

# County of Santa Clara

## Office of the County Executive

County Government Center, East Wing  
70 West Hedding Street, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
San Jose, CA 95110  
(408) 299-5119  
[www.sccgov.org](http://www.sccgov.org)



January 26, 2009

Contact: Gwendolyn Mitchell/Laurel Anderson  
Office of Public Affairs  
(408) 299-5119

Anna Weldon  
Arts Council Silicon Valley  
(408) 971-2787, ext. 217

## **Santa Clara County Poet Laureate Applicants Sought**

*Post to Raise Awareness of the Power of Poetry and the Spoken Word*

SAN JOSE, CALIF.— The County of Santa Clara in partnership with Arts Council Silicon Valley is seeking applicants to fill the honorary post of Santa Clara County Poet Laureate. The Poet Laureate's role is to elevate poetry in the consciousness of Santa Clara County residents and to help celebrate the literary arts. The application deadline is February 17, 2009, 5:00 p.m.

"Through poetry, the Santa Clara County Poet Laureate will showcase the spirit of the people and the special qualities of Santa Clara County," said Supervisor Liz Kniss, President of the County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors. "This is a wonderful opportunity to commemorate the rich and varied culture of Santa Clara County."

On November 18, 2008, the Board of Supervisors approved the establishment of the honorary post. Arts Council Silicon Valley, the official state and local partner of Santa Clara County with California Arts Council, is administering this program in partnership with the Santa Clara County Library.

"The creation of the Santa Clara County Poet Laureate position will certainly elevate poetry into the consciousness of our community and underscores the creative literary talent that resides here," said Bruce W. Davis, Executive Director of Arts Council Silicon Valley. "We are delighted to team with the County of Santa Clara in the development and launch of this important community position and program."

The Poet Laureate will be an honorary two-year position that will begin April 1, 2009 and end on April 1, 2011. During that term, the Poet Laureate will act as an advocate for poetry, literature, and the arts, and contribute to Santa Clara County's poetry and literary legacy through public readings and participation in civic events. The Poet Laureate also will propose and lead a community project.

-more-

## Santa Clara County Poet Laureate Applicants Sought – page 2 of 2

“The Santa Clara County Poet Laureate program is an opportunity to engage the community and celebrate reading, literacy and poetry,” said Melinda Cervantes, County Librarian, Santa Clara County Library.

### Eligibility Criteria for the Santa Clara County Poet Laureate

- The Poet Laureate will be available to serve a two-year term
- The individual will be a Santa Clara County resident of at least five years who has been published or recognized for poetry and literary contributions
- The individual's poetic interests respond to, or represent, the diversity of arts and cultures in Santa Clara County
- The individual has demonstrated a commitment to and passion for poetry and embraces the opportunity to engage in civic discourse

The Poet Laureate will not be considered an employee of Santa Clara County and will continue to have individual pursuits.

### Duties of Santa Clara County Poet Laureate

- Represent Santa Clara County and the art of poetry through outreach related to poetry
- Present appropriate works at the annual State of the County ceremony and at least four selected County-sponsored events, dedications, or memorials per year
- Act as a resource for poetry and literary activities of the Santa Clara County Library
- Participate in National Poetry Month events and activities
- Undertake a project that will make poetry more available and accessible to people in their everyday lives

The Poet Laureate will receive a modest honorarium.

### Inaugural Advisory Committee

An Inaugural Advisory Committee has been selected and will advise on the selection process, consider various projects for the Poet Laureate and suggest related activities to complement the Poet Laureate's work. The Inaugural Advisory Committee, which includes prominent Bay area poets, literary and arts community leaders, library and County representatives, will meet on January 28, 2009 in San Jose.

Applications are available at [www.sccgov.org](http://www.sccgov.org) under “Hot Items” and at [www.artscouncil.org](http://www.artscouncil.org). For more information, please contact Arts Council Silicon Valley at [laureate@artscouncil.org](mailto:laureate@artscouncil.org) or 408-998-2787.

Applications should be submitted to: Santa Clara County Poet Laureate, Arts Council Silicon Valley, 4 North Second Street, Suite 500, San Jose, CA 95113-1305.

###