



ANNUAL REPORT



Association of Writers
& Writing Programs

AWP

amplifies the

VOICES OF WRITERS
and the *academic programs*

and *organizations*

that serve them while

CHAMPIONING DIVERSITY

and **excellence**

in **creative writing.**



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Dear AWP Members and Supporters,

This past year was a time of gathering and community for AWP, one of the great strengths of this long-standing organization. In March 2025 at our annual conference, ten thousand attendees joined together to learn, share, and celebrate writing in Los Angeles, where keynote speaker Roxane Gay spoke to a packed crowd about the necessity of writing in times like these, how “as writers, we can refuse to look away.” The AWP Conference is unlike any other coming together of writers, publishers, and teachers: joyful and liberatory, personal and productive, but also anxious and contentious, because literary community such as the conference provides matters so much to both those in attendance and countless others worldwide supported by the work of writing, teaching, and stories.

The year 2025 was a year of much development and work for AWP. Staff and board worked to finalize a 2026–2029 Strategic Plan focusing on increasing support of individual writers, strengthening ongoing efforts for writing programs, and continuing to create a resilient institution for writers and writing programs. Los Angeles was our first conference and 2025 our first full year using AWP’s robust new digital platforms. This new infrastructure allowed us for the first time in years to collect rich data about the landscape of creative writing education to share with members. In November, AWP launched the video platform Writer’s TV, where members can access new and ongoing webinar series, along with events from past conferences. Beginning in 2026, AWP will engage in a rigorous financial and asset analysis to clearly understand our impact and resource allocation across all our mission-driven programming.

It was with great joy that we announced in July the appointment of Michelle Aielli as the new executive director of AWP. During her brief time as interim executive director, Aielli shepherded AWP through the final stages of shifting decades of information and member resources onto the new digital platforms, at the same time leading AWP through a successful 2025 conference in Los Angeles. In her new role, Michelle has increased communication and support for staff, begun to create results-oriented fundraising structures, and worked on the ground to unite the mid-Atlantic region around our upcoming 2026 conference in Baltimore.

This past year was undeniably a time of immense challenges for writing and writing education. Just two months before the Los Angeles conference, the city was ravaged by fire. Federal and state funding for literature and the arts has been severely cut, while institutions like the National Endowment for the Arts and the Department of Education have been hollowed out. Teachers and students increasingly face censorship inside the classroom and threat of violence without. Artificial intelligence technologies have created new challenges in the classroom, largely by appropriating the work of countless writers.

In the face of such challenges, AWP has been more important than ever. To open the 2025 conference, attendees joined together to fundraise for and commemorate Los Angeles at the AWP Awards Reception & Benefit for LA Fire Recovery, hosted by a third-generation Angeleno, writer and actor Amber Tamblyn. As part of the 2026–2029 Strategic Plan, AWP has made top priority “organizational resiliency through effective financial analysis and oversight alongside strengthened mission-based stewardship and philanthropy,” so AWP not only sustains but grows its support for writers and literary organizations. Late last summer, as teachers were getting ready for their fall classes, AWP published its “Recommendations Regarding Generative Artificial Intelligence” with resources and guidelines for teachers, and in the following months hosted expert panels about AI pedagogy and AI in publishing.

The mission of AWP is simple and direct: “AWP amplifies the voices of writers and the academic programs and organizations that serve them while championing diversity and excellence in creative writing.” I try to repeat this mission as much as possible at board meetings and conferences, and to anyone interested in or impacted by the work of AWP. The words keep us directed and focused. They remind us about the importance of what AWP works year-round to support: the richness of the writing and writing education we have, and the stories and poems yet unheard, unwritten, to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Travis Kurowski". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Travis Kurowski, PhD
Chair, AWP Board of Directors, 2025–2026
Mid-Atlantic Regional Council Chair, 2022–2026



Dear AWP Members,

2025 was a big year—for the world, for the literary arts, and for AWP. In 2025, I transitioned from AWP’s interim executive director to executive director and had the privilege of working alongside an incredibly dedicated and hardworking staff and board. I’ve also had the honor to meet, serve, and coordinate with many AWP members, organizations, academic institutions, sponsors, exhibitors, and literary partners. The experience, for me, has been heartening and mind-opening, and it has me fully energized and rededicated to our community and its mission.

In March 2025, 10,000 attendees came together at #AWP25 in Los Angeles, California, for a week of panels, exhibiting, and celebrating the written word. The positive energy abounded! #AWP25 showcased more than 1,600 writers, 644 exhibiting organizations, 640 work-exchange volunteers, and a very successful launch of our new AWP Tribal Colleges & Universities Fellowship Program, which awarded six TCU fellows. Keynote speaker Roxane Gay kicked off #AWP25 with a poignant reminder to all—“The pen isn’t mightier than the sword; the pen *is* the sword”—and her words emboldened and empowered attendees to recommit to their personal and collective goals as writers and global citizens.

With every year comes new challenges for our writers, organizations, and academic programs. The year 2025 brought new obstacles to creative expression and writers from every culture; shifting employment opportunities for writers and critical economic impact on academic institutions; economic, geographic, and social marginalization of writers and writing programs; the deeper realities and contentions of artificial intelligence (AI); and so much more. These truths urge AWP to work even harder on its advocacy, guidelines, practices, and supports for the members we serve. Our Writer to Writer Mentorship Program remains an important avenue for emerging writers. In June 2025, we launched an exciting Summer Edition of our Writer to Agent Program and will continue to offer this opportunity to members in the future. We are committed to sharpening our development tools and strategies, and to raising the needed funds to continue to provide members new and diversified programming, pathways, and support for years to come.

