

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Nanaimo's next literary youth ambassador has been named!**

#### *Valina Zanetti selected as Nanaimo's next Youth Poet Laureate*

"Have they seen the magical forests, filled with nature's beautiful souls? Have they visited famous landmarks, and if they haven't, have they that as a goal?"

In Valina Zanetti's poem, *The Cardinal*, she explores a bird's journey and reaching new heights. Following their meeting held February 4, Council appointed Valina as Nanaimo's next Youth Poet Laureate, and she will be exploring a new journey of her own.

Valina was chosen for her ability to clearly articulate her goals as the Youth Poet Laureate. Many of her ideas have great aspects and speak of the importance of partnerships and collaborations. Her love for animals also shines through. Valina has the ability to be very inspirational to aspiring young poets and is looking forward to working with them on many creative initiatives.

"Youth nowadays have a lot to say, so I am excited to help let these passionate young minds be heard," said Valina.

The City's Youth Poet Laureate program is a connection to Nanaimo's youth, and helps to inspire strong youth voices within our community. While filling the role, Valina will be mentored by the Poet Laureate and will be a literary youth ambassador for Nanaimo. Responsibilities will include public readings, coordinating a community engagement project to engage youth, writing Nanaimo-themed poetry, and serving as a judge for the Nanaimo High School Poetry Writing Contest.

"By partnering with the Vancouver Island Regional Library, we feel that Valina will raise the profile of literacy in our community while inspiring youth involvement and poetry in the process," said Chris Barfoot, City of Nanaimo Culture & Heritage Coordinator.

Valina is currently a high school student and will fill the role of Nanaimo's Youth Poet Laureate for a two-year term.

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#### **Contact:**

Main Office  
Culture & Heritage  
City of Nanaimo  
cultureandheritage@nanaimo.ca  
250-755-4483

Chris Barfoot  
Culture & Heritage Coordinator  
City of Nanaimo  
chris.barfoot@nanaimo.ca  
250-755-7522



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