



Association of Writers  
& Writing Programs

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: [awppr@awpwriter.org](mailto:awppr@awpwriter.org)

July 12, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **The Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP) Board of Directors Welcomes New Members and Elected Secretary**

RIVERDALE PARK, MD – The Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP) welcomes five new members and one returning member to the AWP Board of Directors.

Congratulations to the following new members of the board:

**Sean Bernard** directs and teaches in the BA creative writing program at the University of La Verne in southern California. Since 2004, he has served as assistant editor of Toad Press. In the spring of 2021, he became the fiction editor for Veliz Books.

**Sumita Chakraborty** is a poet, essayist, and scholar. She is Helen Zell Visiting Professor in Poetry at the University of Michigan—Ann Arbor, where she teaches literary studies and creative writing.

**Jenny Yang Cropp** is an assistant professor of English at Southeast Missouri State University, where she teaches writing and publishing and serves as poetry editor for the literary journal *Big Muddy*.

**James Tate Hill** serves as fiction editor for *Monkeybicycle* and contributing editor at Literary Hub, where he writes a monthly audiobooks column. Born in West Virginia, he lives in Greensboro, North Carolina.

**Judy Wilson** is a fiction writer and director of creative writing at Southwest Minnesota State University, where she has taught since 2002. She is also the founding editor of *Yellow Medicine Review: A Journal of Indigenous Literature, Art, & Thought*.

To read the full bios of new board members, visit AWP's [Board of Directors](#) web page.

**Kris Bigalk**, who previously held the office of secretary, renews her term as an at-large board member. The elected office of secretary is now filled by Southern Council Chair **Stephanie Vanderslice**.

Retaining offices are held by **Kathleen Driskell** of Spalding University as board chair, **January Gill O'Neil** of Salem State University and **Mimi Herman** of Writeaways as vice chairs, and **Bruce H. Saul**, attorney and policy analyst, as treasurer.

**Susan Jackson Rodgers**, Northwestern Regional Council chair, and **Ryan Stone**, Southwestern Regional Council chair, rotated off the board of directors. We extend our gratitude for their dedicated service the last four years.

Board members that remain are **Michelle Aielli**, **DeMisty D. Bellinger**, **Regina Brooks**, **Jeff Kleinman**, **Kenyatta Rogers**, **Dan Vera**, and **Cheryl Woodruff**.

*The mission of the Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP) is to amplify the voices of writers and the academic programs and organizations that serve them while championing diversity and excellence in creative writing.*