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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Getting Creative with Writing

After entering a writing contest and becoming a finalist; then not knowing where they placed until the presentation of awards on Sunday, April 13, 2025; the excitement and anticipation rose as students and their families gathered for the Creative Writing Awards Ceremony.

Guest speaker, Nick Northrup, also known as Crowfather, spoke of his personal struggles and how writing and music helped him overcome some of his hurtles. Crowfather's music aims to be a source of solace and understanding, pulling back the curtain on cycles of generational trauma, inner demons, and the resilience that keep us going.

Jessica Hennen, SMSU Creative Writing professor, opened the ceremony by highlighting the great talent in the room. She also read aloud a couple of sentences from students' entries that were impactful and stood out to her. She encourages students to keep writing even if they have a few rejections. It is not a failure; it is just part of the process.

During the presentation of the awards, Cliff Carmody, Executive Director of SWWC, announced the names and places per category. With beaming smiles and standing proud and tall, students anxiously walked up to receive their anthology from SWWC board member, Matt Coleman, and their medal from speaker Nick Northrup.

The three first place finishers who proudly received their \$2000 scholarships are Nate Noble of Marshall, Melanie Engels of Ivanhoe and Genesis Lopez of Mountain Lake. The school plaque award for most winning entries is Mountain Lake Christian School. First place winners for poetry are Piper Meinerts, McCoy Ackerman, Lexis Overvaag, Annie Scandrett, and Nate Noble. First Place Fiction went to Vivienne Tatge, Jack Behrends, Lexie Overvaag, Ezra Petersen, and Melanie Engels. The first place non-fiction places are Bryce Metzger, Pennie Moore, Nate Toutges, and Genesis Lopez. Second place poetry went to Piper Meinerts, Meggie Keller, Vera Prouty, Jacob Lopez and Melanie Engels. Second place fiction is Samuel Engels, Naomi Rete, Vera Prouty, Shelby Penner and Blaine Braun. Second place nonfiction is Cassie Scandrett, Carter Schettler, Alden Klassen and Lexi Nickel. Finally, third place recipients are poetry are Julia Schroeder, Eleanor Schroeder, Laylanna Hoffmann, Emma Thompson, Nate Noble. Third place fiction is Kia Wiertzema, Elizabeth Gomez Monterroso, Lexie Overvaag, Audrey Dick, Fairlane Penner and nonfiction is Caroline Stoel and Johnny Fales.