We are with you in this vital, meaningful work, and I thank you for your continued participation in our mission and visions for growth and sustainability. We could not do what we do without *you!*

With gratitude,

Michelle Aielli
Executive Director



**2025 AWP
CONFERENCE
& BOOKFAIR**

2025 AWP Conference & Bookfair

AWP was delighted to see the return of the annual AWP Conference & Bookfair in Los Angeles, California. The conference was host to over 10,000 in-person attendees, nearly 650 exhibitors, and over 375 in-person events representing nearly 1,600 presenters. AWP continued its commitment to virtual programming and offered nearly 20 virtual events, plus live streaming for all featured events. The virtual component had over 300 participants.

AWP was honored to host bestselling author and cultural critic Roxane Gay as the #AWP25 keynote speaker. The #AWP25 Keynote Address was a powerful and insightful reflection on Gay's writing life and the impact of the turbulent political and cultural climate on writers. The #AWP25 Keynote Address began with an Indigenous land acknowledgment from the director of the California Center for Native Nations, Wallace Cleaves.



AWP hosted an exciting slate of featured events brought by our literary partners. New partners in Los Angeles included Anaphora Literary Arts, Nightboat Books, and University of Arizona Poetry Center. Returning partners included Alice James Books, the Authors Guild, Blue Flower Arts, Cave Canem, Center for Fiction, Copper Canyon Press, Jewish Book Council, Letras Latinas, Mizna, National Book Critics Circle, National Book Foundation, PEN America, Red Hen Press, and Sarabande Books. These events featured such authors as Kazim Ali, Sloane Crosley, Tishani Doshi, Jonathan Escoffery, Ysabel Y. González, Alison Hawthorne Deming, Duriel E. Harris, Marcelo Hernandez Castillo, Dorianne Laux, Khaled Mattawa, Erika Meitner, Ladan Osman, Jodi Picoult, Clint Smith, Emily St. John Mandel, Justin Torres, Lena Khalaf Tuffaha, and Charles Yu, among others.



The 2025 bookfair was host to hundreds of exhibitors, including UCLA Extension Writers' Program; Atmosphere Press; UC San Diego MFA in Writing and Archive for New Poetry; Center for African American Poetry and Poetics; Sewanee: Writers' Conference, Review, and MFA; Veliz Books; SabbaticalHomes.com; The Common; Community of Literary Magazines and Presses (CLMP); New Directions Publishing; and Street Poets, Inc, among many others. AWP was thrilled to partner with local bookstore Skylight Books as its official #AWP25 bookseller. Thanks to a continued partnership between AWP and Bookshop.org, AWP exhibitors also received an additional 5% commission on sales from Bookshop.

In support of the thousands of Angelenos who were affected by the devastating January 2025 wildfires, AWP hosted the AWP Awards Reception & Benefit for LA Fire Recovery, sponsored by Live Talks Los Angeles and hosted by writer, actor, and third-generation Angeleno Amber Tamblyn. The event provided an opportunity for attendees to donate to Arts for LA, a nonprofit advocacy organization that provides crucial support for communities, artists, and organizations to advocate for an equitable, healthy, and vibrant Los Angeles region through the arts. Donations to Arts for LA were matched dollar for dollar thanks to the Herb Alpert Foundation. Additionally, throughout the conference, attendees wrote moving messages for LA through Letters to LA at #AWP25. These postcards were shared with the Los Angeles community, with select postcards posted on AWP's Instagram.



AWP hosted the HBCU MFA Think Tank at #AWP25. The first national gathering of its kind, the HBCU MFA Think Tank provided space for creative writing educators from HBCUs across the nation to convene and explore the viability of MFA programs at HBCUs, where none currently exist. Funded in part by a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, AWP awarded scholarships to ten HBCU faculty and administrators involved in creative writing at their institutions to participate in a roundtable discussion with ten invited specialists, who were practicing writers on faculty at HBCUs.

The AWP HBCU Fellowship Program, which provides travel and lodging funding and specialized conference programming for fellows, had its third year in Los Angeles. Acclaimed writer Tayari Jones served as creative advisor to three faculty fellows and five student fellows, and delivered a moving lecture titled “Black Words Are Black Wealth,” sponsored by IngramSpark.

Following the success of the AWP HBCU Fellowship Program, 2025 was the inaugural year for the AWP Tribal Colleges & Universities Fellowship Program. Poet and writer Jake Skeets acted as creative advisor to two faculty fellows and four student fellows. In his lecture “Emergence & Becoming—Framing Native Poetics Beyond the ‘Renaissance,’” Skeets reflected on the importance of this program, saying, “Native literature isn’t just something to be preserved or something to remember . . . it’s alive and happening now, and it’s shaping the future of the world of writing.”

AWP continued the AWP Conference Community Scholarship for #AWP25, which aims to expand access to the conference for writers from marginalized communities, including those who identify as people of color, disabled, LGBTQIA+, and/or low-income. From generous community donations, AWP was able to fund fifty-five full scholarships to attend the in-person conference. These fifty-five awarded applicants represent an overall acceptance rate of about 36%. One hundred percent of awarded applicants were located in the Western region, and 77% identified as a person of color, 67% as LGBTQIA+, and 54% as disabled.



