

Poets & Writers

# 2025 Annual Report

JULY 1, 2024 – JUNE 30, 2025



This was a transformational year for Poets & Writers. We launched a new membership program that offers writers expanded digital content, resources, and connectivity, and that invites them to become part of a thriving community dedicated to the craft of writing.

Poets & Writers has been a trusted resource for fifty-five years, and many of the fundamentals that writers need to advance their creative work—guidance on navigating the literary market-place, access to financial support and professional opportunities, and connection to peers—are the same today as when the organization was founded in 1970. But the ways writers learn, share their work, and build community have evolved dramatically. We’ve evolved, too.

As you will read in the pages that follow, we have redesigned how we empower and support writers, building on the core editorial resources, services, and programs that generations of authors have relied on. A new members-only newsletter supplies timely weekly updates on writing contests, a topic of enduring interest. A new app delivers the digital edition of *Poets & Writers Magazine* in a convenient format and showcases our online editorial series. A redesigned and relaunched Poets & Writers Groups is a flourishing hub for peer-to-peer networking. In an era when so much online discourse is noxious and divisive, Poets & Writers Groups stands out as a collective grounded in respect, curiosity, and shared commitment to craft.

Our online classes—taught live by accomplished authors and publishing professionals—further extend that sense of community. These sessions aren’t pre-recorded webinars; they are interactive experiences where writers come together to learn from top practitioners and build connections as they deepen their understanding.

During an exciting year of change and innovation, a few things haven’t changed at all: We are unwavering in our mission to serve writers; and we are driven by our belief in the transformative power of writing, our commitment to providing honest and useful information, and our vision of an inclusive and expansive literary community.

This year writers (and readers) were forced to confront a chilling political climate in which the book banning blight spread and authors were scapegoated, particularly if they addressed topics that questioned hegemony or if their mere identity contradicted the constricted view of humanity that, heartbreakingly, is ascendant. Poets & Writers is steadfast in our commitment to freedom of expression and to an anti-racist stance, which challenges us to recognize and dismantle barriers to full participation.

The innovations introduced this year position Poets & Writers for the future—meeting writers where they are and ensuring our programs remain sustainable for generations to come. We are gratified that so many readily embraced the opportunity to become members, and ever grateful for the generous support of our donors. Together, we nurture and celebrate a literary landscape where many voices are heard and many stories told.



Melissa Ford Gradel  
Executive Director



Madeline McIntosh  
President of the Board of Directors

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

The figures below highlight some of the many ways we served writers this year.

Poets & Writers members: **42,000**

Writers who have joined Poets & Writers Groups, an online community for collaboration, feedback, and connection: **240**

Groups these writers have formed: **46**

New writing contests featured in *Grants & Awards: The Writing Contest Newsletter*, available to Poets & Writers members: **30**

Subscribers to the *Weekly Update* and *The Time Is Now*, our free weekly e-newsletters for writers: **180,000**

Issues of *Poets & Writers Magazine* published: **6**

Complimentary copies of *Poets & Writers Magazine* distributed to writing programs, conferences, events, and through free subscriptions to high school-age writers and their teachers: **2,600**

Visitors to pw.org: **1,600,000**

Listings of writing contests, literary magazines, small presses, MFA programs, and more in our popular online databases: **2,900**

Authors listed in the Poets & Writers Directory: **13,000+**

Number of events listed in our free national Literary Events calendar: **700+**

Number of headlines featured in Daily News, an aggregate of all the literary news writers need to know: **850+**

Writers who attended our online classes on the business and craft of writing: **785**

Number of these writers who received a fee waiver: **101**

Early-career authors selected to participate in Get the Word Out, a publicity incubator: **19**

Get the Word Out alums selected as the inaugural Poets & Writers fellow at Vermont Studio Center: **1**

