

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #311 (98-99) May 24, 1999

TO: SCHOOL BOARD
FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
SUBJECT: PENCILS FULL OF STARS AWARD WINNERS

PERTINENT FACTS:

The idea for a poetry booklet penned by students began in 1970 when Northwood Elementary School first-grade teacher Bell Benton set out to collect student poetry to present at the District's Fine Art Festival. Overwhelmed with the number of submissions, Ms. Benton compiled the collection and titled it, "Pencils Full of Stars."

Each year since, with the help of the Poetry Committee, the booklet has been published, allowing Anchorage students the opportunity to see their creativity in print. It is believed to be the longest continually published poetry anthology in Alaska.

In addition to the publication of their poetry, some students are honored with special awards, such as the Mielke Memorial Poetry Award to Promising Young Poets. This award is given in honor of the late Margaret Mielke, the first poet laureate of Alaska.

This year's Mielke Award winners include Eric Davis and Kyle Stattner from Baxter Elementary; Marcella Dent, Jacquelyn Bertino, Steven Tabor and Amber Morgan from Airport Heights; Jennifer Blankenship from Bayshore Elementary; Katherine Palmer from Williwaw; and Carly Sprano from Family Partnership.

This year a second award has been added to honor the late Bell Benton whose idea has given so many students a forum for their creativity. The four-member

selection committee chose the following students for poetry which they believe Ms. Benton would have enjoyed.

Bell Benton Award winners include Erin Towner from Chugiak Elementary; Declan Boyd from Chugach Optional; Aurelia Preston from Ocean View; Marcella Dent, Amber Morgan and Jacquelyn Bertino from Airport Heights; Eric Harrison from Kasuun; Alexandra Korshin from O'Malley Elementary; and Megan Escobedo from Kincaid Elementary.

It is requested that the School Board recognize these young poets whose imagination and creativity inspired these awards.

BC/LW/CW

Prepared by: Cindy Wilsbach, Communications Specialist

Approved by: Larry Wiget, Executive Director, Public Affairs