



D.C. COMMISSION ON THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

## **31st Annual Larry Neal Writers' Competition Program Guidelines**

**Adults, Teen and Youth Writers May Apply  
Deadline: Friday, April 11, 2014 at 6:00 pm**

### **About this program:**

The Larry Neal Writers' Competition commemorates the artistic legacy and vision of Larry Neal, the renowned author, academic and former Executive Director of the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities (DCCAH). This year, monetary awards will be presented for the artistic excellence of adult, teen and youth writers residing in the District of Columbia. Winners will be announced at the Larry Neal Writers' Awards Ceremony on the evening of Friday, May 9, 2014, which will be presented in partnership with the PEN/Faulkner Foundation.

### **Eligibility requirements:**

The competition is open to any District of Columbia adult, teen or youth resident, from 4<sup>th</sup> grade through adult. Individuals attending a DC college or university may also apply, but will be required to submit a copy of current student identification with their application.

All entries must adhere to the following guidelines:

- All entries must be previously unpublished (including internet publications)
- The author's name **MAY NOT** appear anywhere on the writing sample. DCCAH staff will code each application to ensure it is judged on the merits of the work alone
- The writing sample must include a title, as well as the Division and Category (see below)
- The writing sample must be typed in 12 point Times New Roman, Arial or similarly readable font and be double-spaced
- One inch margins should be set on all sides of document
- **Entries that do not meet the eligibility rules may be automatically disqualified.**

### **Submission Instructions and Deadlines:**

All submissions must be uploaded through the Good Done Great database system accessed through the DCCAH website, [dcarts.dc.gov](http://dcarts.dc.gov). **No hand-delivered applications will be accepted.** The deadline for all applications is Friday, April 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM. A high volume of applications is expected, so please plan accordingly.

DCCAH staff is available to provide technical assistance upon request.

DCCAH will notify all applicants of their status in late April by the email address provided on their entry form.

## **Writing Divisions and Categories:**

### Adult (aged 18 and up)

#### **Adults may submit one of the following applications per year.**

- Poetry: one poetry application must contain three unpublished poems (one poem per page). The applicant will be judged on the quality of all three submissions;
- Short Story: One unpublished short story, not to exceed 3,000 words, double-spaced; and
- Dramatic Writing: One unproduced double-spaced play or double-spaced screenplay. All plays and screenplays must include a two-page summary. Full entries will be judged on the summary and the first 3,000 words submitted.

### Youth (grades 4 – 8) and Teen (grades 9 – 12) Writing

#### **Teen and Youth may submit one of the following applications per year.**

- Poetry: Two unpublished poems (one poem per page)
- Short Story: One unpublished story, not to exceed 500 words, double-spaced
- Essay: One unpublished essay, not to exceed 500 words, double-spaced

#### **Evaluation:**

Distinguished writing professionals will judge each submission according to its artistic excellence in the appropriate literary genre. DCCAHA uses a blind judging format, and each submission is assigned a unique identification number so that judges do not know the identities of applicants prior to the awards ceremony. DCCAHA staff evaluates applications for eligibility, but do not judge writing samples. The evaluation processes takes into consideration general standards of decency and respect for the diverse beliefs and values of the American public consistent with the National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act, as amended in 1990.

#### **Evaluation Criteria:**

- Presentation (formatting, spelling, grammar, punctuation, neatness)
- Structure (well-developed, logical flow and effective sequencing)
- Technique (linguistic diversity, literary devices, audience engagement)
- Creativity (imaginative writing, originality of thought)

#### **Awards:**

Each adult winner will receive an award, a \$1,500 cash prize and the opportunity to have their work recited at the awards ceremony.

Each youth and teen winner will receive an award and a \$500 cash prize.

All winners and finalists will also receive complimentary tickets to the PEN/Faulkner's Reading Series. The PEN/Faulkner Reading Series brings noted American and international writers to the District of Columbia to present readings in the Elizabethan Theater of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

Honorable Mentions may be awarded as warranted, but no monetary award is associated with it. Please note that for any category, the judges reserve the right to deem that there were no meritorious submissions and can choose not to make an award.

#### **Contact Information:**

For more information on the Larry Neal Writers' Competition and awards ceremony, please visit [dcarts.dc.gov](http://dcarts.dc.gov) or contact David Markey, Arts Education Coordinator, at [David.Markey@dc.gov](mailto:David.Markey@dc.gov) or 202-724-5613.