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Top Spoken Word Artists Coming for June 6 Cal Poly Poetry Slam

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly will host seven of the nation's top spoken word artists to compete at the first annual Cal Poly poetry slam on Wednesday, June 6.

The poetry slam is free and open to the public. It is set for 7 to 10 p.m. in Chumash Auditorium on campus.

The event, titled “The Anthem – Words Will Change the World,” will feature spoken word artists Sonya Renee, the 2004 National Slam Champion, and Steve Connell, the 2003 National Slam Champion, as well as award-winning poets Rachel McKibbens, Jason Bayani, Iyeoka Okoawo, Andrea Gibson and Joe Hernandez-Kolski.

The anthem aims to inspire people to use the power of their voice and words to make a difference. The event will expose the audience to diverse personalities and poetry on issues such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, identity, class, life and love, said Tylor Middlestadt, a student coordinator of the event and former Associated Students Inc. president.

"Through the exchange of ideas and dialogue, organizers hope to build an authentic sense of community throughout the Cal Poly campus by creating respect for the individual,” Middlestadt said.

The Anthem is influenced by the Cal Poly Multicultural Center’s successful monthly poetry venue, Another Type of Groove. The Anthem is funded through the university's Instructionally Related Activities program.

It is sponsored by the Cal Poly English Department and the College of Liberal Arts. For more information, call Middlestadt at 441-7174 or tmiddlestadt@gmail.com.

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