San Antonio 2020–2022 Poet Laureate Nomination Guidelines

The San Antonio Poet Laureate is an honorary position whose role is to promote the literary arts and literacy within the community, and create a greater appreciation of the poetic arts through the reading and writing of poetry.

History

The concept of a Poet Laureate originated in England in the 1600s. The title Poet Laureate dates back to the ancient Greeks and refers to the tradition of placing a laurel wreath or crown as recognition for significant achievements in literature or the arts.

The United States Poet Laureate was established in 1937. Many U.S. cities such as San Francisco, Denver and Santa Fe currently have a Poet Laureate program. Each municipality establishes guidelines and criteria for the selection of its Poet Laureate and their duties. Texas has appointed a Poet Laureate since 1932. In 2012 San Antonio was the first major Texas city to appoint a Poet Laureate.

Expectations of the Position

Terms of Services
The San Antonio Poet Laureate will serve a two-year term from April 2020–March 2022.

The San Antonio Poet Laureate is expected to:

- Pursue the preservation of the art of poetry by educating and inspiring established and emerging generations of literary artists and readers of literature
- Celebrate the literary voices of the San Antonio community by illuminating not only their own work, but the work of the writers and residents of the city
- Contribute to the awareness, growth, and accessibility of poetry in San Antonio
- Collaborate with other city and state poet laureate when possible
- Promote poetry and the San Antonio Poet Laureate position through personal and City social media accounts
- Participate in a minimum of one (1) City sponsored and/or selected public event for each year of service
• Work with the City’s Department of Arts & Culture to develop and implement a single signature initiative during their two year term. The Department will provide funds to support such implementation.

Honorarium
The individual selected will receive an honorarium of $3,500 per year. The City is unable to provide support to the Poet Laureate for travel expenses, including hotel accommodations, transportation cost, or per diems for appearances outside of San Antonio. This includes appearances at non-city related conferences, educational institution readings, etc.

Eligibility
Nominees must meet all of the following requirements:
• Have a compelling portfolio of published work (none that are self-published or by a vanity press)
• Have an established history of activity in the San Antonio literary community, i.e., readings, publications, public presentations and/or teaching
• Be at least 21 years of age at the time of nomination
• Have been a San Antonio resident for at least 3 years prior to the nomination deadline, and remain a resident throughout the two-year term
• Be able and available to reach San Antonio audiences through travel or other means
• Pass a standard background check

How to Nominate
Nomination Period: November 18, 2019–January 31, 2020

Who May Submit a Nomination
Members of the public are encouraged to nominate eligible candidates. Self nominations will not be accepted. Poets of all subgenres and styles will be considered. As a reference, biographies for previous San Antonio Poet Laureate may be found at sanantonio.gov/arts.

Where to Submit a Nomination
All nominations should be submitted via email, in person, or postmarked by 4:00 p.m. (Central Time) on January 31, 2020. Submissions delivered in person must be date-stamped at the Department of Arts & Culture front desk.

Email: leslie.chasnoff@sanantonio.gov
Mailing Address: PO Box 839966, San Antonio, TX 78283-3966
Physical Address: 203 S. St. Mary’s Street, Suite 120, San Antonio, Texas 78205
Nomination Requirements

Nominations must contain the following five items:

1. Completed and signed **Nomination Form**
2. **Biographical information, résumé, or curriculum vitae** of nominee to include awards and/or recognitions, and bibliography of published works
   a. Limit of 2 page
   b. Single-spaced, Arial font, Size 11
   c. Self-published or vanity press will be omitted from review
3. **Narrative or outline of community involvement**, engagement with the public, and/or social action initiatives
   a. Limit of 1 page
   b. Single-spaced, Arial font, Size 11
4. **Work samples** of up to 3 original poems. Spoken word manuscripts may be submitted.
   a. Should include publication, performance, or award information
   b. Should be of the highest quality and from any time period
   c. No more than one poem per page
   d. Limit of 5 pages
   e. Single-spaced, Arial font, Size 11
5. **Response to the following question:**
   Why do you believe this poet merits the title of San Antonio Poet Laureate, and why are they suited to represent the City of San Antonio?
   a. Limit of 1 page
   b. Single-spaced, Arial font, Size 11

Failure to provide all required materials as specified will result in automatic ineligibility. Nominated poets must be contacted, agree to the nomination, and have reviewed the terms and expectations of the position.

Selection Process

All nominations will be reviewed by the Department of Arts & Culture to ensure the nomination is complete. Incomplete nominations will not be considered.

Eligible candidates will be reviewed by a selection committee comprised of four (4) nationally accomplished poets from throughout the United States. The committee, to be overseen by a local honorary chair, will rank the candidates based on the nomination packet submitted and recommend the Poet Laureate.

The San Antonio Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem will formally appoint the Poet Laureate on April 1, 2020, serving as the official start date of the Poet Laureate’s two-year term.