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Virginia Center for the Book Announces 2016 Letters About Literature Contest Winners

Charlottesville, VA—The Virginia Center for the Book announces the 2016 winners of the **Letters About Literature** contest in Virginia. Now in its 23rd year, the contest **encourages students in grades 4-12 to read a book, poem, or speech and write to that author** about how the book affected them. Letters About Literature is sponsored by the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress and entries are judged on state and national levels.

Out of 1,248 entries, state-wide honors for Virginia students were awarded by grade levels to the following:

- Level I (grades 4-6): **Aidan Faulkner** (Vienna, VA) on *All of the Above* by Shelley Pearsall
- Level II (grades 7-8): **Jonathan Lam** (Falls Church, VA) on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain
- Level III (grades 9-12): **Margaret Gladieux** (Lynchburg, VA) on *Paper Towns* by John Green

Virginia Secretary of Education Anne Holton honored winners during the 2016 Virginia Festival of the Book Opening Ceremony on Wednesday, March 16 in Charlottesville. Each winner received a \$100 prize and the donation of a book to their school or local library.

Students receiving honorable mentions are:

- Level I (grades 4-6): **Kyri Antholis** (Charlottesville, VA) on *Anywhere But Here* by Mona Simpson
 - **Stephanie Iris Spranger** (Arlington, VA) on *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss
 - **Julia Tan** (McLean, VA) on *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan
 - **Neha Yannam** (Ashburn, VA) on *Blubber* by Judy Blume
- Level II (grades 7-8): **Alisha Foster** (Arlington, VA) on *Bird by Bird* by Anne Lamott
 - **Jack Heaphy** (Charlottesville, VA) on *Counting By 7s* by Holly Goldberg Sloan
 - **Rheannon Loth** (Afton, VA) on *The Color of Water* by James McBride
 - **Paige Peterman** (Barboursville, VA) on *The House at Pooh Corner* by A. A. Milne
- Level III (grades 9-12): **Regan DuHadway** (Sterling, VA) on *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak
 - **Alex Feng** (Great Falls, VA) on *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley
 - **Sophie Salomon** (Charlottesville, VA) on *The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath
 - **Ainood Soliman** (Arlington, VA) on *The Butterfly Mosque* by G. Willow Wilson

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About Letters About Literature: The 23rd annual writing contest for young readers is made possible by a generous grant from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, with additional support from gifts to the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. For more details, visit Read.gov/Letters. The 2017 contest will open in November 2016.

About the Virginia Center for the Book: A program of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, the Virginia Center for the Book was established with the vision that every Virginian will have access to books and reading and to their power to shape and inform personal and civic life. As an affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, the Virginia Center for the Book works within a network of fifty state-center affiliates to promote books, reading, literacy, and the literary life of Virginia. To learn more, visit VirginiaHumanities.org/BookCenter.

About VFH: The mission of Virginia Foundation for the Humanities (VFH) is to connect people and ideas to explore the human experience and inspire cultural engagement. VFH reaches an estimated annual audience of 23 million through Community Programs, Digital Initiatives, Scholarship, and the Virginia Center for the Book. For more information, visit VirginiaHumanities.org.