



PRESS RELEASE: POETRY FOR HOPE

*Rhode Island hosts 4th Biennial Gathering of US State Poets
Laureate at schools, libraries and sites statewide April 19-23*

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For Immediate Release

Contact: Lisa Starr

401-466-9916

lisastarr1@mindspring.com

Rhode Island Poet Laureate Lisa Starr, in collaboration with the state's regional tourism offices, RISCA, RICH, the Office of the Governor and numerous sponsors and volunteers, is pleased to announce Poetry for Hope-- a five-day celebration of poetry, national poetry month, the arts, education, and the human and cultural resources of Rhode Island featuring more than a dozen visiting Poets Laureate from around the country. These ambassador poets, coming from places like Alaska, Indiana, South Dakota and Tennessee will share their work and explore their roles as publicly appointed officials who are charged with being "advocates" for poetry in dozens of schools and libraries and places of interest around Rhode Island.

Poetry for Hope is testimony to the faith and hard work and generosity of all sectors of Rhode Island. Small businesses, legislators, tourism officials, arts agencies, educators and members of the private sector have stepped in to create this event at a time when the failing economy is affecting funding for the arts in all areas. With the help of the regional tourism partners and RISCA, RICH, and dozens of other partners, we have been able to put together a week of remarkable events that will benefit Rhode Islanders of all ages by both exposing them to some of our country's most recognized poets, and also by creating opportunities for them to have their own work heard and responded to.

We will create and blaze a poetry trail that leads these poet ambassadors around and through the state, showcasing regional and cultural sites of interest, and creating events which bring together these nationally recognized poets with regional writers, musicians, teachers, students and citizens. Each morning, teams of poets will visit a number of schools within a particular tourism region and work with students and teachers there, and then visit places of interest within that region. In Pawtucket, the Laureates will workshop poems of Rhode Island poets who wish to participate. In the evenings, large scale public events featuring music and poetry will take place at Providence City Hall, Salve Regina University and Mixed Magic Theatre. The full schedule is available at ri.arts.gov/state_poet. Please call Lisa Starr at 401-466-9916 with any questions about any of the events or if you'd like to get involved.

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