

This nomination is for the following award: **Betty Davis Miller Youth Services Award**

First Name **Kerry**

Last Name **Dowd**

Library Affiliation (if applicable) **Alachua County Library District**

Title (if applicable) **Waldo Branch Manager**

Street Address **14257 Cole St**

City, State, ZIP **Waldo, FL 32694**

Telephone Number **352-468-3298**

E-mail Address [kdowd@aclib.us](mailto:kdowd@aclib.us)

Are you nominating an individual or a group/organization for this award? **Group/Organization**

Library (Other Organization or Research Team) Being Nominated **Alachua County Library District**

First and Last Name of Head of Organization **Shaney Livingston**

Title of Head of Organization **Director**

Street Address **401 E University Ave**

City, State, ZIP **Gainesville, FL 32601**

Telephone Number **352-334-3910**

E-mail Address of Head of Organization [slivingston@aclib.us](mailto:slivingston@aclib.us)

Dates of programs **11/7/15; 11/14/15; 11/21/15**

Are the programs directly related to the mission of the library where they were presented? **Yes**

Library mission statement **Alachua County Library District: a key to building a better community by creating opportunities to participate, connect and discover.**

Will you be submitting any supporting documentation? **Yes**

If you would like us to review web pages in consideration of this application (including videos or other supporting materials that are stored online), please enter the Uniform Resource Locators (URLs) below.

<https://www.aclib.us/teens>

<https://www.aclib.us/teens/blog/teen-creative-writing-contest>

<https://www.aclib.us/teens/blog/teen-creative-writing-contest-results>

Essay **The Teen Creative Writing Contest is a new program for the Alachua County Library District to improve its' service to teens, promote writing and library use and is easily adaptable for other libraries. Costs incurred were kept to a minimum so it could be sustained annually. Staff time and planning are outlined in supportive materials.**

The Teen Creative Writing Contest satisfies a need teens have for showcasing their written, creative voice. As local school curriculum has become more structured and aligned with core standards, there are fewer opportunities for students to write creatively and have their work reviewed and shared.

This innovation introduced positive changes. A series of three creative writing workshops for teens, each led by a local author, were held at the Headquarters Library on Saturdays during National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo) in November, prior to the contest. Several branch libraries promoted and encouraged teens to write that month. Now, two branch libraries offer creative writing clubs monthly.

Two prominent, local writers, one known for writing fiction and short stories and one for poetry, agreed to judge each category, respectively. Entrants needed to be in **6th through 12th grade**. All writing had to be their original work. Entrants could submit (1) fictional, short story (500-2,500 words in length) and/or up to (3) poems, any form or style. Submissions were grouped for judging by grade, 6 to 8th graders or 9 to 12th graders with 1st, 2nd and 3rd places awarded for the top fictional, short stories as well as for poems in both groups – 12 total recognitions. All participants, their families and friends, and the author judges were invited to a reception to showcase all submissions, recognize winners and promote conversation with the entrants, library staff and the author judges. Non-placing entrants were individually recognized

and received certificates. After the ceremony, refreshments donated by a local bakery were available. Winners were awarded by having their writings bound collectively in-house by the Library District with copies added to its permanent collection. All 12 winners received a personal copy of the anthology.

The Creative Writing Contest for teens was created and developed by Kerry Dowd and this supportive team: Youth Services Senior Library Manager Erin Phemester; Library Specialist Ann LeZotte and the Library's Young Adult Planning Group with consultation with local author Lauren Groff.

During the planning stages, Dowd created an entry form and rules and regulations which was reviewed by legal staff (entry form and rules and regulations can be located in one of the supporting documents, a blog that announces the contest); library's Graphic Designer Scot Sterling created an eye catching logo for PR purposes, beautiful participation and winners' certificates and cover for the anthology.

During the implementation stages, Dowd reached out to two resident, well-known writers, Lauren Groff and Lola Haskins to judge short story fiction and poetry, respectively. Dowd worked with the Young Adult Planning Group, whose focus is programs and services for teens, to reach current teen patrons throughout the 12 branch libraries. Dowd worked with School Board of Alachua County Media Specialists Supervisor Debi Bruner to reach public middle and high school media specialists, speaking at their monthly meetings. Dowd contacted private and charter schools, countywide, and homeschool networks.

