

SULLIVAN COUNTY POET LAUREATE

A Project of the Sullivan Public Library Alliance (SUPLA)



A poet laureate (plural: poets laureate) is a poet officially appointed by a government or conferring institution, typically expected to compose poems for special events and occasions. –Wikipedia

The Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress—commonly referred to as the United States Poet Laureate—serves as the nation's official poet. During his or her term, the Poet Laureate seeks to raise the national consciousness to a greater appreciation of the reading and writing of poetry.– Library of Congress

PURPOSE

The Sullivan County Poet Laureate is an ambassador and leading voice for encouraging the appreciation of reading and writing poetry in the County. The poet laureate engages a variety of constituencies, including both children and adults, enriching the lives of residents by sharing and promoting poetry through conversations, readings, public appearances and digital/social media.

THEME

The Spirit of Sullivan County

TERM OF SERVICE

The Poet Laureate's term of service is two years – from 1 May 2026 to 30 April 2028.

REQUIREMENTS

- Applicant must be
 - o A resident of Sullivan County and available for year-round engagements
 - o At least 18 years of age
 - o Have a body of literary work

- o Available for a two-year appointment

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Assume the role of poetry ambassador for Sullivan County.
- Produce and present at least nine original works during the term of service.
- For each of the two years offer a minimum of twelve presentations, which could be in the form of workshops, readings, open mics, or other, in-person or online.
- During the course of the two-year term:
 - Arrange at least one presentation in conjunction with each of the nine Sullivan County public libraries.
 - Conduct workshops and/or give readings at any of the public and private K-12 schools in the county.
 - Include the works of other poets in some presentations, as appropriate.
 - Participate in PR activities (i.e., media interviews).
 - Maintain a presence on the Poet Laureate Facebook page and/or Instagram profile, and possibly other social media through readings, announcements, or other postings.

Encouraged:

- o Offer workshops and/or readings at, or in affiliation with, any of the county's arts organizations (list available upon request).
- o Develop and implement a community project that engages the public in poetry. Projects may take any form or scale.

Additional Responsibilities:

- o Prepare & provide written reports of activities twice annually to the Poet Laureate Steering Committee.
- o Participate in selecting the succeeding Poet Laureate and guide the transition into that role.

BENEFITS/REMUNERATION

- Public exposure of original works presented in person and in the media
- Stipend TBA, to cover expenses and honorarium

COPYRIGHTS

- Poet Laureate retains the copyright to original materials produced in his/her/their official capacity.
- Poet Laureate retains the right to sell and otherwise use poetry created; however, SUPLA retains exclusive rights to at least one of the Poet Laureate's poems until the Poet's term expires. SUPLA agrees to use said poem(s) exclusively as a tool to promote awareness and literacy, not for financial gain.

SELECTION PROCESS

A judging panel will review all submitted materials to arrive at three finalists. Judging will be conducted blindly (i.e. names will be removed from all applicants' materials).

Finalists will be interviewed by the Steering Committee, the members of which will select one winner. The winner will be announced on May 4, 2026 in a public induction ceremony at the Ethelbert B. Crawford Public Library in Monticello.

STATEMENT ON INCLUSION

The Sullivan County Poet Laureate incumbent is uniquely positioned in the community to inspire participants from all walks of life to explore writing and enjoy poetry.

Applicants from all backgrounds and identities are encouraged to apply, including BIPOC, LGBTQIAP+, individuals with disAbilities, and Veterans. Diversity across age (18+), faith, and lived experience is valued.

If you need to request reasonable accommodations for the application process, please contact SCPoetLaureateProject@gmail.com.

STEERING COMMITTEE

Mary Paige Lang-Clouse-- Director, E.B. Crawford Public Library
Peggy McGuire-- Director, Livingston Manor Library
Laurie Burke-Deutsch(Committee Chair) Fallsburg Library
Kiara Josey(Committee Chair) Fallsburg Library
Elmer Serrano(Committee Chair) Fallsburg Library
Sarah Serrano(Committee Chair) Fallsburg Library
Eric Baylin-- Former Sullivan County Poet Laureate
Hope Blecher-- Educational consultant
Nicole Slevin-- Writer, HR/Belonging professional

JUDGING PANEL (Diverse group of 5 evaluators)

TO APPLY

- Application must include

- o Biography (maximum 1 page)
 - o Statement of interest (must be separate from the biography)
 - o Three sample poems, one of them specific to “The Spirit of Sullivan County”
- Send application materials to SCPoetLaureateProject@gmail.com by midnight on Wednesday, March 18, 2026.