

11 years

CONNECTING  
GREAT WRITERS  
& READERS

One-on-one meetings with  
**Literary Agents**

**PITCHAPALOOZA!**

**First Pages  
Critique**

Hands-on  
**Master Classes**

Part of the  
**Virginia Literary  
Festival**

Conference  
**Marketplace**

**Literary Luncheon**

**And more!**

*Connect*  
AT THE 11TH ANNUAL

*James River*  
**WRITERS**

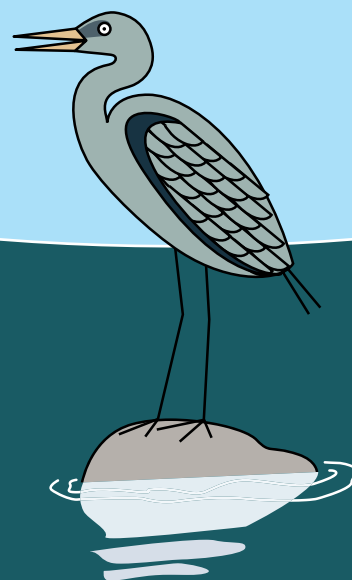
*Conference*

October 18-20, 2013

[JamesRiverWriters.org](http://JamesRiverWriters.org)

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# FROM THE JRW CHAIR

## MISSION

James River Writers builds community by connecting and inspiring writers and readers in central Virginia.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Katharine Herndon

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Sheila Sheppard Lovelady

## BOARD

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Sandra Treadway  
John Ulmschneider

I've been to every conference held by James River Writers. Not many people can say that, and I hope I will always be able to. This conference has meant a lot to me and my wife, because until that first conference in 2003, we were just a pair of transplants from South Carolina who happened to write.

JRW gave us an opportunity to meet with writers from throughout our community and even beyond this nation's borders. We learned how to improve our craft and cultivate connections within the industry. The Writing Show launched in 2005 and later Writers Wednesdays began, giving us the chance to celebrate the written word every month.

Eventually, my wife and I went from just being attendees to active members behind the scenes, planning some of the previous conferences. My wife and I designed panel topics and recruited speakers. That was horribly intimidating for us. We had nothing published at that time, but that's part of what has made this conference and organization so great. JRW loves and recognizes the talent of writers at all the different levels of their career, whether they're still trying to assemble that first paragraph, shopping their latest manuscript to agents and publishers, or celebrating the release of their newest bestseller.

The funny thing is that for all the written words and the informative (and sometimes humorous) panels, the first thing I think about when I look back is the people in it and the times I've shared with them. I found some of the best friends in my life from this conference. I see them all at least once a month, but usually far more often. We don't just talk about what we're writing. We play cards and enjoy a few drinks as we share stories about our kids and work. At some point, my wife and I discovered that JRW had made Richmond our home and given us a family bound not by flesh and blood, but by paper and ink.

I can't give enough thanks to the speakers, donors, sponsors, volunteers, and staff necessary to make this conference the ongoing success it is. I'm grateful for their work to keep this event alive, because in supporting JRW, they've given so much to me, my wife, and our children.

This eleventh conference will give you incredible opportunities to learn from best-selling writers, editors from some of the best publishing houses, and respected literary agents. I hope that when you finish attending this event, you will find your writer's toolbox overflowing with all the things you need to be a better wordsmith. More than that, I hope you will walk away as part of this unique community and extended family that Richmond is so blessed to call its own.

*Bill Blume*

Bill Blume  
Chair, Board of Directors



october  
**19**

**SATURDAY  
CONFERENCE  
SCHEDULE**

greater richmond  
convention center

**9AM to 9:30AM**

Welcome and Poetry Warm-Up  
Speakers: Gbari Allen Garrett, Brad Parks

**9:30AM to 10:45AM**

Plenary Session

**Ideas Worth Writing**

A trio of thinkers and doers from different aspects in the publishing industry offer their thoughts and experiences.

speakers: Carey Albertine, Christopher McDougall,  
Chip Kidd

room: 10A-B

**10:45AM  
to 11:25AM**

**Conference  
Marketplace**

Enjoy a cup of coffee and connect with fellow writers, get your books signed, and browse the Conference Marketplace for writing resources.

**11:30AM  
to 1PM**

**Library of Virginia Literary Luncheon**

The Library of Virginia's annual Literary Luncheon features medal presentations for all 2013 Library of Virginia Literary Award finalists and Lifetime Achievement Award winner Charles Wright. Virginia Literary Award finalists will be available for book signings after the luncheon.

