



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

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

The Lucas County Commissioners Announce Poet Laureate

TOLEDO, OH – The Lucas County Commissioners are pleased to announce today that they have selected Jonie McIntire to be the County’s next Poet Laureate.

Established in 2007 through a County Commissioners resolution, the Poet Laureate is an appointed two-year position that was created to recognize the place that poetry has in the County’s cultural tradition and civic life. Ms. McIntire is the first woman to have the role of Poet Laureate in Lucas County. She will receive a \$2,500 annual honorarium and will perform various ceremonial duties on behalf of the county, including performing public readings and attending community, cultural, and civic development events.

“During the inauguration of President Biden, National Youth Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman sought to fortify and unite Americans in her powerful words on a national stage, inspiring a resurgence of spoken-word poetry in our country. Through our partnership with The Arts Commission, the Toledo Lucas County Public Library, and the County’s former Poet Laureates Joel Lipman and Jim Ferris, the position of the poet laureate was reimagined to re-enforce and exemplify the value that poetry has to our community,” **Commissioner Tina Skeldon Wozniak** said.

Ms. McIntire was among three finalists nominated by the Lucas County Poet Laureate Committee to the Commissioners. The Committee consists of representatives of the Toledo Lucas County Public Library and The Arts Commission, and former Poet Laureates Mr. Lipman (2008-2014) and Mr. Ferris (2014-2020).

An award-winning poet, Ms. McIntire has had her work printed in books by Red Flag Poetry, NightBallet Press, and Finishing Line Press, and she has had individual poems published by *Women of Appalachia Project*, *Tributary Reader*, *Ofi Press*, *Malarkey Books*, *Gasconade Review*, *Dissonance Magazine*, *North of Oxford*, *Red Fez*, *Lunch Bucket Brigade*, *Khroma*, *Of Rust and Glass*, and *Waterwheel Review*. In 2020, she won the Red Flag Poetry’s Chapbook Contest. She was the recipient of The Arts Commission’s Accelerator Grant in 2020 and 2017, and her work was showcased in the Commission’s 2015 and 2014 Toledo Poetry Sidewalks Project.

She has coordinated numerous poetry writing workshops and other literary events in the community since 2010, including writing workshop series at Toledo Lucas County Public Library branches. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from the University of Toledo.

“Jonie has used her talent as a writer and teacher to champion poetry’s potential to the community and foster an appreciation of poetry among our residents,” **Commissioner Gary Byers** said. “Through her work she has shown the ability to enhance the profile of poetry and literary arts, especially for those who may traditionally have less access to or exposure to poetry and literature, and not just those who see themselves as poets or lovers of poetry. It is my hope that our Lucas County Poet Laureate will inspire and engage residents of all ages and backgrounds.”

“The process to select the new Poet Laureate attracted applications from talented and accomplished poets and literary artists that reflect the diversity of Toledo and Lucas County. We couldn’t go wrong in selecting any of the applicants. This shows that our community possesses a strong desire and appreciation for the literary arts and a love of poetry,” **Commissioner Pete Gerken** said.

“The Arts Commission is proud to partner with the Commissioners and Library in continued support of the Lucas County Poet Laureate. Poetry is an art of the heart and through the laureate the craft of the language has a unique ability to capture the soul and character of our community,” said **Marc Folk**, President and CEO of The Arts Commission.

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