MEMBERSHIP

Services

From our online resources to our contests, awards, and programs, including our thriving Writer to Writer Mentorship Program, AWP serves writers throughout all stages of their careers. Our biweekly newsletter informs subscribers of the latest news and services from AWP. Curated videos—including fresh content and rereleases from the annual conference—keep writers engaged year-round. Our steady social media presence encourages interaction and discussion, and strengthens the literary community.

Website

AWP's website saw two million page views and had 413,000 active annual users during FY 2025. The AWP Job List continues to rank consistently in the top ten most-viewed pages throughout the year (number eight in FY 2025). The site continues to serve as a trusted source of writing news, advice, and opportunities—for members and nonmembers alike.

Some of the content added in FY 2025:

- 39 videos
 - 19 #AWP25 featured events
 - 6 pedagogy (2 full-length and 4 teasers)
 - 1 Career Corner
 - 1 new site overview
 - 2 #AWP26 proposal videos
 - 9 Intro Journals Project Winners short readings
 - 1 “Ask an Agent Anything”



- 5 new issues of *The Writer's Chronicle*
 - 44 articles
 - 3 TWC Book Club selections
 - 39 sneak peeks of forthcoming releases
 - 3 writing prompts per issue (poetry, creative nonfiction, and fiction)
 - 3 audiobook playlists on Libro.fm, featuring authors published or referred to in the issue (one per issue starting with February 2025)
- 23 Writer's News pieces
- 11 Writer's Notebook pieces
- 8 press releases
- 262 books featured on the online AWP Member Bookshelf
- 249 grant and award opportunities
- 496 job listings

Online Community

AWP hosts a thriving and engaged community of writers across its various social media platforms. In addition to promoting events and services, AWP spotlights individual writers and organizations, boosts news relevant to its stakeholders, sparks discussion among followers, and celebrates accomplishments in the writing world. On Facebook, AWP facilitates focused conversations in specialized groups and pages such as the AWP Community of Writers, Writer to Writer Mentee Alumni, Writer to Writer Mentors, AWP Program Directors, AWP Writing Organizations, The Writer's Chronicle, and more.

Despite the steady decline of Twitter (now X), our overall social media community remains steady, showing particular growth on Instagram. We currently have roughly 150,000 total followers, distributed as follows:

- 96,000 on Facebook
- 34,000 on Twitter
- 18,116 on Instagram

Writer to Writer Mentorship Program

In FY 2025, AWP's mentorship program received 251 mentee applications and matched 28 emerging writers of creative nonfiction, fiction, and poetry with exceptional mentors. Due to the transition to the new website and submission platform, we did not hold a fall 2024 session, so all applications and matches in FY 2025 were from Season 21 (spring 2025). Following that session, we have returned to our regular, twice-yearly schedule.

Some of the mentors who served with us in FY 2025 included Subhaga Crystal Bacon, Dana Teen Lomax, Eden Boudreau, Jean Guerrero, Elyse Durham, and Shay Galloway.



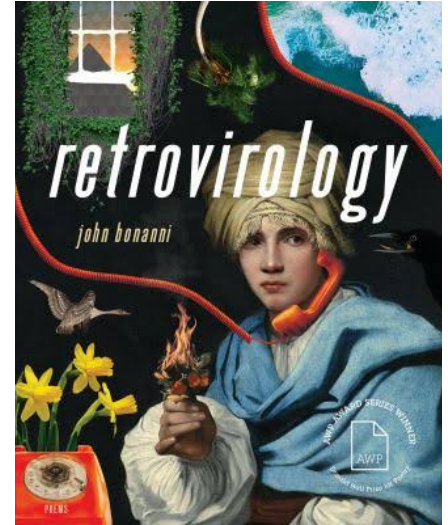
AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

AWP Award Series

AWP sponsors the Award Series, an annual competition for the publication of excellent new book-length works. In addition to the award and publication, winners receive significant promotional support, including paid advertisements and featured readings at the annual conference and bookfair.

The **2025 Donald Hall Prize for Poetry** went to John Bonanni for *retrovirology*. The Donald Hall Prize includes a \$5,500 honorarium and publication by the University of Pittsburgh Press. Judge Honorée Fanonne Jeffers said of the winner:

“*retrovirology* captures the urgency that few books contain: This book is a remembrance of those who passed away during the AIDS epidemic, but equally, it is an altar built to honor those Ancestors of that mournful time. And I say, now in this new year, in this new place—where some are trying to take us back to an old place—now is the time for urgency. Now is the time for those Ancestors’ wisdom. Now is the time to call their names: Larry Kramer and Gaëtan Dugas. Now is the time to speak back against erasure. To reclaim this history. This crucial fierceness. Now: This remembrance that is painful but also beautiful. Now: A taking up space on the page and within the spirit. And I’m so grateful to have read this book—I’m so grateful that it chose me in this time.”



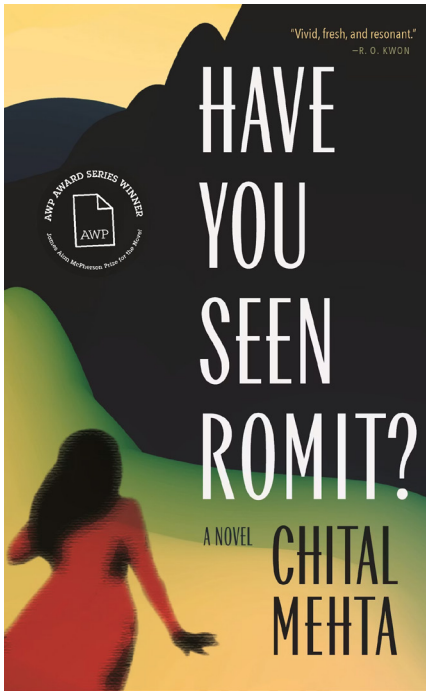
The 2025 Donald Hall Prize for poetry received a total of 567 submissions.