Writers who received Readings & Workshops mini-grants: **670**

Dollars distributed to these writers: **257,775**

Literary events these writers participated in with our support: **812**

Audience members who attended these events: **78,000+**

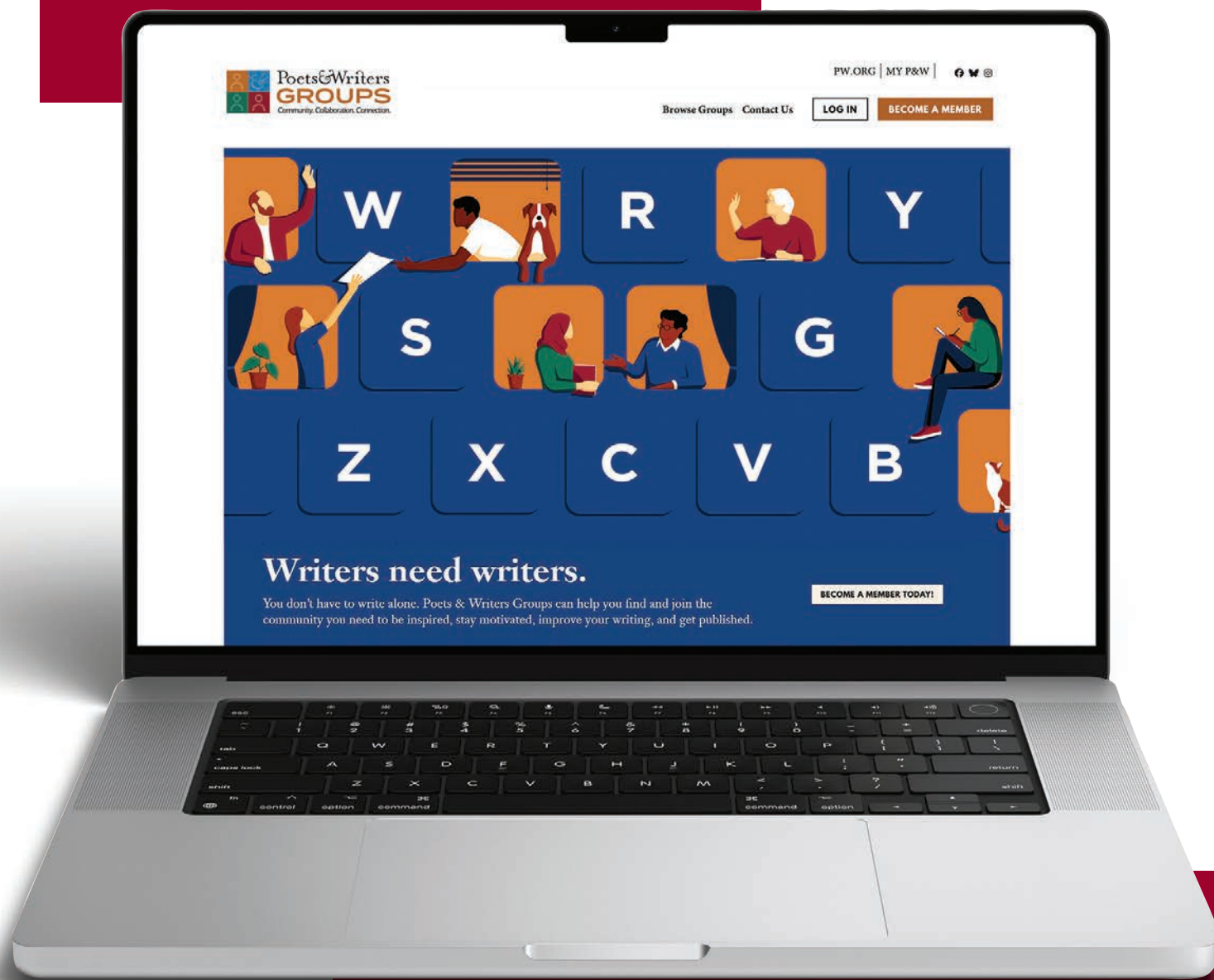
Writers from the Dakotas who received the 2025 Maureen Egen Writers Exchange Award: **2**

Dollars awarded to Cyrus Cassells, the nineteenth winner of the Jackson Poetry Prize: **100,000**

Staff members who made all of this happen: **22**

“Poets & Writers Groups is fantastic!  
I feel very lucky to have found my  
people, which would not have happened  
without Poets & Writers Groups.”

POETS & WRITERS GROUPS USER



“Poets & Writers Groups has been a wonderful source  
of meaningful relationships and peer-to-peer craft  
improvement. When others ask for quality organizations  
to connect with, Poets & Writers is at the top of my list.”

POETS & WRITERS GROUPS USER

## POETS & WRITERS GROUPS

Poets & Writers Groups offers  
community, connection, and  
collaboration. On a significantly  
enhanced version of the platform  
unveiled this past year, writers find  
the encouragement and camaraderie  
they need to sustain their practice.

“Poets & Writers  
Groups is invaluable  
to me as a writer  
without a big  
in-person writing  
community.”

POETS & WRITERS GROUPS USER

Writing is a solitary art—but that doesn’t mean that writers work in isolation. Most crave honest, respectful feedback to move their work forward, along with a trusted community to share the challenges of the blank page, compare notes on submissions and rejections, and celebrate hard-earned breakthroughs. Writers groups are an age-old solution to that problem, and while some are lucky enough to form these connections organically through school, conferences, or workshops, many writers struggle to find peers who can provide mutual support and hold them accountable. This is especially true for writers living far from urban centers or those who have not attended formal writing programs. Poets & Writers Groups leverages our role as the literary community’s central hub to help writers bridge this gap.

Groups welcomes writers at all stages of their journeys and supports a wide range of communities—from small critique groups that require deep commitment to large, informal circles open to drop-ins; from casual meetups to focused writing sessions. Recognizing that a writing group can be a vulnerable space, Groups provides tools for writers to build safe, productive communities and is guided by clear community standards that reflect the respectful, inclusive environment we are committed to fostering. Our Online Community Coordinator maintains an active presence to answer questions, address any issues that may arise, and assist writers in finding groups best suited to their goals.

Throughout our fifty-five-year history, Poets & Writers has been synonymous with craft, respect, and connection, and writers are drawn to Poets & Writers Groups because they trust us. With an average of thirty-five new writers joining each month, Groups is blossoming into a vibrant online community.

