

Town of Haddam Poet Laureate Program

The mission of Haddam’s Poet Laureate Program is to celebrate the value of poetry and use poetry to inspire, inform, and entertain the community at large. The Poet Laureate of Haddam, an Honorary Position of the Town of Haddam, serves as the ambassador of the community’s vibrant literary life, promoting its literary community and celebrating the written word.

Objectives of the Poet Laureate Programs

- Promote reading, understanding, and writing of poetry
- Promote poetry as a form of communication having value—informing, teaching, inspiring and entertaining—in the everyday life of town residents
- Inspire an emerging generation of critical thinkers and writers
- Encourage the reading and writing of literature and poetry
- Promote poetry as a form of literature that has deep roots among people of all ages and cultures
- Read published or commissioned poems at public events (e.g., swearing-in ceremonies, holiday celebrations, convocations, graduations) and community-based non-profit groups.
- Represent Haddam in the CT Coalition of Poets Laureate
- Enhance the cultural life of our community

Terms of Service

- The term of the Haddam Poet Laureate is two years, with no limit on the number of terms served. In the event of a vacancy between terms, an interim Poet Laureate may be appointed by the Haddam Poet Laureate Committee, followed by the beginning of an application process for the appointment of a Poet Laureate for a two-year term.
- The Poet Laureate of Haddam is a non-partisan, honorary position and carries no stipend.
- The Poet Laureate, with the approval of an oversight committee, can apply for and receive an honorarium, stipends, or grants from non-profit or government entities.
- The Poet Laureate cannot officially appear, by title, at a private function or an event by a for-profit organization. The Poet Laureate can appear at such events as a private citizen.
- The oversight committee will seek guidance from the First Selectman of Haddam on emerging issues or interpretations concerning the Terms of Service.

Eligibility

- To be considered, a nominee must be a poet and resident of Haddam, over 18, and available and willing to collaborate with other town poets to develop and present poetry-related activities that address the objectives of the laureate program
- Interested poets can self-nominate or be nominated by others

Criteria

- Breadth of experiences in poetry including writing, publishing, teaching, critiquing, leading groups, planning and presenting activities, attending poetry courses, reading poems in public
- Comfort level with public speaking
- Ability and willingness to advance poetry in the public domain, and to participate in various public gatherings and educational sessions throughout his or her term
- Distinguished achievements

The Haddam Poet Laureate Oversight Committee: Roles and Responsibilities

- The Committee will have the responsibility to select and oversee the activities of the Poet Laureate.
- The Committee will consist of members representative of the Haddam community and could include:
 - Two members of the Brainerd Memorial Library Board of Trustees: Kent Jarrell and Henry Holtzman
 - The Director of the Brainerd Memorial Library: Tom Piezzo
 - Tech Librarian and Friends representative: Robbie Marshall
 - A representative from the First Selectman of the Town of Haddam
 - A member of the Haddam Historical Society
 - A representative of the school system
 - Advisory Member(s): Members of the Coalition of Connecticut Coalition of Poet Laureates, Representatives from the faculty of Middlesex Community College.
- The Committee will select a Chairperson

Application Process

- Nominees (or a sponsor) should submit two copies of the following information:
 - A completed application form, available for download from the Brainerd Memorial Library website or at the Library front desk
 - A brief statement or personal philosophy, either by the nominee or the sponsor of the nominee, describing why the nominee wants the position, how the nominee intends to approach the scope of the work and the objectives of this program
 - A sample of three to six poems by the nominated poet, citing sources if the work has been published
 - A resume or CV
 - Letters of recommendation will also be considered by the Committee

Application Deadline: Close of Business Friday October 13th, 2020

- All materials must be addressed to the Haddam Poet Laureate Committee. Hand deliveries must be received at the front desk of the Brainerd Memorial Library no later than 5 p.m. on the deadline date. Submissions will not be returned.
- E mail delivery: Submission should be addressed to haddampoetlaureate@gmail.com
- Mail delivery address: Brainerd Memorial Library 920 Saybrook Road, Haddam, CT 06438 ATTN: Poet Laureate Committee

Selection Process and Announcement

- The Haddam Poet Laureate Committee will review all nominations and, by at least a majority vote, select the Haddam Poet Laureate as quickly as possible after the Application Deadline has closed. An announcement of the and a formal installation of the Haddam Poet Laureate will be held at the Brainerd Memorial Library selection will be made as quickly as possible.

Support for the Haddam Poet Laureate by the Brainerd Memorial Library

- Coordinate scheduling of events, as needed
- Support library-related events through library program funds
- Make the Library building available for events that include the Poet Laureate
- Support from the Friends of the Brainerd Memorial Library
- Encourage and coordinate other Town of Haddam organizations and entities in holding events that include the Poet Laureate