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Three St. Tammany Parish High School Students Advance to 2018 *Poetry Out Loud* State Competition

The 2018 Parish-level St. Tammany Parish *Poetry Out Loud Competition* was held on Tuesday, January 17, at Fontainebleau High School. Eight St. Tammany Parish High Schools with a total of 22 students, competed in the ninth annual competition. The top three finalists who advanced to the State Championship coming up in March, at the Louisiana State Museum in Baton Rouge, are as follows: **First Place, Dejeune Richardson of Covington High School; Second Place, Grace McCullar of Covington High; and Third Place, Justin Basse of Covington High.**

“In the past, we have had two competitors advance to nationals from this region, so there is no doubt in my mind that the talented young adults who advanced are ready to perform, compete and achieve great things,” Pat Brister, St. Tammany Parish President. “All of these competitors are talented, bright, and capable, and their involvement in this event is a great step in their experience, and in their academic futures. Best of luck to all of them.”

Winners from each state who advance in their respective competitions, will then compete for the National *Poetry Out Loud* Championship in Washington D.C.

Created by The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the Poetry Foundation, *Poetry Out Loud* is a program that encourages the nation’s youth to learn about great poetry through exploration, memorization and performance. The inspiration for this competition is to promote the art of poetry in both the classroom and the community. Participants are scored on performance and accuracy by a panel of judges. The St. Tammany Parish Commission on Cultural Affairs coordinates this competition for the students in our Parish.

To learn more about the *Poetry Out Loud* Competition and what students and schools can win through this competition, visit www.poetryoutloud.org/about.

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