



# News

University News & Information

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## Cal Poly Announces 2014 Landwehr Creative Writing Contest Winners

SAN LUIS OBISPO — Cal Poly English majors Erica London and MacKenzie Soldan have won the university's 2014 Al Landwehr Creative Writing Contest.

London's poem "We Called It Dancing" and Soldan's story "Reference" both won \$100 first-place prizes.

Kevin Clark, contest director and English Department professor, said both writers demonstrate surprising maturity of craft. "Erica's poem is a pantoum, which repeats key lines in surprising ways," he said. "Though only an undergraduate, she understands how to maintain tone and theme within the strict confines of the form."

Poetry judge Dustin Stegner said her poem "evokes soulful, timeless images of love, passion, and music in a fresh way." Stegner also praised her use of form. "Her work shows how poetic form intensifies rather than limits the exploration of such themes."

Clark said Soldan, a recent transfer to Cal Poly, is already highly accomplished in the art of fiction and "has innate storytelling ability."

Fiction judge Jonathan Gotsik was impressed "by Soldan's ability to create a believable speculative world subtly and organically, through the use of neologisms and seamless description."

Student poets Lauren Henley and Kara Erikson won second and third place respectively. Rhiannon Kelly and Kaye Richardson earned second and third in fiction.

All six winners will receive prize money, half of which is donated by poet and Cal Poly alumna Jocelyn Knowlton and her husband, Bruce Knowlton of Knowlton Brothers Furniture in Nipomo.

Editors' choices were also announced: Tim Atwood, Allie Rogge and Eli Williams were chosen in poetry; and Alicia Freeman, Jonathan Maule and Frances Wiese were chosen in fiction.

The annual contest is named in honor of Cal Poly English Professor Emeritus Al Landwehr, a nationally published, much loved creative writing professor who started the contest in the 1970s. The competition is open to all students registered at Cal Poly.

Two separate judging committees — one for poetry; one for fiction — comprised of English Department faculty members read the entries blind. This year, professors John Bartel, Brad Campbell and Stegner judged the poetry, while professors Carol Curiel, Erin Martin-Elston and Gotsik judged the fiction.

The students will read from their winning works and receive their prizes at the annual Creative Writing Contest Awards Reading, held in May. The poems and stories will be published in Cal Poly's literary annual Byzantium, which will be available free

that night.

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