



2023 County Champions

Alameda County Champion

Lana Tariq

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Quarry Lane School

Teacher: Tricia Miller

Poem 1: American Smooth - Rita Dove

Poem 2: The Doubt of Future Foes - Queen Elizabeth I

Poem 3: Sunshower - Natalie Shapero

"The arts and the Poetry Out Loud contest are very meaningful to me, as I write my own poetry and being able to present an author's work in a respectful, meaningful way is an amazing experience."

Amador County Champion

Lily Fawver

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Argonaut High

Teacher: Dale Lisa Flint

Poem 1: Harold & the Purple Crayon - D. Gilson

Poem 2: Broken Promises - David Kirby

Poem 3: An Autumn Sunset - Edith Wharton

"Poetry Out Loud is an emotional freedom that challenges me yet brings me to places I never knew I wanted to explore."

Butte County Champion

Phoebe Parks

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Inspire School of Arts and Sciences

Teacher: Joseph Hill

Poem 1: When I Have Fears That I May Cease to Be - John Keats

Poem 2: Clear Night - Charles Wright

Poem 3: Across the Street - Austin Segrest

"The arts are my childhood, my life, and will be my death."

Calaveras County Champion

Marco Rincon

Pronouns: he/him

School: Calaveras High School

Teacher: Ann Mazzaferro (Ms. Mazz)

Poem 1: On the Death of Anne Brontë - Charlotte Brontë

Poem 2: I, Too - Langston Hughes

Poem 3: When You Are Old - William Butler Yeats

"Art is the refinement of human emotion, poetry is the reflection over them."



2023 County Champions

Contra Costa County Champion

Harper Iles

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Pinole Valley High School

Teacher: Corinna Carlile

Poem 1: I felt a Funeral, in my Brain, (340) - Emily Dickinson

Poem 2: In Love, His Grammar Grew - Stephen Dunn

Poem 3: There Are Birds Here - Jamaal May

"Poetry Out Loud has given me the opportunity to bring poems to life with my voice. Through this experience, I've been able to connect with poets, fellow participants, and audiences, and I've been introduced to poems I probably would have never discovered on my own. Getting to perform them has been a privilege, and just so fun!"

Del Norte County Champion

Aidan Vincenzo Malone

Pronouns: he/him/his

School: Sunset High School

Teacher: Kelly Troyna

Poem 1: Auto-Lullaby - Franz Wright

Poem 2: Or - Thomas Sayers Ellis

Poem 3: And If I Did, What Then? - George Gascoigne

"The arts give me an opportunity to perform! It's a way to challenge myself, express my creativity, be heard, and show my face to the world."

El Dorado County Champion

Alison Lee

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Oak Ridge High School

Teacher: Mrs. Ivelich / Denise Ivelich

Poem 1: Learning to love America - Shirley Geok-Lin Lim

Poem 2: Threshold - Maggie Smith

Poem 3: Friendship After Love - Ella Wheeler Wilcox

"To me, Poetry Out Loud means bringing stories to life by weaving one's own experiences into the words of the poem. What I love most about poetry is that individuals connect with poems in unique ways, and Poetry Out Loud gives students the opportunity to express themselves through their interpretation of each poem."

Fresno County Champion

Aaron Santibanez-Ramirez

Pronouns: he/him

School: Clovis West High School

Teacher: Mrs. Garcia

Poem 1: Friendship After Love - Ella Wheeler Wilcox

Poem 2: The Contract Says: We'd Like the Conversation to Be Bilingual - Ada Limon

Poem 3: Onions - William Matthews

"Poetry Out Loud has opened my eyes to the whole world of poetry; reading poems has inspired me to begin creating my own pieces to understand myself and the world around me."



2023 County Champions

Humboldt County Champion

Zoe LoCicero

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Eureka High School

Teacher: Mauro Staiano

Poem 1: Not Horses - Natalie Shapero

Poem 2: Ozymandias - Percy Bysshe Shelley

Poem 3: Threshold - Maggie Smith

“As a student pursuing a STEM education, I have found the arts to be paramount in allowing me to express myself and to maintain my sanity. Whether it be through poetry, painting, or playing the cello, the arts have always been an integral part of making my life vibrant.”

Inyo County Champion

Kevin J. Glenn

Pronouns: he/him/his

School: Owens Valley High School

Teacher: Erin Renee

Poem 1: The Arrow and the Song - Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Poem 2: Fire and Ice - Robert Frost

Poem 3: Late Summer - Jennifer Grotz

“Poetry Out Loud is an opportunity for me to express myself using the words of poets, allowing to overcome my fear of public speaking, as well as being able to travel to new places, all while following my passion.”

