

Fall 2018 - Revise This!

September 2018

M.A. and M.F.A. Creative Writing Graduates Don their Caps in Summer Commencement



From left to right: Aurora Bonner, Pamela Turchin, Andre Carter, Samantha Patterson, Samantha Stanich, Julie Yelen and Kristin Weller.

We congratulate the graduates of the Maslow Family Graduate Program in Creative Writing, who were awarded their diplomas at the summer commencement ceremony on Sunday afternoon, September 9, 2018, at Wilkes University:

Revise This!

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M.A.

- Jack Butler
- Michelle Chmielewski
- Karla Erdman
- Jessica Fisher
- Michael Hoarty
- Amanda Lance
- Sally Lehman
- Lori Mills
- Iris Ouellette
- Samantha Patterson
- Caterina So
- Samantha Stanich
- Cameron Thrall
- Kristen Weller
- Julie Yelen
- Alan Yount

M.F.A.

- Aurora Bonner
- Andre Carter
- Bibiana Krall
- Ann Miller
- Pamela Turchin

Congratulations to each of these members of our Wilkes writing community, and welcome to the newest members of the Wilkes Alumni Association!

PWC and the Norman Mailer Writers Colony at Wilkes





- **Andre:** *Andre Dubus III (The House of Sand and Fog) was the 2018 PWC keynote speaker.*
- **Jackie:** *Jacquelyn Mitchard (The Deep End of the Ocean) taught a workshop on "leaning into the pain" at PWC18 and taught a 4-day fiction workshop as part of the Norman Mailer Summer Writers Colony.*
- **Marita:** *Marita Golden (The Wide Circumference of Love) also taught fiction at the 2018 Norman Mailer Summer Writers Colony.*

The Pennsylvania Writers Conference is a yearly event hosted by the Maslow Family Graduate Program in Creative Writing at Wilkes University. Writers near and far come together for two days of craft, pedagogy, workshop, performance and of course, writing. This year's conference was held on August 3-4, 2018 and featured keynote speaker Andre Dubus III (*The House of Sand and Fog*) along with Jacquelyn Mitchard (*The Deep End of the Ocean*). The two-day conference featured classes on publication, a pitch session, writing through chaos and rebirth, teaching with rubrics and office hours with a publishing house editor (Nicole Frail, Skyhorse Publishing). With nearly 100 writers in attendance, PWC was a success.

In January of 2018, program co-founder Dr. Bonnie Culver worked with Lawrence Shiller of the Norman Mailer Center to bring the Norman Mailer Writers Colony to Wilkes University. Previously held at the Mailer house in Providence, RI, the Norman Mailer Writers Colony classes are weeklong workshops taught by distinguished members of the writing

community. This year, Jacquelyn Mitchard, Marita Golden (*The Wide Circumference of Love*) and faculty member Ross Klavan taught classes in fiction and screenwriting. The weeklong classes bookended PWC with Golden teaching during week 1 (July 29-August 3) while Mitchard and Klavan taught during week 2 (August 5-10). For more information on the Norman Mailer Writers Colony, please visit nmcenter.org.

Sanding the Rough Edges: PWC and the Norman Mailer Writers Colony

By Iris Ouellette (M.A. '18)

The Pennsylvania Writers Conference took place during the first weekend in August, flanked by two weeks of workshops at the Norman Mailer Writers Colony. Featuring an engaging keynote address by Andre Dubus III, author of *The House of Sand and Fog*, PWC gave both regional and national writers the opportunity to interact with their peers and role models. The weekend, full of classes and comradery with fellow writers, instilled in me (and presumably in each of the attendees) a sense of community and belonging.

The first PWC workshop I attended, on Historical Narrative, was taught by Joseph Kraus, one of the foremost experts on Jewish gangsters in Chicago. He spoke to us about weaving seemingly scattered pieces of history into a cohesive narrative, referencing the boxes and boxes of material he had to sort through to form the narratives of his first and second novels.

Educators in attendance were treated to a workshop on teaching with rubrics that proved invaluable as I began my career as a professor in September. We were given sample rubrics and taught how to break them down into understandable terms for our students. As a new teacher, I was incredibly thankful for this opportunity because it's difficult to get hands-on experience with grading tools before being thrown into the classroom.

Jacquelyn Mitchard, waylaid by weather, unfortunately missed the plenary session originally in the schedule. Fortunately, this meant that she led a workshop – one that ended up being the weekend's most memorable for me. Her workshop dealt with "leaning into" the pain we so often shy away from as writers. She stressed the importance of writing about our traumas and painful experiences and asked each person in attendance (there were at least twenty) to write down five topics about which we've never written. She then asked us to share one.