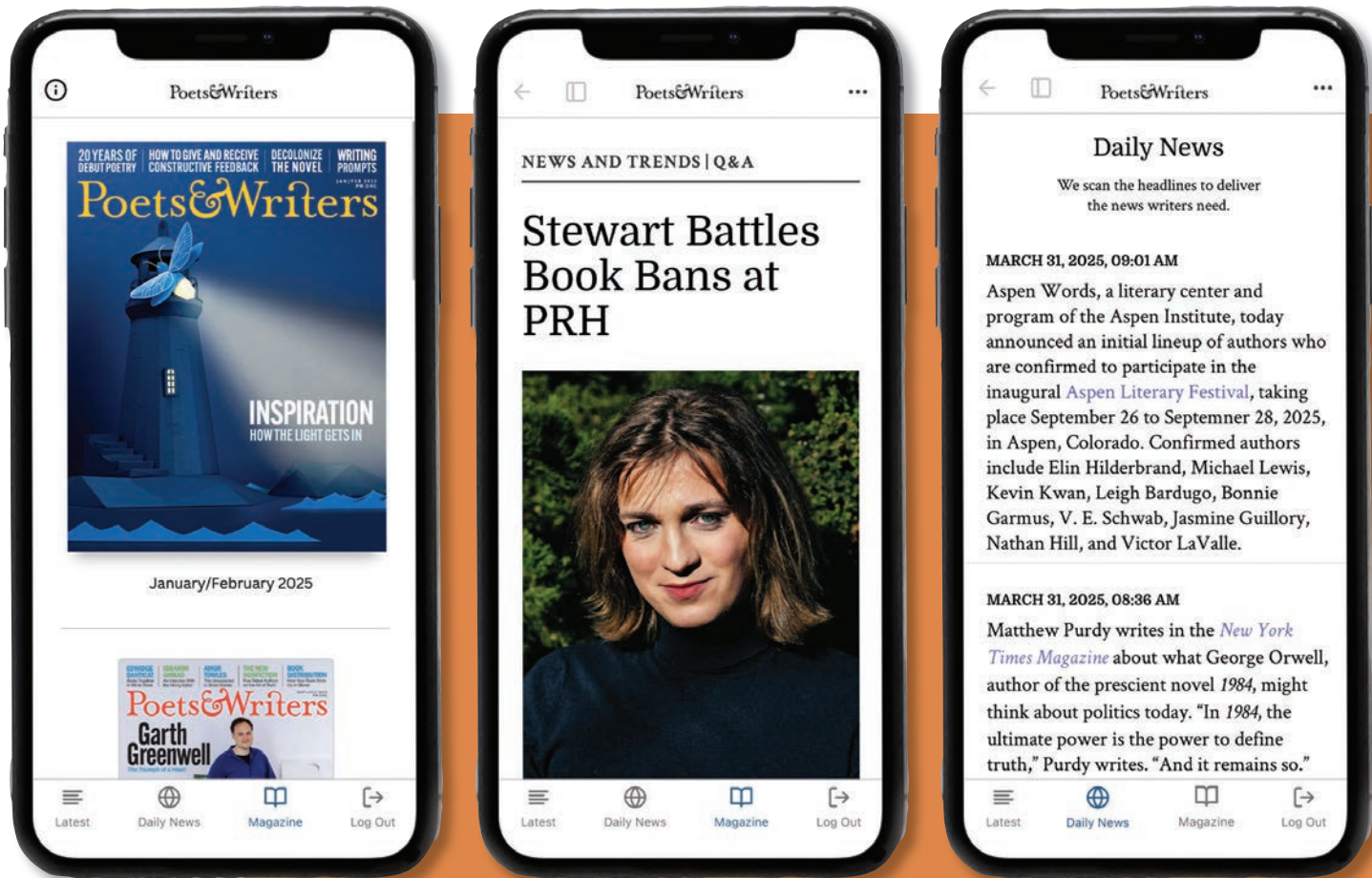
Explore Poets & Writers Groups at [groups.pw.org](https://groups.pw.org).

“There is nothing  
more rewarding  
than coming  
together with  
other poets.  
It is a priceless  
experience.”

