

LAF Writing Contest

The Grossmont College English Department & Creative Writing Program Present

21ST ANNUAL LITERARY ARTS FESTIVAL

“Border Stories”

1ST PRIZE: \$100
2ND PRIZE: \$50
3RD PRIZE: \$25

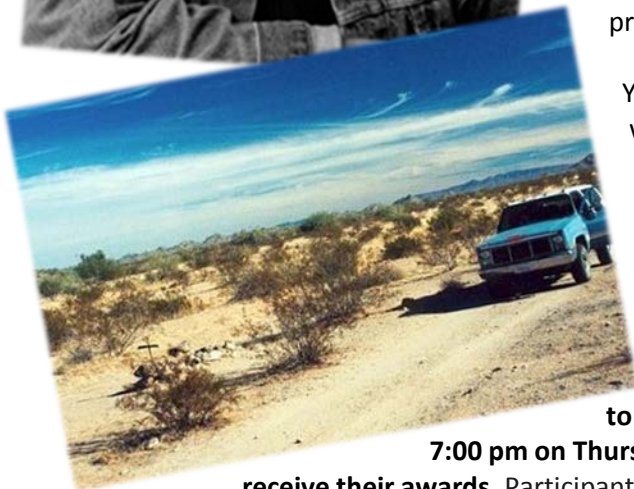
In The Devil’s Highway, Luís Alberto Urrea writes of the Yuma 14, a group of immigrants who braved the harshest border crossing between Mexico and the United States in search of a better life. Abandoned by their guides, the men fell one after another to the brutal desert environment, in what was called, per Urrea, “the largest death-event in border history.” What drove these men, who were mostly poor and indigenous, to risk their lives against “[d]esert spirits of a dark and mysterious nature?”



INSTRUCTIONS

FOR THIS CONTEST, you will write a personal narrative essay in which you describe a time when you attempted a risky border crossing. This border could be physical, like the US-Mexico border, or it could be metaphorical, like the boundary between education and poverty. It could be emotional, like the borders that separate husband from wife, or ideological, like the limits that separate political foes from arriving at consensus.

Borders are boundaries, but they are also places of transition and change. They are crossroads where strangers meet. They can contain walls built to exclude, or to protect. Borders can create alienation—a sense of otherness and exclusion—but they can also create identity, a sense of belonging to a group. The borders between people, real or imagined, can create suffering and injustice, but they can also reinforce order, providing clarity or a sense of purpose.



Your essay should be about 800—1200 words long. One first-place winner will be selected, and that person will be awarded \$100 by the Grossmont College English Department’s Creative Writing program. The second-place winner will be awarded \$50, and the third-place winner will be awarded \$25. All submissions should be emailed to Alan Traylor at alan.traylor@gccd.edu, and the deadline for entries is midnight on April 14th. The winner will be selected by creative writing faculty and notified the following week, no later than Friday, Apr. 21st. **The first-place winner of the contest MUST be available**

to read their essay at the Luís Alberto Urrea Reading & Book Signing at

7:00 pm on Thursday, April 27th in Griffin Gate, and all winners must be present to

receive their awards. Participants will be included in a special printed collection that will be presented

to Luís Alberto Urrea at his appearance in the 21st Annual Literary Arts Festival. Each participating student and instructor will receive a copy.

Find out more online at www.grossmont.edu/laf!