Partnerships developed and strengthened between the library and area schools as a result of the contest. Bruner shared the following in correspondence to Dowd after the contest: "Thank you so very much! The opportunities you provide for the students in the district is AMAZING!!!! I am so happy we have more communication happening between your staff and our media specialists."

Feedback from the judges and a teacher sum up the importance of providing creating writing opportunities for teens. The most notable feedback that showcases the benefits of this contest came from our teen participants. Please refer to testimonials in supporting documents.

This inaugural Creative Writing Contest for Teens attracted county-wide participation and beyond from public, private, charter and homeschooled teens. Thirty-six teens submitted 73 entries. Middle school students entered 18 short story fiction and 12 poetry entries. High school age students submitted 12 entries for short story fiction and 31 for poetry. Fifty-five people - contest participants, their family, friends and teachers - attended the Saturday reception to hear the contest results with some traveling from outside the county, showing fantastic support from and for the teen participants.

The Creative Writing Contest was initiated with the idea of reaching out to teens already connected to our libraries as well as teens not currently involved by providing opportunities to

engage in writing; showcasing their creative written expressions; and strengthening relationships with teens and partnerships between the library, local schools and teachers. Ultimately, this can benefit teens at libraries by stimulating and developing a positive relationship with teens and the library that potentially is everlasting. Though results will be charted as contest continues, this inaugural contest was impressively successful, easily modeled and sustainable, and praiseworthy.

Summary Alachua County Library District developed a Creative Writing Contest that provides an outlet for teens to share their creative, written voice through short story and poetry. This contest benefits teens by providing an opportunity for self-expression; encouraging writing; strengthening partnerships among the library, local schools and teachers as well as authors; and stimulating and developing a positive, lasting relationship with teens and the library that potentially is everlasting. Creative writing workshops are presented prior to the contest during National Novel Writing Month in November to provide writing tips and techniques, introduce the contest, build participation and create excitement. This inaugural program was tremendously successful, easy to model and worthy of recognition.



TEEN  
*creative*  
WRITING  
CONTEST

TEEN  
*creative*  
WRITING  
CONTEST

THE ALACHUA COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT AWARDS THIS CERTIFICATE TO

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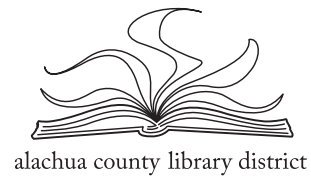
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FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE TEEN CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST APRIL 23, 2016

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Shaney T. Livingston  
*Director*  
*Alachua County Library District*



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Kerry L. Dowd  
*Youth Services Librarian*  
*Alachua County Library District*

TEEN  
*creative*  
WRITING  
CONTEST



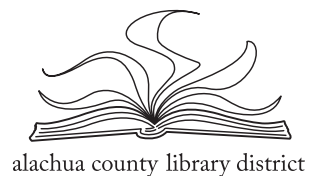
THE ALACHUA COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT AWARDS THIS CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT TO

ADRIENNE FOREMAN

FOR EXCEPTIONAL WRITING IN THE **MIDDLE SCHOOL SHORT FICTION** CATEGORY APRIL 23, 2016

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Shaney T. Livingston  
*Director*  
*Alachua County Library District*



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Kerry L. Dowd  
*Youth Services Librarian*  
*Alachua County Library District*

TEEN  
*creative*  
WRITING  
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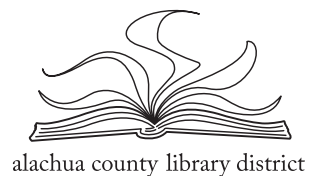
THE ALACHUA COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT AWARDS THIS CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT TO

HANNAH MITCHELL

FOR EXCEPTIONAL WRITING IN THE **MIDDLE SCHOOL SHORT FICTION** CATEGORY APRIL 23, 2016

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Shaney T. Livingston  
*Director*  
*Alachua County Library District*



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Kerry L. Dowd  
*Youth Services Librarian*  
*Alachua County Library District*

TEEN  
*creative*  
WRITING  
CONTEST



THE ALACHUA COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT AWARDS THIS CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT TO

