2023 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate

On June 2, Nairobi Barnes was named the 2023 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate after competing with six other finalists, winning a $5,000 college scholarship generously funded by the Friends of the Oakland Public Library.

The award was announced by District 4 Council member Janani Ramachandran at the culmination of a packed, standing-room-only live event during which all finalists performed.

Barnes, a 2022 graduate of Oakland Military Institute, will represent the Oakland community through poetry, media, and public appearances.

On being the 2023 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate, Barnes says, “Poetry is more than the words written for the speaker, poetry is more than the depths of emotion that it evokes, poetry is more than myself and every other poet before me. It is community; it is the city of Oakland that I call home, it is the way my mother wishes me well, it is the way I love myself and others. Poetry is what keeps me kind and loving, it is my promise to others that I will lead this year with fulfillment and bravery, and it is my greatest pleasure to stand beside the Oakland Public Library to spread poetry and all its love to others.”

The Bookmark News

Free Children’s Book Day

Every Second Sunday
(Next giveaway days: August 13 & September 10)

NEW Book Totes for Sale

Show off your love for the Bookmark with one of these stylish new book totes! Available for purchase at The Bookmark Bookstore.

Save the Date: Fall Book Sale

Friday, October 20 - Saturday, October 22
Get to Know Your Grants

By Sara DuBois, Coordinator of Grants & Volunteers

In 2021-22, the Friends of the OPL awarded the first set of Branch Equity Grants: discretionary awards ($1,500 at the time) to each branch located in a high priority neighborhood (per the OakDOT Equity Toolbox.)

The impact of these grants was immediate and powerful, and the Friends of the OPL generously increased the size of each grant to $2,500 in 2022-23. As we approach the end of the Friends’ fiscal year, the library is pleased to share just a few of the highlights from this program. These projects and activities – and others not included in the list below – would not have been possible without the Branch Equity Grants.

- 81st Avenue Branch hosted an online program with award-winning organizer, speaker, political commentator, producer, independent journalist, and scholar-activist Rosa Clemente.
- Asian Branch worked with the Cut Fruit Collective, Civic Design Studio, and students from Oakland High School Visual Arts Academy to create a colorful and fun mural in the branch.
- Brookfield Branch staff purchased lumber and built another box for their garden. The Branch Manager reported that a neighbor offered to help, adding that the library’s garden – started with last year’s Branch Equity grant – is “bringing people in the neighborhood together.”
- The César E. Chávez Branch engaged local mural artist Xochitl Guerrero to design and paint a mural that delights and inspires all visitors to this busy branch. You can see photos and read more about the work at www.fopl.org/news.

OPL Events

Black August Film Series
Presented by Black Cultural Zone

Saturdays, August 5, 12, 19 & 26
81st Avenue Branch

Black Cultural Zone presents a captivating curated collection of empowering and thought-provoking films honoring Black resilience and resistance. Panel discussions follow each film.

August 5, 2PM-4PM: Judas and the Black Messiah
August 12, 2PM-4PM: Soledad Brother: A Tribute to George Jackson
August 19, 2PM-4PM: Lowndes County and the Road to Black Power
August 26, 3PM-5PM: Neptune Frost

Urban Cycling 101 with Bike East Bay

Saturday, September 9, 1PM – 3PM
West Oakland Branch

Join Bike East Bay for a FREE workshop on the basic rules of the road, how to equip your bicycle, fit your helmet, avoid bike theft, ride after dark, and prevent common crashes. 2-hour, indoor workshop for adults and teens, no bike required. To register contact: dani@bikeeastbay.org.

Book Clubs at OPL

OPL has in-person and online book clubs! Find yours at OaklandLibrary.org/bookclub

Off the Shelf | Summer 2023
Remembering Judy Toll: a Dedicated Friend and Advocate of the OPL

Our friend and former board member Judy Toll died peacefully on May 20, 2023. Judy joined the Bookmark volunteer staff in 2001 after retiring from a career as a High School Librarian. She served on the board from 2003 to 2017. Judy loved the Oakland Public Library, the Friends of OPL, and most especially, the Bookmark. She led the Bookstore Committee for several years and continued to volunteer at the store on Friday afternoons until March 2020.

