

FRESNO STATE

Fresno State News

[ACADEMICS](#) [CAMPUS/COMMUNITY](#) [RESEARCH](#) [ALUMNI](#) [ATHLETICS](#) [FEATURED VIDEOS](#) [Q](#)[Home](#) » [Alum James Tyner named Fresno's first Poet Laureate](#)[< Previous](#) [Next >](#)

SECTIONS

[> ACADEMICS](#)[> CAMPUS & COMMUNITY](#)[> RESEARCH](#)[> ALUMNI](#)[> PRESS RELEASES](#)[> FEATURED VIDEOS](#)

NEWS SOURCES

[> Fresno State Magazine](#)

Alum James Tyner named Fresno's first Poet Laureate

Fresno State alumnus James Tyner is the City of Fresno's first Poet Laureate.

Mayor Ashley Swearengin made the announcement today in the Leon S. Peters Ellipse of the Madden Library at Fresno State. Tyner, a [Fresno County Public Library](#) employee who conducts one of the longest-running free poetry series in the San Joaquin Valley, will serve a two-year term beginning immediately.

Tyner holds a bachelor's degree in English and a Master of Fine Arts degree, both from Fresno State. He graduated from the Creative Writing Master of Fine Arts program with distinction in 2009 and received the Most Outstanding Thesis Award for his book of poetry, "Baptized in Dirt."

Since his graduation, Tyner has had more than 20 poems published, and his poetry has been included in three anthologies. For the past four years, Fresno State has asked Tyner to speak to incoming MFA students, as well as students in beginning and intermediate poetry classes at Fresno State.

"James Tyner has built an impressive record of accomplishments, both through his work as a poet and his efforts to promote community awareness of literary arts and making poetry accessible to a wide range of audiences," Mayor Swearengin said. "I'm confident that James' commitment and passion will expand the audience for poetry and promote the accomplishments of our local literary artists."

The Fresno Poet Laureate is responsible for advocating for the advancement of literary arts in the greater Fresno area. Tyner is expected to be engaged with local schools and create or facilitate workshops and readings that will bring him into contact with students, artists and the public.

"I just want to say how humbled, honored, and excited I am to be able to serve the City of Fresno in this way," Tyner said. "Fresno has an amazingly rich poetry history, and I can't wait to share that with others, to use the office of the Poet Laureate to expose the community to all the great literary happenings taking place here."

Tyner is the third poet with a Fresno State connection to receive a literary honor. [Philip Levine](#), professor emeritus of English, served as the poet laureate of the United States, and former Fresno State professor [Juan Felipe Herrera](#) is California's current poet laureate.

[Community Newsletter](#)

[Fresno State](#)

[The Collegian](#)

[Bulldog Blog](#)

[Go Bulldogs](#)

[Videos](#)

[Social Media Directory](#)

"As a community we have much to be proud of," said Lilia Chavez, executive director of the [Fresno Arts Council](#). "Fresno is recognized throughout the country and internationally as fertile ground for growing talented poets and writers. It is time we harvest and recognize one of our own."

Mayor Swearingin created the Poet Laureate position in October 2012 to demonstrate that the community recognizes the value of poetry, culture and heritage.

Tyner has worked for the Fresno County Public Library for almost 13 years and has conducted poetry workshops and poetry readings for the public. His poetry series, "Poets in the Library," focuses on local writers and is one the longest-running free poetry events in the San Joaquin Valley.

Award-winning poet Terrance Hayes said "words like grit and vigor suit (Tyner's) work, but the best word for what we are given and witness to is passion."

The Poet Laureate Selection Committee consisted of individuals representing Fresno State's Cultural Heritage Division, the Fresno Arts Council, the Fresno Poet Association, the Fresno County Library System, published poets and representatives of Fresno and Central Unified school districts. The Fresno Arts Council coordinated and staffed the Selection Committee for the Poet Laureate.

The City of Fresno's Poet Laureate will receive \$1,000 per year with funds from the Fresno Arts Council & Bonner Family Foundation.

To read his first poem as Poet Laureate, click [here](#).

Related Links:

- [Fresno County Public Library](#)
- [Philip Levine](#)
- [Juan Felipe Herrera](#)
- [Fresno Arts Council](#)

[Download Adobe Acrobat Reader](#)

By [Shirley Armbruster](#) | April 22nd, 2013 | Categories: [PRESS RELEASES](#) | Tags: [awards and recognition](#), [students](#) | Comments Off

Share This Story, Choose Your Platform!



Related Posts

New semi truck emissions testing program opens on campus

February 1st, 2024

Historic winter expedition highlighted in 'Sierra Odyssey' movie premiere

January 30th, 2024

Fresno State holds blood drive

January 30th, 2024

Community service opportunities fair planned

January 30th, 2024

Grant propels Journalists of Color training program

January 30th, 2024

Fresno State News Hub is the primary source of information about current events affecting California State University, Fresno, its students, faculty

CONTACT US

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO
5241 N. Maple Ave.
Fresno, CA 93740
P: 559.278.4240

SECTIONS

> [ACADEMICS](#)

> [CAMPUS & COMMUNITY](#)

> [RESEARCH](#)

Sign up for the Community Newsletter

Fresno State News Archives

<https://www.fresnostatenews.com/2013/04/22/alum-james-tyner-named-fresnos-first-poet-laureate/>

4/5

2/1/24, 12:33 PM

Alum James Tyner named Fresno's first Poet Laureate - Fresno State News

and staff; providing an archive of news articles, videos and photos, as well as links to major resources on campus as a service to the university community.

Email Us

- > [ALUMNI](#)
- > [PRESS RELEASES](#)
- > [FEATURED VIDEOS](#)

Copyright 2012 - 2016 Avada | All Rights Reserved | Powered by WordPress | Theme Fusion