**1:15PM to 2:15PM**

Concurrent Sessions

**Intensive with Chip Kidd**

Designer and author Chip Kidd shares his insights and expertise.

room: 10A-B

**An Interview with Lee Smith**

Award-winning author Lee Smith discusses her work, her career, and her latest book.

interviewer: Brad Parks

room: 11A

**Suspense Across the Genres**

How does a story demand attention from the first sentence? How is that sustained? What does suspense look like in various genres? Restock your writer's tool kit with new techniques for heightening tension.

speakers: Philippa Ballantine, Christopher McDougall,  
Kevin O'Malley, Howard Owen

moderator: Julie Geen

room: 11B

**The Care and Feeding of  
Your Muse: Ideas and Prewriting**

Good writing starts with good ideas. Learn how to recognize a good idea, techniques for developing an idea into a creative work, and tips for choosing which project to pursue.

speakers: Carey Albertine, Tee Morris, A.B. Westrick

moderator: Douglas Jones

room: 11C

**Advice from Debut Authors**

Your book is finally released! Now what? You may be surprised to learn your job is not done yet. Learn from these 2013 debut authors about the writing craft and what happens when a book is born.

speakers: Megan Mayhew Bergman, Virginia Pye

room: 10D

**2:30PM to 3:30PM**

Concurrent Sessions

### Literary Award Finalists: Fiction

The Library of Virginia Literary Awards are given annually to outstanding Virginia authors as a way of celebrating the power of the written word. The 2013 finalists in fiction discuss their experiences and thoughts on writing.

speakers: Gigi Amateau, Clifford Garstang,  
Robert Goolrick, Lydia Netzer, Kevin Powers  
moderator: Peggy J. Bagget  
room: 10A-B

### Literary Award Finalists: Nonfiction

The 2013 finalists in nonfiction discuss their experiences and thoughts on writing.

speakers: Joe Jackson, Cynthia A. Kierner,  
Michael L. Nicholls  
moderator: Kristin Swenson  
room: 11A

### Literary Award Finalists: Poetry

The 2013 finalists in poetry discuss their experiences and thoughts on writing.

speakers: David Huddle, LuAnn Keener-Mikenas  
moderator: Dr. Jay Paul  
room: 11B

### Writing for Children

sponsored by Richmond Children's Writers

Authors and illustrators of picture books, middle grade, and young adult books discuss the challenges and rewards of writing for a younger audience.

speakers: Cece Bell, Kathryn Erskine, Kevin O'Malley  
moderator: Jenesse Evertson  
room: 11C

### Fitting for Size: Going With a Small to Mid-size Publisher

How do you make the decision to go with a small or mid-size publisher? What can you expect, and what are the advantages?

speakers: Carey Albertine, Bill Blume, Greg Michalson  
moderator: Rebekah L. Pierce  
room: 10D

**3:45PM to 4:45PM**

Concurrent Sessions

### Creating Settings

Every story happens somewhere and some time. Explore the power of a strong setting, how it advances plot, shapes a character, and adds to the conflict. Learn how to research, develop, and evoke a strong sense of place.

speakers: Kathryn Erskine, Elizabeth Huergo, Dean King  
moderator: Gigi Amateau  
room: 11B

### First Draft Methods and Madness

Do you follow an outline or go with the flow? Jump around or move forward sequentially? How do you muddle through the middle? Tips and tricks for getting a story from your head to the page.

speakers: Lydia Netzer, Kevin O'Malley, Virginia Pye  
moderator: Valley Haggard  
room: 11C

### Focus On: The Nonfiction Proposal

Writing a proposal is a specialized skill. Knowing how to write a whiz-bang proposal will hone your self-promotion skills and help you move from a general idea to a saleable book.

speakers: Arielle Eckstut, Christopher McDougall  
moderator: Melissa Scott Sinclair  
room: 10A-B

### Desperate Authors

Being a writer is living the dream, but every writer deals with challenges like jealousy, discouragement, self-doubt, fear, and stress. Learn how to work on patience, discipline, and balance in your writing life.

speakers: Jabeen Akhtar, Cece Bell, Howard Owen,  
Paige Wheeler  
moderator: Brad Parks  
room: 11A

### Industry Update: What's New in Publishing

How do writers keep up with the ever-changing landscape of publishing? Catch up on the latest news with industry professionals.

speakers: Greg Michalson, Samantha Lien, Beth Phelan  
moderator: Rebecca Joines Schinsky  
room: 10D

october  
**20**

**SUNDAY  
CONFERENCE  
SCHEDULE**  
greater richmond  
convention center

**9AM to 9:15AM**

Welcome and Warm-Up

**9:15AM to 10:15AM**

**First Pages**

sponsored by Wells Fargo

Learn how to catch an agent's or editor's attention from the first sentence. Listen to publishing experts critique manuscript first pages, and develop an ear for what your first page needs to rise above the slush pile.

speakers: April Eberhardt, Greg Michalson,  
Victoria Skurnick, Paige Wheeler

moderator: David L. Robbins  
room: 10A-B

**10:30AM to 11:30AM**

Concurrent Sessions

**Issues in Personnel Management:  
All About Characters**

Having trouble recruiting the right characters for your story? Need creative ways to motivate them? Learn techniques for understanding your characters and giving them what they need to feel genuine and compelling.

speakers: Philippa Ballantine, Lydia Netzer  
moderator: Lana Krumwiede  
room: 11A

