



The Poet Laureate of Erie County

The Poet Laureate Initiative

The Poet Laureate Initiative in Erie County is a means by which the community will be exposed to exceptional poetry. The Initiative consists of the Erie County Poetry Committee, the Poet Laureate Jury, the Poet Laureate position, and the yearly community outreach project. The Erie County Poet Laureate is an emissary for poetry who will promote an awareness of poetry and inspire an appreciation of the art form in our community.

1) The Committee

The Committee will consist of six to ten persons, including at least one member of the faculty of each of the County's higher education institutions, at least one representative from a county school district, and an elected county official appointed by the Chairman of Council, county staff, and community members who share a vital interest in poetry. The Erie County Poetry Committee will work with the Laureate to provide oversight and aid while he/she executes his/her yearly responsibilities. The Committee Members will select a Chairperson to serve for a period of one year. A replacement may be chosen to serve the remainder of a term for reasons of absence or incapacity.

Erie County Poetry Committee appointments will serve a term of five years, renewable once. The respective universities will recommend their representatives or replacements to Erie County Council for approval.

2) The Jury

The Erie County Poetry Committee will select a Poet Laureate Jury of five people, who will then review all applications for the Laureate and make a final selection. Three of the jury members will be chosen from the Erie County Poetry Committee by a majority vote of the Committee. The two other jury members come from the community at large and will be appointed by the elected county official on the Poetry Committee. Members of the Jury will select a Chairperson to serve during the selection process. A replacement shall be chosen to serve the remainder of the selection process for reasons of absence or incapacity.



The Poet Laureate of Erie County

3) The Poet Laureate

The Laureate shall be a resident of Erie County, Pennsylvania, whose works have appeared in literary journals, books, anthologies, or other media.

The Laureate shall be someone who regularly contributes to the region's poetry community and should be comfortable with public presentation and interaction.

The Laureate will contribute to the history of poetry in Erie County and foster the appreciation of verse across the community.

The Laureate will serve a one-year appointment from September 1 to August 31, renewable no more than twice. The Laureate will read poetry at selected civic occasions, celebrations, and communal gatherings; encourage others to explore their creative writing abilities; and inspire personal expression through poetry.

The Laureate may collaborate with other artistic groups and will encourage writing by people of all ages and backgrounds.

The Laureate is required to give a minimum of one public reading of his/her own original work during this tenure and also develop and implement a community outreach project.

The Laureate will receive a \$3,000 honorarium and a \$7,000 approved budget for his/her community poetry outreach project.

The Laureate will cooperate with the Erie County Poetry Committee to fulfill the obligations of the position. He/she will provide a mid-term progress report to the Committee by March 1 and a final report by August 31. The Committee will then submit the report to County Council for review.

Prospective poets who hope to be selected as Erie County's Poet Laureate should submit an application to the Poet Laureate Jury and must meet the following conditions:

- Provide up to 12 pages of original poetry (5 copies)
- Provide a resume of his/her accomplishments in the field
- Propose a community outreach project that reflects the mission and goals of the Poet Laureate, including an itemized projection for a \$7,000 budget
- Present poems and interview with members of the jury

