

UNH Announces Annual Poetry Festival & Programming

Friday, April 28, 2023



DURHAM, N.H.—Thanks to a \$2 million gift from the YAS Foundation, the University of New Hampshire has established the Nossrat Yassini Poetry Fund to

support a year-long schedule of activities that will celebrate and promote the power of poetry at UNH and beyond, culminating each April in a festival to coincide with national poetry month.

The festival on the Durham campus is a free community event. It will feature readings and workshops by nationally renowned and emerging poets, monetary prize awards for both published and unpublished poems, showcases of work by high school and college students as part of an integrated curriculum and the publication of poetry collections featuring the festival's best poems. Activities related to the festival, including outreach to New Hampshire high school teachers and students, will start this



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summer and the inaugural festival will take place in April 2024.

The fund will also provide yearly support to a Nossrat Yassini Poet in Residence within the English department as well as a graduate assistantship to a UNH Master of Fine Arts in Writing student.

“I’m thrilled for the College of Liberal Arts to receive this generous and forward-thinking gift from the YAS Foundation,” said Michele Dillon, dean of the College of Liberal Arts. “In a time of tremendous societal change and uncertainty—stoked by technological transformation, geopolitical conflicts, climate change and persistent inequality—this gift allows us to reassert and sustain the power of poetry to remind us of our shared human purpose and to help bridge the many polarizing divisions that mark our current era.”

The Nossrat Yassini Poetry Fund honors the life of Nossrat Yassini (1934-2022), the deeply loved and much appreciated mother of Rouzbeh and Pamela Yassini.

The Nossrat Yassini Poetry Festival website provides details about the festival timelines and activities at <https://cola.unh.edu/nossrat-yassini-poetry-festival>.

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