**The Art of Memoir**

Find out what it takes to write and sell your life story. Making a narrative of your own life, dealing with issues of privacy and the lunacy of a family—all these topics will be bandied about by the Book Doctors.

speakers: Arielle Eckstut, David Henry Sterry  
room: 10D

**11:45AM to 12:45PM**

Concurrent Sessions

**Voice Lessons**

Voice can be the most natural of all story elements, or it can be the most elusive. Listen in as authors demystify voice by discussing the choices a writer makes and why.

speakers: Elizabeth Huergo, Lydia Netzer, Virginia Pye

moderator: Patty Smith

room: 11A

**Word Nerds Unite! Advanced  
Techniques in Sentence Fluency**

What is a dangler? And how do modifiers get misplaced? What, exactly, makes prose flow smoothly? Dig deep into writing with publishing professionals who know their stuff.

speakers: Greg Michalson, Victoria Skurnick

moderator: Erica Orloff

room: 11C

**Other People's Money:  
Funding for Writers**

Grants, fellowships, crowdsourcing—find out what opportunities are available for writers and how you can get in on them. Writers who have been through the process will share secrets to success.

speakers: Carey Albertine, Tee Morris, A.B. Westrick,  
Reba White Williams

moderator: Maya Payne Smart

room: 11B

**Thinking Outside the Books:  
Apps and Trailers**

What do you need to know to make your own book trailer? Is your book right for an app? Find out how to grab your share of the spotlight in the digital age.

speakers: Samantha Lien, Megan Mayhew Bergman,  
Michael Portis

moderator: Julie Geen

room: 10A-B

**Revising Like a Rockstar**

Rethink your revision strategies with new ideas for finding and addressing the weaknesses in your manuscript. From developmental edits to line edits, panelists share best practices for shoring up drafty stories.

speakers: Cece Bell, Elizabeth Huergo, Greg Michalson,  
Virginia Pye

moderator: Douglas Jones

room: 11C



## Finding the Right Feedback

Every writer needs feedback, but not all feedback is helpful. Discover the inner workings of successful critique groups. Are beta readers a good bet? Learn how to decide which comments to work on and which to ignore.

speakers: A.B. Westrick, Deborah Grosvenor,

Lana Krumwiede

moderator: Shawna Christos

room: 10A-B

## Creating a Strategic Marketing and Publicity Plan

Explore steps you can take to prepare your work for the best possible reception. Leave with ideas you can put into practice right away.

speakers: Carey Albertine, Samantha Lien, Jon VanZile

moderator: Rebecca Joines Schinsky

room: 10D

## The Past, Present, and Future of Regional Writing

What is the Southern literary tradition and how is it evolving? Find out how connecting with a region can help writers build their readership.

speakers: Jabeen Akhtar, Megan Mayhew Bergman,

Reba White Williams

moderator: Gigi Amateau

room: 11B

## 12:45PM to 1:45PM

Lunch

Enjoy this time on your own or participate in a facilitated discussion. Please see the program addendum for a complete list of discussion topics.

## 3:15PM to 4:45PM

PITCHAPALOOZA

At Pitchapalooza, judges will help you improve your pitch, not tell you how bad it is. You will receive concrete advice on your pitch, as well as a greater understanding of the ins and outs of the publishing industry. At the end of Pitchapalooza, the judges will pick a winner, who will receive an introduction to an agent or publisher appropriate for his or her book.

speakers: Arielle Eckstut, David Henry Sterry, Deborah Grosvenor

## 2PM to 3PM

Concurrent Sessions

### Plot Mechanics

Plot is the engine that makes your story move. Panelists will discuss different types of plot structure, common plot breakdowns, and repairs. Learn how to turbocharge your plot for better internal combustion.

speakers: Tee Morris, Philippa Ballantine

moderator: Bill Blume

room: 11C

### Focus On: Writing Diversity

Writing diverse characters or settings comes with many opportunities and challenges. Authors will address issues in gender identity, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, and more.

speakers: Jabeen Akhtar, Kathryn Erskine,

Elizabeth Huergo

moderator: Camisha Jones

room: 11B

### Dazzling Dialogue

Nothing breathes life into fiction better than strong dialogue; you can quote us on that. Pick up new tips for writing dialogue that speaks for itself.

speakers: Megan Mayhew Bergman, Kevin O'Malley

moderator: Patty Smith

room: 10D

### Going the Indie Route: An Agent's Perspective

When, why, and how do authors publish their own books? Literary agent April Eberhardt shares her innovative approach to devising a strategy that suits your goals, dreams, and timetable in a rapidly changing industry.

speaker: April Eberhardt

room: 10A-B

### What to Do Before You Query

You've written it and rewritten it. You've polished it and repolished it. Now what? Discover tips for submission strategies and following industry etiquette.

speakers: Deborah Grosvenor, Beth Phelan, Paige Wheeler

moderator: Maya Payne Smart

room: 11A

## FOLLOW A TRACK

The James River Writers Conference is designed to help you reach your writing goals, whatever they may be. With that in mind, we've created tracks that you can follow during the conference. Of course, you are free to attend any session you like, but as you plan which sessions to attend, take a look at the tracks listed here.

