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**ALASKAN WRITERS
BRYAN ALLEN FIERRO AND JILL OSIER
WIN MAUREEN EGEN WRITERS EXCHANGE AWARD**

*Prize Includes All-Expenses-Paid Trip to New York City,
Meetings with Publishing Professionals,
Month-long residency*

New York City – April 19, 2013 — Poets & Writers announced today that fiction writer **Bryan Allen Fierro** and poet **Jill Osier** are the winners of the 2013 Maureen Egen Writers Exchange Award. The prestigious award, which aims to provide promising writers a network for professional advancement, has helped to launch the careers of Sue Monk Kidd (*The Secret Life of Bees*), Elaine Beale (*Another Life Altogether*), Sandra Beasley (*Don't Kill the Birthday Girl*), David Mura (*Turning Japanese: Memoirs of a Sansei*), Fae Myenne Ng (*Bone*), Mona Simpson (*My Hollywood*), and others.

Each year, Poets & Writers selects one state (or Washington, D.C.), and invites writers from that jurisdiction to apply for the Writers Exchange Award (WEX). For 2013, the state of Alaska was chosen. Poets & Writers received 118 manuscripts, about evenly divided between poetry and fiction. Winners were selected by judges **Ann Napolitano** (for fiction) and **Afaa Michael Weaver** (for poetry).

The Writers Exchange Award offers winners an unusual opportunity. Poets & Writers will ask Mr. Fierro and Ms. Osier to identify publishing professionals, agents, editors, and writers that they would like to meet. Then, over the next several months, staff will work to arrange appointments with as many of these individuals as possible. In October, the two winners will travel to New York City, all expenses paid, and representatives of Poets & Writers will accompany them on a round of visits to gain insight and advice and establish professional contacts. As a direct result of these meetings, past WEX winners have had their books published, received fellowships, secured teaching positions, and laid the groundwork for their professional lives as writers. To date, more than 80 writers from 32 states have participated.



Bryan Allen Fierro grew up in the environs of Los Angeles, California. He received his B.A. in English-Writing from the University of Colorado at Denver, and is currently finishing his M.F.A. in fiction at Pacific University's low-residency program in Oregon. His thesis project, a collection of stories called *Dodger Blue Will Fill Your Soul*. Bryan lives in Anchorage, Alaska where he serves his community as a firefighter/paramedic for the Anchorage Fire Department. His stories have appeared in *Copper Nickel*, and *Quarterly West*.



Jill Osier moved to Alaska in 1997 to study poetry at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Since then her poems have appeared in literary journals and in two chapbooks, *Bedful of Nebraskas* and *Should Our Undoing Come Down Upon Us White* (forthcoming). Her work has received a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, the Diane Middlebrook Poetry Fellowship, the Frost Place Chapbook Fellowship, and the Campbell Corner Poetry Prize. She lives in Fairbanks.

The judges also cited first runners-up **Joan Naviyuk Kane** (in poetry) **David Stevenson** (in fiction), both from Anchorage; and second runners-up **Linda Martin** from Homer (in poetry) and **Brendan I. Jones** from Sitka (in fiction).

As part of the winners' visit to New York, Poets & Writers will sponsor a reading and reception for them. In addition, they are offered a one-month residency at the Jentel Artist Residency Program in Wyoming. Excerpts of the winning manuscripts, as well as a complete list of past winners, can be found at at.pw.org/wex. The Writers Exchange Award is generously supported by Maureen Mahon Egen.

ABOUT POETS & WRITERS

Poets & Writers is the nation's largest nonprofit literary organization serving creative writers. Founded in 1970, the organization's mission is to foster the professional development of poets and writers, to promote communication throughout the literary community, and to help create an environment in which literature can be appreciated by the widest possible public.

Poets & Writers accomplishes its mission through *Poets & Writers Magazine*, an award-winning bimonthly publication; pw.org, a website that provides trustworthy advice, information, and a lively online community for writers; Readings/Workshops, which pays writers fees for giving readings and leading workshops throughout New York and California, as well as in eight cities outside those states; and by sponsoring awards that honor and encourage writers. In addition to the Maureen Egen Writers Exchange Award, Poets & Writers sponsors the Jackson Poetry Prize and the Amy Award. [Learn more at pw.org](http://pw.org).

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