



# ARTS COUNCIL For Monterey County

*Enriching the lives of our community through the arts*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **MONTEREY COUNTY POETRY OUT LOUD CHAMPION ANNOUNCED**

*Anixia Davila from Gonzales High School Advances to State Poetry Out Loud Competition*

**[Monterey, CA. February 5, 2024]** The Arts Council for Monterey County (Arts4MC) is pleased to announce the champion of the 2024 Monterey County Poetry Out Loud (POL) competition. On Saturday, February 3rd, students from seven local high schools competed in the Poetry Out Loud contest, which took place at the CSUMB Alumni & Visitor's Center in Seaside.

First Place: Anixia Davila from Gonzales High School

Second Place Tie: Trinity Becerra from Rancho San Juan High School and Aurelia Serpa from Pacific Grove High School

At the event, students recited selected poems from an anthology of over 1,200 poems. Each performance was evaluated by the judges based on criteria such as voice clarity, articulation, accuracy, and evidence of understanding. After two rounds of performances, Davila was named the 2024 POL Champion, "I had so much fun, I couldn't believe it," said Pol winner Anixia Davila. "It was a great experience."

The journey of POL began in the fall of 2023 when local student groups at each high school competed for a chance to advance to the Countywide competition. The runner-ups and finalists from this round were invited to perform at POL. "Each student brought their whole selves to the stage. You could really tell that they did a lot to prepare for it" said Rosemary Soto, Board Member for Arts4MC "It takes a lot of courage to come up here and perform in front of a crowd and it was beautiful. I really encourage other students to get involved and participate in this event!"

The winner of the competition was awarded the champion title and a \$150 gift card, while those in second place received \$100 gift cards. Participants who didn't place as well as all runners-up received a \$25 gift card. We extend our special thanks to all the schools and teachers who attended the event this year and we eagerly await the next competition, which will take place during the upcoming fall season.

Davila has qualified for the California Poetry Out Loud contest, scheduled for March 17 - 18. The winner of the California competition will receive a cash prize of \$200 and will advance to the national finals in the spring. At the national finals, \$50,000 in awards and school/organizational stipends will be distributed among the winners. The school or organization represented by the state champion will also receive \$500 for purchasing poetry materials. The first runner-up in each state will receive a cash prize of \$100, along with \$200 for their school or



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organization. The Poetry Foundation oversees and administers all aspects of the monetary prizes and travel arrangements for the Poetry Out Loud National Finals.

To learn more about the California Poetry Out Loud contest, contact [www.capoetryoutloud.org](http://www.capoetryoutloud.org) or visit [PoetryOutLoud.org](http://PoetryOutLoud.org).

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***Poetry Out Loud** is a national arts education program that promotes the study of great poetry among high school students across the United States. This program is presented in partnership with the Arts Council for Monterey County, National Endowment for the Arts, Poetry Foundation, and the California Arts Council. It provides free educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition to encourage students to engage with poetry and showcase their skills. The Poetry Out Loud initiative is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts and Poetry Foundation. They have developed free, standards-based curriculum materials including lesson plans, a teacher's guide, posters, an online anthology, and video and audio resources on the art of recitation. These resources are readily available for free on [PoetryOutLoud.org](http://PoetryOutLoud.org).*

***Arts Council for Monterey County (Arts4MC)** is committed to enhancing the quality of life for all residents in our region through the arts. We provide a variety of ways to make art more accessible to everyone, including but not limited to providing **Arts Education** programs through schools and community organizations, offering business resources for artists and nonprofits through **BusinessWorks**, creating studio and public art spaces for local artists by **Curating Public Exhibitions** and via our **ArtWorks** locations, awarding **Scholarships**, and providing **Grant Funding** to individual artists and nonprofits for community programs and events related to arts and culture. To learn more, visit [arts4mc.org](http://arts4mc.org).*