MAX MUNOZ

FOR EXCEPTIONAL WRITING IN THE **MIDDLE SCHOOL SHORT FICTION** CATEGORY APRIL 23, 2016

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Shaney T. Livingston  
*Director*  
*Alachua County Library District*



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Kerry L. Dowd  
*Youth Services Librarian*  
*Alachua County Library District*





## Entry Form

Full legal name of writer: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of entries: \_\_\_\_\_

School attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ ZipCode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Library Branch for pick-up of writing(s) by May 15, 2016 \_\_\_\_\_

By entering Alachua County Library District (ACLD) creative writing contest, I give ACLD permission to publish my work on their website and in other media and educational purposes. I also authorize the use of my photograph (if applicable). I understand that my work and my photograph (if applicable) may be supplied to media outlets which may elect to publish my work as well. I understand that I will not be paid for the use of my work. All files and submissions, including any photos taken of me, will constitute the property of ACLD and may be used in publications, web publications and any other media for purposes of this contest. I retain all other rights to the work.

### Verification of Authenticity

I, \_\_\_\_\_,

have written and/or created the following title(s):

Title of fictional short story: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of poem 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of poem 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of poem 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of entry is for one fictional short story and/or up to three titles for poems submitted.

I have not copied any parts of it from another source. I verify that this is my work. I assume all responsibilities and consequences if my work is found to be otherwise. ACLD will not be held responsible if legal action results from publication.

Printed name of writer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of writer: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name of parent/legal guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent/legal guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Library Use Only

Location submitted: \_\_\_\_\_ Date submitted: \_\_\_\_\_



## Rules and Regulations

- Entrants must be in 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.
- All writing must be the original work of the entrant.
- Each entrant may submit (1) fictional, short story, 500 – 2500 words in length and/or up to (3) poems, any form or style.
- Entrant's submission(s) will be grouped for judging into one of two grade ranges, 6 - 8<sup>th</sup> grades or 9 -12<sup>th</sup> grades. Within each of the two grade ranges, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> places will be awarded for the top fictional, short stories as well as for poems.
- Each entry must be clearly labeled with name and grade of entrant and title of work; typed in Times New Roman; 12 point font; and double spaced.
- Entries will be accepted beginning Monday, January 11, with **deadline Friday, March 11, 2016, 5:00 pm**. Entries may be submitted to all Alachua County Library District locations.
- Entries **must** be accompanied by a completed *Creative Writing Contest Entry Form* signed by the writer and by the writer's parent/legal guardian. (This *Entry Form* will serve as a liability waiver and as a release allowing the Library District to use and/or display the writer's work in the library and on the website.)
- Two prominent, local writers, one known for writing fiction and short stories and one for poetry, will judge each category, respectively.
- Winners will be announced at a reception Saturday, April 23, 2016, 11 am, in the Teen Space at the Headquarters Library, 401 East University Avenue, Gainesville, FL. (Decisions of the judges are final).
- Winners will be awarded by having their writings bound collectively by the Library District with copies added to its' permanent collection.
- Entries **must** be picked up at the designated library by May 31, 2016 or work will be forfeited.

## **2017 FLA Awards Nomination Form**

### **Betty Davis Miller Award**

#### **Alachua County Library District's Teen Creative Writing Contest**

#### **Testimonials and Timeline to Develop and Implement**

##### **Testimonials**

**Feedback from our judges and a comment and recent inquiry from an enthusiastic teacher sum up the importance for providing creative writing opportunities for teens:**

“I loved getting to judge the teen contest, and I think events like this are among the most impacting things libraries can do. It's so important to show teens how much of themselves lies beyond twitter and snapchat and how beautiful that part is. And to reward them publicly for having the courage to stand forward.” - Lola Haskins, Poet

“When Kerry Dowd asked me to be a judge for her inaugural Teen Creative Writing contest she was so passionate and so articulate about the widespread benefits for our local teenagers that such a program would have that there was no chance that I could ever say no. Kerry brought vision and enthusiasm to the contest, opening it to as many young people as she could and coming up with such inventive ways to get them writing, that the result was that the judges were able to read a great deal of beautiful and heartfelt work. I know, from having been involved in other similar programs, that Teen Creative Writing contest ran smoothly because Kerry did a great deal of hard work behind the scenes, and she pulled it all off with ease and grace.” - Lauren Groff, Best-selling Novelist and Short Story Writer

“The contest offered the students encouragement to expand their creativity. By giving them recognition, the contest gave them a reason to write more and produce better quality papers.”

