



Santa Maria Joint Union
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
NEWS * NEWS * NEWS
PRESS RELEASE

Monday,
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2023

Righetti High School's Lucas Hsiung will be moving on to a state competition after winning first place in the 2023 Poetry Out Loud Regional Competition for Santa Barbara County.

Two other Righetti students: Samantha McDonald (10th grade) and Natalie Lancor (11th grade) also recited poems to compete at last week's event that was held at the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors Building in Santa Barbara.

Hsiung, who is in 11th grade, recited "Invictus" by William Ernest Henley.

"Participating in the competition was an awesome experience," said Hsiung, who also won a new iPad. "I'm very glad I did it and I'd like to encourage others to do it as well!"

Warrior Reading Specialist and English Teacher Kristen Kurth described Hsiung's performance as, "amazing, powerful and moving."

"Lucas is an 11th-grade, 4.0+ student on the varsity swim team but he has never done anything like this in his life," Kurth added. "He gained an interest in poetry after the poetry writing and recitation assignments in Honors English during his sophomore year, but he never thought it would lead to anything outside of his class assignments. Now his confidence in public speaking is soaring and he is about to compete at the state level for Poetry Out Loud! I met his parents for the first-time last night, and they were shocked because they had never witnessed their son perform in anything but sporting events! I love when our students surprise their parents in positive ways!"

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