



# *News Release*

Contact: Martin Ackley, Director of Public and Governmental Affairs, 517-241-4395  
Bill Disessa, Spokesperson, 517-335-6649

## 2017 Letters About Literature National Winners Announced

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LANSING – Michigan has two national winners for the Letters About Literature 2017 program, the Michigan Department of Education announced today.

Letters About Literature is a Library of Congress national reading and writing promotion program that asks young people in grades 4 through 12 to write to an author (living or deceased) about how his or her book affected their lives. This year’s winners come from all parts of the country and wrote to authors as diverse as R.J. Palacio, Lisa Genova, Sharon Draper, Laura Ingalls Wilder, and Stephen Chbosky.

The top letters in each competition level for each state were chosen. Then, a National winner and two National Honor winners were chosen from each of the three competition levels: Level 1 (grades 4-6), Level 2 (grades 7-8) and Level 3 (grades 9-12). National winners receive a \$1,000 gift card and National Honor winners receive a \$100 gift card.

Following are this year’s winners:

### **Level 1**

#### *National Prize*

- **Claire Juip, Grosse Pointe, MI**, wrote to R.J. Palacio, author of “Wonder”

#### *National Honor Award*

- Isabella Reichard, Brookline, NH, wrote to Esther Earl, author of “This Star Won’t Go Out”
- Mark Leschinsky, Mahwah, NJ, wrote to Lisa Genova, author of “Still Alice”

## Level 2

### *National Prize*

- **Maria Cheriyan, Farmington Hills, MI**, wrote to Ruta Sepetys, author of “Salt to the Sea”

### *National Honor Award*

- Sam Opinsky, Chesterfield, MO, wrote to Sharon Draper, author of “Out of My Mind”
- Madison Kelleher, Montoursville, PA, wrote to Robert Munsch, author of “Love Your Forever”

## Level 3

### *National Prize*

- Apoorva Chauhan, Las Vegas, NV, wrote to Stephen Chbosky, author of “The Perks of Being a Wallflower”

### *National Honor Award*

- Brice Jansen, Leopold, MO, wrote to Laura Ingalls Wilder, “Little House” series
- Samantha Lynn Kiss, Chesapeake, VA, wrote to David Levithan, author of “Boy Meets Boy”

To access the full text of their letters, go to <http://www.read.gov/letters/>.

Letters about Literature is a program is promoted in Michigan by the Library of Michigan and the Michigan Center for the Book.

For more information or questions about Letters About Literature, contact Cathy Lancaster, Youth Services Coordinator at the Library of Michigan, [lancasterc5@michigan.gov](mailto:lancasterc5@michigan.gov).

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The Library of Michigan – Michigan’s official state library agency for more than 185 years – is part of the Michigan Department of Education. To learn more, visit [www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan](http://www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan).