



City of
OAKLAND
California

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News from: **Oakland Public Library**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 25, 2016

**The Oakland Public Library and Youth Speaks
Announce 2016 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate
Finalists**

Oakland, CA – The Oakland Youth Poet Laureate program has selected five finalists to advance in the competition to become the 2016 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate, announced in July 2016. The Oakland Youth Poet Laureate program is a partnership between the Oakland Public Library and Youth Speaks and encourages poets between the ages of 13–18 living in Oakland to showcase their talent from the page or the stage in a citywide competition that celebrates the voice and leadership of young people.

Current Oakland Youth Poet Laureate, Tova Ricardo, was a judge in this year's competition, along with Stephanie Yun, 2012 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate. Other judges included Wilson Riles, former Oakland City Council Member; Kate Schatz, author of *Rad American Women A-Z* (2015); and Vernon Kieve, poet, author, and current Oakland Unified School District teacher.

Each of the finalists will advance to a second round of judging, which includes an in-person performance and interview with the judges. The announcement of the 2016 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate will take place as part of the annual BeastCrawl festival in July, with performances by all finalists at the Impact Hub, located at 2323 Broadway in Oakland.

Finalists:

Azariah Cole-Shephard, 18
Lucy Flattery-Vickness, 17
Isabel Hallock, 17
Nandi Maunder, 14
Emma Talamantes, 17

Honorable Mention:

Stephanie Vega-Gallardo, 17

The 2016 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate will receive a \$5,000 college scholarship and have multiple opportunities to perform their work for the community during their term.

About Youth Speaks:

Founded in 1996, Youth Speaks is a multi-faceted organization that understands and believes that the power, insight, creativity, and passion of young artists can change the world. Through the intersection of arts education and youth

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development practices, civic engagement strategies and high quality artistic presentation, Youth Speaks creates safe spaces that challenge young people to find, develop, publicly present, and apply their voices as creators of societal change. Youth Speaks exists to shift the perception of youth by combating illiteracy, alienation, and silence, creating a global movement of brave new voices bringing the noise from the margins to the core.

About Oakland Public Library:

The Oakland Public Library is a part of the City of Oakland in California and has been in existence since 1878. Locations include 16 branches, a Main Library, a Second Start Adult Literacy Program, the Tool Lending Library, and the African-American Museum and Library. The Oakland Public Library empowers all people to explore, connect, and grow.

For more information, please contact Lana Adlawan, Supervising Librarian, Teen Services, at ladlawan@oaklandlibrary.org or 510-238-7613.

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