POETS & WRITERS GROUPS USER

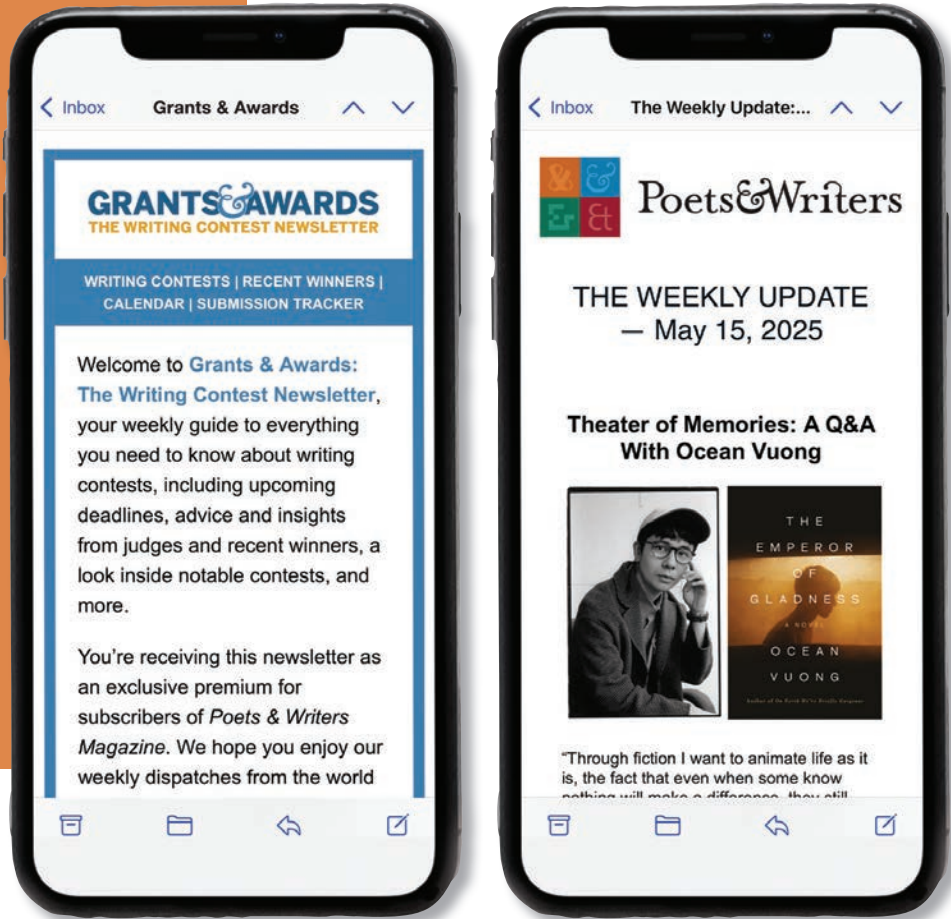


This year we made it easier than ever for writers to stay informed, inspired, and connected—wherever they are.



“I was blown away by the *Grants & Awards* newsletter, and *very* excited to identify at least one opportunity to apply for; I intend to use this newsletter to keep me motivated, accountable, and inspired.”

POETS & WRITERS MEMBER



With the launch of the new Poets & Writers App, writers now enjoy convenient, on-the-go access to online posts from our editorial team. With a few taps, they can browse popular series such as Agents & Editors Recommend and Craft Capsules, access weekly writing prompts, and catch up on curated Daily News headlines about authors, books, and the publishing industry—all free of charge.

Poets & Writers members enjoy full in-app access to the current issue of *Poets & Writers Magazine*—the creative writer’s professional guidebook—plus more than a year’s worth of archival issues optimized for reading on smartphones and tablets.

Among the primary reasons writers turn to Poets & Writers is to find reliable information about writing contests. So, we introduced a new members-only newsletter featuring upcoming contest deadlines, advice from recent winners, and insight from judges. Delivered weekly to members’ inboxes, *Grants & Awards: The Writing Contest Newsletter* provides timely updates between issues of *Poets & Writers Magazine* and has quickly become an indispensable resource for writers seeking publication and recognition.

Two free weekly newsletters reached more than 180,000 writers. The *Weekly Update* highlights new content on pw.org, news from the field, upcoming classes and events, jobs for writers, and more. The *Time Is Now* provides fresh, original writing prompts for poets, fiction writers, and creative nonfiction writers, with more than two thousand archived prompts instantly accessible on pw.org.





“I used to rummage through *Poets & Writers Magazine* as a wee twenty-something year-old, looking for lit mags to submit to, wanting to be published, wanting to be a writer. I tried, and I tried—and I made it!”

SIDIK FOFANA, AUTHOR OF *STORIES FROM THE TENANTS DOWNSTAIRS*, WINNER OF THE GOTHAM BOOK AWARD AND NAMED A BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR BY NPR, *KIRKUS REVIEW*, *LIBRARY JOURNAL*, *CHICAGO REVIEW OF BOOKS*, LITERARY HUB, AND ELECTRIC LITERATURE

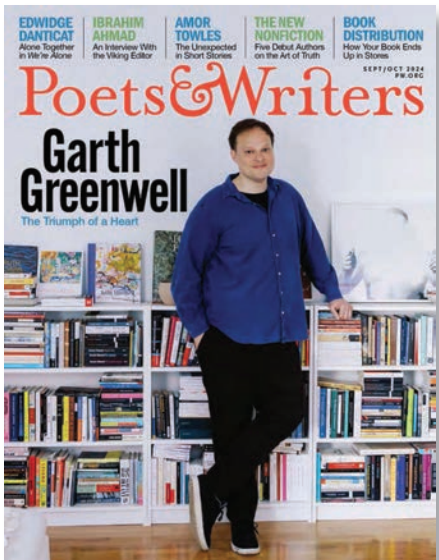


## POETS & WRITERS MAGAZINE

*Poets & Writers Magazine* has been a beacon for generations of writers—and continues to light the way for writers today.

The six issues published this year profiled some of the most compelling voices in contemporary American literature, from poets Douglas Kearney and Mosab Abu Toha to novelists Garth Greenwell, Julia Phillips, and Karen Russell. Our Agents & Editors series offered insights from the professionals who help make books successful, including interviews with editor Ibrahim Ahmad and literary agent Nicole Aragi. And we shared stories of how writers publish their first books with our long-running series spotlighting debut authors of fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction, as well as those making their debuts after the age of fifty.

We reported on how global conflict and environmental disasters are affecting writers through articles like “Ukrainian Children Turn to Poetry” and “Literary Loss and Solidarity in L.A.” and examined AI’s multifaceted impact on writing and publishing with stories such as “AI Threatens Literary Translation.” Pieces like “Building Together: How to Give—and Effectively Receive—Constructive Feedback” and “The Nuts and Bolts of Distribution: How Your Book Ends Up in Stores” offered hands-on advice for writers seeking practical guidance. As always, each issue delivered the most comprehensive listing of writing contests and award winners available in print.



