

Lincoln University

James Samuel Norcliffe, Lincoln University Medal

2012 Recipient

The cultural reputation of Lincoln University has been enhanced significantly by the presence on staff of a national award winning author and poet – James Norcliffe.

A staff member since 2002, James is a Senior Tutor in Lincoln University's Foundation Studies and English Language Division and teaches Integrative Study Skills and English Language and Communications. He is also a poet, fiction writer, editor and educator who has achieved outstandingly in the field of the arts and culture. James has published eight collections of poems, nine novels for young readers and a collection of short stories for adults.

James has twice won the New Zealand Poetry Society's International Poetry Award and has been short listed for the Montana Poetry Awards.

With fellow Canterbury poet Bernadette Hall, he was presented with a Press Literary Liaisons Honour Award for lasting contributions to literature in the South Island, has facilitated many creative writing workshops, and been awarded writing fellowships both in New Zealand and overseas. He publishes poetry widely internationally and regularly reads at festivals and other occasions throughout New Zealand and across the world.

In 2011 he won the Junior Fiction category of the New Zealand Post Children's Book Awards. Among previous awards is the 2006 Sir Julius Vogel Trophy for the best science fiction/fantasy novel published in New Zealand.

Also in 2010 he was the only Oceania poet invited to perform at the 21st International Poetry Festival in Medellin, Colombia – one of the largest poetry festivals in the world, and in 2011 was invited to the Trois-Rivieres International Poetry Festival in Quebec.

He has held a Robert Burns Fellowship at Otago University, a fellowship at the University of Iowa's International Writing Programme, a residency in Hobart under the Tasmanian Island of Residencies Programme, a residency at Massey University and has been a portfolio assessor (poetry) for Professor Bill Manhire's Institute of Modern Letters at Victoria University.

James has been a National Council Member, Vice-President and Canterbury Branch Chair for the New Zealand Society of Authors, and President and Vice-President of the New Zealand Poetry Society. He was a founder member (and currently chair) of the Canterbury Poets' Collective.

In 2012 James had a six-month appointment as the Otago University/Creative New Zealand Children's Writer in Residence.

James has also done much to encourage other writers, young and old. He has been a mentor and manuscript assessor for the NZ Society of Authors, the unpaid poetry editor for the Christchurch Press for many years, and with Tessa Duder for the last 12 years, co-editor of the annual Re-Draft anthologies of the best writing by young New Zealanders.

James' contributions to the fabric of the University have included readings of his works on campus. His passion, creativity and commitment to the written word and devotion to passing his knowledge on to future generations make him an outstanding recipient of the Lincoln University Medal.