  
Media Advisory  
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**City, partners launch Richmond Poet Laureate program**

[*Application for poet laureate position open now*](https://rvapoetlaureate.org/)

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**Richmond, VA** — The City of Richmond has launched the Richmond Poet Laureate Program to highlight gifted artists in Richmond and use the literary arts to provide support in an unprecedentedly challenging time.

With the freedom to develop their own projects during their term, the Poet Laureate’s main task will be to promote poetry. This will include interfacing with residents already interested in poetry and serving as a literary arts liaison to communities less familiar with the medium.

The Richmond Poet Laureate will serve as a literary leader and voice for the city for a two-year term. The first term will last from January 2021 to December 2023.

Applicants must have been a resident of Richmond or surrounding counties for the last five years and be at least 21 years of age. Lack of traditional publication credentials should not dissuade interested applicants. During the selection process, weight will be given to the applicant’s commitment to the Richmond community and dedication to the craft of poetry. [Interested parties can apply here.](https://rvapoetlaureate.org/)

Applications to serve as Richmond Poet Laureate will close November 5 at 5 p.m.

The idea began in the Human Services portfolio, where employees noticed an increasing number of Richmond residents seeking support. The challenges of the pandemic presented an opportunity to simultaneously support artists and lift spirits.

“Richmond should always embrace the arts as an accessible way to provide hope and encouragement,” said Human Service DCAO Reggie Gordon. “The Poet Laureate will give us another opportunity to use the power of words to heal wounds, open hearts and minds and weave us closer together.”

The Poet Laureate Committee includes representatives from numerous community organizations dedicated to uplifting the literary arts. Generous donors have agreed to provide an annual $4,000 honorarium to the chosen candidate to support their work and compensate for their time.

Members

Stefanie Fedor, *VisArts*

Paula Gillison, *Poet/The Writers Den RV*A

Georgie Green, *Poet Laureate Program*

Valley Haggard, *Life in 10 Minutes Writing Studios*

Brian Henry, *UR/Poet*

Katharine Herndon, *James River Writers*

Jean Huets, *Circling Rivers, a local press*

Catherine Ingrassia, *Department Chair, English, VCU*

Kelly Justice, *The Fountain Bookstore*

Joanna S. Lee, *Poetry Society of Virginia, River City Poets*

Deanna Lorianni, *Zuula*

Patty Parks, *Richmond City Office of Human Services*

Chris Peterson, *Richmond Public Library Board*

Casey Polczynski, *Virginia Commission for the Art*s

Robert Pruett,*Brandylane Publishers*

Ward Tefft, *Chop Suey Bookstore*

Aaron-Paula Thompson, *The Poe Museum*

Sandra Treadway, *Librarian of Virginia*

Dianne Wilmore, *Richmond Public Library Manager of North Avenue Library*

[Those interested in applying to serve as the Richmond Poet Laureate can apply here.](https://rvapoetlaureate.org/)

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