

For Immediate Release: April 13, 2017
Contact: Sarah Lawson, Virginia Center for the Book
Phone: (434) 982-2983 | Email: sdlawson@virginia.edu

Virginia Center for the Book Announces 2017 Letters About Literature Contest Winners

Charlottesville, VA—The Virginia Center for the Book announces the 2017 winners of the **Letters About Literature** contest in Virginia. Now in its 24th year, the contest **encourages students in grades 4-12 to read a book, poem, or speech and write to that author** about how the book affected them.

Out of more than 1,000 entries, state-wide honors for Virginia winners were awarded by grade levels to:

- Level I (grades 4-6): **Fatima Mouslik** (Arlington) on *The Diary of Anne Frank* by Anne Frank
- Level II (grades 7-8): **Jocelyn Yee** (Ashburn) on *Sense and Sensibility* by Jane Austen
- Level III (grades 9-12): **Samantha Lynn Kiss** (Chesapeake) on *Boy Meets Boy* by David Levithan

Virginia Center for the Book director Jane Kulow honored winners during the 2017 Virginia Festival of the Book Opening Ceremony on Wednesday, March 22 in Charlottesville at the Jefferson-Madison Regional Library. Each winner received a \$100 prize and the donation of a book to their school or local library.

Students receiving honorable mentions are:

- Level I (grades 4-6): **Nathan Moldavsky** (Vienna) on *Out of My Mind* by Sharon Draper
 - **Zainab Rentia** (Annandale) on *Thank You, Mr. Falker* by Patricia Polacco
 - **Ellie Shaps** (Charlottesville) on *Mockingbird* by Kathryn Erskine
 - **Tenzin Werner** (Annandale) on *The Poems of Emily Dickinson* by Emily Dickinson
 - **Jessica Ye** (Vienna) on *A Work in Progress* by Connor Franta
 - Level II (grades 7-8): **Anya Ambarish** (Sterling) on *A Story of Science: Newton at the Center* by Joy Hakim
 - **Emily Burton** (Chester) on *The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe* by C. S. Lewis
 - **Porter DuHadway** (Sterling) on *The Giver* by Lois Lowry
 - **Ethan Nguyen** (Richmond) on *Keeper* by Mal Peet
 - Level III (grades 9-12): **William Cho** (McLean) on *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot
 - **Jada Mabe** (Annandale) on *13 Hours* by Mitchell Zuckoff
 - **James Potthast** (Arlington) on *Death Be Not Proud* by John Gunther
 - **Niharika Vattikonda** (Herndon) on *Born Bright* by Nicole Mason
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About Letters About Literature: The 24th annual writing contest for young readers is made possible by a generous grant from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, with additional support from gifts to the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. For more details, visit Read.gov/Letters. The 2018 contest will open in November 2017.

About the Virginia Center for the Book: A program of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, the Virginia Center for the Book was established with the vision that every Virginian will have access to books and reading and to their power to shape and inform personal and civic life. As an affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, the Virginia Center for the Book works within a network of fifty state-center affiliates to promote books, reading, literacy, and the literary life of Virginia. To learn more, visit VirginiaHumanities.org/BookCenter.

About VFH: The mission of Virginia Foundation for the Humanities (VFH) is to connect people and ideas to explore the human experience and inspire cultural engagement. VFH reaches an estimated annual audience of 23 million through Community Programs, Digital Initiatives, Scholarship, and the Virginia Center for the Book. For more information, visit VirginiaHumanities.org.