



Board of County  
Commissioners  
Tina Skeldon Wozniak  
President  
Pete Gerken  
Gary L. Byers

Tuesday, May 11, 2021

**MEDIA ALERT:**

CONTACT: Mark Reiter, Public Information Officer  
Office: 419-213-4590 / Cell: 419-787-4772

**Lucas County Commissioners announce open call to submit  
applications for Lucas County Poet Laureate**  
*Accepting Applications May 11 – July 1*

TOLEDO, OH - The Lucas County Commissioners today announced the opening of the nomination period in the selection process to appoint the next Poet Laureate of Lucas County.

“One of the goals of this prestigious position is to make poetry more accessible to residents across Lucas County and to promote the love of poetry and literacy throughout the community,” said Commissioner Tina Skeldon Wozniak. “Poetry is a transformative form of art that has so much to offer. It can bring the community together and has the potential to foster cultural and society growth for Lucas County residents.”

The Commissioners are partnering with The Arts Commission and the Toledo Lucas County Public Library in the selection process.

The Lucas County Poet Laureate will be responsible to foster the art of poetry and diversity, equity, and inclusion through literary engagement, encourage literacy, learning and the reading and writing of poetry in the county, and address issues related to the humanities and heritage.

“If you have something to say about the world through poetry, I invite you to apply to become the Lucas County Poet Laureate. You will share the vitality of poetry and shape our community narrative with your creative bravery and vision,” said Jason Kucsma, Executive Director/Fiscal Officer of the Toledo Lucas County Public Library.

The opening of the nomination period was announced at Tuesday’s meeting of the Board of Lucas County Commissioners. Applications for the Poet Laureate position are available at <https://theartscommission.wufoo.com/forms/lucas-county-poet-laureate-nomination-form> and may be submitted beginning today. Applications must be submitted by the end of the day on July 1, 2021 to be eligible for consideration.

Applicants must be at least 18 years old and provide proof that they are a current Lucas County resident and have been a resident since July 1, 2020.

Nomination guidelines also include:

- Ability to demonstrate a body of work that shows skills in writing, reading, and/or performance in any form of poetry.
- Received significant recognition for contributions to poetry.
- Shown excellence in promoting awareness and engaging the public in the enjoyment of poetry.
- Ability to reach and serve a county-wide audience both in person and virtually.

"Poetry is the language of the soul and we are delighted to work with our partners to select the next Poet Laureate for Lucas County. We encourage you to apply or nominate a poet for this prestigious role to use the power of poetry to celebrate our community and connect us to each other," Marc Folk, President and CEO of The Arts Commission.

A voluntary position, the poet laureate will receive a \$5,000 annual honorarium and will be expected to engage in ceremonial duties, including performing public readings and attending community, cultural, and civic development events.

A Selection Committee consisting of representatives of the Toledo Lucas County Public Library and The Arts Commission, and former Lucas County Poet Laureates Joel Lipman (2007-2011) and Jim Ferris (2015-2019) will review the applications submitted for the position and narrow the list to three to five finalists. The winning nominee will be announced in September and will begin service in January.

###