

NEWS RELEASE

Distributed May 17, 2019

Youth Poet Laureate wraps up term and Youth Poetry Video Anthology launches

Event planned to launch of "Beyond This City's Streets", thank Kailey DeFehr

Summary

Join us on Friday, May 31 at 5:00 pm in the Vancouver Island Conference Centre (Piper's Lagoon Lobby, next to E.J. Hughes Mural) as we launch Nanaimo's first ever youth poetry video anthology "Beyond This City's Streets" and say "farewell" to inaugural Youth Poet Laureate Kailey DeFehr as she wraps up her 2017/18 term.

Over the course of her term, Kailey has participated in media interviews, numerous readings at City Council meetings and other City-led events. She has attended many community-based poetry events and initiatives, community based workshops, launched the High School Poetry Contest, co-presented with the City's Poet Laureate and so much more.

In November 2018, Kailey invited local poets ages 15 to 26 to submit their original works for a chance to have their poetry featured in a video poetry anthology, "Beyond This City's Streets". Poets were asked to answer the question: What does it mean to be a youth in Nanaimo? Poems were received by five youths; Vayda Page, Erika Berg, Trent Warren Jack, Dazza Fell and Liam Salzl-O'Toole, who presented their work on camera alongside Kailey to create the City's first ever video poetry anthology.

"I'm very excited about the way this project has finally come together. It means many things to me but first and foremost I feel it is a calling of sorts to help inspire and encourage other young people to put their talents and voices forward" said Kailey DeFehr. "You don't need to be anyone's Edgar Allan Poe for your words to carry a great deal of meaning. They are as powerful in their uniqueness as you are, and I am so grateful for every young poet who submitted their work to this project for believing just that. Thank you. From the bottom of my heart, I hope you always bet on yourselves."

RSVP is required as seating is limited. Please RSVP directly to cultureandheritage@nanaimo.ca or by calling 250-755-4483.

Strategic Link: The Youth Poet Laureate programs further the goals of the Cultural Vitality pillar of the City's Strategic Plan by ensuring that Nanaimo has a strong, vibrant and collaborative culture leading to greater popularity as a place to visit, live, work and play.

Key Points

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Quotes

"My time spent as youth poet laureate has been a transformative experience in my life. Getting the chance to be an active part of Nanaimo's poetry community, meeting so many other wonderful writers and learning to own and present my work while encouraging others to do the same...it was an unexpected opportunity that came along for me that made all the sense in the world. I will forever be grateful for it, and for Naomi Wakan who pointed me down this path that worked so intricately into the road to myself. It's been a wonderful and tremendous inner journey, and it's only the beginning."

Kailey DeFehr
Inaugural Youth Poet Laureate (2017/18)
City of Nanaimo

"Thank you Kailey for your outstanding performance as our inaugural Youth Poet Laureate, and to all of Nanaimo's young poets who have shared their work through the video anthology and other calls for poetry."

Leonard Krog
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

"We are extremely happy with the establishment of Nanaimo Youth Poet Laureate position and especially with Kailey's ability to elevate the position through her poetry. She has shown how this role has the ability to be a strong advocate for youth and the youth's participation in the literary arts. She has inspired many youth poets in Nanaimo to let their talents and voices be heard while building relationships in the community through her collaborative approach."

Chris Barfoot
Culture & Heritage Coordinator
City of Nanaimo

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