The **2025 Sue William Silverman Prize for Creative Nonfiction** was awarded to Brittany Perham for *Executrix*. The Sue William Silverman Prize includes a \$2,500 honorarium and publication by the University of Georgia Press. Judge Cheryl Strayed said of the winner:

“*Executrix* is a moving, wise, innovative memoir that captures the experience of loving and losing a complicated parent with such precision and power it lands like a truth bomb on the heart. In lean and vivid prose that’s at turns comic and devastating, poignant and provocative, the author reckons not only with her late father, but also with memory and the form of memoir itself. Masterfully crafted, *Executrix* is a complex, emotionally exacting, beautiful book that held me in its thrall from page 1.”

The 2025 Sue William Silverman Prize for Creative Nonfiction received a total of 214 submissions.



The **2025 James Alan McPherson Prize for the Novel** was awarded to Chital Mehta for *Have You Seen Romit?* The James Alan McPherson Prize comes with a \$5,500 honorarium and publication by the University of Nebraska Press. Judge R. O. Kwon said of the winner:

“*Have You Seen Romit?* is a gripping, intensely moving portrayal of a woman whose ferocious love for her children ends up clashing with how others expect her to behave. I loved spending time with the rule-breaking Usha and with the complicated world Chital Mehta has conjured. Vivid, fresh, and resonant.”

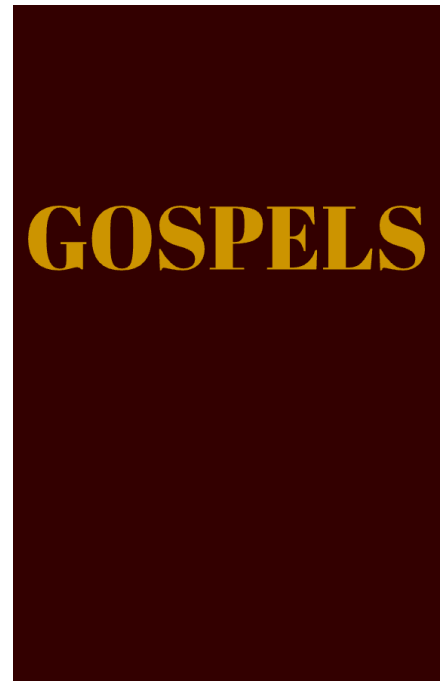
The 2025 James Alan McPherson Prize for the Novel received a total of 391 submissions.

The **2025 Grace Paley Prize for Short Fiction** was awarded to Adam Peterson for *Gospels*. The Grace Paley Prize includes a \$5,500 honorarium and publication by Mad Creek Books, an imprint of The Ohio State University Press. Judge Kevin Wilson said of the winner:

“As history tends to shave off the weird bumps and ridges of our past, it’s exhilarating and unsteady to read a collection that ambitiously seeks to provide a kind of bizarre reimagining of our world. *Gospels* is odd and hilarious and yet so tenderly human, so unafraid of cataloging all the strange desires and cruelties and moments of true connection that have somehow gotten us to this moment in time, and then it rockets beyond that to imagine an even stranger future. This is wildness of the highest order, unforgettable and highly original.”

The 2025 Grace Paley Prize for Short Fiction received a total of 261 submissions.

In 2024, AWP began recognizing the finalists in each category, as well as the winners, which we continued in 2025. To generate buzz for the contest, we announced the ten finalists in each genre (forty finalists total) on social media and our website, ahead of the official winner announcements.



George Garrett Award

The George Garrett Award for Outstanding Community Service in Literature recognizes individuals who have made notable donations of care, time, labor, and money to support writers and their literary accomplishments. The award is named for George Garrett (1929–2008), who made exceptional contributions to his fellow writers as a teacher, mentor, editor, friend, board member, and good spirit. As a writer, teacher, mentor, editor, and inspiration, Garrett helped many young writers who are now major contributors to contemporary letters. The award includes a \$2,000 honorarium in addition to travel, accommodations, and registration to attend AWP’s annual conference, where the award is publicly announced and conferred.

At the 2025 AWP Conference & Bookfair, AWP awarded the George Garrett Award to Kathryn Kysar.

Kysar is the author of two books of poetry, *Dark Lake* and *Pretend the World*, and she edited the creative nonfiction anthology *Riding Shotgun: Women Write About Their Mothers*. She has received fellowships and residencies from the Anderson Center for Interdisciplinary Studies, Banfill-Locke Center for the Arts, the Minnesota State Arts Board, the National Endowment for the Humanities, Toft Lake Center, the Oberholtzer Foundation, and Write On, Door County. Her poems, book reviews, travel articles, and essays have been published in *About Place Journal*, *The Fourth River*, *Hayden’s Ferry Review*, *Literary Mama*, *The Minneapolis Star Tribune*, *Mizna*, *Mollyhouse*, *Sequestrum*, *Slag Glass City*, *Stone Coast Review*, *Voice Mail Poems*, and many other magazines and anthologies. She has a BA in English from Hamline University and an MFA in poetry from Wichita State University. She is the founder of the creative writing program at Anoka-Ramsey Community College, and she has served on the boards of directors for the Association of Writers & Writing Programs and Rain Taxi. In addition to her work at ARCC, Kysar teaches at the Loft Literary Center and performs with the Sonoglyph Collective, a poetry/improvisational jazz group. She lives in Saint Paul near the Mississippi River.