**EXPLORING GENRE:** For those writers looking for new markets, venturing into a different genre, or delving deeper, this track brings together authors, editors, and agents who will address topics specific to various genres.

**Suspense Across the Genres** (Saturday, 1:15PM-2:15PM)

**Literary Award Finalists: Fiction** (Saturday, 2:30PM-3:30PM)

**Literary Award Finalists: Nonfiction** (Saturday, 2:30PM-3:30PM)

**Literary Award Finalists: Poetry** (Saturday, 2:30PM-3:30PM)

**Writing for Children** (Saturday, 2:30PM-3:30PM)

**Focus On: The Nonfiction Proposal** (Saturday, 3:45PM-4:45PM)

**The Art of Memoir** (Sunday, 10:30AM-11:30AM)

**GETTING PUBLISHED:** In this track, you'll get up-to-date information from industry professionals and published authors and learn about resources available to help you along your journey.

**Fitting for Size** (Saturday, 2:30PM-3:30PM)

**Industry Update** (Saturday, 3:45PM-4:45PM)

**Other People's Money** (Sunday, 10:30AM-11:30AM)

**Finding the Right Feedback** (Sunday, 11:45AM-12:45PM)

**Going the Indie Route** (Sunday, 2:00PM-3:00PM)

**What To Do Before You Query** (Sunday, 2:00PM-3:00PM)

**Pitchapalooza** (Sunday, 3:15PM-4:45PM)

**IMPROVING YOUR CRAFT:** No matter what you write or where you are in your career, you can always pick up new ideas for making your writing stronger and more compelling.

**Suspense Across the Genres** (Saturday, 1:15PM-2:15PM)

**The Care and Feeding of Your Muse** (Saturday, 1:15PM-2:15PM)

**An Interview with Lee Smith** (Saturday, 1:15PM-2:15PM)

**Advice from Debut Authors** (Saturday, 1:15PM-2:15PM)

**Creating Settings** (Saturday, 3:45PM-4:45PM)

**First Draft Methods and Madness** (Saturday, 3:45PM-4:45PM)

**First Pages Critique** (Sunday, 9:15AM-10:15AM)

**Issues in Personnel Management** (Sunday, 10:30AM-11:30AM)

**Revising Like a Rockstar** (Sunday, 10:30AM-11:30AM)

**Voice Lessons** (Sunday, 11:45AM-12:45PM)

**Word Nerds Unite!** (Sunday, 11:45AM-12:45PM)

**Plot Mechanics** (Sunday, 2:00PM-3:00PM)

**Dazzling Dialogue** (Sunday, 2:00PM-3:00PM)

**THE LIFE OF A STORY:** To learn more about the process of writing, follow these sessions throughout the conference. We'll start with ideas and move step-by-step all the way to the submission stage.

**The Care and Feeding of Your Muse** (Saturday, 1:15PM-2:15PM)

**First Draft Methods and Madness** (Saturday, 3:45PM-4:45PM)

**Revising Like a Rockstar** (Sunday, 10:30AM-11:30AM)

**Finding the Right Feedback** (Sunday, 11:45AM-12:45PM)

**What To Do Before You Query** (Sunday, 2:00PM-3:00PM)

**PROMOTING YOUR BOOK:** These sessions will help you sort out social media, digital promotional tools, and other networking opportunities. You'll learn what publishers expect from authors and how you can live up to it.

**Advice from Debut Authors**

(Saturday, 1:15PM-2:15PM)

**Thinking Outside the Books: Apps and Trailers**

(Sunday, 10:30AM-11:30AM)

**Creating a Strategic Marketing and Publicity Plan**

(Sunday, 11:45AM-12:45PM)

**The Past and Present of Regional Writing**

(Sunday, 11:45AM-12:45PM)

## FROM THE CONFERENCE CHAIR

Welcome to the eleventh annual James River Writers Conference. People often ask what makes the JRW Conference unique, and my answer is always the supportive community. Each year, the JRW Conference teaches me through interactions with speakers and attendees. Years ago, this was my first writing conference, and it made me feel like a real writer. I found my critique group here, met favorite authors, and formed some of my dearest friendships.

These friendships include the planning committee: Diane Black, Bill and Sheri Blume, Tiffany Cardoza, Robin Farmer, Leila Gaskin, Katharine Herndon, David Kazzie, Lana Krumwiede, Joanna Lee, Sheila Sheppard Lovelady, Erica Orloff, Shann Palmer, Kris Spisak, and Judy Witt. I'm grateful for the countless hours, creativity, and humor they poured into conference planning. It's been a joy to work alongside volunteers as we stuff tote bags, watch doors, chauffeur speakers, schedule and reschedule travel, and attend to the minutiae that make a conference run. A list of conference volunteers appears in your addendum. Please introduce yourself to these wonderful people, thank them, and get to know them.

