

The
Bechtel Prize
2013 Prize Recipients

Selected by Susan Orlean



Winner

Chris Belden

Ridgefield, Connecticut

“Inside Words: How to Teach Writing in Prison”

This year’s Bechtel Prize–winning essay was selected from among the finalists by Susan Orlean, who had this to say about it:

“I was first drawn to the piece for the strength of the writer’s voice, cool and analytical, trying to sort out a situation—life in prison—that is highly charged and emotional. At the same time, the writer manages to provide, in the most economical way, glimpses into the inmates’ lives. It’s masterful and authentic.”



Finalist

Eileen Shields

Manhattan Beach, California

“The Literature of Lockdown”



Louise Bechtel and Support for the Bechtel Prize

The Bechtel Prize is endowed by the Cerimon Fund in honor of Louise Seaman Bechtel (1894–1985). Editor, critic, author, and teacher of young children, Bechtel was the first person to head a juvenile book department established by an American publishing house. During her 15-year tenure as managing editor at the Macmillan Company (1919–1934), Bechtel shepherded production of more than 600 new books, marking a milestone in the growth and development of American literature for children.