

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

4/6/2009

CONTACT: Maiben Beard, (334) 844-4946, maiben.beard@auburn.edu

ALABAMA WINNERS OF NATIONAL STUDENT WRITING COMPETITION ANNOUNCED

Results of the 2009 Alabama Letters About Literature contest have been announced by the Alabama Center for the Book. The winning entries were selected from among almost 600 entries submitted by students in grades four through twelve across the state. In Alabama, the competition is sponsored by the Alabama Center for the Book, part of the College of Liberal Arts at Auburn University, and by the Alabama Humanities Foundation. National sponsors are the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress and Target Stores.

Letters About Literature is a national reading-writing contest in which student readers write a personal letter to an author, living or dead, from any genre—fiction or nonfiction, contemporary or classic—explaining how that author's work changed the student's way of thinking about the world or themselves. Letters are judged first at the state level. First-place winners from state competitions across the country are then submitted to the national contest, where six winners will be chosen to receive \$10,000 reading promotion grants for their school or community library.

Alabama winners will be recognized in an awards ceremony at the Alabama Book Festival on April 18, 2009, at Old Alabama Town in Montgomery. Each winning student will receive books and a certificate from the Alabama Center for the Book. The first-place winner in each level will also receive a \$50 gift card from Target Stores.

The students selected for recognition in the 2009 Alabama Letters About Literature contest are:

Level I, grades 4-6:

Dakotah Murphree, Highlands School, Birmingham (first place); **Megan Tidwell**, Spanish Fort Middle School, Spanish Fort (second place); **Harrison DeLong**, Spanish Fort Middle School (third place); **Joshua Lim**, Spanish Fort Middle School (honorable mention).

Level II, grades 7-8:

Cori Anne Mazer, Highlands School, Birmingham (first place); **Emery Edwards**, Homewood Middle School, Homewood (second place); **Sidney Smith**, Irondale Middle School, Irondale (third place); **Abby Prutzman**, Homewood Middle School (honorable mention); **Chana Kim**, Baldwin Arts and Academic Magnet School, Montgomery (honorable mention); **Anisa Nuanes**, Baldwin Arts and Academic Magnet School (honorable mention).

--See page two--

Level III, grades 9-12:

Destiny Sharpe, Goshen High School, Goshen (first place); **Alex Lindley**, Florence High School, Florence (second place); **Obianujunwa Anakwenze**, Florence High School (third place); **Mallick Hossain**, Gadsden City High School, Gadsden (honorable mention); **Kassio Theis**, Cherokee County High School, Centre (honorable mention).

The Alabama Center for the Book is a state affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. Housed at the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts & Humanities in the College of Liberal Arts at Auburn University, the Center sponsors programs around the state on books and reading. For more information, please visit www.alabamabookcenter.org or contact the Alabama Center for the Book at 334-844-4946.

#####