

Media Release

Delaware Department of State

Delaware Division of Libraries



Status
Release Date

For Immediate Release
Thursday, 29 November 2007

Contact
Phone

Marie Cunningham
(302) 739-4748 x119

Calling All Young Readers and Writers!

Division of Libraries Reminds Students of Contest Deadline

Have you ever read a book that changed your life? Have an author's words touched you in such a personal way that they altered how you view your world or yourself? If so, the Library of Congress wants to hear all about it!

Letters About Literature is a national reading and writing promotion program for young readers in grades 4 through 12, sponsored by the Library of Congress' Center for the Book, in partnership with Target. To enter the contest, readers write a personal letter to an author, explaining how his or her work affected them. Young readers can select authors from any genre—fiction or nonfiction, contemporary or classic. This year's deadline for submissions is December 14.

Last year, more than 55,000 young people from across the nation entered the contest. "The competition is pretty stiff," said Catherine Gourley, *Letters About Literature's* national project director. "Letters that summarize the plot or are nothing more than fan letters are eliminated during the first round of judging."

Delaware Assistant Secretary of State Rick Geisenberger and State Librarian Anne Norman will select the top Delaware essayists based on content, exposition, and voice. One student from each of the three competition levels will be chosen: Level I for young readers in grades 4 through 6; Level II for grade 7 and 8 readers; and Level III for readers in grades 9 through 12.

On the state level, Delaware winners will receive a \$50 Target GiftCard, a \$100 cash prize, and a \$100 reading grant for their community or school library. Each state winner will then advance to the national competition.

A panel of judges for the Center for the Book will select six national winners (two per competition level) who will each receive a \$500 Target GiftCard and a Reading Promotion Grant of \$10,000 for their community or school library. Twelve national runners-up (four per competition level) will also be named.

Any student in grades 4 through 12 in public or private schools is eligible, as are home-schooled students. To obtain the required entry coupon and a copy of the "how to enter" guidelines, young readers can either call the Delaware Division of Libraries at (302) 739-4748 ext.119, write to the national program director at lal@epix.net, or visit the *Letters About Literature* webpage at the Library of Congress: www.loc.gov/letters.

###