What the Friends Board is Reading

These titles can be found at OPL (check the card catalog at oaklandlibrary.org) or purchased from Bookshop bookshop.org/shop/theBookmarkBookstore

**WHAT YOU DON’T KNOW WILL MAKE A WHOLE NEW WORLD: A MEMOIR**
Dorothy Lazard
The retired head librarian of the Oakland History Center shares her own early history in this riveting return to the Bay Area of the 1960s and ’70s. Dorothy’s resilience enabled her to survive family turbulence and loss. And her endless quest for knowledge led her over and over to (where else?) the library!
- **Recommended by Kathryn Sterbenc**

**THE MOTHERS**
Brit Bennett
Set within a contemporary black community in Southern California, Brit Bennett’s mesmerizing first novel is an emotionally perceptive story about community, love, and ambition. It begins with a secret.
- **Recommended by Aniya Grimm**

**DEMON COPPERHEAD**
Barbara Kingsolver
In transposing Charles Dickens’ *David Copperfield* to the contemporary American South, Barbara Kingsolver’s *Demon Copperhead* speaks for a new generation of lost boys.
- **Recommended by Julie Waldman**

**ORANGES**
John McPhee
*Oranges* was first conceived as a short magazine article about oranges and orange juice, but the author kept encountering so much irresistible information that he found that he had in fact written a book.
- **Recommended by Corey Hatcher**

**AT THE EDGE OF THE ORCHARD**
Tracy Chevalier
This historical fiction starts in Ohio but takes the reader to California during the Gold Rush, with a different emphasis on trees and plants instead of gold.
- **Recommended by Sara Jewell**

**WHAT YOU DON’T KNOW WILL MAKE A WHOLE NEW WORLD: A MEMOIR**
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Giving

- In memory of Bettye Hemphill from Arline M. Chinn
- In memory of Dorothy McKenna from Justice Greenwood, Justice Lie, and Marina Meyere
- In memory of Judith Toll from Laila Hallsteen and Winifred Walters
- In memory of Adam Twain, from his coworkers at OPL
- In memory and appreciation of Judy Toll, from her friends at the Oakland Public Library
- In memory of my son, Sam Low, from Elaine Joe
- In honor of Susana Conde from Kathleen Lemmon
- In honor of Mrs. Maibelle Lee’s 100th birthday from Darrow Chan
- In honor of Pat Toney from Cassie Perham
- In honor of Winifred Walters from Laurie Umeh

Thank you to members who participate in workplace giving programs offered by these employers:

- Apple
- Chevron
- Clif Bar
- City of Oakland
- The Clorox Company
- Exelixis
- Gilead
- Google
- Kaiser Permanente
- LinkedIn
- Moss Adams
- Netflix
- PlayStation Cares
- PricewaterhouseCoopers
- Roblox
- PG&E
- Salesforce
- Spotify
- Take Two Software
- Thermo Fisher
- Walt Disney Company Foundation
- WarnerMedia
- Wells Fargo
- XL Construction
Friends of the OPL Board Members

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✦ Jennifer Chan
✦ Mifta Chowdhury, Assistant Treasurer
✦ Stephen Cole
✦ Erica Dennings
✦ Elizabeth Falkner
✦ Aniya Grimm
✦ Colleen Haikes
✦ Corey Hatcher
✦ Sara Jewell, Treasurer
✦ Pooneh Koohyar
✦ Ronile Lahti
✦ Charu Mehra
✦ Rebecca Pfifffner
✦ Kathryn Sterbenc, President
✦ Julie Waldman
✦ Anastasia Yip, Secretary, Newsletter Editor

Mission

Our mission is to advance the role of the Oakland Public Library as a vital community resource and as an institution critical to the culture, education, and welfare of our diverse community.

The Friends of the Oakland Public Library is the only organization that provides support to all Oakland Public Libraries.

In addition to that great feeling that comes with supporting the library, members receive our quarterly newsletter that includes a special feature highlighting grants to the library.

The Bookmark Bookstore operates on volunteer power and is a community resource for anyone who loves books. The Bookmark has been in Oakland since 1992. Proceeds benefit the Oakland Public Libraries.

Ways to Support Friends of the OPL

• Membership - your annual member dues help fund grants to the Oakland Public Library
• Make a tax deductible donation
• Invite a friend to become a member
• Leave a legacy by naming Friends of the OPL as a beneficiary in your estate plan
• Shop for books and media at The Bookmark Bookstore where members receive discounts for their purchases
• Donate gently used books to The Bookmark Bookstore
• Purchase new books at bookshop.org/shop/theBookmarkBookstore

Thanks to your support, in the last 10 years Friends of the OPL granted almost $2 million for library programs and projects. Thank you for your continued support!

To learn more about Friends of the Oakland Public Library, visit www.fopl.org

The Friends of the Oakland Public Library is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Our tax ID is 94-2553734. All contributions are tax deductible.