



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: info@powerofthepen.org

**DISTRICT CREATIVE WRITING TOURNAMENT FOR 7TH AND 8TH GRADERS TO BE HELD
Saturday, Feb. 3 AT South Range Middle School**

More than 65 area students to participate in the district competition

Canfield, OH — The second round of Eastern Region 7th- and 8th-grade creative writing tournaments organized by North Canton educational nonprofit Power of the Pen will be held on Sat., Feb. 3, with a district tournament hosted by South Range Middle School. The tournament is sponsored by the Albco Foundry.

The 2023-2024 season tournaments began in January. This is the second year back on location since the pandemic, and the students are looking forward to competing in person once again. This is the second year that South Range has hosted the event and Albco Foundry has sponsored. Host school coordinator and South Range PoP coach, Debbie Staffeld has hosted the tournament with great success.

Approximately 65 students from 7 area schools will compete in the District tournament: Canfield, Holy Family, Green, Lisbon David Anderson, Lordstown, LaBrae and South Range.

The top students from the district tournament will be invited to the regional tournament on Sat., Feb. 24, hosted by Lake Elementary.

Power of the Pen, one of Ohio's largest educational enhancement programs, seeks to positively impact the state's middle schoolers by helping young people find and develop their own unique creative voice.

Founded by Lorraine B. Merrill in 1986, Power of the Pen gives middle school students a platform to share their stories, build confidence in their writing, and develop leadership abilities. She thought of Power of the Pen as a way to, "whisper in the ear of a child, 'Go ahead, all you have to do is imagine.'" The skills and abilities that students gain from this program serve them well throughout school and in their careers.

Qualifying writers from 18 district tournaments held across Ohio (approximately 50%) advance to the 9 regional events. Around 20 percent of students participating in the regional tournaments move on to the state tournament. Competitions consist of 3 timed, extemporaneous rounds of creative writing tasks per grade level, each in response to an open-ended prompt. Judges evaluate the students' work to identify the winners who will be recognized in an awards ceremony.

By the time the tournaments begin, these young writers have spent months polishing their creative writing skills under the guidance of a Power of the Pen coach, and the competition is their chance to shine.

The Eastern Region includes Carroll, Columbiana, Harrison, Jefferson, Mahoning, Stark, and Trumbull Counties.

About Power of the Pen: Ohio's original interscholastic creative writing program for middle schools, Power of the Pen offers an opportunity for 7th- and 8th-grade students in Ohio to compete in a series of district, regional and state competitions by writing creative responses to provided prompts. The 501(c)(3) organization was founded in 1986 by the late Lorraine B. Merrill and has since become one of the state's largest educational enhancement programs. Nearly 3,000 students participate in tournaments each year, while in-class supporting materials are provided for nearly 300 middle schools in Ohio. For more information, visit powerofthepen.org.

###