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**KANSAS POETRY OUT LOUD STATE FINAL COMPETITION
TO AIR ON KANSAS PUBLIC RADIO ON SUNDAY**

Topeka, Kan. – The Kansas State Final of the Poetry Out Loud National Recitation Contest will air Sunday, April 3, at 8:00 pm, on Kansas Public Radio (Lawrence, 91.5 FM; Manhattan, 99.5 FM; Emporia, 89.7 FM; Junction City, 91.3 FM). For those that live out of the KPR listening area, you can listen online at kpr.ku.edu. It will also be available on the KPR web archive later next week.

The competition was held Friday, March 11, 2011, at the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site in Topeka, and was presented by the Kansas Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts, in cooperation with the Kansas Association of Teachers of English.

The Poetry Out Loud program encourages Kansas high school students to learn about great poetry through memorization, performance and competition. The contest begins in the classroom where students select three poems from www.poetryoutloud.org to recite and compete for a spot at the regional competition. The regional winners compete at the state level; the state winner travels to Washington, D.C. to compete nationally.

State competitors were:

- Kari Bingham, senior at Smoky Valley High School, Smoky Valley
- Susan Elder, junior at Northfield School of the Liberal Arts, Wichita

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- Addie Johnson, junior at Quinter High School, Quinter
- Casha Mills, junior at Shawnee Mission North High School, Overland Park
- Devany West, 9th grader at Southwest Junior High School, Lawrence
- Allison Williams, senior at Ottawa High School, Ottawa

Casha Mills, the 2010 Kansas Poetry Out Loud State Champion, won the 2011 Kansas State Poetry Out Loud recitation competition. As the state champion, she received \$200 and an all-expenses-paid trip to the Poetry Out Loud National Finals on April 25 and 26, in Washington, D.C. to compete for a \$20,000 scholarship. In addition, the state champion's school receives a \$500 stipend for the purchase of poetry books.

For questions, contact Margaret Weisbrod Morris, KAC program manager of arts in education, at margaret@arts.ks.gov, or 785/368-6545.

The Kansas Arts Commission is a state agency, funded by the State of Kansas and the National Endowment for the Arts, dedicated to promoting and supporting the arts in Kansas. Its mission is to provide opportunities for the people of Kansas to experience, celebrate and value the arts throughout their lives. For more information on the Kansas Arts Commission, please visit the KAC website at <http://arts.ks.gov>.

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