



67th Otero Arts Festival Creative Writing Winners, 2023

Judge's Best Representative Work, Senior

Luis Carale

Title: Oh What a Gift, Short Story

School: Swink School

Instructor: Jessica Pickering

Judge's Best Representative Work, Junior

Liz Chowning Nonato

Title: Roots Untold, Poem

School: Rocky Ford Jr High School

Instructor: Tammy Mamede

Otero College Creative Writing Scholarship

Jestine Romero

Titles: Platonic Soulmate, Liberty and Justice for All, Listen Before I Go

School: Fowler High School

Instructor: Lacy McCuistion

Otero College Creative Writing Scholarship Alternate

Silkiana Baca

Titles: HOT HOT, A Chip in the Right Direction, Eight-Legged Love Story

School: Rocky Ford High School

Instructor: BeaJae Viescas

Creative Books

Best Overall Book

Emily Geist

Title: Falling for Fall

School: Rocky Ford High School

Instructor: BeaJae Viescas

Most Original Book

Analiyah Griego

Title: My Story

School: Rocky Ford High School

Instructor: BeaJae Viescas

Most Creative Book

Sasha Reeves

Title: Elyssa and the Royal Adventure
School: Crowley County High School
Instructor: Amy Hobbs

Best Storyline Book
Claire Emick
Title: Ordinary People
School: Rocky Ford High School
Instructor: BeaJae Viescas

Poetry

Grade 7

1st Place, Elizabeth Chowing-Nonato
Title: Roots Untold, RF Jr High School, Instructor Tammy Mameda
2nd Place, Mya Marlow
Title: Locket of You, Manzanola School, Instructor Gaynell Allen
3rd Place, Bianna Brusuelas
Title: Ball Point Pen, Swink School, Instructor Bonnie Grossen
HM, Haley Rusler
Title: Happy, Fowler Jr High School, Instructor Paige Lower

Grade 8

1st Place, Nevaeh Hyatt
Title: A Colorful Thing, Fowler Jr High School, instructor Paige Lower
2nd Place, Gavin Denahy
Title: Back, La Junta Jr High School, instructor Kellie Buhr
3rd Place, Danner Carroll
Title: Elk Hunting, Manzanola School, instructor Gaynell Allen
HM, Raelee Walter
Title: My Dad, Manzanola School, instructor Gaynell Allen

Grade 9

1st Place, Ciana Rodriguez
Title: I Promise, La Junta High School, instructor Kellie Buhr
2nd Place, Maribella Salazar
Title: Rich Man, La Junta High School, instructor Kellie Buhr
3rd Place, Autumn Johnston
Title: The Reminiscence of Summer, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen
HM, Flynn Holmes
Title: Insatiable, Manzanola School, instructor Alana Holmes
HM, Madelyn Bamber
Title: Grandpa, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen

Grade 10

1st Place, Sol Tirado Jensen
Title: Precision of Cooks, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen
2nd Place, Sawyer Menz
Title: Why are you running?, Rocky Ford High School, instructor Sue Shelton
3rd Place, Jacqueline Becerra
Title: On, Blue Jay, La Junta High School, instructor Bill Schmidt
HM, Hagen McCuiston
Title: Golf Rage, Fowler High School, instructor Katie Thomas-Palatino

HM, Rainy Weber
Title: The Desert Bloom, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen
HM, Avalon Brown
Title: Calm Night, Manzanola School, instructor Alana Holmes

Grade 11

1st Place, Alyssa Meatas
Title: Confidence, Fowler High School, instructor Katie Thomas-Palatino
2nd Place, Faith Wirth
Title: Texas Dandelion, Rocky Ford High School, instructor BeaJae Viescas
3rd Place, Ethan Robinson
Title: Apology, Swink School, instructor Jessica Pickering
HM, Pedro Garcia
Title: Ode to My Airpod:(, Manzanola School, instructor Alana Holmes
HM, Lizzy Ketner
Title: What Friendship Is, Fowler High School, instructor Lacy McCuistion
HM, Libby Horn
Title: Newer Isn't Always Better, Manzanola School, instructor Alana Holmes

Grade 12

1st Place, Alexis Medina
Title: The Long Gone Cowboy, Rocky Ford High School, instructor BaeJae Viescas
2nd Place, Baylee Stowers
Title: Picture It, Fowler High School, instructor Lacy McCuistion
3rd Place, Ashlynn Place
Title: My Moon, Swink School, instructor Jessica Pickering
HM, Luis Carale
Title: Road Trip, Swink School, instructor Jessica Pickering
HM, Boyd Rogers
Title: Wrestling, Fowler High School, instructor Lacy McCuistion

Essays

Grade 7

1st Place, Avery Genova
Title: Why Smoking is Bad, Fowler Jr High School, instructor Paige Lower
2nd Place, Payton Kilburn
Title: How the Traditional Christmas Starter, Fowler Jr High School, instructor Paige Lower
3rd Place, Kayla Ybarra
Title: Jellyfish, Fowler Jr High School, instructor Paige Lower
HM, Ava Camacho
Title: Animal Testing, Fowler Jr High School, instructor Paige Lower

Grade 8

1st Place, Sabryna Su
Title: Why You Shouldn't Judge a Book By its Cover, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen
2nd Place, Danner Carroll
Title: Paper Bags <Eco-Friendly Bags, Manzanola School, instructor Gaynell Allen
3rd Place, Kaitlynn Scott
Title: A Rapper's Broken Life, Manzanola School, instructor Gaynell Allen
HM, Isis Pacheco

Title: The Importance of Failure, La Junta Jr High School, instructor Kellie Buhr
HM, David Diaz

