News from: **Oakland Public Library**

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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### Oakland to Announce New Youth Poet Laureate in Award Ceremony on August 2

**Oakland, CA** – On Friday, August 2, the City of Oakland will announce the winner of its second Youth Poet Laureate competition in a public ceremony at I-SEEED, 1625 Clay Street, Suite 600, in Oakland. The program begins at 6:30 p.m., with Oakland Indie Award Winner Jazz Monique Hudson as master of ceremonies.

The ceremony is the culmination of a yearlong program organized by the Oakland Public Library in partnership with Youth Speaks, and more than a dozen community partners including event host I-SEEED, an Oakland-based nonprofit nationally recognized for creating sustainable cities and schools.

All eight finalists in the contest will perform before this year's winner is announced in front of City officials and Oakland's preeminent artists, educators, scholars, and culture shapers.

The eight finalists represent the best of Oakland's young talent and reflect the city's lauded diversity. They attend five different schools and hail from seven different zip codes:

- **Olivia Hoffman,** 16, Oakland School for the Arts
- **Maya Bello,** 16, Holy Names High School
- **Obasi Davis,** 17, Berkeley High School
- **Robert Paige,** 18, Oakland Technical High School
- **Mina Jameson,** 15, Oakland School for the Arts
- **Francesca Paris,** 16, Head-Royce School
- **Cindy Huey,** 17, Oakland Technical High School
- **Kai Smith,** 15, Oakland School for the Arts

These talented young poets made it through a highly competitive process juried by accomplished authors, educators and community leaders. The eventual winner will be determined by a panel of celebrity judges, including California's Poet Laureate Juan Felipe Herrera, Oakland-born poet and playwright Chinaka Hodge, performer Raphael Cohen, and current Youth Poet Laureate Stephanie Yun, who won the competition in 2012.

The winner will be honored with a $5,000 scholarship and the opportunity to officially represent his/her community through poetry, media, and public appearances.

For information, please contact Amy Sonnie, Teen Outreach Librarian, at 238-7233 or asonnie@oaklandlibrary.org.

*Background:* www.oaklandlibrary.org/teens/events-programs/youth-poet-laureate-program

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City of
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