



Association of Writers
& Writing Programs

Press Release

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For immediate release:

AWP TO MOVE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

This summer, AWP will move its offices from Virginia to Maryland, from George Mason University (GMU) to the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP).

The Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP) is one of the nation's largest literary nonprofit organizations. The association supports 550 colleges and universities with creative writing programs, 150 conference and centers for writers, and 50,000 writers, teachers, and students. Its conference attracts 12,000 attendees each year.

"AWP enjoyed many successes at GMU. Outgrowing our office space is a result of AWP's success and rapid growth," said AWP Board of Trustees Chair David Haynes. "This move has been a long time coming. Since 2012, the board carefully explored many options for new offices. We are certain this is the best one. Over the long term, the new location will help AWP provide the best services to our membership."

AWP outgrew two office spaces while it was housed at GMU, at Tallwood House and then at Carty House. Since its inception in 1967, AWP has been affiliated with a college or university. AWP was founded at Brown University. Since then, Washington College, Old Dominion University, and George Mason University each served as a home base for AWP. Each move of the organization was prompted by a growth in the association's projects, services, and staff.

AWP arrived on the campus of GMU in 1994. Since that time, AWP's institutional membership doubled. Individual membership tripled. AWP created a new category of membership for writers' conferences and centers. While membership grew, AWP's projects grew in complexity and scope. AWP's website, a modest site of a few pages when it launched in 1996, would undergo many iterations until it came to include its present guide to writing programs; job listings and career advice; a calendar of opportunities in publishing, grants, and awards; literary news; and more than a thousand articles and recordings on the art of writing. AWP's flagship magazine, the *Writer's Chronicle*, doubled the number of pages and essays in each issue. The association's annual conference grew by 1,200%. AWP served 16,000 stakeholders in 1994. It serves 50,000 today.

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AWP was attracted to UMCP for many reasons: its growing research park, its entrepreneurial support for affiliated units, its strong Department of English and College of the Arts and Humanities, its proximity to Washington, DC, its extensive mass transit system, its status as a Big Ten university, and its ongoing work to improve the quality of life in College Park.

“We are delighted that AWP is joining our Department of English,” said Michael Collier, Director of the Creative Writing Program at the University of Maryland. “The partnership with AWP, in addition to strengthening and supporting our Writers Here and Now reading series and promoting our distinguished MFA and undergraduate creative writing programs, will provide employment opportunities and internships for our students, helping them to develop skills in publishing and editing, arts administration, and association management. We look forward to welcoming David Fenza, his staff, and the AWP Board to College Park soon.”

This summer, AWP will move from Carty House at GMU to a modern office building in the research park of UMCP.

“AWP was lucky to have GMU’s support. AWP accomplished wonderful things at GMU,” said AWP Executive Director David Fenza, “but we had to look for a bigger home that would serve AWP well for the next twenty years. Our new home base will help us improve upon our services for writers, teachers, and students. The University of Maryland is a great university. The staff and I look forward to joining to the dynamic intellectual life of College Park.”

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The mission of the Association of Writers & Writing Programs is to foster literary achievement, to advance the art of writing as essential to a good education, and to serve the makers, teachers, students, and readers of contemporary writing. Founded in 1967, AWP supports 50,000 writers, 550 college and university creative writing programs, and 150 writers’ conferences and centers.