

Town of Wallingford, Connecticut Poet Laureate Program

“Poetry is what in a poem makes you laugh, cry, prickle, be silent, makes your toe nails twinkle, makes you want to do this or that or nothing, makes you know that you are alone in the unknown world, that your bliss and suffering is forever shared and forever all your own.” - *Dylan Thomas*

The mission of Wallingford’s Poet Laureate Program is to communicate the value of poetry and use poetry as a means to engage, educate, and entertain the community at large. The Poet Laureate of the Town of Wallingford serves as an ambassador of the community’s vibrant literary life, promoting its literary community, and celebrating the written word.

Objectives of the Poet Laureate Program

- Promote poetry as a form of communication having value—informing, teaching, inspiring and entertaining—in the everyday life of town residents
- Inspire an emerging generation of critical thinkers and writers
- Encourage the reading and writing of literature and poetry
- Promote poetry as a form of literature that has deep roots among people of all ages and cultures

Roles of the Poet Laureate

- Promote reading, understanding, and writing of poetry
- Develop working relationships with other poets and teachers of poetry to present poetry writing workshops to teenagers and adults
- Write a “Poets Corner” column for the Library’s newsletter in which poems having value for readers’ lives would be presented and reflected upon
- Develop an *Introduction to Poetry* program for members of the public who are curious about poetry and would be interested in learning how to read, understand, and perhaps write poetry
- Develop a poetry program involving local poets that would broadcast from local television and/or radio stations
- Upon invitation, be a guest in local public schools to complement teaching of skills and understanding needed by students for reading, writing, and listening to poems
- Read published or commissioned poems at public events (e.g., swearing-in ceremonies, holiday celebrations, convocations, graduations) and community-based group events
- Represent Wallingford in the Connecticut Coalition of Poets Laureate

Terms of Service

- The term of the Wallingford Poet Laureate is two years. The Poet Laureate may apply for a second term but shall serve for no more than two consecutive terms. In the event of a vacancy between terms, an interim Poet Laureate may be appointed by the Search and Review Committee to serve until the following April.
- The Poet Laureate of Wallingford is an honorary position and carries no stipend.

Eligibility

- To be considered, a nominee must be a poet and resident of Wallingford, or employed in Wallingford, and available and willing to collaborate with other town poets to develop and present poetry-related activities that address the objectives of the laureate program.
- Interested poets can self-nominate or be nominated by others.

Criteria

- Breadth of experiences in poetry including writing, publishing, teaching, critiquing, leading groups, planning and presenting activities, attending poetry courses, and reading poems in public.
- Comfort with public speaking
- Ability and willingness to advance poetry in the public domain, and to participate in various public gatherings and educational sessions throughout his or her term.
- Distinguished achievements

Application Review and Selection Process

A Search & Review Committee, the members of which are appointed by the Wallingford Public Library, will be comprised of the following representatives:

- The Wallingford Public Library's Community Services Librarian or designee
- A member of Wallingford's *Saturday Mornings with Poetry* collective
- A member(s) of the local education community (e.g., English teacher from Sheehan, Lyman Hall, and/or Choate Rosemary Hall)
- A poetry faculty member from a college or university in Connecticut
- The present or a former poet laureate from Wallingford, if available

Application Process

All nominees must submit two copies of the following information:

- A completed application form, available for download from Wallingford Public Library's website
- A brief artist's statement or personal philosophy that describes how the nominee intends to approach the scope of the work and the objectives of this program
- A sample of up to five poems by the nominated poet, citing sources if the work has been published
- A resume or CV
- Two letters of recommendation

Application Deadline: February 29, 2020.

All materials must be addressed to the Wallingford Public Library Poet Laureate Search & Review Committee. Hand deliveries must be received no later than 5 p.m. on the deadline date. Mail deliveries must be postmarked on or before the deadline date. Submissions will not be returned.

Mailing & Hand Delivery Address

Attention: Julie Rio
Wallingford Public Library
200 North Main Street
Wallingford, CT 06492

Search Committee review of all nominations will be completed on or before March 27, 2020. Announcement and installation of Poet Laureate by Wallingford Public Library Board of Managers will take place in April 2020.

For more information

Contact Julie Rio, Adult Programming & Community Services Librarian
Wallingford Public Library
200 North Main Street
Wallingford, CT 06492
203-284-6425

jrio@wallingfordlibrary.org (please write "poet laureate" in the subject line)

Wallingford Poet Laureate Application Form and Materials

Please submit application, along with two copies of the following documents: brief artist's statement or personal philosophy that describes how the nominee intends to approach the scope of the work and the objectives of this program, a sample of up to five poems (published or unpublished), and two letters of recommendation to: Wallingford Public Library, 200 North Main Street, Wallingford, CT 06492, Attn: Poet Laureate Committee. Applications will be accepted through February 29, 2020.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Employer (for non-resident applicants): _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Website: _____

Please include the following (attach separate page if necessary):

Memberships in literary organizations:

Publications where your work has appeared:

List literary awards and dates awarded:

List of poetry-related experience including writing, publishing, teaching, critiquing, leading groups, planning and presenting activities, attending poetry courses, and reading poems in public.

Please be sure the applicant's name appears on every page submitted. Handwritten materials will not be accepted. Materials will not be returned to the applicant.

I, _____, authorize my name to stand for nomination for the position of Poet Laureate of Wallingford, Connecticut, and affirm that I am 21 years of age or older, and that I currently reside in Wallingford or am currently employed in Wallingford. I also verify that the representations made in this application are true and complete and that the work samples submitted with my application are my own work.

Applicant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Applications must be received no later than 5:00 pm on February 29, 2020. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.