JRW is lucky to be part of a supportive city. Kelly Justice of Fountain Bookstore, who joins us today as conference bookseller, is a force in Richmond's literary arts. Fountain brings renowned authors to Richmond and supports nonprofits that make Virginia a better place to be a writer. Up Cary Street from Fountain, past the cobblestones and college campuses, you'll come to the neighborhoods of other indie bookstores, including bbgb tales for kids and Chop Suey Books, both stores who've partnered with JRW this year. If you want a case study in how independent bookstores are the hub of a reading community, you've found it.

This community is full of authors who generously give their time and talents to encourage others. JRW's Founding Board, Board of Directors, and Advisory Board are professionals who sustain this organization. We're proud to partner with the Library of Virginia and organizations around the city for the Virginia Literary Festival, a week long celebration of the written word. A special thank you and congratulations to Literary Festival partner Kat Spears, whose debut novel will be released next year. She is among the many JRW attendees who give back to the community long before and after they sign their contracts.

We might talk a lot about Richmond while you're here, but our community extends far beyond the city. Writers from Canada, the United Kingdom, and more than eleven states are here today. Thank you for investing your time and passion in this community of writers. We're happy you're here. I hope this JRW Conference will give you the support and relationships you need to realize your goals.

With gratitude,

*Kristi Tuck Austin*

2013 Conference Chair



**12th Annual James River Writers Conference**  
**October 17-19, 2014**

# CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

**Jabeen Akhtar** is from London and immigrated with her family to the US at two years old. She worked for six years writing and publishing federal regulations for the United States government before writing her debut novel, *Welcome to Americastan* (Penguin India/Viking), which was a 2011 fiction finalist in the Library of Virginia Literary Awards.



**Carey Albertine** is co-founder of In This Together Media and is responsible for concept and creative development. Carey has previously worked in television at Saturday Night Live, *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*, and *NBC News*. She has written and performed stand-up comedy in NYC. She is a graduate of the University of Virginia and the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College. Carey grew up in Fredericksburg VA. She now has two children and firmly believes in magic.



**Gigi Amateau**'s first YA book, *Claiming Georgia Tate*, was published by Candlewick Press in 2005. *Come August, Come Freedom*, her first work of historical fiction, was chosen as a Best Children's Book of the Year, a Jefferson Cup Honor book, and a Library of Virginia People's Choice Award fiction finalist. Gigi received a Theresa Pollak Prize for Excellence in the Arts from *Richmond Magazine*. Her fifth novel for young readers, *Macadoo of the Maury River*, was released in August 2013.



**Philippa (Pip) Ballantine**, New Zealand born fantasy writer, is author of *The Books of the Order* and the *Shifted World* series. She is co-author of the Ministry of Peculiar Occurrences novels with fellow-writer and husband Tee Morris. Her awards include an Airship, Parsec, and a Sir Julius Vogel. She currently resides in Virginia with her husband, daughter, and a mighty clowder of cats.



**Cece Bell** is a children's book author and illustrator who lives in an old church and works at a barn in southwest Virginia. She is married to the author/illustrator Tom Angleberger. Her book *Rabbit & Robot: The Sleepover*, was a recipient of a 2013 Theodore Seuss Geisel Honor. She is currently working on a graphic novel for Amulet Books.



**Bill Blume**'s debut novel, *Tales of a 10th Grade Vampire Hunter*, was released this past August from Fable Press. He graduated from the University of South Carolina with a degree in Broadcast Journalism in 1995. In the years after, he worked as a TV news producer, first in Columbus, Georgia, and then in Richmond, Virginia. He became heavily involved in James River Writers and spent many years as a board member. He's served as a past chair for JRW's annual conference. This year, he was also honored to be named chair for the board of directors.



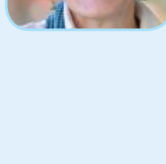
**Shawna Christos** is a long time supporter and board member of James River Writers. She has served as treasurer, worked on conference committees, and chaired the 2013 Emyl Jenkins Award. After having a short story published in *River Town* recently, she is hard at work on her next book project, a young adult book she is excited about, and is putting aside, for now, her other projects, which include young adult, middle grade, adult writing, and her blogs.



**April Eberhardt** founded an agency in order to assist and advise authors as they navigate the increasingly complex world of publishing. April holds an MBA from Boston University, a BA from Hamilton (Kirkland) College, and a degree from the University of Paris. She is currently a reader for the Best American Short Stories series. Her agency, April Eberhardt Literary, helps authors explore traditional publishing and the emerging options for self-publishing. A "literary change agent" and author advocate, April works with authors who need professional support.

**Arielle Eckstut** is an agent at large for Levine Greenberg, helping to identify and refer talented writers to her colleagues. Arielle's interests and activities vary widely, but she is most excited by ideas that expand our consciousness, challenge our assumptions, and make our world a more visually exciting place.