Intro Journals Project

Sixteen emerging writers were selected as winners of the 2025 AWP Intro Journals Project, which helps student writers attending our member programs find publication in established journals.

Judges for the 2025 competition were jo reyes-boitel (poetry), Uche Okonkwo (fiction), and AJ Romriell (creative nonfiction).

Participating magazines were *Colorado Review*, *Florida Review*, *Hayden’s Ferry Review*, *Mid-American Review*, *Puerto del Sol*, *Quarterly West*, *Reed Magazine*, and *Tampa Review*.

Winners for poetry were Jacob R. Benavides (Oklahoma State University), Ben Cooper (Salisbury University), Elizabeth Garcia (Georgia State University), Camilo Loaiza Bonilla (University of South Florida), Heather Neidlinger (Western Kentucky University), Sophia Savo (University of Central Florida), Merrick Sloane (University of Tennessee), and Cela Xie (University of Tennessee).

Winners for fiction were Carter Groves (University of Missouri–Kansas City), Serena Kerkstra (Georgia College & State University), and Kelly Ward (West Virginia University).

Winners for creative nonfiction were Tyler Balkcom (University of South Florida), Maya Bernstein-Schalet (University of Arizona), Ari Koontz (Northern Michigan University), Katie Rhodes (University of Southern Mississippi), and Josiah Roberts (Point Loma Nazarene University).

Prize for Undergrad Lit Mags

Previously the National Program Directors' Prize, the AWP Prize for Undergrad Lit Mags is awarded annually to one outstanding undergraduate-led journal and two runners-up. The prize celebrates the work of undergraduate student writers and editors, including exceptional content, cohesive design, and innovation. In 2025, the Prize for Undergrad Lit Mags received 131 submissions.

The 2025 winners were selected by Ona Anosike. The first-place winner, *Estuary*, volume 16, from Savannah State University, was awarded \$1,000; we also published a short piece about the editing and selection process by the editors in *The Writer's Chronicle*. The second-place winner, *r2: The Rice Review*, volume 20, from Rice University, was awarded \$500. The third-place winner, *The Yale Journal of Literary Translation*, issue 15, was awarded \$250.

Small Press Publisher Award

The AWP Small Press Publisher Award is an annual prize for nonprofit presses and literary journals that recognizes the important role such organizations play in publishing creative works and introducing new authors to the reading public. The award includes a \$2,000 honorarium and a complimentary exhibit booth, including two complimentary conference registrations, at the AWP Conference & Bookfair in the year following the recipient's recognition. In even years, the award is given to a journal, and, in odd years, to a press.

The 2025 winner was Autumn House Press; the finalists were Alice James Books and Tia Chucha Press. The winner and finalists were selected by judges Brent Amenyro, Judy Halebsky, and Keenan Norris. The year 2025 was the last year that we recruited external judges, before transitioning to a selection process by AWP staff and board.

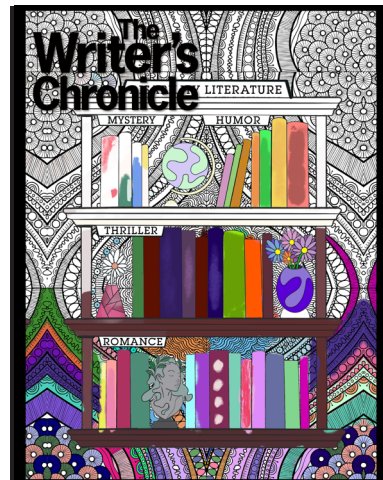
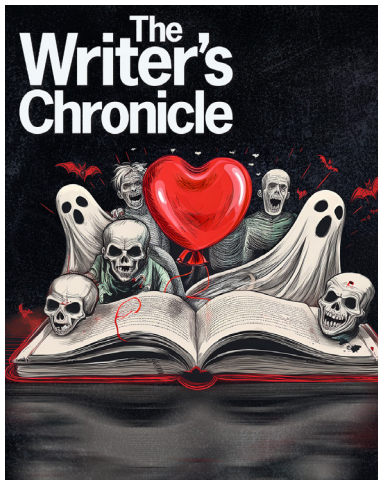
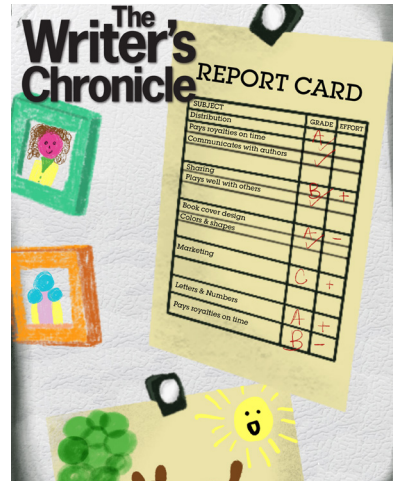
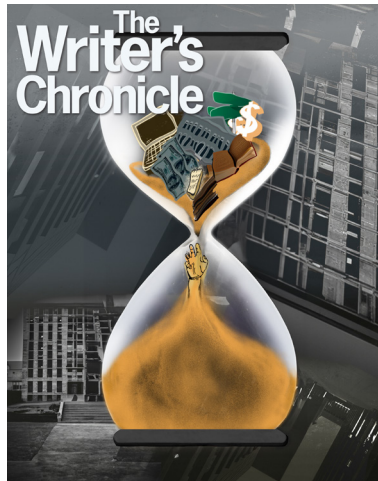
Writing Organization Award

