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LETTERS ABOUT LITERATURE WINNERS ANNOUNCED

AUBURN, Ala.--The Alabama Center for the Book has announced the state winners of the 2007 Letters About Literature contest.

Letters About Literature is a national reading-writing contest in which readers in grades four through twelve 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 submitted to the national contest. National winners will be announced in May 2007.

Sponsored nationally by the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress and Target Stores, and in Alabama by the Alabama Center for the Book, this year's contest drew more than 50,000 entries, with more than 450 letters written by students from Alabama.

State winners will receive a certificate from the Alabama Center for the Book. The first-place winner in each level will receive a gift card from Target Stores. The state winners will be recognized in a public ceremony held at 12:30 p.m. at the Alabama Book Festival, April 21, 2007, in Old Alabama Town in Montgomery.

This year's Alabama Letters About Literature winners are the following:

Level One (grades four through six): Isabelle White, The Altamont School, Birmingham (first place); **Courtney Franklin**, Brent Elementary School, Brent (second place); **Shelby Stewart**, Spanish Fort Elementary School, Spanish Fort (third place); **Rachel Warwick**, Montgomery Academy, Montgomery (honorable mention).

Level Two (grades seven and eight): Victoria Kent, The Altamont School, Birmingham (first place); **Courtney Cox**, Patrician Academy, Butler (second place); **Kate Benton**, Carver Magnet School, Dothan (third place); **Taylor Gregory**, Baldwin Arts and Academics Middle Magnet School, Montgomery (honorable mention).

Level Three (grades nine through twelve): Deanne Revel, Pelham High School, Pelham (first place); **Lauren Womack**, Daphne High School, Daphne (second place); **Jennifer Quan**, Covenant Christian Academy, Huntsville (third place); **Karla Hosch**, Daphne High School, Daphne (honorable mention); **Emilee Rucker**, Daphne High School, Daphne (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. The 2008 Letters About Literature contest will be jointly sponsored by the Alabama Center for the Book and the Alabama Humanities Foundation. For more information, please visit www.alabamabookcenter.org or contact the Alabama Center for the Book at 334-844-4946.