



Jesse White

SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

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Jesse White Announces Illinois Emerging Writers Competition Winners

SPRINGFIELD--Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White has announced the winners of the 2009 Illinois Emerging Writers Competition. The competition created by White is designed to promote creative writing, encourage local writers and provide a unique opportunity and outlet for recognizing new literary talent. Secretary White sponsors the competition in partnership with the Illinois State Library, the Illinois Center for the Book, Illinois Poet Laureate Kevin Stein and the James Jones Literary Society.

“I am very proud to congratulate these talented writers whose works enhance our state’s long and rich literary heritage,” said White. “These awards are named in honor of two of our state’s literary giants—Gwendolyn Brooks and James Jones. Their legendary achievements will inspire readers for generations to come, and I hope the works of this year’s winners inspire readers and encourage more poets and short story writers to enrich our lives with their works.”

Winners of the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award are:

- 1st – Vincent Francone – “Chicago”
- 2nd – Valerie Wallace – “The Poem Stays”
- 3rd – Mary Hotlen – “Year of Psalms”

Winners of the James Jones Short Story Award are:

- 1st – Baird Harper – “Futures”
- 2nd – Colby Cuppernull – “At the End of the Day”
- 3rd – Deanna Sue Cording – “Driving Lessons”

Winners receive cash prizes and have their works submitted for review and possible publication in three Illinois literary magazines -- [Downstate Story](#), [Ninth Letter](#) and [RHINO](#). The final judges in the competition were Kevin Stein for the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award and Kaylie Jones, the talented writer and daughter of celebrated Illinois author James Jones for the James Jones Short Story Award. A ceremony will be held later this month at the Illinois State Library where Secretary White will present the awards to winners.

Read the winning entries at the Illinois Center for the Book website at <http://illinoiscenterforthebook.org/projects/projectsb.html>. The Illinois Center for the Book, an affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, nurtures and connects readers and writers and honors Illinois’ rich literary heritage.