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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **HEARST CENTER TO HOST REGIONAL POETRY CONTEST**

**December 5, 2019** - The Hearst Center for the Arts is hosting a regional Poetry Out Loud competition this Sunday, December 8 at 10:00 AM, featuring local students from the Cedar Valley Community School system, grades 9-12. The competition is free and open to a public audience.

The Hearst's regional competition received 20 registrations from students in school systems representing Dike, Cedar Falls, Waverly, Denver and home school programs. Local judges for the competition include Felicia Smith Nalls, Samantha Mensinger, Emily Schroeder and Sarah Vander Zanden.

The competition, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, the Iowa Arts Council and the Poetry Foundation is part of a national program encouraging students to learn about great poetry through memorization, performance, and competition. Participating students will recite two works of poetry for the chance to compete in the state competition on in Des Moines on March 8, 2020. State champions will compete in the national finals in Washington D.C. on April 30-May 1, 2020, where \$50,000 will be given in awards.

Poetry Out Loud is a national arts education program that encourages the study of great poetry by offering free educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition to high schools across the country. This program helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about literary history and contemporary life. Since 2005, Poetry Out Loud has grown to reach more than 3.8 million students and 60,000 teachers from 16,000 schools in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands.

#### **About the Hearst Center for the Arts**

The James & Meryl Hearst Center for the Arts is located at 304 West Seerley Boulevard in Cedar Falls. More information on the Hearst Center and its programs is available at [www.TheHearst.org](http://www.TheHearst.org), by calling the Hearst Center at (319) 273-8641, or follow us on Facebook. The Hearst Center is free and open to the public.

Where Art Happens  
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