Lake County Champion

Madelin Muniz-Espinoza

Pronouns: she/her

School: Clearlake high school

Teacher: Tim Barnes

Poem 1: Idea 61: Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part - Michael Drayton

Poem 2: I Am Offering this Poem - Jimmy Santiago Baca

Poem 3: Harold & the Purple Crayon - D. Gilson

“A new experience, and something I can learn from”

Lassen County Champion

Morgan Merrill

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Lassen High School

Teacher: Rachel Vincent

Poem 1: A Song: Lying is an occupation - Laetitia Pilkington

Poem 2: Flirtation - Rita Dove

Poem 3: Fire and Ice - Robert Frost

“Poetry Out Loud has helped me connect to words that have been written to express someone else's emotions. I feel poetry has a way to speak without saying it as it is, leaving thoughts and feelings within it all.”



2023 County Champions

Los Angeles County Champion

Anaiya Asomugha

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: The Archer School for Girls

Teacher: Kathleen Keelty

Poem 1: a song in the front yard -
Gwendolyn Brooks

Poem 2: Self-Help - Michael Ryan

Poem 3: Envy - Mary Lamb

"One of the best feelings in the world is reading a poem and realizing that with every stanza, you grow more and more confident that this poem was written for you."

Madera County Champion

David Ivey Jr.

Pronouns: he/him/his

School: Yosemite Highschool

Teacher: Alicia Myer

Poem 1: Fire and Ice - Robert Frost

Poem 2: Harlem - Langston Hughes

Poem 3: Song of the Powers - David Manson

"I like how in "Poetry Out Loud" us the participants are there to be a conduit of the true Emotionality of the poem for further understanding of the poem."

Marin County Champion

Henry Greber

Pronouns: he/him/his

School: Novato High School

Teacher: Rebecca Pollack

Poem 1: Wide Receiver - Mark Halliday

Poem 2: Perhaps the World Ends Here - Joy Harjo

Poem 3: The American Soldier - Philip Freneau

"Poetry Out Loud is the opportunity to express feelings and messages through the words of those who can't express them themselves."

Mariposa County Champion

Annie Bryant

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Mariposa County High School

Teacher: Brooke Dobson

Poem 1: Cartoon Physics, part 1 - Nick Flynn

Poem 2: I felt a Funeral, in my Brain, (340) - Emily Dickinson

Poem 3: A Wing and a Prayer - Beth Ann Fennelly

"To me, Poetry Out Loud is about celebrating the art of poetry and allowing students to explore their connection to these pieces of art."



2023 County Champions

Mendocino County Champion

Amy Liu

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Developing Virtue Secondary School

Teacher: Jin Jr Shr

Poem 1: Burning in the Rain - Richard Blanco

Poem 2: Breakfast - Mary Lamb

Poem 3: History Textbook, America - JoAnn Balingit

"Poems are a pair of wings that cannot only bring me close to what awes me, but also lift me to a new perspective so I find myself in awe of what is close to me. Poetry Out Loud, then, is something I cherish -- a chance for me to take flight and share with others what I discover."

Modoc County Champion

Alexis Jean Hill

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Surprise Valley High School

Teacher: Heather Bordwell

Poem 1: Since There Is No Escape - Sara Teasdale

Poem 2: The Debt - Paul Laurence Dunbar

Poem 3: I Find no Peace – Sir Thomas Wyatt

"Poetry Out Loud facing my fears of public speaking and expressing my love of poetry."

Merced County Champion

Olivia Bruner

Pronouns: she/her

School: Merced High School

Teacher: Karen Silva

Poem 1: The Debt - Paul Laurence Dunbar

Poem 2: Experience - Ralph Waldo Emerson

Poem 3: Not Waving but Drowning - Stevie Smith

"Preparing for my senior year, I had one mission: try everything. I wanted to take advantage of any and every opportunity I could before moving onto the next chapter of my life. When my teacher, Mrs. Silva, brought up the Poetry Out Loud challenge, I knew I wanted to partake in the challenge. I always love the chance to dive into new areas and while poetry is by no means new to me, it gave me the chance to read through new poetry and find some new poets to look into."

Mono County Champion

Kira Wanner

Pronouns: she/her

School: Lee Vining High School

Teacher: Sarah Taylor

Poem 1: Shall earth no more inspire thee - Emily Brontë

Poem 2: Enemies - Wendell Berry

Poem 3: Do Not! - Stevie Smith

"To me, Poetry Out Loud represents an opportunity for teenagers to explore a new and beautiful, though often overlooked, way of expressing our emotions, about the world, nature, people, hard times and good times - in short, poetry speaks from the heart, and POL allows us to tune in to that."



