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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Award-Winning Poet-Author-Activist Nikki Giovanni
To Lead 'Slam' at Cal Poly April 8

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Poet and writer Nikki Giovanni, an activist on the national scene for three decades, will lead a public "poetry slam" at Cal Poly April 8 as part of the University's "Provocative Perspectives" series.

Joining Giovanni in the slam will be local poets and the 2003 Orange County Grand Poetry Slam champion, who goes by the designation RAC. The slam, a competition that emphasizes both writing and performance, will begin at 7 p.m. in the main lounge of Yosemite Residence Hall on Grand Avenue on campus. The public is invited to the free event, which is sponsored by the university’s Multicultural Center.

Prolific in almost every form of the written word, Giovanni is the author of "Racism 101," a collection of essays on her observations as an educator, writer and scholar-activist. She is also the author of more than 14 volumes of poetry. The most recent, "The Collected Poetry of Nikki Giovanni," was published last year. She is a professor of English and women’s studies at Virginia Tech.

Reviewers have described Giovanni’s topics as running the gamut from the environment to our reliance on manners and from sex and politics to love among blacks, with special attention to all aspects of black womanhood. She has been acclaimed as a major influence since her poems emerged during the civil-rights and black arts movements of the 1960s.

"Nikki Giovanni is nothing if not provocative, and she will be a great capstone to our series this year," said Cornel Morton, vice president for student affairs and a sponsor of "Provocative Perspectives." "She is an outstanding poet and a stimulating and engaging speaker. We are indeed fortunate to have her visit our campus."
As part of her visit to the campus, Giovanni will also address faculty and staff members in a breakfast talk.

For more information on the evening’s activities, call the Multicultural Center at 756-1405.

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