**Kathryn Erskine**, lawyer-turned-author, found that her experience of growing up in six countries helped her view life and writing from different perspectives. Her novels include *Mockingbird*, a 2010 National Book Award Winner, *The Absolute Value of Mike*, *Quaking*, and her latest novel (set in Virginia), *Seeing Red*. While her books cover heavy topics, they also have a warmth and humor that makes difficult issues approachable. She is a writing instructor and frequent workshop presenter. **Sponsored by St. Catherine's School.**



**Mary Chris Escobar** lives in downtown Richmond with her husband. After years of searching for her creative outlet, (evidenced by her collection of pottery and college transcript bearing 15 arts credits), she finally found her voice. Her first novel, *Neverending Beginnings*, came out in late 2012. She can be found at [marychrisescobar.com](http://marychrisescobar.com) and just about anywhere with good coffee or craft beer.



**Jenesse Evertson** is co-owner of Richmond's only independent children's bookshop, bbgba tales for kids, where she keeps the shelves stocked with current YA fiction favorites. Before bbgba, she studied and taught writing and children's literature in elementary schools and universities. Her own book, the *PreK-2 Writing Classroom: Growing a Community of Writers*, is published by Scholastic.



**Gbari Allen Garrett** is an eighth grade student at Robious Middle School where he is enrolled in gifted/honors classes. Richmond Young Writers workshops are his favorite extracurricular activity. He is a voracious reader of mysteries and science fiction as well as a musician, having studied the piano, violin, and upright bass. Gbari writes original music and hopes to attend an arts high school and eventually pursue a writing career.



**Julie Geen** is a freelance writer for *Style Weekly* and wrote an award winning fitness column for *Belle* magazine despite her hatred for exercise. Her essays have been published in anthologies, and a short story about zombies and high heels appeared in *Richmond Macabre II*. Currently, she is editing her first novel and teaching for Richmond Young Writers.



**Deborah Grosvenor** has more than twenty-five years of experience in the book publishing business as an agent and editor. During her career, she has edited or represented several hundred nonfiction books. As an editor, she acquired Tom Clancy's first novel, *The Hunt for Red October*. Her list is extremely selective, which enables her to offer her clients the editorial and marketing support they deserve.



**Valley Haggard** teaches creative nonfiction classes for adults at the Black Swan Bookstore, Chop Suey Books, and the Visual Arts Center of Richmond. *Style Weekly's* Book Editor from 2004-2011, Haggard wrote reviews, interviewed authors, covered literary events and organized the semi-annual fiction contest for years around Richmond. Haggard has a BA in Creative Writing from Sarah Lawrence College, a dog, a cat, a husband, and a son.

**Elizabeth Huergo** was born in Havana and immigrated to the U.S. at an early age as a political refugee. Since receiving her M.A. and Ph.D. in English from Brown University, she has taught at colleges and universities, including Rhode Island College, American University, Montgomery College, and George Mason University. A published poet and story writer, her first novel is *The Death of Fidel Pérez* (Unbridled Books).

**Camisha Jones** is a freelance writer, currently writing for *Urban Views Weekly*. She is also a performing poet. Slam Richmod is her "home venue." In the future, Camisha hopes to publish a book of poetry.

**Douglas Jones** has written and seen produced more than forty plays. *Variety* praised his musical *Bojangles* (with composer Charles Strouse and lyricist Sammy Cahn) for its "solid, sensitive script... tender and vitriolic, romantic and racist, acerbic and biting." *NPR* theatre critic John Porter called Jones's adaptation of *The Turn of the Screw* "the grand-daddy of all ghost stories," and *Backstage* declared his *Songs from Bedlam* "a triumph... pure electric poetry." Jones holds degrees from the University of Chicago and the University of Virginia. He's a member of The Dramatists Guild, and he is a James River Writers Board Member. (not photographed)

**Chip Kidd** is a designer/writer in New York City. His book cover designs for Alfred A. Knopf, where he has worked non-stop since 1986, have helped create a revolution in the art of American book packaging. He is the recipient of the National Design Award for Communications, as well as the Use of Photography in Design award from the International Center of Photography. Kidd has published two novels, *The Cheese Monkeys* and *The Learners*, as well as *Batman: Death By Design*, an original graphic novel published by DC Comics and illustrated by Dave Taylor. He is also the author of several books about comics.

# CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

## CONTINUED

**Dean King** is the bestselling author of *Skeletons on the Zahara*, *Unbound*, *The Feud*, and *The Definitive Biography of Patrick O'Brian*. He has written for numerous publications, including the *New York Times*, *Outside*, *Men's Journal*, *Garden & Gun*, and *Granta*. He is a contributing editor of *Virginia Living*. Dean was on the founding board of James River Writers and is on the board for the Library of Virginia Foundation.



**Lana Krumwiede** is a Richmond author and avid reader. Her work has appeared in *Highlights*, *High Five*, *The Friend*, and *Chicken Soup for the Child's Soul*. *Archon*, her second novel, hit the shelves October 8, 2013. She also has a picture book under contract with Candlewick Press. Previously, Lana has worked as a teacher and reading tutor for young kids. She lives with her husband and youngest daughter. Her three older children are off having adventures of their own.



