

Town of



Huntington

... News Release From

The Town of Huntington ...

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Board to Recognize 2016 Poetry for the HART Winners

*Winning teens to join poets Alan Semerdjian, Patti Tana, and Steven Licardi in
April 21 reading at Walt Whitman Birthplace*

On Thursday, April 21, the Huntington Town Board will recognize teen poets from the community selected for participation in the Town's *Poetry for the HART* Public Art Initiative. The event will begin at 7 p.m. at the Walt Whitman Birthplace (246 Old Walt Whitman Rd., Huntington Station).

The winning teen poets will receive certificates in an award ceremony with members of the Huntington Town Board. Immediately following conclusion of the award ceremony there will be a poetry reading led by poets **Alan Semerdjian**, **Patti Tana**, and **Steven Licardi** at which each of the teen poets selected for the program will read their winning poems. A brief reception will follow. The award ceremony, reading, and reception are free and open to the public.

Writer, musician, and educator **Alan Semerdjian's** poems and essays have appeared in over 100 print and online publications and anthologies including *Adbusters*, *Diagram*, and *Brooklyn Rail*. He released a chapbook of poems called *An Improvised Device* (Lock n Load Press) in 2005 and his first full-length book *In the Architecture of Bone* (GenPop Books) in 2009. His songs have appeared in television and film and charted on CMJ. He earned his MFA at Goddard College in 2002 and currently teaches English at Herricks High School in New Hyde Park, NY. Alan resides in New York City's East Village.

Patti Tana is Professor Emerita of English at Nassau Community College (SUNY) and the Walt Whitman Birthplace 2009 Long Island Poet of the Year. She is the editor of the poetry anthology *Songs of Seasoned Women*, associate editor of the *Long Island Quarterly*, and the author of nine books of poems, most recently *All I Can Gather & Give* (JB Stillwater Publishing, 2014). To read her poems, visit www.pattitana.com.

Steven T. Licardi (*The Sven-Bo!*) is a Long Island-based spoken word poet, actor, motivational speaker, and artist from West Islip, NY. He is the author *Death By Active Movement* (Local Gems Press, 2013) and often uses poetry to raise awareness of various social justice issues to teach empathy, understanding, empowerment, and altruism. Steven has been praised for his literary work, volunteerism, advocacy, and activism, including 1st Prize in the Princess Ronkonkoma Productions Poetry Contest in 2014 for his poem "If I Looked Like What I've Been Through." For more, please visit his website: TheSvenBo.com.

Poetry for the HART is a Public Art Initiative project developed by the Town's Public Art Advisory Committee in conjunction with Teenspeak, Co-Lead Agency, who suggested the project to the Town. Teens in the community from ages 14-18 were invited last fall to submit poems for consideration in the program. A selection panel comprised of the poets Patti Tana, and Steven Licardi, joined by Jim Metcalfe, a member of the Town's Public Art Advisory Committee, were charged with reviewing the 147 different submissions from 113 different teen poets and narrowing the choices to the winning poems. Additional partners in this project include Heckscher Museum of Art; Huntington Arts Council; *The Long Islander*, which has pledged to publish the winning poems; REACH CYA; Town of Huntington Youth Bureau; Tri-Community Youth Agency; the award reception host – Walt Whitman Birthplace Association; and Youth Directions & Alternatives CYA, as well as numerous area teachers who actively encouraged their students' participation. Subsequent to the ceremonies, colorful placards, each bearing a winning poem, will be placed in the interior advertising spaces on buses throughout the HART system. Information on previous winners of the Poetry for the HART program and their winning poems can be found at www.HuntingtonNY.gov/HARTpoetry.

The names of the winning teen poets and text of their winning poems will be available following the April 21 event. For further information on *Poetry for the HART* or other Town of Huntington Public Art Initiative projects, contact John Coraor, Director of Cultural Affairs, at 631-351-3099 or via e-mail: jcoraor@HuntingtonNY.gov.

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