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SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

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White Announces Winners Of Second Annual Illinois Emerging Writers Competition

SPRINGFIELD — Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White today congratulated the winners of the second annual Illinois Emerging Writers Competition. White established the competition to promote writing and creativity and to provide a unique opportunity and outlet for recognizing new talent.

“I am honored to congratulate these very talented individuals, who were among 115 entries we received during this year’s competition,” White said. “Illinois has a long, rich history of producing outstanding writers, and I hope all of those persons who entered will continue writing and inspiring us with their poems and short stories.”

This year's winners of the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award and James Jones Short Story Award were announced during the Illinois Authors Book Fair at the Illinois State Library. Three winners were selected in each category:

- **Anthony Coman of DeKalb** won first place in the poetry division for his poem *House*
- **Jessica Lauren Neiweem of Cary** was named second place winner for her poem *The Forests Nearby*
- **Ryan McNeily of Western Springs** won third place for his poem *Celebration of Public Bathrooms*
- **Paul Heinz of Elmhurst** won first place in the short story division with his work *James’s Arrival*
- **William Siavelis of Chicago** won second prize with his short story *The Time That Uncle Tom Died*
- **Susan Srikant of Urbana** won third place in the short story division with her work *My Arrival in Horseshoe, Nevada*

Kevin Stein, who succeeded Gwendolyn Brooks as Illinois poet laureate, served as final judge for the poetry contest and presented the poetry awards to the winners. Kaylie Jones, celebrated author and daughter of writer James Jones (*From Here to Eternity*) served as final judge for the short story contest and presented the short story awards to the winners. (To read this year’s winning entries, log on to www.illinoiscenterforthebook.org.)

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A plaque and monetary awards were presented to the winners at the Book Fair awards ceremony. The winners in both divisions received \$500 for first place, \$300 for second place and \$100 for third place. Winners read their works at a program during the Book Fair. The winning short stories will also be submitted to *Downstate Story Magazine* and *Ninth Letter Magazine* for possible publication, while the winning poems will be submitted to *Another Chicago Magazine*, *Ninth Letter Magazine* and *Rhino Magazine*.

The Emerging Writers Competition is a joint venture of the Illinois Center for the Book, for which White serves as Honorary Chairman, the Illinois State Library, Kevin Stein and the James Jones Literary Society.

The Illinois Center for the Book, an affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, is a non-profit organization promoting books, book arts, libraries and reading in Illinois. Established in 1985, the organization's mission is to celebrate the printed word and to create an environment that promotes reading, the book arts and an appreciation of the state's rich literary heritage. For more information about the Illinois Center for the Book, log on to www.illinoiscenterforthebook.org.

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