The AWP Writing Organization Award is a new award that will annually recognize writing conferences, festivals, centers, workshops, residencies, retreats, and other organizations for the important work they do to serve the writing community. The year 2025 was the first year of this award, created as a replacement for the Kurt Brown Prizes, which were found to be ineffective in serving our writing organization members. Based on letters of nomination, AWP awards a \$2,000 honorarium and a complimentary bookfair booth, including two conference registrations, to each year's winning organization.

The inaugural winner of the AWP Writing Organization Award was Torch Literary Arts. The finalists were Brink Literacy Project and the Macondo Writers Workshop.



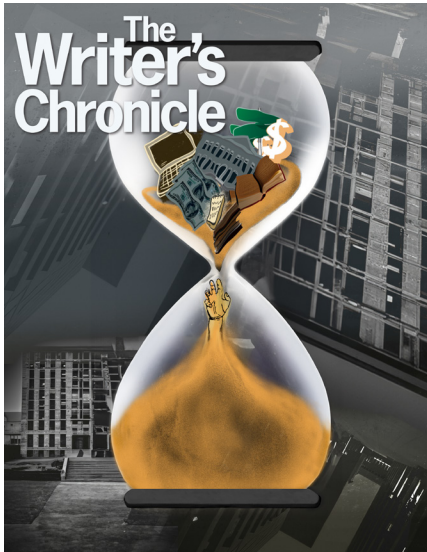
PUBLICATIONS



For decades, *The Writer's Chronicle* has served as a leading source of articles, news, and information for writers, editors, students, and teachers of writing. Published every other month, *The Writer's Chronicle* provides diverse insights into the art, craft, pedagogy, and business of creative writing that are accessible, practical, and thought-provoking. Each issue features in-depth essays on the craft of writing, personal essays about the writing life, wide-ranging conversations among authors and publishing professionals, writing prompts, and excerpts of new and forthcoming books of poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction. Readers can also find AWP news and highlights, including a listing of grants, awards, and publication opportunities available to writers. *The Writer's Chronicle* is for writers as well as readers.

As the 2024–2025 issues demonstrate, the magazine has significantly rebooted its content, interface, and accessibility, the latter in terms of content as well as *TWC's* website. This fiscal year saw *The Writer's Chronicle* become fully web-based with a new, accessible platform that launched with AWP's new website. The magazine also began its transition from four issues per year to six. Most significantly, this fiscal year marked a shift away from the magazine's academic tone to a more contemporary, reader-friendly feel in the tradition of *Poets & Writers*, *Literary Hub*, and *Electric Literature*. Under Senior Publications Editor James Tate Hill, *The Writer's Chronicle* relaunched in October 2024 as a home for fresh, relevant, diverse, and incisive coverage of contemporary writing and publishing. Submissions reopened in October 2025, but contributions before that have been entirely solicited to establish the magazine's new tone and feel.

In addition to a 50% increase in issues, we have increased *TWC*'s per-issue content as well, adding more features than the previous iteration, between six and nine excerpts of new books per issue, three writing prompts per issue, and a *TWC* Book Club selection every other issue. In late 2024, AWP forged a partnership with Libro.fm, the audiobook purveyor who shares proceeds with local independent bookstores, and in February 2025, we began including an audiobook playlist of contributors and authors discussed in each issue. We have made these increases in content with the same annual budget as the magazine's quarterly version. As measured in page views, readership of *The Writer's Chronicle* has increased by 50% over the previous digital iteration on the BlueToad platform.



October 2024

The Big Conversation: Making a Living (or Not) as a Freelance Book Critic

With Daniel Felsenthal, Maris Kreizman, Ilana Masad, and Kristen Martin

Here's Where the Story Ends: Scenes from the End of a Teaching Career

Daniel Nester lived his dream of teaching creative writing at the College of St. Rose—until it closed.

Behind Closed Doors: On the Steamier Side of AWP

Beth Nguelyn examines romances that begin at the annual writing conference, including her own.

The Weight of a Sentence: What Ceramics Teaches Me About Revision

Emily Maloney reveals how one art form informs another.

Portrait of a Mentor: Dorianne Laux

Tyree Daye reflects on the far-reaching impact of his former teacher.

The Small Press Distribution Closure and Aftermath: Notes from a Small Press Editor

Diane Goedel looks back on the event that rocked the small press world.

A Quiet Voice in the Night: On Depression and Writing

Bethanne Patrick recalls how a college acquaintance helped her return to writing.

Publicity as Chain Letter: What Makes a Book Stick

Cassi Mannes Murray considers how books find an audience well after their launch.

Seven Lessons Novelists Can Take from Video Games

Mary Kenney draws parallels between two narrative art forms.



December 2024

The Big Conversation: Writing and Publishing Disability

Jessie Male, Keah Brown, M. Leona Godin, and Sonya Huber discuss the joys and challenges of writing nuanced and complex experiences of disability.

The Song Remains the Poem

Sir Jonathan Bate connects Taylor Swift to the tortured poets of prior centuries.