Title: Grandpa's Boy, Manzanola School, instructor Gaynell Allen
HM, Ryan Remick

Title: Desmond Doss, La Junta Jr High School, instructor Kellie Buhr

Grade 9

1st Place, Maribella Salazar

Title: The Drive Home, La Junta High School, instructor Kellie Buhr

2nd Place, Nathaniel Ritter

Title: Life of a Friend, La Junta High School, instructor Kellie Buhr

3rd Place, Donaven Bell

Title: An argument of Welfare, Crowley County High School, instructor Amy Hobbs
HM, Madison Porto

Title: Nurture vs. Nature, Fowler High School, instructor Paige Lower
HM, Brianna McElroy

Title: To Find Yourself, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen

Grade 10

1st Place, Sol Tirado-Jensen

Title: Wonderful World, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen

2nd Place, Kathir Sasikumar

Title: ChatGPT: Google Killer, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen

3rd Place, Cristian Barnhart

Title: ESL Completes English, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen
HM, Jayla Murphy

Title: Fast Food, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen

Grade 11

1st Place, Hunter Bauserman

Title: Preparing for What's to Come, Swink School, instructor Jessica Pickering

2nd Place, Michael Ramire

Title: Diesels, Fowler High School, instructor Lacy McCuistion

3rd Place, Armando Guzman

Title: Buddy, Rocky Ford High School, instructor BaeJae Viescas
HM, Lindsey Briscoe

Title: My Fair Share, Swink School, instructor Jessica Pickering

Grade 12

1st Place, Claire Johnson

Title: The Recruiting Process, Fowler High School, instructor Lacy McCuistion

2nd Place, Dalton Carroll

Title: The Journey of a Lifetime, Manzanola High School, instructor Alana Holmes

3rd Place, Mateo Martinez

Title: LegACy, Rocky Ford High School, instructor BeaJae Viescas
HM, Timothy Cardenas

Title: How should post-secondary education change to serve the workforce?, Rocky
Ford High School, instructor BeaJae Viescas

HM, Taylor Osborne

Title: Power to Strengthen, Fowler High School, instructor Lacy McCuistion

Short Stories

Grade 7

1st Place, Wyatt Olds-Johnson

Title: Zeus and Johnny, Fowler Jr High School, instructor Paige Lower

2nd Place, Connor Campbell

Title: Battle on Mount Olympus, Fowler Jr High School, instructor Paige Lower

3rd Place, Anton Morales

Title: Lonely Little Boy, Crowley County Jr High School, instructor Amy Hobbs
HM, Brianna Brusuelas

Title: Rose earrings, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen
HM, Kaileah Aragon

Title: A Weeping Reaper, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen
HM, Allison Berger

Title: Gracie's Story, Crowley County Jr High School, instructor Amy Hobbs

Grade 8

1st Place, Grant Pickering

Title: The Cure, Swink School, instructor Keri Robinson

2nd Place, Karlee Knabenshue

Title: Trust, Swink School, instructor Keri Robinson

3rd Place, Isabella Marquez

Title: Robert, Manzanola School, instructor Gaynell Allen
HM, Finn Castro

Title: A Whimsical Way, Crowley County Jr High School, instructor Amy Hobbs
HM, Sabryna Su

Title: The Crown of Erathesia, Swink School, instructor Keri Robinson
HM, Keelin Wallace

Title: The Golden Apple, Manzanola School, instructor Gaynell Allen

Grade 9

1st Place, Jason Headley

Title: Flesh, Manzanola School, instructor Alanna Holmes

2nd Place, Briana McElroy

Title: The Flower, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen

3rd Place, Julie Liddle

Title: Pumpkin king and me, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen
HM, Bailey Ward

Title: Trashy Crabby, La Junta High School, instructor Kellie Buhr
HM, Vincent Montoya

Title: Ain't That A Kick In The Head, La Junta High School, instructor Kellie Buhr
HM, Autumn Johnston

Title: The Butterfly Effect, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen

Grade 10

1st Place, Cristian Barnhart

Title: Martyr, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen

2nd Place, Maria Meza

Title: The End Of The World, Fowler High School, instructor Katie Thomas-Palatino

3rd Place, Cort Larrew

Title: The Man Who Found Happiness, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen
HM, Austin Patton

Title: The Cave People, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen
HM, TJ Rook

Title: The Great Banana Heist, Fowler High School, instructor Katie Thomas-Palatino
HM, Emily Brusuelas

Title: The Experiment, Swink School, instructor Bonnie Grossen

Grade 11

1st Place, Ricky Pena

Title: The Rock On the top of the Dunes of Time, Rocky Ford High School, instructor
BeaJae Viescas

2nd Place, Jansen Ediger

Title: The Paper Company, Swink School, instructor Jessica Pickering

3rd Place, Lydia Ballantyne

Title: Humility for Chad, Swink School, instructor Jessica Pickering

HM, Ty Shaddon

Title: The Legend of Jack Frost, Rocky Ford High School, instructor BeaJae Viescas

HM, Michael Chambers

Title: A mousy Kind of Love, Fowler High School, instructor Katie Thomas-Palatino

HM, Kaylee Tucker

Title: Luna, Rocky Ford High School, instructor BeaJae Viescas

Grade 12

1st Place, Luis Carale

Title: Oh What a Gift, Swink School, instructor Jessica Pickering

2nd Place, Aaron Culver

Title: The Story of the Ancients and the Breaking of the Earth, Rocky Ford High School,
instructor BeaJae Viescas

3rd Place, Kyle Wren

Title: More To Discover, Swink School, instructor Jessica Pickering

HM, Addison Brusuelas

Title: The Glitch, Rocky Ford High School, instructor BeaJae Viescas

HM, Jenna Kienitz

Title: Roses and Flames, Rocky Ford High School, instructor BeaJae Viescas

HM, Emma Hanagan

Title: The Gardner, Swink School, instructor Jessica Pickering