“When I was in high school, the faculty leaders of the writing club would bring in issues of *Poets & Writers Magazine*, and we’d go through them for contest deadlines and youth opportunities. I understood that this magazine was like the *New York Times* for writers: the place where you could learn everything that was going on in the writing world. So many of the journals and places and things that would become key parts of my writing life decades later—Bread Loaf, Yaddo, the *Iowa Review*, the Pushcart Prizes—I first read about in those pages.”

REBECCA MAKKAJ, AUTHOR OF *THE GREAT BELIEVERS*

GRANTS & AWARDS	
Submission Calendar	
<b>May 15</b> UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH PRESS Annual Award for Creative Nonfiction A prize of \$10,000 and publication for University of Pittsburgh Press is given annually for a collection of short fiction. Writers who have published at least one previous book of fiction or a minimum of three short stories or novellas in nationally distributed magazines or literary journals are eligible. Using only the online submission system, submit a manuscript of 100 to 300 pages by June 15. There is no entry fee. Visit the website for complete guidelines. (SEE RECENT WINNERS) UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH PRESS, One Penn Plaza, 15th Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15222, Email: <a href="mailto:submit@pittsburghpress.com">submit@pittsburghpress.com</a> View Leases Press, International Voices in Creative Nonfiction Competition A prize of \$1,000 and publication for View Leases Press will be given for a book of nonfiction, including biography, memoir, and hybrid work. Using only the online submission system, submit a manuscript of 10,000 to 100,000 words of prose or at least 100 pages of hybrid work with a \$12 entry fee by July 5. Visit the website for complete guidelines. (SEE RECENT WINNERS) View Leases Press, International Voices in Creative Nonfiction Competition, 1000 Pennsylvania Ave., Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20004, Email: <a href="mailto:submit@viewleasespress.com">submit@viewleasespress.com</a> PRIZES/GRANTS The Creative Nonfiction Award is given to honor a year's worth of creative nonfiction writing. The award is given to the author of the best work of creative nonfiction published in the year. Visit the Submission Calendar for upcoming deadlines.	<b>SOUTHERN POETRY REVIEW</b> Cay-Davis Prize <b>TWO STORIES PRIZE</b> Chapman Prize <b>UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS</b> Flannery O'Connor Award for Short Fiction <b>JUNE 1</b> AMERICAN SHORT FICTION Hedley Beach Fiction Prize <b>BAIRD COLLEGE</b> Best Fiction Prize <b>ROLLMANS</b> Poetry Contest for Emerging Poets <b>NEW AMERICA</b> Pittsburgh Star Column for Literary One History <b>PITTSBURGH LIFE REVIEW</b> Pittsburgh Foundation Fund Grant <b>SALAMANDER</b> Fiction Prize <b>JUNE 6</b> NATIONAL BOOK FOUNDATION National Book Award <b>JUNE 15</b> COLUMBIA PRESS Poetry Award <b>TORONTO UNIVERSITY</b> Prize for Literature <b>TORONTO REVIEW</b> Chapman Prize <b>UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA PRESS</b> Allen Poetry Prize <b>JUNE 16</b> CANADIAN PUBLISHING Chapman Contest <b>JUNE 20</b> GRAFFIN PRIZE FOR EXCELLENCE IN POETRY Coffin Poetry Prize



**Spring Ahead: Applying for Grants, Fellowships, and Residencies**

Led by Shelley Wong



Credit: Margarita Corporan

“The class gave me a clearer, more useful lay of the publishing landscape, which is what I wanted as I prepare to launch a new novel.”

PARTICIPANT, WHAT THE MFA WON'T TEACH: ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS OF WRITING FOR 21ST CENTURY WRITERS

Online classes helped writers deepen their craft and move closer to publication. In 2024–25 we offered a wide range of classes that served 785 writers at every stage of development—from those honing their unique voice to those preparing to query agents or negotiate book deals.

Courses covered both the art and business of writing, from generative workshops exploring craft to practical sessions that offer behind-the-scenes looks at the publishing process. In *Mapping the Maze*, a recurring introductory workshop, early-career writers gathered the tools and confidence to chart their individual journeys to publication, with genre-specific sessions addressing the different pathways available to poets, fiction writers, and creative nonfiction writers.

In keeping with Poets & Writers’ commitment to anti-racism, we work to ensure that our classes address concerns specific to BIPOC writers. We do this in part by engaging diverse rosters of instructors

that include agents, editors, and authors with a wide variety of professional and lived experiences.

Poets & Writers classes are accessibly priced, and to ensure more equitable access, we offer fee waivers for writers for whom the registration cost is a barrier. We encourage applications from those traditionally underrepresented in publishing, including writers who identify as BIPOC, immigrants, writers with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ writers, writers residing outside of major cities, and those who do not have an MFA or equivalent degree. In the past year, 101 writers received fee waivers—95 percent of whom identified as members of one or more of these groups.

**Grief and Rage and Beauty: A Convergence**

Led by Marcelo Hernandez Castillo



Credit: Courtesy of the Author

“The class was invaluable for me. The instructors’ practical insights, advice, and personal accounts of working with writers and publishers left me with what seems to me a basic understanding of editors’ and agents’ needs and priorities that I could not have acquired on my own.”

