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## 2023 Teen Poet Laureate Contest

Young people have a lot to say about the world as it is... and the world as they'd like it to be. What they say is important and can make a difference in creating God's Kingdom here on earth. Allies for Racial Justice is pleased to offer a unique platform for teens to speak up through poetry.

High School teens who participate at St. James or Resurrection United Methodist churches, in person or online, are invited to lift their voices and inspire racial justice through this competition. Original poems should be created around either of these two themes:

- **Juneteenth** – the celebration acknowledging the day in 1865 when the last American slaves in Texas first found out that they were actually free; more than two years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation!

**Consider these history-learning opportunities (not required reading):**

[www.youthfocus.org/what-is-juneteenth/](http://www.youthfocus.org/what-is-juneteenth/)

[www.history.com/juneteenth](http://www.history.com/juneteenth)

[www.juneteenth.com/history/](http://www.juneteenth.com/history/)

- **Racial Justice** – an opportunity to address any issue of racism, including matters of education, employment, housing, the legal system, politics, healthcare, voting, relationships, and other aspects of justice/injustice in daily life.

**Consider these history-learning opportunities on YouTube (not required viewing):**

Holy Post - Race in America by Phil Vischer: <https://youtu.be/AGUwcs9qJXY>

Holy Post - Race in America = Part 2 by Phil Vischer: <https://youtu.be/u-yun74BJEc>

**One Teen Poet Laureate will be selected from each church. Award recipients will serve as laureate for one year and each will receive \$500 in recognition of their creative endeavor.**

### COMPETITION GUIDELINES

The following general guidelines are to be followed by all entrants in this poetry competition.

- Only one original poem submission per person; at least 21-lines in length and addressing one of the designated themes
- Typed copy of poem and completed Official Submission Form must be received by April 21, 2023
- Poem must be written in English
- There is no cost to enter
- Adult permission is required

- Entries may be submitted online or by US Mail
  - Online submission at [alliesforracialjustice.org/arj/](http://alliesforracialjustice.org/arj/)
  - Mailed submissions received at: St. James UMC, c/o ARJ Poetry Competition, 5540 Wayne Ave., Kansas City, MO 64110
- Open to High School teens who participate at St. James or Resurrection United Methodist churches, in person or online
- Must be present in person at Allies for Racial Justice “Juneteenth” celebration on June 24, 2023, to read poem and receive award
- Commitment to seek other opportunities to share poem during 1-year laureate term
- Award decisions by judges will be final and recipients will be notified the week of May 30, 2023
- Awards will be publicly announced at the June 24, 2023, Allies for Racial Justice “Juneteenth” celebration to be held in the Kansas City metro area
- While poems remain the property of the author, permission is granted to Allies for Racial Justice for the poem to be published, with accreditation, in church newsletters, bulletins and other publicity venues

## COMPETITION JUDGING

ARJ is honored to announce that Glenn North will serve as judge for our teen poetry competition.

Glenn North is a recognized leader in arts and culture education with over 20 years of experience in multidisciplinary program development, community building, institutional outreach, and youth advocacy. He will oversee the judging of all submissions to the Allies for Racial Justice Teen Poet Laureate program.

Mr. North currently serves as Director of Inclusive Learning & Creative Impact at the Kansas City Museum. He is also Adjunct English Instructor and Cultural Curator at Rockhurst University and a poetry instructor at Kansas University Medical Center’s K-12 Initiative.

Mr. North has served as mentor, adviser and collaborator for numerous civic and educational organizations throughout our region and nationally. He builds productive relationships with artists of various disciplines, ages, and circumstances. North has created and implemented poetry writing and performance workshops, as well as academic programs for area middle and high school students and the Jackson County Juvenile Detention Centers. He stresses the use of poetry to address issues of social justice and self-empowerment. In the past two decades, over 7000 area youth have benefited from participation in his programs. An award-winning poet in his own right, his works include “City of Song” – a poetry collection, “Love, Loss, & Violence: A Visual Dialogue on War,” co-authored with artist, Ada Koch, and the critically acclaimed recording project, “Check Cashing Day” with legendary saxophonist, Bobby Watson. North holds a bachelor’s degree in English from Rockhurst University and a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Missouri.

## QUESTIONS

Please contact [ariteenlaureate@gmail.com](mailto:ariteenlaureate@gmail.com) with any questions.

*Allies for Racial Justice (ARJ) is a ministry partnership between St. James United Methodist Church and Resurrection, A United Methodist Church, dedicated to forging authentic relationships to eliminate the existing racial divide in our communities and churches.*



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# 2023 Teen Poet Laureate Contest Official Submission Form

## Personal Information

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Last First M.I.*

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Street Address Apartment/Unit #*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*City State ZIP Code*

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy): \_\_\_\_\_

With which church do you affiliate?  St. James  Resurrection

What High School do you attend: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of your poem: \_\_\_\_\_

## Required References

**Complete at least two reference options.**

**Option 1) A teacher/mentor who has seen your poem or your previous poetry:**

Teacher/Mentor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School or Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher/Mentor's  
Phone or email address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Option 2) An adult (other than a relative) who supports you in this competition:**

Supportive Adult's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Supportive Adult's  
Phone or email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe your  
connection: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Continued on next page

**Option 3) A Pastor or Leader from St. James or Resurrection who will support you in this competition:**

Pastor/Church Leader's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor/Church Leader's  
Phone or email address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Required Parental/Guardian Permission**

*I, the undersigned parent/guardian of the above student, give my permission for him/her to participate in the Allies for Racial Justice 2023 Teen Poet Laureate competition as outlined above.*

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**MAILING INSTRUCTIONS**

Please keep pages 1 and 2 for your records.  
Mail this completed form (pages 3-4) along with a copy of the student's poem to:

**St. James UMC  
c/o ARJ Poetry Competition  
5540 Wayne Ave.  
Kansas City, MO 64110**