What happened as a result was an intense sense of love and understanding within the room. People spoke about divorce, disease, abuse, mental health, family relationships, and more with unflinching

honesty and courage.

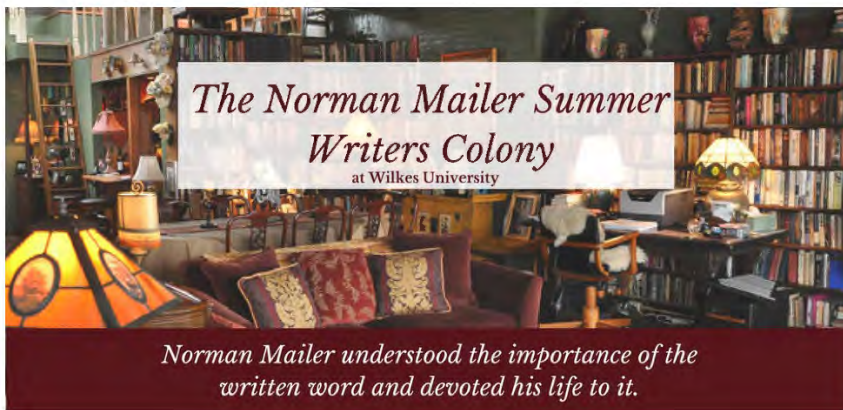
On the final night of PWC, Andre and Jackie shared the stage, offering readings that left us in the audience perhaps teary but feeling whole. Following their readings, the two authors, both with books in Oprah's Book Club, offered a Q&A and engaged with the audience for nearly an hour. It was incredibly valuable to those of us in the audience who are unpublished to see two published authors describe their writing processes since they were so very different. Seeing established authors explain that they, too, experience self-doubt is a pleasant reminder that we're all right.

That night, with the encouragement of Jackie, I was able to write about a topic I've avoided for years. Her workshop during PWC proved a successful audition for the class I took with her and three other people during the Norman Mailer Writers Colony.

Jackie then led a four-day Mailer Colony class on story endings, during which four attendees shared the first 25 pages of our current projects and offered critiques. A successful writing workshop such as this one has the potential to sand the rough edges of our projects without killing the spirit that caused us to create in the first place. We were also given well-known first and last sentences of stories and novels and asked to mimic them, because as Jackie taught us, writing like the masters makes our own writing much better.

The most valuable aspect of this class for me was my individual meeting with Jackie. We spoke, of course, about my project, but also about my overarching aspirations as a writer. She provided me with both encouragement and concrete tips for reaching my goals, as well as sharing more than a few laughs and tears.

I cannot recommend the Pennsylvania Writers Conference and the Norman Mailer Writers Colony enough. If you are a writer in any sense of the word, you must surround yourself with like-minded individuals periodically, even if only once a year. It recharges your writerly batteries. It makes you feel less like an impostor. It reminds you of your purpose.



Mailer Conference returning in October

The 16th annual Norman Mailer Society Conference will be held at the Macon City Center Marriott Hotel, in Macon, GA from Thursday October 25 to Saturday October 27, 2018.

Mailer was the first founding advisory board member of the Maslow Family Graduate Program in Creative Writing, and students and faculty from the CW program have read and performed his work for the last 15 years as part of the Wilkes U Readers Theatre. This year faculty, alums and students will read from a script based upon Mailer's *Why Are We in Vietnam?*

The Norman Mailer Summer Writers Colony is now held at Wilkes University! We will once again be offering two weeks of craft, pedagogy and workshops with *New York Times* and members of our faculty. For more information about the Norman Mailer Writers Colony at Wilkes University, please visit [this link](#).

Fall



ATTEND OUR CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOPS

Adults of any age or education level are welcome! Registration is \$65 for each series. Workshops take place on the campus of Wilkes University.

Writing Our Environments

6 to 8 p.m. on Mondays
Sept. 10 to Oct. 22
Instructor: Aurora Bonner

Generating from the Senses

6:30 to 8 p.m. on Fridays
Sept. 21 to Nov. 2
Instructor: Virginia Grove

Get Real! A Memoir Workshop

10 a.m. to 12 noon on Saturdays
Sept. 8 to Oct. 20
Instructor: Rachael Hughes

Jazz Poetry Workshop

1 to 3:30 p.m. on Saturdays
Sept. 29 to Oct. 27
Instructor: Rashidah Ismaili Abubakar

Workshops are sponsored by the Maslow Graduate Creative Writing Program at Wilkes University. Follow your passion, write your story and learn to get published. Earn your M.A. and M.F.A. online with limited campus visits.



REGISTER ONLINE AT WWW.WILKES.EDU/CW

Questions? Call us at (570) 408-4547.

Community Workshops

Sharpen your skills and jump into writing with our Fall Community Writing Workshops!