PARTICIPANT, MAPPING THE MAZE FOR FICTION WRITERS

**MAPPING THE MAZE**  
CHART YOUR PATH TO PUBLICATION



Credit: Marcus Beasley

**That Famous Freytag: Breaking Down the Rules of Fiction**

Led by Sidik Fofana

“By the end of the two-session workshop I felt I had a grip on the elusive qualities of putting a poetry manuscript together.”

PARTICIPANT, THE POEM BETWEEN THE POEMS: ORDERING THE MANUSCRIPT





**2025 GET THE WORD OUT FICTION FELLOWS** (from top left):

Yu-Mei Balasingamchow — *Names Have Been Changed* (Tiny Reparations Books, 2026)  
Roohi Choudhry — *Outside Women* (University of Kentucky Press, 2025)  
Kerry Donoghue — *Mouth* (Unsolicited Press, 2025)  
Lacey N. Dunham — *The Belles* (Atria, 2025)  
Shasta Grant — *When We Were Feral* (Regal House Publishing, 2026)  
Laura Venita Green — *Sister Creatures* (The Unnamed Press, Fall 2025)  
Benedict Nguyen — *Hot Girls with Balls* (Catapult Books, 2025)  
Miranda Schmidt — *Leafskin* (Stillhouse Press, 2025)  
Daniel Tam-Claiborne — *Transplants* (Regalo Press, 2025)



**2025 GET THE WORD OUT POETRY FELLOWS** (from top left):

Adedayo Agarau — *The Years of Blood* (Fordham University Press, 2025)  
Genevieve DeGuzman — *Karaoke at the End of the World* (JackLeg Press, 2026)  
Isabella DeSendi — *Someone Else's Hunger* (Four Way Books, 2025)  
Alison Lubar — *The Other Tree* (Small Harbor Publishing, 2025)  
Nick Martino — *Scrap Book* (Alice James Books, 2026)  
Yimini Pathak — *Her Mouth a Palace of Lamps* (Milk & Cake Press, 2025)  
m. mick powell — *Dead Girl Cameo* (One World, 2025)  
Maya Salameh — *Mermaid Theory* (Haymarket Books, 2026)  
Kelsey L. Smoot — *SOULMATE AS A VERB* (DOPAMINE/Semiotext(e), 2026)  
Bernardo Wade — *A Love Tap* (Lookout Books, 2025)



**GET THE WORD OUT**

# Nineteen writers were selected to take part in Get the Word Out, a publicity incubator for early-career authors.

To give their books a real chance of finding readers in a crowded marketplace, authors today must be active partners in promoting their work. While this is true for all authors, it is essential for poets who so often “hand-sell” their books as well as fiction writers working with independent presses. Launched in 2022, Get the Word Out builds on Poets & Writers’ decades-long history of providing practical guidance about the business of writing and aims to reduce barriers to success for those historically excluded from publishing, including BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ writers, as well as those from outside of New York City and those whose books are published by independent presses.

Each year, a small cohort of fiction writers and another of poets is selected through a competitive application process. The fifty-nine authors that have participated thus far have found notable success in bringing exposure to their new titles while building skills and professional connections they will carry throughout their careers—including Olatunde Osinaike, whose poetry collection *Tender Headed* (Akashic Books, 2023) was a National Poetry Series winner; Ae Hee Lee, whose poetry collection *Asterism* (Tupelo Press, 2023) was selected by John Murillo for the 2022 Dorset Prize and named by Debutiful as a Best Poetry Book of 2024; and Ada Zhang, whose story collection *The Sorrows of Others* (A Public Space Books, 2023) received a 2024 Whiting Award and was a National Book Foundation 5 Under 35 honoree.

Christina Cooke at Vermont Studio Center.



## A new partnership with Vermont Studio Center provides a fully funded residency for a Get the Word Out alum.

Through a new partnership with Vermont Studio Center (VSC), alumni of Get the Word Out are invited to apply for a fully funded residency at VSC, with one applicant selected to visit the storied writers retreat annually.

Christina Cooke, a 2023 Get the Word Out participant, was selected as the inaugural P&W/VSC fellow. Cooke’s debut novel, *Broughtupsy* (Catapult Books, 2024) was named a Best Book of 2024 by *Elle*, *Electric Literature*, *CBC Books*, and *Debutiful*, as well as recommended reading by over thirty other outlets.

Cooke spent three weeks at VSC, which is situated along the Gihon River in the northern Green Mountains, in February 2025. “It was refreshing, it was generative... and it was exactly what my creative spirit needed,” Cooke said, “because while I was there, I started writing again. And through writing, I started to feel like myself again.”



# The Readings & Workshops program awarded \$257,775 to 670 writers, supporting an average of fifteen literary events a week.

In 2024–25, Readings & Workshops mini-grants paid writers fees for their participation in 812 events that brought free or low-cost literary programming to more than 78,000 people across New York State and California, including many in rural and underserved communities. Our grants ensure that writers are paid for their participation and, just as importantly, provide priceless validation and encouragement. Approximately 49 percent of the writers who received these mini-grants identified as BIPOC.