Much More than Fan Fiction: On Revisioning, Bob Dylan, Translation, and the Art of Borrowing

K.E. Semmel examines literary retellings and the inspiration for his own debut novel.

Empathy Versus Experience: On Creating an Authentic Hard of Hearing Hero

Tiana Smith explains why her hard of hearing hero isn't her novel's protagonist.

You Cannot Invent Me (*Yet I Did, I Do*)

Rosebud Ben-Oni redefines science with poetry and vice versa.

Tarot: The DIY Writing Workshop You Didn't Know You Needed

Chelsey Pippin Mizzi offers unconventional advice for shaking up your drafting, editing, and revision.

It's a Performance, People! Tips for Moderating a Lively Panel

Melissa Hart talks to moderators of successful AWP panels about how to wow an audience.

Accidental on Purpose: Why I Use the Wrong Phrase to Define the Night My Best Friend Shot Me in the Head

Paul Rousseau on the many implications of a chosen word

February 2025

Are the Big Guys Always Bad Guys?

Courtney Maum debates the viral "The Big Five Publishers Have Killed Literary Fiction" Substack article.

Surrender Is an Action Verb

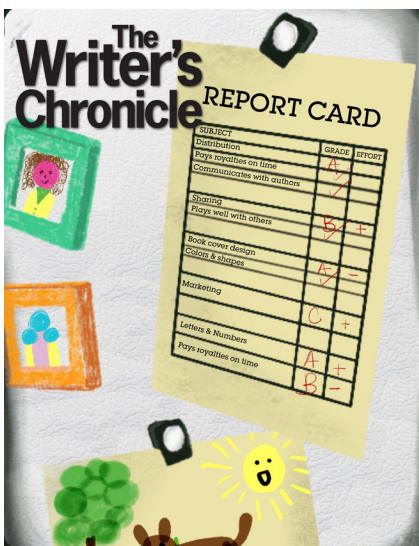
Grant Falkner talks to Paolo Bacigalupi, Lan Samantha Chang, and Rachel Khong about unconventional origins of their novels.

Graphic

Jesse Lee Kercheval describes her unexpected transition from poet and memoirist to graphic novelist.

From Anecdote to Essay: Freeing Yourself from the Tyranny of Chronology

Tom McAllister has tips for going deeper with memoir and personal essays.



Brush Strokes and Scribbled Lines

Elaine Neil Orr charts the close relationship between painting and writing her latest novel.

Presencing LA with Story

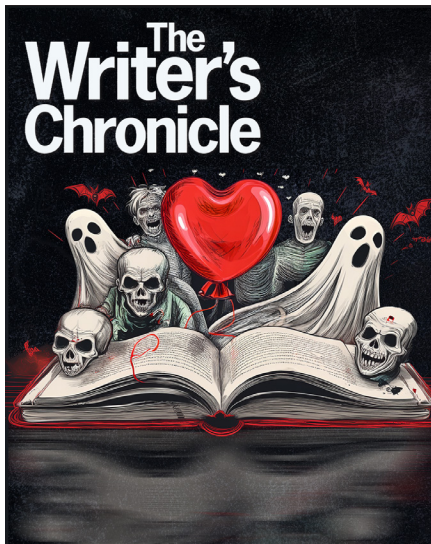
Esther G. Belin reflects on the Los Angeles wildfires, the healing power of stories, and the city's history of Indian relocation.

The Small Press Report Card

Wendy J. Fox examines results of the inaugural survey of small press authors.

The Big Conversation: What Writers Can Learn from Bookselling

Audrey Smith, Michael Leali, Lillian Li, and Ashley Lumpkin discuss how working in bookstores has influenced their writing.



April 2025

The Big Conversation: The Horror Renaissance

Erika T. Wurth, Carolina Florez-Cerchiaro, Rachel Harrison, and Paul Tremblay discuss why we love and need fiction that scares us, now more than ever.

It Takes Nerve

Sarah Fawn Montgomery shares insights on developing a disabled writing practice and making the writing workshop more accessible.

Write What You Are: In Praise of Unconventional Stories

Anu Kandikuppa recounts her resistance to conventional structures and her MFA classmates' resistance to her stories.

Mirrors and Reflections: A Conversation with the Propel Disability Poetry Series

Six disabled and neurodivergent poets consider what it does and doesn't mean to be a disabled poet.

Once More Again with Feeling

Joe Mungo Reed examines the pleasures of the family saga and the mechanics of how they work.

Sungold

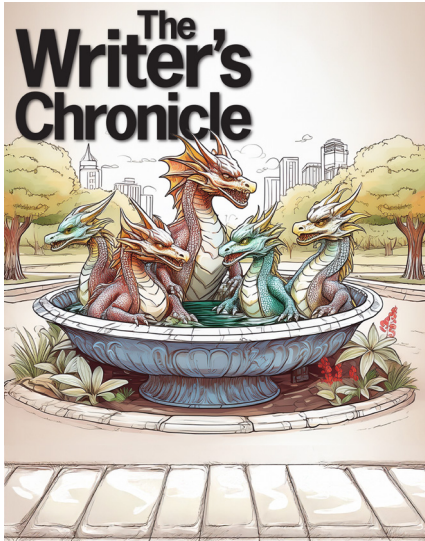
Paul Lisicky falls in love with a little help from Joni Mitchell.