2023 County Champions

Monterey County Champion

Karina Torres

Pronouns: she/her

School: North Monterey County High School

Teacher: Ms. Velasquez

Poem 1: And I wonder where you are -
Tanaya Winder

Poem 2: After the Winter - Claude McKay

Poem 3: We Wear the Mask - Paul Laurence
Dunbar

"The arts mean everything to me; they are a part of my life. Poetry Out Loud has been a great opportunity to open up about my passions."

Napa County Champion

Colette St. Aubin

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Vintage High School

Teacher: Mrs. LaMonte

Poem 1: Siren Song - Margaret Atwood

Poem 2: If We Must Die - Claude McKay

Poem 3: "Hope" is the thing with feathers -
Emily Dickinson

"Poetry is a hand to be held; it guides us to see that we are never alone."

Nevada County Champion

Sam Uelmen

Pronouns: he/him

School: Sierra Academy Of Expeditionary
Learning (SAEL)

Teacher: Marika Beck

Poem 1: The Coming of the Plague - Weldon
Kees

Poem 2: Very Large Moth - Craig Arnold

Poem 3: The Charge of the Light Brigade –
Alfred, Lord Tennyson

"I am an actor, a musician, and a poet. I view art and poetry as a great way to express yourself without being constrained by all these grammatical rules and writing styles. Poetry has helped me through a lot in my life. From my foster father's passing to a recent breakup, I find myself turning back to poetry."

Orange County Champion

Olivia Le

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: OCSA

Teacher: Josh Wood

Poem 1: A Noiseless Patient Spider - Walt
Whitman

Poem 2: Fairy Tale with Laryngitis and
Resignation Letter - Jehanne Dubrow

Poem 3: Respiration - Jamaal May

"Words have been used in infinitely different ways with infinitely different intentions but poetry is the place where we can be fully honest and human."



2023 County Champions

Placer County Champion

Sarah Yee

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Granite Bay High School

Teacher: Julie Francesconi

Poem 1: Suppose - Phoebe Cary

Poem 2: anthem for my belly after eating too much - Kara Jackson

Poem 3: The Legend - Garrett Hongo

"Poetry Out Loud is a space for me to celebrate language and connect to the its context-whether that's the poet's lived experiences or my own. Poetry and Poetry Out Loud is about empathy and building connections that both transcend and recognize the times."

Plumas County Champion

Aidan Powers

Pronouns: he/him

School: Quincy High School

Teacher: Erica Perdue

Poem 1: I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud - William Wordsworth

Poem 2: Adlestrop - Edward Thomas

Poem 3: How Dark the Beginning - Maggie Smith

"Poetry Out Loud gives me the opportunity to submerge myself in my imagination and perform for others without judgment. The arts are important to me because they allow me to express myself to others."

Riverside County Champion

Harliana Otto

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Palm Valley School

Teacher: Susie Zachik

Poem 1: I Am Offering this Poem - Jimmy Santiago Baca

Poem 2: Envy - Mary Lamb

Poem 3: Alive - Natasha Sajé

"Poetry lets you step outside the world you are locked into and express yourself."

Sacramento County Champion

Alex Yue

Pronouns: he/him/his

School: John F. Kennedy High School

Teacher: Jennifer Reynaga

Poem 1: Filling Station - Elizabeth Bishop

Poem 2: The Conqueror Worm - Edgar Allan Poe

Poem 3: When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer - Walt Whitman

"The arts and Poetry Out Loud have been a way for me to express my individuality. Through the poems of my choice, my understanding, my approach, and my few or many victories, I can feel myself interacting with artistically adorned ideas that are depthful and great."



2023 County Champions

San Benito County Champion

Angelo Hillstock

Pronouns: he/him/his

School: Hollister High School

Teacher: Amanda Chiado

Poem 1: Here's an Ocean Tale - Kwoya Fagin Maples

Poem 2: Caged Bird - Maya Angelou

Poem 3: The Children's Hour - Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

"Poetry Out Loud is a great way to share our stories and relate to others through a creative outlet; there's a poem out there for everyone, no matter who you are or where you are from."

