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SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

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WHITE ANNOUNCES 4th ANNUAL ILLINOIS EMERGING WRITERS COMPETITION

SPRINGFIELD — Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White and the Illinois Center for the Book have announced that entries are now being accepted for the fourth annual Illinois Emerging Writers Competition for poets and authors of short stories.

"As we enter our fourth year, the Illinois Emerging Writers Competition has become a highly respected and widely praised outlet for uncovering and recognizing new literary talent," said White, who serves as honorary chair of the Illinois Center for the Book. "Several of our past winners have been or will soon be published. The competition is proving to be a marvelous way to promote creative writing and encourage new authors to develop and share their talents. Their outstanding works are adding to Illinois' rich literary heritage."

White said the competition will again consist of two categories: the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award and the James Jones Short Story Award. Three cash prizes will be available in both categories for original, unpublished works. Illinois poet laureate Kevin Stein will select winners of the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award, named for the late award-winning Illinois poet laureate. Kaylie Jones, the accomplished writer and daughter of James Jones, will pick winners of the James Jones Short Story Award, named for the acclaimed late Illinois novelist and short story writer. Winning entries will be submitted to *Ninth Letter Magazine*, *RHINO Magazine*, *Another Chicago Magazine* and *Downstate Story Magazine* for possible publication.

The competition is open to Illinois residents age 18 and over and runs through June 30th, 2008. Entry forms, rules and other information may be found at http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf_publications/lda964.pdf. There is a \$20 per submission charge from which prizes will be awarded.

Secretary White acknowledged the continued support of Kevin Stein and the James Jones Literary Society that has played a major part in the success of the competition. The Illinois Center for the Book, an affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, is a not-for-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.

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