



■ FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 6, 2026 - Bakersfield, California

Dr. Portia Choi Named Kern County Honorary Poet Laureate

The Arts Council of Kern made the recommendation and on June 16, The Kern County Board of Supervisors appointed Dr. Portia Choi as Honorary Poet Laureate, recognizing her outstanding literary contributions, dedication to the arts and commitment to fostering a vibrant culture of poetry throughout Bakersfield and Kern County.

The Arts Council of Kern welcomes Dr. Choi's appointment and values her long dedication to the Literary Arts in Kern County. Creative Director, Em Radmacher, affirms, "Dr. Choi's appointment will strengthen the role of poetry in civic connection, increase awareness of poetry in the pursuit of literacy, and inspire increasing creativity in the community."

The Board congratulated Dr. Choi on June 16, 2026 and recognized the commitment that accepting this appointment represents. They expressed appreciation for the time and effort involved in bringing awareness and encouragement of poetry in our community.

The role has been filled previously by many talented Kern poets, most recently, Samuel Rain Benjamin served in this capacity.

Dr. Choi has decades of experience in the medical field as a Family Physician and Preventive Medicine Specialist. She has been writing and promoting poetry and part of a healthy lifestyle for almost as many years as she has practiced medicine.

Dr. Choi founded Kern Poetry and guests to Dagny's Coffee Company on most first Friday nights in the last decade will have discovered the open mic that continues to gain momentum and popularity. Through Kern Poetry, local poets are showcased and poetry events are open to the public.

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