



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Janet Starke, Executive Director
(804) 314-4989 (c)

Albemarle High Senior Katharina Ravichandran to Represent Virginia in National Poetry Out Loud Competition

Teen Advanced from 11 Student Competitors to Win Virginia State Final

Richmond, Virginia (April 6) – Katharina Ravichandran, a senior at Albemarle High School, Charlottesville, will represent the Commonwealth of Virginia in the national Poetry Out Loud competition, hosted by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation on May 1, 2022. Once again, this year's competition will be held virtually, at arts.gov. She is working with renowned Virginia-based poet Regie Cabico to prepare for the event.

Miss Ravichandran advanced after becoming the 2022 Poetry Out Loud Virginia State Champion in a recorded event that took place Friday, March 11, 2022 at VPM, Virginia's home for Public Media. There, Miss Ravichandran competed along with eleven other students from across the Commonwealth.

Student competitors included:

- Damilola Awofisayo, Thomas Jefferson High School, Alexandria
- Evalynn Bogusz, Heritage High School
- Alyssa Malcolm, Deep Run High School, Richmond
- Bailey Moncure, Appomattox Regional Governor's School, Petersburg
- Katherine Nguyen, Colonial Forge High School, Stafford
- Ryan Poquis, Mills E. Godwin High School, Henrico
- Kashvi Ramani, Rock Ridge High School, Ashburn
- Isaiah Riddle, Grace Christian School, Staunton
- Samantha Rinker, Lake Braddock Secondary School, Burke
- Trinity Smith, Open High School, Richmond
- Killian Winn, St. Christopher's School, Richmond

In 2022, 3,616 students from 40 schools participated with 33 students advancing to one of four virtual semifinal competitions held in February. The Virginia Commission for the Arts administers the statewide Poetry Out Loud program in partnership with The National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation. 2022 marks the 17th

anniversary year of the program and the eighth year the Commission has collaborated with VPM to host and record the competition.

Student competitors selected works from the Poetry Out Loud Anthology, which hosts over 1,000 contemporary and classical poems. All students recited their first two poems with judges selecting the top three students to advance to the third round.

Miss Ravichandran recited ["The Woman at the Washington Zoo,"](#) by Randall Jarrell; ["Self-Inquiry before the Job Interview,"](#) by Gary Soto; and ["The Two Boys,"](#) by Mary Lamb. Ravichandran is a classical cellist and approaches poetry similarly as to the interpretation of music stating, "For me, poetry is a beautiful opportunity for artistic expression. Having played instruments throughout my life, I approach each poem as a piece of music, with crescendos, decrescendos, dynamics, tempo changes, and more. In many ways, reciting poetry is music." Miss Ravichandran received a \$200 cash award and Albemarle High School received a \$500 stipend for the purchase of poetry books.

Isaiah Riddle, a senior at Grace Christian School (Staunton) was the first runner-up, and received a \$100 cash award and a \$200 stipend for his school library. Second runner-up Baily Moncure, a junior at Appomattox Regional Governor's School (Petersburg) received a literary gift.

Distinguished judges included: Angela Dribben, poet, contributing editor, writer and western regional representative for the Poetry Society of Virginia; Jorge Mendez, an author, musician and spoken word artist based in Hampton Roads; Kim B. Miller, a motivational speaker and poet as well as the current Poet Laureate of Prince William County; and Richard Follett, a middle school theatre teacher who resides in the Shenandoah Valley.

To learn how you can participate in Virginia's Poetry Out Loud program visit, http://www.arts.virginia.gov/programs_POL.html.

About Virginia Commission for the Arts

The Virginia Commission for the Arts is the state agency that supports the arts through funding from the Virginia General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts.

###