

2009 Kansas Letters About Literature

by Roy Bird, Director, Kansas Center for the Book

The Kansas Center for the Book announces the 2009 Letters About Literature (LAL), a national reading and writing initiative sponsored by the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress in partnership with Target. Letters from students across Kansas and the entire nation will be accepted at Letters About Literature, PO Box 609, Dallas, PA 18612 beginning in August.

To enter, young readers write a letter to an author, past or present, describing how that author's work somehow changed the student's view of the world or himself/herself. The project focuses on reader response and reflective writing and has three levels: Level 1 for students in grades 4-6; Level 2 for students in grades 7-8; and Level 3 for students in grades 9-12. Three state winners, one at each level, will receive a cash award, as well as a \$50 Target gift card and advancement to the national level judging.

For the 2008 LAL competition, over 56,000 students nationally and 1,500 Kansas students submitted letters. This year we would like over 2,000 students to send their letters in!

The three 2008 Kansas LAL winners (pictured below) were received by Governor Kathleen Sebelius. Who will be the state winners next March?



Jamie Yearout
Level One - 2008



Corinne Andresen
Level Two - 2008



Ammarah Usmani
Level Three - 2008

Again this year six national winners (two per level of competition) will receive a \$500 Target gift card, plus each will win a \$10,000 LAL Reading Promotion Grant for their community or school library so that others can experience personal relationships with authors and the stories they tell. Twelve national honorable mention winners (four per level of competition) will each receive a \$100 Target gift card and a \$1,000 LAL Reading Promotion grant for the community or school library of their choice.

For more information check out the Letters About Literature page on

the Kansas Center for the Book website, www.kcfb.info. Visit now—all entries must be received by December 7, 2008.