



City of Alexandria, VA

City Hall, 301 King St. Room 3500, Alexandria, VA 22314

City of Alexandria Names Amy Young as New Poet Laureate

April 22, 2010

News Highlights:

- The City of Alexandria has appointed Amy A. Young as the new Poet Laureate.
- Ms. Young succeeds Mary McElveen, who has served as the Poet Laureate since 2007.

More Information:

- www.alexandriacommissionforthearts.org
- www.alexandriava.gov/arts

The City of Alexandria announces the appointment of Amy A. Young as the new Poet Laureate. Young, a resident of Alexandria, has read, studied, and written poetry since she was a child growing up in Washington, DC. For the last 11 years, she has led the Writer's Lab for 11- and 12-year-olds with learning disabilities at the Lab School of Washington. She also has taught writing workshops for learning disabled adults. Young has studied poetry in George Mason University's Master of Fine Arts program and has been trained to lead intensive writing workshops for people from a variety of backgrounds. In her role as Poet Laureate, Ms. Young will create programs to foster an appreciation of poetry as an art form, to encourage creative writing and reading, and to promote literacy through poetry.

Poet Lore, a prominent journal, recently published Ms. Young's work, and Anukriti Sud Hittle, a visual artist in St. Louis is producing and selling collage paintings inspired by one of her poems. In May 2010, a leading classical ensemble, the 21st Century Consort, will make *Characters*, a series of Amy's poems along with new music and visual images, the centerpiece of a special concert at the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

City Council re-established the Poet Laureate program in 2006, and Mary McElveen was selected to fill the post. McElveen created and presented poems for official City ceremonies, and conducted outreach activities in Alexandria schools, recreation centers, libraries, and senior centers. Prior to McElveen's appointment, City Council last appointed a Poet Laureate in 1979. Jean Elliott, an Alexandria resident, served as the City's "Poet in Residence" until her death in 1999.

To select Ms. McElveen's successor, the Alexandria Commission for the Arts and the Office of the Arts issued a call for nominations in the fall of 2009. A Selection Committee representing Alexandria residents reviewed nominations, interviewed three finalists, and recommended to the Mayor and City Council the appointment of Amy Young as the next Poet Laureate.

For more information, contact Cheryl Anne Colton, Cultural Arts Administrator, at 703.746.5588 e-mail poet@alexandriava.gov.