**Samantha Lien** is Senior Publicist at JKSCcommunications, a literary publicity firm that specializes in media relations, new-model book tours, social networking, and web development for the book publishing industry. Samantha focuses on national coordination of client book tours, online promotional platforms, and works diligently with bloggers and reviewers around world. She holds a Masters in Business and Entertainment Management from the University of Colorado-Denver and a bachelor's degree in Journalism from Northern Arizona University. Samantha has authored articles for entertainment publications and provided management to artists in the music business, which gives her a unique perspective for the work she does with JKS.



**Megan Mayhew Bergman** was raised in North Carolina and now lives on a farm in Vermont with her veterinarian husband, daughters, and menagerie of animals. Megan has degrees from Wake Forest University, Duke, and Bennington College. Her first book, *Birds of a Lesser Paradise*, was a Barnes and Noble Discover Pick and an Indie Next Pick. Her work has appeared in *Best American Short Stories 2011*, *Best New Stories from the South 2010*, *New York Times*, and *Oxford American*. Scribner will publish her forthcoming novel, *Shepherd, Wolf*.



**Christopher McDougall** is a Harvard graduate who went on to work with Susan Linnee, the Madrid bureau chief for *Associated Press*. He was hired as their new Lisbon correspondent, despite his inexperience with Portuguese and news-writing. He spent a few years being shuttled back and forth between Portugal and Africa, covering wars in Angola and Congo and the genocide in Rwanda. He eventually left Europe to return to the U.S. and break into the magazine industry. *The New York Times Magazine* hired him to work on a story which led to his first book, *Girl Trouble*. Chris has also worked for *Men's Health* magazine, and is the author of the national best-seller *Born to Run*. Currently, Chris is working on another book that he hopes has as much great raw material as his best-seller. He does most of his own running barefoot in rural Pennsylvania, where he lives with his wife and two daughters.



**Greg Michalson** is co-publisher of Unbridled Books and was previously a co-founder of BlueHen Books (Penguin/Putnam). He was the managing editor of *The Missouri Review* for twenty years, where he served as fiction and poetry editor. He's the author of numerous prize-winning stories and articles, his work has been mentioned in *BASS* and *Pushcart*, and he is co-author/editor of a number of books, including *Conversations With American Novelists* and *For Our Beloved Country*.



**Tee Morris** is the author of several works of science fiction, fantasy, and steampunk. He graduated from James Madison University with degrees in Communications and Theatre. Morris' love of acting gradually gave way to a second love: writing. His first published work, *MOREVI: The Chronicles of Rafe & Askana*, was later turned into a podcast and became a 2003 Eppie Finalist for Best Fantasy. He also co-authored *The Ministry of Peculiar Occurrences* with his wife. Morris currently resides in Virginia with his family.



**Lydia Netzer** lives in Norfolk with her husband and two children. She's a karate and orchestra mom, a homeschool teacher, and when she's not traipsing after her children, loves to write, knit, and of course, read. Her novel *Shine Shine Shine*, a *New York Times* Notable Book for 2012, is about robots, motherhood, NASA, true love, and the dangers of fitting in.



**Kevin O'Malley** is a children's book author and illustrator. His latest books range from nonfiction to raucous humor, with everything in between. He has always loved drawing and shares his enthusiasm for the medium by talking with kids in schools. Kevin lives in Baltimore, Maryland, with his artist wife and two sons.



**Erica Orloff** has published twenty-five novels under four pen names for Penguin, MIRA, Red Dress Ink, Jabberwocky, and Silhouette. She has worked in publishing since 1985 as a book editor, book doctor, ghost writer, copy editor, and book packager for publishers and clients ranging from New York University Press, Loyola Press, Pearson, to Houghton Mifflin. She edits fiction and nonfiction, including technical titles, and acts as a writing coach.



**Michael Portis** is an award-winning art director who has worked in interactive media for the last fifteen years. He's designed campaigns for clients such as Disney Interactive, Pixar, Microsoft, Kraft, and Lexus. He also has an extensive background in multimedia design. Recently he launched Three Hats, an app development company.



**Howard Owen** is the author of eleven highly acclaimed novels, including the best-selling *Littlejohn* and *Oregon Hill*. In 2012, this novel won the Hammett Prize for best crime literature in the US and Canada. His eleventh novel, *The Philadelphia Quarry*, was published in July. He and his wife, Karen, live in Richmond. They are both newspaper editors.



**Virginia Pye**'s debut novel, *River of Dust*, was an Indie Next Pick for May 2013. Her award-winning short stories have been published in numerous literary magazines, including *The North American Review*, *Fallbetter*, *The Baltimore Review*, and *Tampa Review*. She holds an MFA from Sarah Lawrence and taught writing at New York University and The University of Pennsylvania. She was chair of James River Writers and still serves on the Advisory Board.