San Bernardino County Champion

Faith Bakhos

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Big Bear Highschool

Teacher: Colin Schour

Poem 1: The World Is Too Much With Us - William Wordsworth

Poem 2: Floating Island - Dorothy Wordsworth

Poem 3: Shall earth no more inspire thee - Emily Brontë

"To me, Poetry Out Loud means living. It means experiencing another person's deepest thoughts and feelings and being able to bring them to life. When I am performing I lose myself and find the soul of the author come through. The connection you feel with language when you recite a poem is incomparable, and I believe it is something every person should do at least once."

San Diego County Champion

Mia Grace Davis

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Academy of Our Lady of Peace

Teacher: Siobhan MacManus

Poem 1: To Myself - Franz Wright

Poem 2: Hanging Fire - Audre Lorde

Poem 3: Breakfast - Mary Lamb

"Art is a conversation between an artist and the audience. As both a physical and metaphorical manifestation of that connection, Poetry Out Loud cultivates those conversations—and for that I am grateful."

San Francisco County Champion

Duyen Huynh

Pronouns: Her

School: George Washington High School

Teacher: Laudra Cunradi

Poem 1: Today - Billy Collins

Poem 2: The Last Performance - Thomas Hardy

Poem 3: Invitation to Love - Paul Laurence Dunbar

"I got a lot of benefits from this competition and I think everyone should have a chance to join."



2023 County Champions

San Luis Obispo County Champion

Blair Victoria Bishop

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Paso Robles High School

Teacher: Jeffrey Mount

Poem 1: I Once Was a Child - Victoria Chang

Poem 2: Early Affection - George Moses Horton

Poem 3: You, If No One Else - Tino Villanueva

"Poetry Out Loud and the arts mean finding a way to connect with someone else's work to understand the deeper meaning, or find what it means to you."

San Mateo County Champion

Kate Chernykh

Pronouns: she/her

School: Woodside High School

Teacher: Mark Reibstein

Poem 1: Echo - Daryl Hine

Poem 2: I felt a Funeral, in my Brain, (340) - Emily Dickinson

Poem 3: the world is about to end and my grandparents are in love - Kara Jackson

"Poems are these beautiful secrets that allow us to capture a moment and make it history, with only the use of words. A reader brings life to such a moment, thus making history present. The art of poetry is magical and captivating, and POL has given me a chance to share this."

Santa Barbara County Champion

Lucas Hsiung

Pronouns: he/him

School: Ernest Righetti High School

Teacher: Mrs. Kristen Kurth

Poem 1: Invictus - William Ernest Henley

Poem 2: In a Dark Time - Theodore Roethke

Poem 3: She Walks in Beauty - Lord Byron (George Gordon)

"The arts are the expression of one's deepest emotions and feelings."

Santa Clara County Champion

Selina Xu

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Harker Upper School

Teacher: Jennifer Siraganian

Poem 1: The Coming Woman - Mary Weston Fordham

Poem 2: Slant - Suji Kwock Kim

Poem 3: Siren Song - Margaret Atwood

"I think Poetry Out Loud is about bringing words to life and highlighting the impact of poetry, fusing the artist's words with our own choices and emotions. Art makes us human, and preserving that is vital."



2023 County Champions

Santa Cruz County Champion

Tashi Liem

Pronouns: they/them/theirs

School: Santa Cruz High School

Teacher: Audrey Sirota

Poem 1: "I think I should have loved you presently" - Edna St. Vincent Millay

Poem 2: The Day Lady Died - Frank O'Hara

Poem 3: Luke Havergal - Edwin Arlington Robinson

"Poetry is where I go when I need to make sense of how I feel. Feelings that seem too big to fit anywhere always turn out to be the perfect size for a poem."

Shasta County Champion

Amana Sinantha

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Shasta High School

Teacher: Kristina Miralles

Poem 1: On Quitting - Edgar Albert Guest

Poem 2: Breakfast - Mary Lamb

Poem 3: Propositions - Stephen Dunn

"Drama has always been my comfort class at school. Poetry Out Loud for me is a competition that ties the skills I learned from Drama, like public speaking, with being able to take the time to appreciate poems I may never have come across before."

Siskiyou County Champion

Teagan Wirth

Pronouns: he/him/his

School: Golden Eagle Charter School

Teacher: Mrs. Renee Callaghan

Poem 1: Song of the Shattering Vessels - Peter Cole

Poem 2: The Maldive Shark - Herman Melville

Poem 3: The Tide Rises, the Tide Falls - Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

"An opportunity to express myself in a healthy, creative, and exciting way."

Solano County Champion

Natalie Villalobos

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Early College High School

Teacher: Pam Williamson

Poem 1: I felt a Funeral, in my Brain, (340) - Emily Dickinson

Poem 2: The Last Word - Nikki Grimes

Poem 3: April Midnight - Arthur Symons

"To me, poetry both spoken and written is a form of self expression. Whether we connect with the piece through our own experiences or simply enjoy it."



