

## **AWP 2020 EVENT OUTLINE**

- 1) EVENT TITLE: **To Be Young, Black, and Tenure-Track: Diversity in Higher Education** (a panel discussion)
- 2) EVENT DESCRIPTION: What does it mean when you walk into a classroom and the person at the podium looks like you? As colleges across the nation increase diversity and inclusion efforts to close equity gaps for students of color, they may be overlooking one thing – diverse faculty representation. Published authors and professors, our panelists share best practices for culturally responsive pedagogy, their experiences in academia, tips for supporting Black teachers, as well as how they make time for writing.
- 3) EVENT CATEGORY: Pedagogy
- 4) EVENT ORGANIZER AND MODERATOR: **bridgette bianca**
- 5) EVENT PARTICIPANTS & SHORT BIOS:

**bridgette bianca** is a poet and professor. When she is not sharing her own poetry at venues all around Southern California, she co-curates two literary series, Making Room for Black Women and the Women's Center for Creative Work Reading Series. Her debut book of poetry, *be/trouble*, will be released by Writ Large Press in 2020.

**Natalie Graham**, associate professor of African American Studies at California State University, Fullerton, earned her M.F.A. in Creative Writing and Ph.D. in American Studies. She is author of *BEGIN WITH A FAILED BODY*, winner of the 2016 Cave Canem Poetry Prize.

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**Arisa White** is a Cave Canem graduate fellow and the author of *You're the Most Beautiful Thing That Happened*. She collaborates with other artists to expand readership for poetry and to center the narratives of marginalized voices. White is an assistant professor of English at Colby College.

**Kiese Laymon** is a black southern writer, born and raised in Jackson, He is a Professor English and Creative Writing at University of Mississippi and is the author *Long Division* and *How to Slowly Kill Yourself and Others in America*. His memoir *Heavy* is forthcoming from Scribner in October 2018.

**Ryane Nicole Granados** is a writer, professor and former AWP Writer to Writer Mentee. She holds an MFA from Antioch University LA, has received several writing fellowships and has work appearing in numerous publications. Her fiction novella is forthcoming in 2019.

### 6) QUESTION AND ANSWER PORTION (approximately 50 minutes):

*Sample Moderator Questions\*:*

- a) Describe your role in higher education.
- b) Less than three percent of all full-time college faculty identify as Black/African-American. What does this look like on your campus? How does this effect your work environment?
- c) A recent study found that students of all races prefer teachers of color for a variety of reasons. During your career, how have students responded to your presence behind the podium?
- d) Let's discuss the writing classroom, specifically, in terms of representation in reading materials and culturally responsive assignments. How do you establish culturally

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- competent pedagogy? How do you foster a classroom environment that encourages a diversity of thought?
- e) In a recent Chronicle of Higher Education article, the author detailed how instructors of color often find themselves called upon to do equity, diversity, and inclusion work on campus via committees, councils, mentor programs, etc. Are you active in your campus community in this way? How do these activities affect your in-classroom work?
  - f) Along with your success as teachers, many of you shared stories of imposter syndrome, weathering, burn out, and anxiety. Do you have any advice for other educators of color, specifically Black professors, as they progress in their careers? Any advice or lessons passed on to you by mentors or veteran instructors?
  - g) For many of us, being published can affect our standing, Tenure, visibility, and even pay at our respective institutions. How do you balance your career in education with the demands of a writer's life?
  - h) Between the responsibilities of teaching, heightened visibility (or invisibility) on campus, your writing careers, and other pursuits, how do you make time for self-care?
  - i) Before we open this up to questions from the audience, where can we find you all during the conference and how can we support your work?
- 7) QUESTIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE (approximately 25 minutes):  
We ask that your questions be brief and relevant to the subject of diversity in higher education.

\*Sample questions. Citations pending.