Generating from the Senses

With Diane Ackerman's *A Natural History of the Senses* as our guide, we will explore the common five senses: smell, touch, taste, hearing, and vision. This workshop for adults of all ages is meant to be generative in nature, enabling writers the option of composing in any genre they see fit for a given assignment. This workshop is appropriate for anyone looking to create a more regular space for writing, anyone looking to enrich an in-progress piece, and anyone wanting to learn more about themselves and how memory and our senses connect. Students will be expected to purchase a copy of *A Natural History of the Senses* and to complete readings within each of the five-sense sections, in addition to weekly writing assignments.

Meetings: Fridays – 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Dates: September 21, 28, October 5, 12, 26 and November 2 (No meeting on October 19)

Cost: \$65.00 for the entire series

Instructor: Virginia Grove

Get Real! A Memoir Workshop

Want to write memoir but don't know where to start? Afraid to? Great. Join me on a six-week journey on opening up and facing the hard stuff that just needs to be told. The premise of most memoir is to write it out to

get past it, but to leave a trail of wisdom and comfort for your readers to follow you into your next creative work. This workshop for adults of all ages will rely on writing prompts, sharing of works, and tips and advice from someone in the field who's "been there and done that!" Another component of this will be to tear down the insecurities of being a writer who writes about sensitive material. It is my hope this workshop will empower you to share your story, so that you and your readers will benefit from your journey.

Meetings: Saturdays – 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Dates: September 8, 15, 22, 29, October 13 and 20 (No meeting on October 6)

Cost: \$65.00 for the entire series

Instructor: Rachael Hughes

Jazz Poetry Workshop

This five-week workshop for adults of any age will be a combination of looking at the genre of Jazz Music as an eclectic way of being that permeates lifestyle, fashion, language, culture and poetry.

The goals of the workshop are to increase the appreciation for and knowledge of this genre of music and the integration of poetry within that frame, to have basic information of the history of Jazz and the musicians who created this art form and the culture it spawned for over one hundred years. To look at the early poets who used the language, signature rhythms and styles to craft a new way of writing and seeing. To look at the performative aspects of Jazz Poetry as its own art form and appreciate the contributions of those early musicians and poets. To have each participant create a chapbook of Jazz poems.

Using various techniques of poetry and oral recitation, participants will create and hone their poetic muscles into crafting Jazz Poems and at the same time critical skills to help write and listen to the music and poetry of this uniquely American art form. Selected music and poetry will be listened to in workshops.

Handouts and a schedule of both works to be listened to, articles on the subject as well as in depth focus on stages of development of chapbook and rewrites as a result of the workshop process.

Budding poets, closet poets and intimidated poets of all levels are welcome.

Meetings: Saturdays – 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Dates: September 29, October 6, 13, 20 and 27

Cost: \$65.00 for the entire series

Instructor: Rashidah Ismaili Abubakr

To register for a community workshop, please visit wilkes.augusoft.net.

Wilkes at AWP19

The 2019 [AWP Conference & Bookfair](#) will be held at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland, Oregon from March 27 – 30, 2018. Current students are invited to apply for an AWP19 registration waiver, which covers the cost of conference registration. Transportation and housing will be at your expense. Contact Associate Director Bill Schneider at bill.schneider@wilkes.edu for more information.

In exchange for your conference waiver, students are required to spend a minimum of two hours each day working at the Wilkes/Etruscan booth. Working the booth is a great way to network with authors, publishers, and other graduate students from around the country while promoting the Maslow Family Graduate Program in Creative Writing to potential students.

The full AWP19 schedule will be released in October, and more information can be found at www.awpwriter.org.

While you're in Portland, swing by these sessions and support the Wilkes CW family, including program partners Akashic Books and Etruscan Press:

Etruscan Press Authors

Kazim Ali (*The Disappearance of Seth*)

- Fifty Years of FIELD: Contemporary Poetry and Poetics
- Reinventing the Wheel: The Tradition of Innovation in Poetry

Patti Horvath (*All the Difference*)

- Rewriting History: Why It's Not Okay to Fictionalize Our Memories

David Lazar (*Who's Afraid of Helen of Troy: An Essay on Love*)

- Que savent-ils?: What Classic Essays Can Teach Contemporary Essayists

Paul Lisicky (*The Burning House*)

- Endings for the End Times?

