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## **APPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED FOR 2018-2020 WASHINGTON STATE POET LAUREATE**

### **POSITION ACTS AS PRIMARY SPOKESPERSON, SUPPORTER, AND PROMOTER OF POETRY IN THE STATE; APPLICATIONS DUE JULY 31**

STATEWIDE – Applications are now being accepted for Washington State’s next poet laureate. The poet laureate serves to build awareness and appreciation of poetry – including Washington’s legacy of poetry – through public readings, workshops, and presentations in communities throughout the state. The new laureate will serve from February 1, 2018, to January 31, 2020.

Washington joined several other states in appointing an official state poet laureate in 2007. The position is sponsored by the Washington State Arts Commission (ArtsWA) and Humanities Washington, with the support of Governor Jay Inslee.

Current laureate Tod Marshall has held hundreds of poetry workshops and readings across Washington State since February 2016. Marshall, a Washington State Book Award-winning poet and Gonzaga professor, is in the second year of his two-year term. A list of his upcoming events is available via [Humanities Washington’s website](#) and the [state poet laureate’s blog](#).

“The current and past state poets laureate have taken this job very seriously,” said Karen Hanan, executive director of ArtsWA. “Each, in their own distinct way, has helped Washingtonians of all

ages appreciate the power of language. The state poet laureate is uniquely placed to help promote Washington's literature as well as prompting discovery of new poets, new literary works, and, ideally, a deeper understanding of the human condition with all its contradictions and complexities."

"Tod has brought an incredible passion, knowledge, and intensity to the position, yet he is immensely approachable," said Humanities Washington executive director Julie Ziegler. "It doesn't matter if he is speaking to a group of retirees at a senior center, students in a school classroom, or inmates at a penitentiary—he can convey poetry's power to people from all walks of life."

Selection of the Washington State poet laureate is governed by state regulation and coordinated by ArtsWA and Humanities Washington. The state poet laureate is appointed by the governor to serve a two year term. To be considered, applicants must meet all eligibility requirements and [submit an application online](#). **Applications must be submitted electronically by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, July 31.** The full application guidelines are [available here](#).

The poet laureate will receive \$10,000 per year for professional services, up to \$1,500 per year for travel and services, and up to \$2,000 per year additional for related program costs.

"Serving as poet laureate has reinforced my beliefs about the power of poetry and the importance of finding words that matter," said Marshall. "It's a life-changing experience to share poems with Washington's citizens and hear from them about the many ways words dwell in their hearts and minds."

Humanities Washington and ArtsWA hope to find this same generosity, as well as ideas for continuing to expand the audience for poetry, with the next laureate.

## **ABOUT HUMANITIES WASHINGTON**

Humanities Washington sparks conversation and critical thinking using story as a catalyst, nurturing thoughtful and engaged communities across our state. For more about Humanities Washington, visit [humanities.org](http://humanities.org).

## ABOUT ARTSWA

ArtsWA, the Washington State Arts Commission, was established by the legislature in 1961. Its mission is to collaborate with artists and arts organizations statewide to conserve, promote, and develop artistic resources. For more information about ArtsWA, visit [arts.wa.gov](https://arts.wa.gov).

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