



The John Oliver Simon Award (formerly the Poetry Promise Award) celebrates a full time student poet in or from Clark County, NV for exceptional promise in poetry and is selected blindly by the Poetry Promise Board of Directors.

The Awardee will receive:

Recognition for achievement in the art of poetry.

\$500 to support the study and writing of quality poetry.

A public reading with prominent Clark County poets on:

Saturday, November 8, 2025.

A **runner up** will be selected to receive \$200.00.

Awardee and runner-up will be announced during the week of:

Monday, October 28, 2025.

What to submit and when:

This application and 3 pages of original poetry are due by:

Monday, September 15, 2025. Label each poem with a title or number so we know when a new poem begins. Be sure to include page numbers. Only provide your name on this application. Do not put your name on any other pages.

On **Wednesday, October 1, 2025**, the top 3 poets will be notified that they've made it to Round 2 of the process.

Round 2: Due Saturday, October 11, 2025. The top 3 poets should submit up to ten (10) pages of poetry and a brief essay. Please reuse the original 3 pages of poetry you submitted. Label each poem with a title/number so we know when a new poem begins.

Be sure to include page numbers. Only provide your name on the cover page. Do not put your name on any other pages.

What should your essay be about?

Prompt: Write a brief statement on poetry, poets, and/or poetic traditions that you admire and have influenced you. Tell us why poetry is important to you. It can be up to 2 pages, 12 pt. font, Arial or Times New Roman).

Questions: Please email awards@poetrypromise.org with "JOS AWARD" in the subject line.

Application: Due Monday, September 15, 2025

1. What is your full name? What are your pronouns?

(Example: First M. Last, she/her/hers)

2. What is your phone number and area code? (Example: 702-706-2383)

3. What is your home address? (include city, state, and zip code)

4. Will you be 15 years old by July 8, 2025?

5. What is the name of the high school you attend(ed)?

6. Which college or university have you applied to? Or which colleges or universities do you want to apply to?

7. Which college or university do you attend if you're in college?

8. Please save & email this document and 3 pages of poetry to awards@poetrypromise.org.

You can have multiple poems on one page. But please only submit 3 pages.

Other details: Please use Arial or Times New Roman 12 pt font. Single spaced.

We prefer a Word or Google Docs file. However, please use what is available to you.

*** * What inspired the John Oliver Simon Award?**

John Oliver Simon, one of the Bay Area's most beloved poets, devoted himself to teaching children to write poetry. He co-founded and taught at the People's Community School in Berkeley, 1969-1973. He was a former president and board member of California Poets in the Schools (CalPoets) and served as the artistic director of Poetry Inside Out, a program of the Center for the Art of Translation. In 2013, he was named the River of Words Teacher of the Year by former U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Hass. John Oliver Simon and Bruce Isaacson were colleagues and John consistently encouraged Bruce to create a Nevada Poets in the Schools. He offered guidance, a listening ear, and encouragement to Bruce. Indeed, John Oliver Simon was the catalyst for our Nevada Poets in the Schools program. We have re-named the Poetry Promise Award to honor John Oliver Simon, who passed away on January 16, 2018.

Inspiration for the award came from Bruce Isaacson's reading of the life of Arthur Rimbaud. Arthur Rimbaud was the most talented writer of his era, and was perhaps born with this gift. A lack of local understanding and opportunities led to his abandoning poetry at the age of 21 to become an adventurer and gun runner in colonial Africa. He has since been claimed as a prime inspiration by literary movements from the French Symbolists, Surrealists, Existentialists, Beats, Punk movement, etc. Our hope in establishing the award and local workshops is to provide constructive avenues of engagement. We hope to encourage literary understanding and achievement by promising writers.