J. D. Schraffenberger (*Saint Joe's Passion*)

- Changing of the Guard: Editors on Inclusion and Diversity in Literary Journals
- Impact and Empathy: Service-Learning and Creative Writing

Tim Seibles (*Fast Animal and One Turn Around the Sun*)

- How we need another soul to cling to: Writing Love Poems in Difficult Times
- Ghost Fishing: An Eco-Justice Poetry Anthology Reading

Shara McCallum (*Poems and Their Making*)

- Boulevard 35th Anniversary & 100 Issues Reading

Wilkes University Maslow Family Graduate Program in Creative Writing

Jason Carney and **Bill Schneider** (Wilkes University Alumni)

- AWP Open Mic and Old School Slam

Program Partners

Ibrahim Ahmad (Akashic Books)

- Can I Pick Your Brain? The Fine Line Between Giving Back and Getting Paid

Faculty News

Lenore Hart's short story, "Thirteen Ways of Living With a Wolf," appeared in the July issue of *The Florida Review*. It was a finalist for their 2017 Editors' Fiction Prize. Her poem "The Well-Shooter's Wake" was a finalist for the Charter Oak Prize for Historicals. That poem and another, "On Visiting the Castle of My Drawn and Quartered Ancestor", will be published in *Alternating Current's Notes #4* this fall. Lenore was also invited to attend the annual gathering of the Connecticut Poetry Society in New Haven, CT. There, she gave a reading of "Struck By Light", which won the 2017 Connecticut River Review Poetry Prize. Lenore also was featured in [The Horror Tree](#), which is a resource for both new and experienced writers.

Ross Klavan's new noir novella, *I Take Care of Myself*, which is out in September, received a favorable review from [Publisher's Weekly](#).

Jean Klein published a new blog on [Havescripts/Blue Moon Plays](#) with mention of both Wilkes and Dr. Culver.

Nancy McKinley's short story "Hand Against the Horn" is published in the Timberline Review Issue 7, with the theme of Rebirth, August 2018.

Student/Alumni News

Molly Barari (M.F.A. '17) has been chosen to speak about the

importance of life story writing for the 2018 Black Hills Aging Gracefully Expo in September.



Randee Bretherick (M.F.A. '13) under the name Randee Green published her first mystery novel on July 1, 2018. *CRIMINAL MISDEEDS* is the first novel in the Carrie Shatner Mystery series.

Janine P. Dubik (M.A. '17) is among the poets selected for the 2018 Poetry in Transit in conjunction with the Luzerne County Transportation Authority in the Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, area. The 2018 theme is unbreakable, and Janine's poem is entitled "Touchstone."

This is the third consecutive year that Janine has been part of Poetry in Transit. The six-line poems are displayed on illustrated panels that rotate among all LCTA bus routes for the next year. The official launch of the 2018 Poetry in Transit was held at 6 p.m. Friday, Aug. 17, at the Wilkes University/King's College Barnes & Noble on South Main Street in downtown Wilkes-Barre.



Rachael Hughes (M.F.A. '13) will be launching her debut memoir *Us Girls: My Life Without a Uterus* at the Barnes & Noble Wilkes Kings Bookstore on September 22, 2018 at 7 p.m.

Tara Lynn Marta (M.A. '18) had an essay "The Dream Lives On" included in the *I Am Strength* anthology, which was released on August 26th, in honor of Women's Equality Day. Tara read her essay at KGB Bar in NYC on August 29, 2018.

Josh Penzone's (M.A. '13) short story "A Soldier's Story" appeared in the July issue of *Blue Lake Review*.

Donna Talarico (M.F.A. '15) coordinator and creator of Hippocamp, A Conference for Creative Nonfiction Writers was featured in the Living section of the Lancaster Paper. [Donna's publishing](#)



endeavor, Hippocampus Magazine and Books, was featured in LNP as well, along with an interview with Hippocampus Magazine and Books' flagship author Rebecca Fish Ewan.



Alyssa Waugh (M.F.A. '15) curated and edited an anthology titled **I AM STRENGTH**, which was released on August 26, 2018. I AM STRENGTH is a collection of true stories, poems, and art created by women from all walks of life, championing our everyday struggles and triumphs.

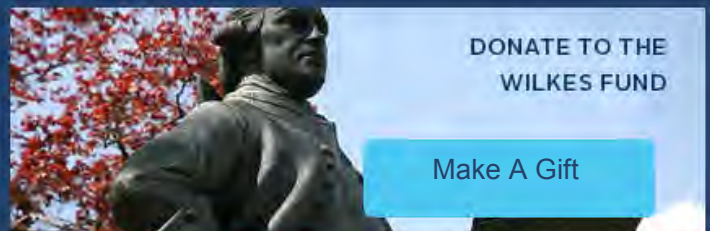
Alan Yount (M.A. '18) had an essay, "Syllogisms" published by Not Your Mother's Breast Milk in June and "The Paddle" was published August's

Hippocampus Magazine.

Danie Watson (M.A. '18) began teaching at Lackawanna College as an adjunct instructor in August 2018.

Quick Links

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