“Last year my students participated in the creative writing contest. Are you going to have the competition again? We have stories to enter! Thanks!” - Martha Robinson, Teacher

**The most notable feedback that showcases the benefits of this contest came from our teen participants:**

“Participating in the Creative Writing Contest has been an uplifting experience. The contest allowed me to display my creativity and skill-set in a way I had not prior. I was able to showcase my work with a sense of accomplishment and pride. Before participating in the contest I did not value my talent, but I now see that I can cultivate my passions into something worthy and inspiring.” - Eriana Harrison

“Thanks! Thank you for putting this contest together it was very fun.” – Hannah Mitchel

“I had an amazing experience with the Writing Contest. At first I was unsure about submitting work because I am usually shy about sharing anything but Mrs. Kerry, being as eager as she is,

did get me to submit my work and I'm glad she did. Getting positive feedback about my writing from real-life, professional authors really gave me the confidence to allow myself to be completely free in my writing and to not be so scared of what others opinions might be. The creative writing contest overall really reminded me of how important it is to take chances because you never know what the outcome could be." - Jordan Williams

### **Timeline to Develop and Implement**

#### **6 months from contest deadline, develop the following:**

- Share Creative Writing Contest idea with other staff members in your library, especially those who work with teens, to get ideas, buy-in and support.
- Establish timeline for contest with deadline
- Determine what type of writing contest you want to hold (short story, poetry, non-fiction, etc.)
- Decide Contest Details (length of entries; number of entries allowed; format desired such as font type, size, and whether you want electronic submissions, etc.) Suggestion: keep entrant's name off the page(s) that judge will ultimately see to maintain non-bias review. Use a numbering system, etc.
- Then create Rules and Regulations and an Entry Form (include a release form and signature of entrant which indicates original work)
- May want to submit release form for review by legal staff
- Arrange for library to bind winning writings (can be done in-house) and add to library's permanent collection, ultimately to be submitted as a bound anthology
- Establish Judges for Creative Writing Contest
- Begin designing logo for contest
- If creative writing workshop(s) are going to be held during November to celebrate NaNoWriMo and promote the contest, then establish local authors (or library staff) to present.

#### **3 months from contest deadline:**

- Complete creative writing contest logo and begin using on all PR as well as Rules and Regs and Entry Forms

- Create PR flyers/posters for contest. Place requests for web slides on library's website, press release, etc. to begin promoting within established time frame (8 or so weeks from deadline). Create PR flyers/posters for writing workshops.
- Create certificates for all participants and contest winners (incorporate logo in design)
- Establish a reasonable deadline with judges for getting back judged writings and a date to hold a reception for all participants.
- Include date of reception on Rules and Regs and Entry Forms as well as blog, etc.
- Promote creative writing workshops, writing a blog, etc.
- Celebrate NaNoWriMo, offer creative writing workshops and excite teens about upcoming contest.

### **2 months from contest deadline:**

- Begin promoting contest in-house, providing Rules & Regs and Entry Forms at all library branches. Share information with staff and teen patrons.
- Provide PR flyers/posters to all library branches
- Begin promoting contest through schools (public, private, charter, homeschool networks) by sending a packet of information via mail or electronically to include: a letter explaining contest; Rules and Regs & Entry Forms; and PR flyers.
- Encourage teachers to incorporate contest into class assignment or give extra credit for entering
- Attend school board media specialists' monthly meeting, and visit schools/classes upon request
- Blog on your library's website and include Rules and Regs and Entry Form
- Contact local bakery for refreshments donation at reception

### **1 month from contest deadline:**

- Make arrangements to get writings to judge(s) (either in print form or electronically)
- Continue to promote contest

### **Contest deadline:**

- Log each entrant and work(s)
- Let entrants know their writing(s) has been received
- Make additional copies of all submitted writings for judge(s)

- Provide copies to judges for their review (paper or electronic)

