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**Contact: Sherrie Young
212-685-0261
syoung@nationalbook.org**

**NATIONAL BOOK FOUNDATION TO GIVE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT
AWARD TO URSULA K. LE GUIN**

***Neil Gaiman will present Medal to Le Guin
at the 65th National Book Awards Ceremony on November 19.***

New York, NY (September 9, 2014) – The National Book Foundation, presenter of the National Book Awards, will award its **2014 Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters to Ursula K. Le Guin** at the 65th National Book Awards Ceremony and Benefit Dinner. The event will be held on Wednesday, November 19, 2014 at Cipriani, 55 Wall Street, in New York.

Le Guin will be honored in recognition of her transformative impact on American literature. For more than forty years, Le Guin has defied conventions of narrative, language, character, and genre, and transcended the boundaries between fantasy and realism to forge new paths for literary fiction. Among the nation's most revered writers of science fiction and fantasy, Le Guin's fully imagined worlds challenge readers to consider profound philosophical and existential questions about gender, race, the environment, and society. Her boldly experimental and critically acclaimed novels, short stories, and children's books, written in elegant prose, are popular with millions of readers around the world.

"Ursula Le Guin has had an extraordinary impact on several generations of readers and, particularly, writers in the United States and around the world," said Harold Augenbraum, the Foundation's Executive Director. "She has shown how great writing will obliterate the antiquated—and never really valid—line between popular and literary art. Her influence will be felt for decades to come."

Le Guin is the twenty-seventh recipient of the Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters (DCAL), which was created in 1988 to recognize a lifetime of literary achievement. Previous recipients include John Ashbery, Joan Didion, E.L. Doctorow, Maxine Hong Kingston, Elmore Leonard, Norman Mailer, Toni Morrison, and Tom Wolfe.

Nominations for the DCAL are made by former National Book Award winners, finalists, and judges, and other writers and literary professionals from around the country. Final selections are made by the National Book Foundation's Board of Directors.

For more information about the National Book Awards and Awards-related events visit nationalbook.org.

Ursula K. Le Guin

Born in 1929 in Berkeley, California, and educated at Radcliffe College and Columbia University, Ursula K. Le Guin published her first novel, *Rocannon's World*, in 1966. Over the course of her literary career, Le Guin has published twenty-two novels, eleven volumes of short stories, seven books of poetry, four collections of essays, thirteen books for children, and five works of translation. Her first major work of science fiction, *The Left Hand of Darkness*, established Le Guin's reputation for daring experimentation and her internationally bestselling *Books of Earthsea* have been translated into thirty-one languages.

The recipient of numerous awards and honors, Le Guin won a National Book Award in 1973 for *The Farthest Shore*, and was a Finalist in 1972 for *The Tombs of Atuan* and in 1985 for *Always Coming Home*. Le Guin also has received a PEN/Malamud Award for short fiction, a Harold D. Vursell Memorial Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, twenty-one Locus Awards, six Nebula Awards, five Hugo Awards, three Asimov's Readers Awards, a Pushcart Prize, a Boston Globe-Horn Book Award, and a Newbery Silver Medal. Le Guin's lifetime achievement awards include the title of Grand Master from the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America, the Margaret A. Edwards Award from the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) of the American Library Association, the Willamette Writers Lifetime Achievement Award, the *Los Angeles Times*' Robert Kirsch Lifetime Achievement Award, the University of California—Riverside's Eaton Lifetime Achievement Award, and the Maxine Cushing Gray Fellowship for distinguished body of work from the Washington Center for the Book.

Le Guin lives in Portland, Oregon.

Neil Gaiman

Neil Gaiman has written poetry, songs, fiction and nonfiction for adults and children. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Hugo, Nebula and the World Fantasy Award, and is the only author to be awarded both the Newbery Medal in the United States and Carnegie Medal in Britain for the same work, *The Graveyard Book*. His most recent novel, *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*, was named the United Kingdom's National Book Award 2013 Book of the Year. Born in the UK, he has lived in the United States for over 20 years.

Gaiman has been spending more and more time in the last few years advocating for libraries and on behalf of Refugees for the United Nations High Commission on Refugees. He is a Professor in the Arts at Bard College.