



# Worcester County Poetry Association



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True Press Release, 6-20-2015  
Rodger Martin, Chairman, Stanley Kunitz Medal Selection Committee  
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Michael D. True, PhD, of Worcester, Massachusetts, has been chosen to receive the first annual Stanley Kunitz Medal, awarded through a bequest from two-time Poet Laureate of The United States and Pulitzer Prize winning poet and Worcester native Stanley Kunitz.

The medal is awarded to a person with a strong Worcester County (Mass.) connection who best exemplifies Stanley Kunitz's life-long commitment to poetry and poets. The award recognizes the total commitment to poetry as Stanley lived it: teaching poetry, mentoring poets, speaking poetry, publishing poetry, and supporting organizations which nurture poetry.

Rodger Martin, Chairman of the selection committee said, "I can't think of a finer example of someone who has spent a lifetime promoting poetry throughout the Central Massachusetts region and at the same time promoting peace and social justice throughout the world. Stanley Kunitz would have approved."

True is one of the founders of The Worcester County Poetry Association in 1971 and founding editor of the literary journal *The Worcester Review* which has published every year since 1974. He also served as the poetry editor for *The English Journal* in 1976. He is a retired professor of English from Assumption College. His book of poetry *Plain Songs and Other Poems* came out in 2013. In addition, in 1972 True wrote *Worcester Poets, With Notes Toward a Literary History* which included an introduction by Stanley Kunitz. He followed that with a second volume, *Worcester Writers, 1680-1980*, in 1986.

Like Kunitz who was a conscientious objector in World War II, True dedicated his life to peace and social justice. He received a Lifetime Achievement Award from Peace Studies Association in 2000, and was chosen as Peace Educator of the Year from the Consortium on Peace, Research, and Development, in 1996.

According to Bob Cronin, the President of the Worcester County Poetry Association "The Stanley Kunitz Medal is a fine thing. It reaffirms the legacy of Kunitz and the primacy of language in human affairs. It also enables us—those who cherish poetry-- to honor one of our own. Michael True is an ideal first recipient of the Stanley Kunitz Medal."

An award ceremony to coincide with Kunitz's birthday celebration, will be held at Stanley Kunitz's Boyhood Home, 4 Woodford Street, Worcester, MA on Sunday, July 26, 2015, 2 p.m. Seating is extremely limited; therefore, please RSVP to [rodgerwriter@myfairpoint.net](mailto:rodgerwriter@myfairpoint.net).

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