

## 2015 AMOCAT Arts Awards

The AMOCAT Arts Awards recognize those in our community who provide distinctive contributions to the arts. The honorees work hard to support and build our community by innovating in artistic excellence. AMOCAT award recipients are nominated by the public and selected by the Tacoma Arts Commission.

There are three categories for recognition: Community Outreach by an Individual, Community Outreach by an Organization, and Arts Patron. Each exhibits vision, dedication, and action in creating a lively arts community in Tacoma.

### 2015 Arts Patron

**University of Washington Tacoma**

[www.tacoma.uw.edu](http://www.tacoma.uw.edu)

253.692.4400

UW Tacoma's contributions to the arts in Tacoma began 25 years ago at the campus' founding, when 15 faculty were hired to create an interdisciplinary liberal arts curriculum. Since then, the university's impact on the community can be measured by the work of its faculty, students and alumni; a dense network of partnerships and collaborations; and a growing public art collection.

Today there are 24 professors and lecturers in the Arts, Media & Culture and the Writing Studies programs within the School of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences. They teach courses ranging from feminist perspectives in film to improvisational theater in everyday life to community arts practice.

UW Tacoma's connections to the Tacoma arts community go both ways. The Museum of Glass hosts a class where students learn glass art techniques. Leaders of Tacoma's museums serve on UW Tacoma advisory boards, and UW Tacoma faculty and alumni serve on museum boards. One building of the Tacoma School of the Arts sits on the UW Tacoma campus footprint, and some TSOTA classes meet elsewhere on the campus. UW Tacoma has partnered with Spaceworks Tacoma to support creative entrepreneurs.

One recent university-community collaboration is assistant professor Michael Kula's innovative community-based theater project, which kicked off live theater at UW Tacoma via a production by Toy Boat Theatre of Naomi Iizuka's *Anon(ymous)*. And, this past summer, the campus played host to a portion of the City of Tacoma and Tacoma Art Museum's Pop-Up Art Putt! golf course.

UW Tacoma's investment in developing the campus and Prairie Line Trail, with a commitment to aesthetic design and adaptive re-use, has encouraged a more walkable and beautiful community. And, the campus proudly displays a diverse art collection, the bulk of which is part of the State Art Collection, including works by Pablo Picasso, Dale Chihuly, Gerard Tsutakawa, Dawoud Bey, Buster Simpson, local muralist Chelsea O'Sullivan, and many others. A guide to the public art collection can be found [here](#).

## **2015 Community Outreach by an Organization**

**Tacoma Public Library**

[tacomalibrary.org](http://tacomalibrary.org)

[facebook.com/tacomapubliclibrary](https://facebook.com/tacomapubliclibrary)

[twitter.com/tacomalibrary](https://twitter.com/tacomalibrary)

[info@tacomalibrary.org](mailto:info@tacomalibrary.org)

253.292.2001

Today's public libraries continue to adapt to meet the changing needs of the community. No longer are they just a quiet place to read, research, and study. Today's libraries - and certainly the Tacoma Public Library - are a hub of community activity. They are a 'third place' where the community comes together to tell and create stories, listen to and create music, experience art, play chess, access the internet, and escape with a great film. Libraries are centers of lifelong learning – from discovering how to send email, Skype, create a Facebook page and use Word or Excel; to learning how to raise chickens, make a film, create music, and write computer programs.

Tacoma's public libraries bring readers and writers together to share a love of story through book talks, discussion groups, and the community-wide reading program: Tacoma Reads Together.

They also bring the community together to experience art where they least expect it – in a library! A trip to the Main Library to check out books can result in an unanticipated encounter with visual art created by local, regional, national and international artists on display at the Handforth Gallery. And, in support of Tacoma Public Library's focus on education, artists regularly give talks about their work and share their talents through demonstrations.

Tacoma's public libraries are regularly filled with music – classical, jazz, rock, country, children's music, as well as music from other cultures. Our libraries are filled with laughter from audiences enjoying puppet shows, magic acts, silent movies, jugglers, clowns, and acrobats.

Tacoma Public Libraries are also filled with the silence of creativity as young people learn how to program a computer, write and record songs, or take extraordinary photographs and then enhance them through technology. The Main Library's StoryLab encourages students to expand their digital creativity through workshops in sound production, voice-over, Photoshop and Lightroom skills, film production and editing, beat-making, digital drawing, and song writing.

## **2015 Community Outreach by an Individual**

**Connie K Walle**

[pugetsoundpoetryconnection.org](http://pugetsoundpoetryconnection.org)

Connie K Walle is an integral part of the Puget Sound literary landscape. She is a poet, the founder and President of Puget Sound Poetry Connection (PSPC), and facilitator for the Distinguished Writer Series, which has been a staple of Tacoma's literary arts community for 25 years and counting.

The free monthly Distinguished Writer Series provides a platform where poets of national regard share their work with the South Sound community and where local writers of all levels and backgrounds can share their work in a constructive and supportive environment.

Under Connie's leadership PSPC has spearheaded multiple projects including literary publications, a teen writing contest, and poetry workshops with well-known local poets. She also hosts poetry critiques and produces a weekly e-newsletter promoting poetry-related opportunities throughout the region. On October 16 & 17, 2015, PSPC, Dale King, and Michael Haeflinger are producing the first ever Tacoma Poetry Festival.

Connie continues to work tirelessly to educate, encourage, and provide opportunities for poets and, in doing so, has helped to elevate the literary arts in Tacoma and the South Sound.

"What do I get out of this? Great poetry. Good friends. Good teachers," said Connie. "Our group is the most generous and friendly reading in the state. No matter what the level of writing or reading, our people always make newbies feel welcome and encourage them to return. I set pretty high standards for our group and somehow they find a way to exceed it."

The Distinguished Writer Series meets at 7 p.m. on the second Friday of every month at King's Bookstore, 218 St. Helens Avenue, in Tacoma. The event is free and open to the public. All ages and levels of writing are welcome.