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Fellowship Honors Graves with Appalachian Writing Award

Chattanooga, TN: Jesse Graves will receive the 2015 James Still Award for Writing about the Appalachian South from the Fellowship of Southern Writers during the Southern Lit Alliance's Celebration of Southern Literature in Chattanooga.

The event will take place April 16 to 18 in the Tivoli Theatre in downtown Chattanooga.

Founded in 1987, the Fellowship of Southern Writers (FSW) is a nonprofit organization that recognizes and encourages excellence in Southern literature. The FSW commemorates outstanding literary achievement, encourages young writers through awards, prizes, and fellowships, and recognizes distinction in writing by election to membership.

Humorist and author Roy Blount, Jr., a frequent guest on NPR's "Wait, Wait, Don't Tell Me" and "Prairie Home Companion," as well as a contributing writer to *The Oxford American* and *Garden & Gun*, is among the speakers at the Celebration of Southern Literature.

Other featured writers include novelist Richard Bausch, 2010 winner of the prestigious Dayton Peace Prize, Natasha Trethewey, former U.S. Poet Laureate, and acclaimed short story writer Jill McCorkle.

Jesse Graves grew up in Sharps Chapel, Tennessee, about 40 miles north of Knoxville, in a community his ancestors settled in the 1780s. He is an Associate Professor of English at East Tennessee State University, where he won the 2012 New Faculty Award from the College of Arts & Sciences. Graves completed a Ph.D. in English at the University of Tennessee, and a M. F. A. degree in Poetry Writing from Cornell University, and taught for one year as a lecturer at the University of New Orleans. His first poetry collection, *Tennessee Landscape with Blighted Pine*, was published by Texas Review Press, and won the 2012 Weatherford Award in Poetry from Berea College and the Appalachian Studies Association, as well as a Book of the Year Award from the Appalachian Writers' Association. He was recently awarded the Thomas and Lillie D. Chaffin Award for Appalachian Writing from Morehead State University. His second collection of poems, *Basin Ghosts*, was published in the spring of 2014. Graves has published essays on literature, and has edited a number of poetry anthologies and critical volumes.

The 2015 Celebration of Southern Literature will be held from April 16-18th, hosted by the Southern Lit Alliance. Jesse Graves, as well as nine other writers, will be honored for their contributions to Southern literature. For more information about the Celebration of Southern Literature, visit www.SouthernLitAlliance.org.

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