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SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

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White Announces Winners Of Third Annual Illinois Emerging Writers Competition

Chicago—Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White today announced the winners of the third annual Illinois Emerging Writers Competition. White created the competition to promote writing and creativity and to provide a unique opportunity and outlet for recognizing new Illinois literary talent.

"I am proud and honored to congratulate these very talented individuals," White said. "Illinois has a long history of producing outstanding writers, and I hope all of the writers who entered this year will continue writing and inspiring us with their poems and short stories."

Secretary White presented cash prizes and a plaque to the winners at an awards ceremony in Chicago. This year's winners of the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award are:

1st place – **Mary Lucille Hays** of **White Heath** for her poem "Tippet Hill"

2nd place – **Samira Grace Didos** of **Urbana** for her poem "Antiques"

3rd place – **Samira Grace Didos** of **Urbana** for her poem "Fear of Laughter"

Winners of the James Jones Short Story Award are:

1st place - **Lorie Kolak** of **Chicago** for her story "Her Terrible Singing Voice and Love of Singing"

2nd place – **Andrew Gregory Krzak** of **New Lenox** for his story "24 Frames"

3rd place – **Joseph A. Woods** of **Park Forest** for his story "Black Shines"

The winners of both awards receive \$500 for first place, \$300 for second place and \$100 for third place. In addition, the winners' short stories will be submitted to *Ninth Letter Magazine* and *Downstate Story Magazine*, and the winners' poems will be submitted to *RHINO Magazine*, *Ninth Letter Magazine* and *Another Chicago Magazine* for review and possible publication.

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

The Illinois 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, and the James Jones Literary Society. The James Jones Literary Society provided generous financial support for the competition.

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