

POETRY & *Art* CONTEST

60th
ANNUAL

Contest Deadlines

Submissions due by Sunday, October 19, 2025, at midnight.

Submissions will be judged the week of October 20th – 24th.

Winners will be announced the week of October 27th.

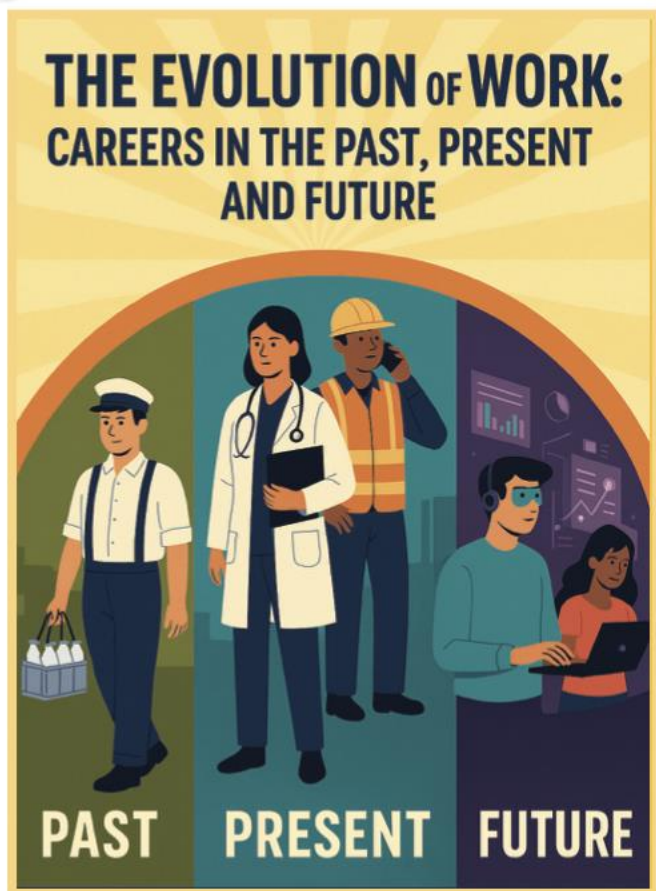
Winning entries will be on display at the Mississippi Counseling Association annual conference in Tupelo, MS, from November 5th – 7th. We will announce the winners at the Awards Luncheon on Thursday, November 6th.

1st, 2nd, & 3rd place winners will be sent to the National Contest. National winners will be recognized on the NCDA website, www.ncda.org, in May of 2026.

THIS YEAR'S THEME

The Evolution of Work: Careers in the Past, Present, and Future

From milkmen and lamplighters to YouTubers and app developers, the world of work has transformed over the years. Show us how you imagine jobs from long ago, the careers we see today, or the exciting possibilities that might exist tomorrow. Through your poem or artwork, help us celebrate 60 years of the National Career Development's Poetry and Art Contest by exploring how the world of work has evolved and how it continues to change our lives.



NCDA

National Career
Development
Association

www.ncda.org

305 N. Beech Circle, Broken Arrow, OK 74012

The National Career Development Association is conducting their 60th Annual Poetry & Art Contest.

The theme of the year is:

THE EVOLUTION OF WORK: CAREERS IN THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

The Mississippi Counseling Association is proud to conduct the state preliminaries for the national contest. Winning submissions for the Poetry and Poster contest will be submitted immediately following the MCA Conference in November.

SUBMISSIONS DUE BY SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2025.

ELIGIBILITY

- Primary Grades K – 2
- Intermediate Grades 3 – 5
- Middle Grades 6 – 8
- Senior Grades 9 – 12
- Adult Student 18 and older (enrolled in school)
- Open Adult 18 & older (teachers, parents, professionals, etc.)

Each entry should celebrate and inspire career development with a positive tone while emphasizing the national theme.

REQUIREMENTS FOR POEMS

- **Poetic Form:** Acceptable poetic forms, e.g. cinquain, free verse, diamante, haiku, limerick, metered, rhyming, blank verse
- **Size:** Submit each poem on a single sheet of paper 8.5" x 11", 12-point font.
- **AI:** AI-assisted poems are permitted but must include a disclosure of tool(s) and prompt(s) used. **See additional AI submission guidelines below.**

REQUIREMENTS FOR ART

- **Lettering:** Simple bold lettering is preferred. Captions are to be used to convey the theme, attract attention, and to achieve goals of clarity, vigor, and originality. All lettering will be considered part of the design.
- **Art Categories**
 - Art 1 (A1): Standard use of ink, pencil, poster paints, magic marker, acrylics, and oils.
 - Art 2 (A2): Use of photos, clipart, graphic art software, collage, cut and pasted paper, and mixed media.
 - Size: Each poster must be created in 8.5" x 11" format, including matte, to be eligible.
- **AI:** Digital artwork created with the help of AI tools is permitted – Applicable to Art 2 submissions only. Full disclosure is required. See additional AI submission guidelines below.

JUDGING PROCESS

Criteria

- Judging will be based on originality, creativity, and development of the national theme.
- Poems will be evaluated on appropriate form, execution, spelling, and grammar.
- Art evaluation will focus on the appropriate use of media, lettering, and basic principles of art.

Please adhere to the size requirements for each entry as many entries are received.

NEW!

AI-Generated Submission Guidelines

(Applicable to Poetry and Art 2 submissions only)

We welcome the thoughtful use of AI tools in creative expression. Submissions assisted by AI must include:

- The name of the AI platform used (e.g., ChatGPT, CoPilot, Midjourney, etc.), and
- A short sample of the prompt(s) used.

Example disclosure: "This poem was edited for structure and flow after generation to better align with the author's intended message and emotion using ChatGPT."

Submissions that do not include this information may be disqualified.

****Please complete the following form and include it with contest submissions by October 19, 2025.****

Official Entry Form

(Each entry must have a completed form. Form and art/poetry will be submitted electronically. Please submit your entry to: mcapoetryandartcontest@gmail.com.)

Student Name: _____ Age: _____ Grade: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number(s): _____

Email: _____

School Counselor: _____

School Name: _____

School Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number(s): _____

Email: _____

You must state the school the individual attends per eligibility guidelines unless the entry is submitted under Open Adult.

_____ Individual Submission

_____ School Submission

_____ Poetry

_____ Poster C1

_____ Poster C2

I, _____, state that the attached Poster/Poetry entry is the original, which I myself created and completed.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Thank you for ensuring a fun-filled contest by submitting your original work!

Note: All entries become the property of the National Career Development Association and will not be returned. The association reserves the right to use the poems and posters to focus attention on activities and promote Career Development Month goals.