For fifty-five years, Readings & Workshops has been a catalyst for literary activity, enabling organizations ranging from bookstores and cafés to hospitals and settlement houses to host literary events—and pay writers for their participation. We often hear that without our support, these events simply would not take place.

*Readings & Workshops is supported, in part, by the New York State Council on the Arts, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the California Arts Council, and the Cowles Charitable Trust.*

Participants in a poetry reading by Emily Lee Luan presented by Carson McCuller House in Nyack.



Alfredo Andonie Kraushaar reads at the En Construcción Reading Series at Barco de Papel bookstore in New York City.

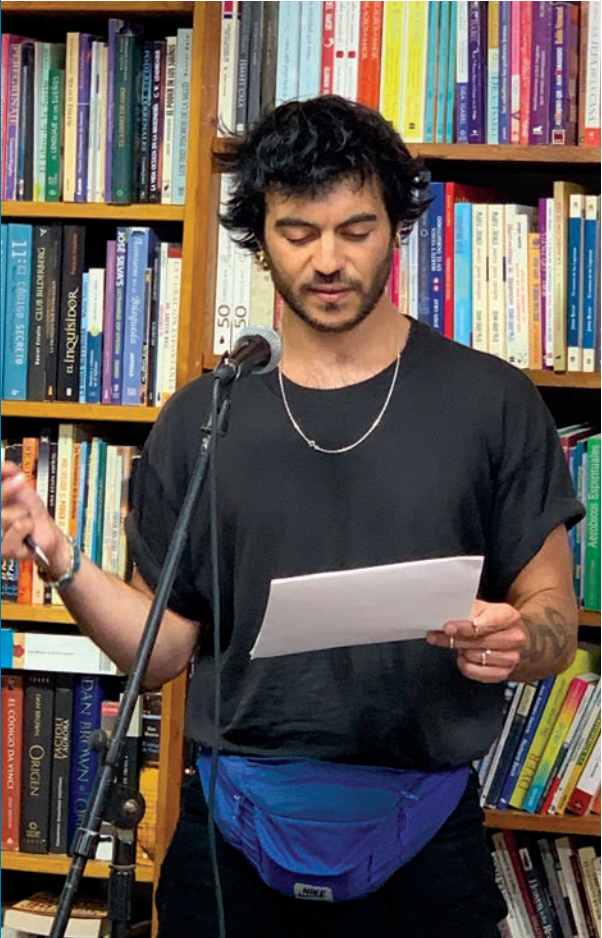


Poet Alisha Acquaye reads at Poetry in the Park, presented by the Fort Greene Park Conservancy in Brooklyn, NY.

Signage for poetry reading presented by FootHills Publishing in Steuben County, NY.

“Support from Poets & Writers made it possible for me to travel for the event, affirms the value of poetry, and bolsters a sense that sharing poems is important—at this time and in all times. Monetary support from Poets & Writers propels me to keep writing, sharing, traveling, and reading my work publicly. It is a buoying gift, and I am grateful for it.”

P&W-SUPPORTED WRITER CHRIS HANSEN-NELSON, BLOOM READINGS, NEW YORK, NY



Participants in a veteran poetry reading presented by Poetic Theater Productions at the Wild Project in New York City.

“The Poets & Writers grant let us bring this workshop to life! It covered facilitator fees and allowed us to offer it for free, attracting participants who wouldn’t have had the chance otherwise. We also got to promote the event more widely, reaching new communities who felt seen and heard.”

DOMINICAN WRITERS ASSOCIATION, BRONX, NY



“Now more than ever, our fragile but important community of writers, readers, and artists needs to take care of itself and encourage creative expression and discussion. P&W is a vital partner and friend in these conversations.”

P&W-SUPPORTED WRITER MICHAEL MEYERHOFER, MODESTO-STANISLAUS POETRY CENTER, MODESTO, CA



Fady Joudah, winner of the 2024 Jackson Poetry Prize, was celebrated at a memorable event that reached a wide audience.

On September 17, 2024, Poets & Writers hosted a special event to celebrate poet Fady Joudah at the Greene Space in New York City. He was joined by poet and theologian Pádraig Ó Tuama for a reading and conversation before an audience of more than one hundred, with hundreds more tuning in online. The conversation spanned the scope of Joudah’s work, which includes six collections of poems as well as several translations of Arabic poetry collections, and concluded with a powerful reading of Joudah’s “Dedication.” A recording of the event has been viewed thousands of times and is available at [pw.org/JacksonPrize](https://pw.org/JacksonPrize).

Established in 2006 with an endowment from the Liana Foundation and named for the John and Susan Jackson family, the Jackson Poetry Prize honors an American poet of exceptional talent. The amount of the prize has grown to \$100,000—making it one of the most generous awards given to an American poet.

Fady Joudah (left) with Susan Jackson (right).



Pádraig Ó Tuama (left) in conversation with Fady Joudah (right).



Fady Joudah reads from his 2024 collection [...] (Ellipses).

“The Jackson Poetry Prize celebrates Palestinian-American poet Fady Joudah’s significant and evolving body of work, distinguished by his courage to speak in the face of the unspeakable, in poems of lyric concision and intensity.”

2024 JACKSON POETRY PRIZE JUDGES  
NATALIE DIAZ, GREGORY PARDLO, AND DIANE SEUSS

The Maureen Egen Writers Exchange Award brought two promising Native American writers to New York City for an immersive week of meetings with authors, editors, agents, and other literary professionals—opening doors to new opportunities and connections.

