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Poet Laura Tohe to be honored at Festival of Words

By James D. Watts Jr. Tulsa World Jan 8, 2019



Poet Laura Tohe will receive the Festival of Words Writers Award at a ceremony March 2.

Courtesy/J. Morgan Edwards

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Laura Tohe, former poet laureate of the Navajo Nation, has been chosen as the recipient of the Festival of Words Writers Award, presented by the Tulsa Library Trust.

Tohe will receive the award — an engraved crystal trophy and a \$5,000 honorarium — as part of the Festival of Words, a daylong celebration of Native American culture and heritage, March 2 at Connor’s Cove in the Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd St.

Tohe (Diné, Tsénaahabíinii, Sleepy Rock People clan, and born for the Tóóich’íinii, Bitter Water clan) co-edited the anthology “Sister Nations: Native American Women Writers on Community” and is the author of such volumes of poetry as “Code Talker Stories,” “Making Friends with Water,” “No Parole Today” and “Tseyi’: Deep in the Rock, Reflections on Canyon de Chelly.”

As a librettist, Tohe was commissioned by The Phoenix Symphony to write the libretto for “Enemy Slayer, A Navajo Oratorio,” which premiered in 2008 as part of the symphony’s 60th anniversary. Her current project is a libretto on healing, “Nahaszdáán in the Glittering World,” with performances scheduled for spring 2019 in France.

Tohe is Professor Emerita with Exemplar Distinction from Arizona State University and had faculty affiliations with American Indian Studies, the Center for the Study of Race and Democracy, and Honors College. She also is an Arizona Speaks presenter for the Arizona Humanities that awarded her the 2006 Dan Schilling Public Scholar award.

For more information: 918-549-7323, tulsalibrary.org.

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