

Proclamation designating April 2023 as National Poetry Month and announcing Glendale's first Poet Laureate

WHEREAS, National Poetry Month was launched by the Academy of American Poets in April 1996 to celebrate poets' integral role in our culture and that poetry matters; and,

WHEREAS, Over the years, it has become the largest literary celebration in the world, with tens of millions of readers, students, K–12 teachers, librarians, booksellers, literary events curators, publishers, families, and—of course—poets, marking poetry's important place in our lives; and,

WHEREAS, Poets Laureate are officially appointed at the federal, state, county and city level throughout the United States in order to promote and celebrate the art of poetry; and,

WHEREAS, As the result of a grassroots call from a citizen of Glendale, by request as Mayor, and the approval of the City Council, Glendale Library, Arts & Culture has created the City's first Poet Laureate Program.

WHEREAS, The Poet Laureate will serve as an ambassador for Glendale's rich culture and diversity, promoting the art of poetry, and be selected by a competitive process; and,

WHEREAS, Raffie Joe Wartanian teaches writing with UCLA Writing Programs, and his poetry and essays have appeared in *No Dear Magazine*, *h-pem*, *Ararat Magazine*, *Armenian Poetry Project*, *The Armenian Weekly*, *the New York Times*, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *Outside Magazine*, *Lapham's Quarterly*, *The Baltimore Sun*, *Miami Herald*, and the recent anthology, "We Are All Armenian: Voices from the Diaspora;" and,

WHEREAS, Raffi Joe Wartanian was selected as Glendale's first Poet Laureate in recognition of his accomplishments in poetry and his vision for the "Glendale Poet Laureate as someone who can utilize writing to promote self-expression, find common ground across communities, and foster solidarity that celebrates diversity while embracing individuality."

THEREFORE, I Ardy Kassakhian, Mayor of Glendale, do hereby proclaim the month of April to be National Poetry Month throughout this city, and I urge all the people of Glendale to join me in celebration.