school library. The National Champion receives \$20,000 in prizes.

*Poetry Out Loud* is a partnership of the National Endowment for the Arts, the Poetry Foundation and state arts agencies. The New Mexico project of the national poetry

recitation contest is sponsored by New Mexico Arts, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs.

*Poetry Out Loud* encourages students to learn about great poetry through exploration, memorization, and performance. The program seeks to promote poetry in both the classroom and community. Student performers are judged on physical presence, voice and articulation, appropriateness of dramatization, level of difficulty, evidence of understanding and accuracy.

Local sponsors include Sunflower Market, Whole Foods, and the New Mexico Museum of Art.

The New Mexico Museum of Art is located at 107 W. San Francisco Street in downtown Santa Fe. Admission is free. For more information, contact Jenice Gharib, New Mexico Arts, at (505) 827-6492 or (800) 879-4278 (statewide), or email [JeniceE.Gharib@state.nm.us](mailto:JeniceE.Gharib@state.nm.us).

*“Learning great poetry by heart develops the mind and imagination,” said Dana Gioia, former Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. “It isn’t just an arts program. By immersing themselves in powerful language and ideas, the students will develop their ability to speak well, especially in public. This is a skill they will use in the workplace and the community for the rest of their lives.”*

*“The public recitation of great poetry,” said John Barr, President of the Poetry Foundation, “is a way to honor the speaker, the poem, and the audience all at once. Poetry Out Loud brings new energy to an ancient art by returning it to the classrooms of America.”*

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*[New Mexico Arts](#), a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, is the state arts agency. New Mexico Arts administers the state’s One Percent for Public Art program, awards grants to nonprofit organizations for arts and cultural programs in their communities across the state, and provides technical assistance and educational opportunities for organizations, artists, and arts educators throughout New Mexico.*

*The [National Endowment for the Arts](#) is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts – both new and established – bringing the arts to all Americans, and providing leadership in arts education. Established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government, the Endowment is the nation’s largest annual funder of the arts, bringing great art to all 50 states, including rural areas, inner cities and military bases.*

*The [Poetry Foundation](#), publisher of Poetry magazine, is an independent literary organization committed to a vigorous presence for poetry in our culture. It has embarked on an ambitious plan to bring the best poetry before the largest possible audience.*