

Introduction

Writer and Poet Naomi Shihab Nye delivered the 2018 May Hill Arbuthnot Honor Lecture, “Refreshments Will Be Served—Our Lives of Reading & Writing,” on Saturday, April 28, at the Western Washington University Performing Arts Center.

The daughter of a Palestinian father and an American mother, Nye grew up in St. Louis, Jerusalem, and San Antonio, Texas. Describing herself as a “wandering poet,” she has spent 40 years traveling the country and globe, leading writing workshops and inspiring students of all ages. Drawing on her Palestinian-American heritage and world travel experiences, Nye uses her writing to demonstrate our shared humanity. She is a professor of creative writing at Texas State University

The author and/or editor of more than 30 books for adults and children, Nye’s *The Turtle of Oman*, a children’s novel, was chosen as a 2015 Notable Children’s Book by ALSC. She has received four Pushcart Prizes, was a 2002 National Book Award

finalist for *19 Varieties of Gazelle: Poems of the Middle East*, and has been named a Guggenheim Fellow, amongst many honors.


The 2018 Arbuthnot Honor Lecture committee selected Western Washington University (WU) and Whatcom County Library System to serve as the host site for Nye’s 2018 lecture.

Sylvia Tag, curator of The Children’s Literature Interdisciplinary Collection at WU, noted that, “Naomi Shihab Nye spreads hope and light through her poetry and prose. Western Washington University and the Whatcom County Library System are honored to host the Arbuthnot Honor Lecture and invite her



2018 Arbuthnot Honor Lecture Committee: Monica Edinger, Betsy Bird, chair, and Wendy Lukehart (l to r). Not shown: Timothy Capehart and Sharon McKellar.

particular brilliance to illuminate our diverse and word-hungry communities.”

Members of the 2018 Arbuthnot Honor Lecture Committee are: Chair Elizabeth Ramsey Bird, Evanston Public Library (Ill.); Timothy D. Capehart, Beavercreek (Ohio) Community Library; Monica Edinger, The Dalton School, New York; Wendy Lukehart, District of Columbia Public Library, Washington, D.C.; and Sharon McKellar, Oakland (Calif.) Public Library. 



The podium at Western Washington University Performing Arts Center, site of the 2018 Arbuthnot Honor Lecture