Each year, Poets & Writers invites writers from a select state or jurisdiction to apply for this distinctive award, which has helped launch the careers of Sue Monk Kidd, Craig Santos Perez, and Lidia Yuknavitch, among others. The 2024 competition was open to poets and fiction writers who are enrolled members of a Native American tribe in the contiguous United States or Alaska. Jake Skeets judged for poetry and Kelli Jo Ford for

fiction; they selected Emerald Zȩb GoingSnake and Kira Hayen as the winners for poetry and fiction, respectively.

*The Writers Exchange Award is generously supported by Maureen Mahon Egen, a member of the Poets & Writers’ Emeritus Board.*



Credit: Sunny Lu

“These poems are an embodiment, each break and beat is something felt—like a dance or two birds swinging in the air,” said Jake Skeets of Emerald Zȩb GoingSnake’s award-winning poetry manuscript.



Credit: Shola C. Sogunro

“This story astounds in form and function, turning traditional Hasinai stories into fully formed contemporary characters, complete with worry, pain, and love,” Kelli Jo Ford said, placing Kira Hayen’s winning fiction submission in cultural context. “It, too, is a teaching story, asking us to consider what is the privilege of living on a warming planet full of plastics destined to outlast us all. The answer is as moving as it is surprising. I’m desperate to read more from this incredible writer.”



# Our 2025 Gala raised a record-breaking \$1.35 million.

“Books connect us; they expand our understanding, they challenge our thinking, and open doors to worlds we might never have imagined... [W]hen books are silenced, so are voices. When ideas are limited, so is understanding, and when stories are kept from readers, the very foundation of a free and informed society is weakened.”

DOMINIQUE RACCAH, CEO AND PUBLISHER OF SOURCEBOOKS AND CHAIR OF POETS & WRITERS’ 2025 GALA

More than six hundred publishers, editors, agents, booksellers, authors, and readers gathered in New York City on March 24 for the largest Poets & Writers Gala yet. The event celebrated the profound contributions of writers to our national discourse and to the inner lives of readers while raising critical funds to support Poets & Writers.

Under the leadership of gala chair Dominique Raccah—and thanks to the Poets & Writers Board of Directors and the generosity of our gala sponsors, including Premier Underwriters Books-A-Million, Penguin Random House, and Sourcebooks—the event raised more than \$1.35 million to fund programs and services that help writers navigate the literary marketplace, connect with opportunities and readers, and build community.

At the gala, the Writers for Writers Award was presented to Kimberly Blaeser, Angie Cruz, and Kiese Laymon, each of whom has created systems of support to champion and lift up other writers. Peter Blackstock, Morgan Entrekin, and Elisabeth Schmitz of Grove Atlantic were honored with the Editor’s Award in recognition of their remarkable individual contributions to books of literary merit, as well as the collective and ongoing impact of Grove Atlantic on the literary conversation.



Honoree Angie Cruz.



Honoree Kimberly Blaeser.



Gala chair Dominique Raccah.

Grove Atlantic editors and authors (from left) Morgan Entrekin, Patrick Hoffman, Francisco Goldman, Kelli Jo Ford, Elisabeth Schmitz, Betsy Lerner, Isabella Hammad, Peter Blackstock, and Michael Thomas.



Deesha Philyaw (left) accepts the Writers for Writers Award on behalf of Kiese Laymon, presented by host Sloane Crosley (right).



Freedom of expression is a bedrock principle for Poets & Writers. Given our mission of service to writers and the literary community, there is nothing more fundamental.

As efforts to restrict access to books—especially those by BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ authors—rise at epidemic rates, **Poets & Writers stands unequivocally with writers—and readers—in defending freedom of expression and opposing censorship in all its forms.** We are proud members of the National Coalition Against Censorship and partners in the American Library Association’s Unite Against Book Bans campaign.





DONORS

We are grateful for every donor who helps support our programs and publications for creative writers. Due to space limitations, we list below only those who made donations of \$1,000 and above between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

\$100,000 AND ABOVE

Books-A-Million  
New York City Department of Cultural Affairs  
New York State Council on the Arts  
Penguin Random House  
Sourcebooks

\$50,000 TO \$99,999

Hawthornden Foundation  
National Endowment for the Arts

\$25,000 TO \$49,999

Amazon Literary Partnership  
Apple Books  
Barnes & Noble Booksellers  
Hachette Book Group  
HarperCollins Publishers  
Kimberly Jackson, the Liana Foundation  
Macmillan Publishers  
Sayuri and Dav Pilkey  
Simon & Schuster

\$10,000 TO \$24,999

Abrams Books  
Anonymous Content  
Audible, Inc.  
Authors Equity

David Baldacci  
Amy Berkower and Daniel Weiss  
Bertelsmann Printing Group  
Bloomsbury USA  
BookBub & Chirp  
CIBC Bank  
Dow Jones | The Wall Street Journal  
Maureen Mahon Egen

Alexandra Engler  
Entangled Publishing  
Janet McCarthy Grimm and Stephen Grimm  
Horizon Paper  
Hudson, an Avolta Company  
The Hyde and Watson Foundation

Ingram Content Group  
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