Urizen

Vidyan Ravinthiran writes about the obsessive-compulsive disorder that nearly caused him to cancel his new book, *Asian/Other*.

Close Escapes: Or, Now Is the Time for Poetry

Steven Kuusisto reflects on a celebrated writing career delayed by disability and why poets get better with age.



June 2025

A Field Guide to Writing Genre Fiction

Jennifer Pullen offers a mini handbook for anyone wary of letting genre fiction in their classroom.

Kissing Novels to Killing Novels

Margie Sarsfield never knew writing romance was preparing her so well to write horror.

Pressure and Time

Matthew Clark Davison and Alice LaPlante share experiments to unlock buried tension in your writing.

Opening Day: On Baseball, Poetry, and Permission to Feel

Sandra Marchetti connects America's pastime to what she loves most about poetry.

Against Cynicism: What Makes You a Better Person Makes You a Better Writer

Lori Ostlund generates hope through service and finds her writing changed as a result.

The Big Conversation: Publishing in a Time of Unrest

Agents Rebecca Podos, Jim McCarthy, and Stefanie Molina-Santos join authors Tehlor Kay Mejia and Tamika Thompson to discuss how publishing has and has not responded to social and political upheaval.

Writing in a Terrible World

Susan Muaddi Darraj reconsiders her relationship to the page through the Palestinian value of sumud.

Confessions of an Antiquarian Bookseller

Oliver Darkshire charts the origins of his fantasy debut to a lifetime spent around rare books.



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Our cherished donors play a vital role in keeping our services and programs affordable and accessible to all, as membership and conference fees cover only a portion of the expenses associated with AWP’s many programs and services. We express our gratitude for our supporters, who raised a total of \$35,849 for AWP and an additional \$2,460 to aid LA fire recovery and relief during FY 2025. Thank you, Friends of AWP!

Friends of AWP (July 1, 2024–June 30, 2025)

We are thankful for the Friends of AWP, who show their caring through their investment in AWP’s mission “to amplify the voices of writers and the academic programs and organizations that serve them while championing diversity and excellence in creative writing.”

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AWP Awards Reception

LA Live Talks



2025 AWP AUDITOR'S REPORT

The firm of Wegner CPAs, LLP has audited the financial statements of the Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP), which comprise the statements of financial position as of June 30, 2025 and 2024, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements. The full audit letter and the audited financial statements and related notes are available upon request.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

The management of AWP is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Wegner CPAs conducted AWP's audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAS). Their objectives were to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes their opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. This includes obtaining an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal controls. Accordingly, no such opinion was expressed by Wegner CPAs. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.



In the referenced audit letter, Wegner CPAs believes that the audit evidence obtained was sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for their audit opinion. In the audit letter, Wegner CPA stated that the financial statements represented in the audited financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Association of Writers & Writing Programs as of June 30, 2025 and 2024, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

SUPPORT AND REVENUE	2025	2024
Program service revenue		
Annual conference	2,071,663	1,675,983
Membership services	626,017	605,014
Advertising income	67,195	119,158
Publications	2,109	6,929
Award series fees	40,775	36,390
Other income	3,180	3,703
Contributions		
Individual donations	37,031	33,207
Grant revenue	100,000	50,000
Investment return, net	415,185	673,438
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	3,363,155	3,203,822
EXPENSES		
Program services		
Annual conference	1,899,245	1,447,192
Membership services	614,807	579,720
Publications	331,791	333,936
Total Program Services	2,845,843	2,360,848
Supporting activities		
Management and general	679,430	496,262
Development	104,869	136,436
TOTAL EXPENSES & LOSSES	3,630,142	2,993,546
Change in net assets	(266,987)	210,276
Net assets at beginning of year	4,618,636	4,408,360
Net assets at end of year	4,351,649	4,618,636



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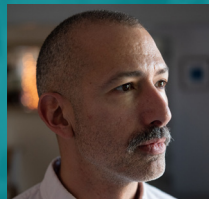
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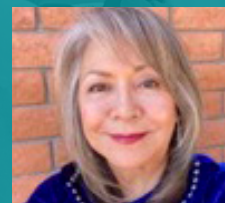
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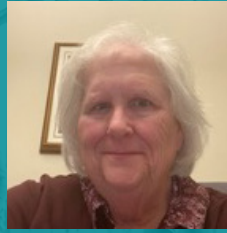
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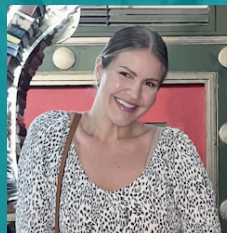
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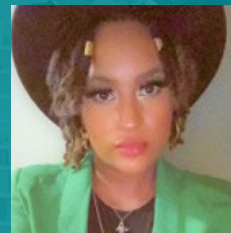
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- Flatiron Writers Room
- Freeflow Institute
- Gotham Writers Workshop
- *Harvard Review*
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- Iowa Summer Writing Festival
- Juniper Summer Writing Institute
- Kachemak Bay Writers' Conference
- Kaz Conference Writing Workshop
- Larksong Writers Place
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- Loghaven Artist Residency
- Maximum Impact
- Mineral School
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- New Directions Publishing
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- North Words Writers Symposium
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- Rebirth Your Book
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- The Creativity Workshop
- The Hudson Valley Writers' Center
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- The Muse Writers Center
- The Writing Institute at Sarah Lawrence College
- *The Yale Review*
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- Northern Michigan University
- Northwestern State University
- Northwestern University
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