2023 County Champions

Sonoma County Champion

Chelle Servais

Pronouns: they/them/theirs

School: Santa Rosa High School

Teacher: Mr. Lyon

Poem 1: Summer - Chen Chen

Poem 2: The Children's Hour - Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Poem 3: He Mele Aloha no ka Niu - Brandy Nālani McDougall

"Poetry Out Loud gives me a creative outlet to embody language and meaning."

Stanislaus County Champion

Haven Cating

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Oakdale High

Teacher: Leigh Ann Gobel

Poem 1: a song in the front yard - Gwendolyn Brooks

Poem 2: The Children's Hour - Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Poem 3: Candles - Carl Dennis

"Arts are an expression my humanity. It connects people emotionally and intellectually throughout the world with words, pictures, and music."

Sutter County Champion

Ainsley May Nelson

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Sutter Union High School

Teacher: Rick Tuttle

Poem 1: How Dark the Beginning - Maggie Smith

Poem 2: Love Calls Us to the Things of This World - Richard Wilbur

Poem 3: The Albatross - Kate Bass

"Art is not a luxury, but a necessity for our souls."

Tehama County Champion

Crystal Jasmin Marquez

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Corning Union High School

Teacher: Louis Buran

Poem 1: A Boat Beneath a Sunny Sky - Lewis Carroll

Poem 2: Early Affection - George Moses Horton

Poem 3: To Cupid - Joanna Baillie

"Art, no matter what form it comes in, cleanses the soul and makes life seem a little sweeter."



2023 County Champions

Trinity County Champion

Charles Vang

Pronouns: he/him/his

School: Hayfork High School

Teacher: Joe Hall

Poem 1: Don't Bother the Earth Spirit - Joy Harjo

Poem 2: I Find no Peace - Sir Thomas Wyatt

Poem 3: For the Nefarious - Mai Der Vang

"Poetry brings out the feelings you have stored up inside and a history of what the authors went through for them to write the poems we're currently reading and reciting now."

Tulare County Champion

Sabrina Castillo

Pronouns: she/her

School: Tulare Union

Teacher: Jill Coyle

Poem 1: Invisible Children - Mariana Llanos

Poem 2: When You Are Old - William Butler Yeats

Poem 3: Sweet Tooth – Russell Edson

"The arts convey meaningful emotional expression in many different forms. Poetry helps an experience be shared with others through the power of words and Poetry Out Loud has given me a platform to branch out into this amazing form of performance."

Tuolumne County Champion

Natalie Harris

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Summerville Union High School

Teacher: Leah Gissler

Poem 1: In the Desert - Stephen Crane

Poem 2: Happy Hour - Lee Ann Roripaugh

Poem 3: After working sixty hours again for what reason - Bob Hicok

"This competition has introduced me to a wonderful array of new people and beautiful poetry, and I'm glad to be involved in it."

Ventura County Champion

Sofia Noriega

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Oxnard Middle College High School

Teacher: Dr. Stephenson

Poem 1: I Find no Peace - Sir Thomas Wyatt

Poem 2: Truth is I would like to escape myself - Nour Al Ghraoui

Poem 3: Broken Promises - David Kirby

"Art is something you pour your heart and soul into, it can be any shape or form, it can have curves, lines, bumps, glitter anything you can imagine, because everything is art if you set your heart and soul to it."



2023 County Champions

Yolo County Champion

Gabriela Garcia

Pronouns: she/her/hers

School: Winters High School

Teacher: Olivia Rodriguez

Poem 1: Acquainted with the Night - Robert Frost

Poem 2: To Solitude - Alice Cary

Poem 3: The Affliction of Richard - Robert Bridges

"To me, poetry is a way to express myself and communicate my feelings to those around me. The arts, specifically poetry, have positively shaped the way I view life and have helped me better appreciate the world around me."

Yuba County Champion

Salma Antonia Alfaqeeh

Pronouns: she/her/hers, they/them/theirs

School: Marysville Charter Academy for the Arts

Teacher: Mathew Fridrich

Poem 1: Horns - Kwame Dawes

Poem 2: We Wear the Mask - Paul Laurence Dunbar

Poem 3: Sunshower - Natalie Shapero

"Poetry Out Loud has given me a new appreciation for the musicality of poetry. Dissecting and analyzing the poems has made the meter, punctuation, line breaks, and other components of each poem stand out. So much more can be found in a poem by reading it aloud."