



# NEWS RELEASE

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## Cockeysville and Dumbarton middle school students earn first and third place in county library's short horror story contest

Towson, MD – Baltimore County Public Schools' students earned first and third place in the Under 21 category of the Baltimore County Public Library's Tales of the Dead Short Horror Story Contest.

The BCPS student winners are:

- **Ivy McKnight**, a Grade 8 student at Cockeysville Middle School, who won first place for "Dead Space," a sci-fi horror story set on a space station on the moon.
- **Lucy Bray**, a Grade 8 student at Dumbarton Middle School, who took third place for "House of the Impathegens," about an alien invasion on Halloween night.

Baltimore County Public Library challenged writers of all ages to write original horror stories with a "Moonlit Masquerade" theme. First, second, and third place winners in the Over 21 and Under 21 categories were selected by a panel of judges including local civic leaders, librarians, and published authors. Criteria for judging included originality, fear factor, and quality of writing.

McKnight says she loves writing and hopes to become a writer one day. When creating "Dead Space," she says she drew inspiration from books and movies she enjoys. "I wanted the main character to be more realistic so I made her a typical curious young adult who would be excited at the prospect of going to space," said McKnight.

McKnight and Bray will read their stories at a private reception on Friday, October 7, at the library's Reisterstown Branch. The young winners receive a prize package including an "A Toast Among Ghosts" T-shirt and gift card.

The Tales of the Dead Short Horror Story Contest started in 2016, inspired by the 1816 ghost story challenge that led to the creation of Frankenstein's monster and the first modern vampire story. The contest is held in conjunction with [A Toast Among Ghosts](#). The winning stories will be published on the [Foundation for Baltimore County Public Library](#)'s website after October 15.

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[Baltimore County Public Schools](#), the nation's 22nd largest school system, is focused on raising the bar and closing gaps to prepare our students for the future. Thanks to innovative and talented leaders, teachers, staff, and students, BCPS celebrates [many honors](#).