**Prior to Reception:**

- Once judge(s) have provided names and titles of the winners, make certificates for all winners with their names printed on each. Make certificates for the remaining participants as well so that everyone receives a certificate
- Send an electronic invitation regarding reception to all participants. Invite them to bring family, friends & teachers
- Finalize details for reception – Consider asking 1st place winners in attendance if they will read the first page of winning piece at reception
- Consider Swag bags for judges (PR items for your library like tote bags, notecards, etc.) as a thank you

**At Reception:**

- Make sure to get a group photo with judges and both winners and participants holding certificates

**Post reception:**

- Send electronically an announcement of the winners and thank everyone who participated
- Write a follow up blog sharing this information on website
- Send certificates to anyone who was unable to attend
- Send handwritten thank you notes to the judges, bakery, and others who generously assisted with the contest
- Bind winning writings into an anthology. Send winners their bound copy as a prize and submit a copies to be permanently added to the library's collection (one non-circulating copy for each branch)

## **Alachua County Library District**

### **Teen Creative Writing Contest**

#### **Timeline to Develop and Implement**

##### **6 months from contest deadline, develop the following:**

- Share Creative Writing Contest idea with other staff members in your library, especially those who work with teens, to get ideas, buy-in and support.
- Establish timeline for contest with deadline
- Determine what type of writing contest you want to hold (short story, poetry, non-fiction, etc.)
- Decide Contest Details (length of entries; number of entries allowed; format desired such as font type, size, and whether you want electronic submissions, etc.) Suggestion: keep entrant's name off the page(s) that judge will ultimately see to maintain non-bias review. Use a numbering system, etc.
- Then create Rules and Regulations and an Entry Form (include a release form and signature of entrant which indicates original work)
- May want to submit release form for review by legal staff
- Arrange for library to bind winning writings (can be done in-house) and add to library's permanent collection, ultimately to be submitted as a bound anthology
- Establish Judges for Creative Writing Contest
- Begin designing logo for contest
- If creative writing workshop(s) are going to be held during November to celebrate NaNoWriMo and promote the contest, then establish local authors (or library staff) to present.

##### **3 months from contest deadline:**

- Complete creative writing contest logo and begin using on all PR as well as Rules and Regs and Entry Forms
- Create PR flyers/posters for contest. Place requests for weblinks on library's website, press release, etc. to begin promoting within established time frame (8 or so weeks from deadline). Create PR flyers/posters for writing workshops.
- Create certificates for all participants and contest winners (incorporate logo in design)
- Establish a reasonable deadline with judges for getting back judged writings and a date to hold a reception for all participants.
- Include date of reception on Rules and Regs and Entry Forms as well as blog, etc.
- Promote creative writing workshops, writing a blog, etc.
- Celebrate NaNoWriMo, offer creative writing workshops and excite teens about upcoming contest.

## **2 months from contest deadline:**

- Begin promoting contest in-house, providing Rules & Regs and Entry Forms at all library branches. Share information with staff and teen patrons.
- Provide PR flyers/posters to all library branches
- Begin promoting contest through schools (public, private, charter, homeschool networks) by sending a packet of information via mail or electronically to include: a letter explaining contest; Rules and Regs & Entry Forms; and PR flyers.
- Encourage teachers to incorporate contest into class assignment or give extra credit for entering
- Attend school board media specialists' monthly meeting, and visit schools/classes upon request
- Blog on your library's website and include Rules and Regs and Entry Form
- Contact local bakery for refreshments donatio at reception

## **1 month from contest deadline:**

- Make arrangements to get writings to judge(s) (either in print form or electronically)
- Continue to promote contest

## **Contest deadline:**

- Log each entrant and work(s)
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- Make additional copies of all submitted writings for judge(s)
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## **Prior to Reception:**

- Once judge(s) have provided names and titles of the winners, make certificates for all winners with their names printed on each. Make certificates for the remaining participants as well so that everyone receives a certificate
- Send an electronic invitation regarding reception to all participants. Invite them to bring family, friends & teachers
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## **At Reception:**

- Make sure to get a group photo with judges and both winners and participants holding certificates



**Post reception:**

- Send electronically an announcement of the winners and thank everyone who participated
- Write a follow up blog sharing this information on website
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- Send handwritten thank you notes to the judges, bakery, and others who generously assisted with the contest
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