



Maine Community College System

NEWS RELEASE

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Students from Morse, Fort Kent, and Kennebunk High Schools Chosen as “Governor’s Young Writers of the Year”

HALLOWELL, Maine — Three Maine high school juniors — **Berkley Heath** of Morse High School in Bath, **Shannon Martin** of Fort Kent Community High School, and **Katherine Rich** of Kennebunk High School— were honored today as the 2008 Governor’s Young Writers of the Year.

Maine authors Richard Russo, Linda Greenlaw, and Wesley McNair served as judges for the Maine Community College System’s “A Journey Into Writing” program, a statewide contest open to all high school juniors in Maine.

The three winning entries were chosen from 218 submissions from 65 Maine high schools. Governor John E. Baldacci participated in a luncheon ceremony today to announce the three winners and honor all seven semifinalists.

The students came from around the state with family members and teachers to attend the event at Maple Hill Farm Inn in Hallowell. Also attending were representatives of the program sponsors: the Portland Press Herald/Maine Sunday Telegram and U.S. Cellular.

Governor Baldacci praised all seven students. “Writing is important. It’s an important form of communication,” he said. “My hat is off to you. The way that you are able to articulate yourself, be succinct about it and do it in a short story format is to be commended. I am really impressed by your work.”

Richard Russo, in his remarks to the audience, described writing as a “lifelong conversation with yourself” and encouraged the students to keep writing. “We don’t write to tell people what we think, we write to discover what we think.”

Author Wesley McNair read aloud portions of each students’ entries and praised them and their teachers: “Thank you for proving that imaginative writing is alive and well in the schools of Maine.”

Linda Greenlaw told the students that even if they didn’t make a career out of writing, “the ability to write will serve you well for the rest of your lives.”

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Along with earning the title “Governor’s Young Writer of the Year,” each of the three winners received a total of \$2,500.

The other semifinalists were: Ryan Henderson of Erskine Academy in South China; Julianna Mateyko of Brunswick High School; Hannah Montalvo of Freeport High School; and Katherine Rich of Kennebunk High School. Each of the semifinalists received a plaque and \$250.

“A Journey Into Writing” is open to all high school juniors and home-schooled students of the same age. To enter the contest, students submit a short story, essay, or poem of up to 1,500 words. More information about the contest, including the top seven entries, is available at <http://writing.mccs.me.edu>.

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