**Brad Parks** is the only author to have won the Shamus, Nero, and Lefty Awards. He received the Shamus (for best first private eye novel) and the Nero (for best American mystery) for his debut, *Faces of the Gone*. The Lefty (for best humorous mystery) went to his third book, *The Girl Next Door*. The series also includes *Eyes of the Innocent* and *The Good Cop*. It will continue with a fifth installment in 2014. Parks is a graduate of Dartmouth College. He is now a full-time novelist who lives in Virginia with his wife and two children.



**David L. Robbins** was born and raised in Virginia. David graduated from William & Mary with a B.A. and received his Juris Doctorate soon thereafter. He has published eleven novels. David is also a playwright, award winning essayist, and screenwriter. David is proud to be founding co-chair of James River Writers, as well as the non-profit Podium Foundation, which supports the practice of writing in Richmond High Schools. He has been writer-in-residence at the College of William and Mary, and presently teaches creative writing at VCU's Honors College. Currently, his movie script, *The Brink*, is in pre-production, and he looks to have his stage adaptation of his novel, *The End of War*, produced next year.



**Beth Phelan**, a graduate of NYU, joined The Bent Agency as a literary agent in 2013 after holding positions at the Howard Morhaim Literary Agency and Waxman Leavell Literary LLC. She is currently building her client list and welcomes submissions from new and seasoned authors. Beth is looking for unique and offbeat fiction for YA and middle grade readers. She is also interested in select adult fiction. Her nonfiction tastes include lifestyle, cooking, LGBT, and animals.



**Rebecca Joines Schinsky** is the director of content and community for *Riot New Media Group*, where she writes for and edits *Book Riot* and *Food Riot* and oversees social media strategy. Prior to joining *RNMG*, Rebecca wrote about books, publishing, and the reading life at her popular literary site, *The Book Lady's Blog*, for four years. She is also a cofounder of the Bookrageous Podcast.



**Rebekah L. Pierce** writes and teaches English literature for teenagers. She loves mystery novels that feature complicated protagonists. Her book *Murder on Second Street: The Jackson Ward Murders* is a blend of history and fiction. Over the years, she has written and directed several award-winning plays which have been performed on Off-Broadway. She has been a member of several local writers' groups for both fiction and drama. Rebekah is currently teaching American lit and English composition in Richmond.



**Melissa Scott Sinclair** is now a freelance journalist, copywriter and James River Writers board member. She's working on a novel about the reluctant heir to a doomed doomsday cult.



# CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

## CONTINUED

**Victoria Skurnick** has been an agent at the Levine Greenberg Literary Agency for six years. Before that, she was Editor-in-Chief of The Book-of-the-Month Club. Victoria represents both fiction and nonfiction. Her clients include Senator Tom Daschle (*Critical*), Susan Elia MacNeal, and Cynthia Keller (*An Amish Christmas*), among others. In addition, Victoria is the co-author of seven novels written under the name, Cynthia Victor.



**Lee Smith** is the author of seventeen books of fiction including bestselling novels *Fair and Tender Ladies* and *The Last Girls*, winner of the Southern Book Critics Circle Award. She is also the recipient of the 1999 Academy Award in Fiction from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Lee lives in Hillsborough, NC.



**Maya Payne Smart** earned a bachelor's degree with honors in social studies from Harvard University and a master's degree in journalism from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism. She's written hundreds of articles for newspapers, magazines, and websites, including *Black Enterprise* and *CNNMoney.com*. She blogs about women, creativity and leadership at *MayaSmart.com*.



**Patty Smith** has been teaching american lit and creative writing at the Appomattox Regional Governor's School since 2006. She holds degrees from Wesleyan University and Middlebury College. Patty is originally from Massachusetts, and she moved to Richmond to attend VCU, where she received her MFA in Fiction and Nonfiction, and where she taught composition and creative nonfiction. Her nonfiction writing has appeared in *One Teacher in Ten*, *Tied in Knots*, and *Something to Declare*. Her short fiction has been published in *The Tusculum Review* and *So to Speak*: a feminist journal of language and art.



**David Henry Sterry** is the author of fourteen books, a performer, activist, and book doctor. His first memoir, *Chicken*, was an international best-seller. His anthology was featured on the front cover of the *Sunday New York Times Book Review*. He authored *The Essential Guide to Getting Your Book Published* with his ex-agent and current wife. He has been featured everywhere from *National Public Radio* to the *London Times*, and he is a regular contributor to the *Huffington Post*. His new illustrated novel is *Mort Morte*, a coming-of-age black comedy about gun violence and children, and a boy who really loves his mother.



**Jon VanZile** spent years working in online and print publishing before founding Editing for Authors with Erica Orloff. He began his career as a political reporter in the South Pacific Islands of American Samoa, before moving back to the U.S. to continue writing for magazines and newspapers. He is currently the content director for *Bundoo.com*, a start up pediatric website that launched in 2013. His publishing credits include the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Los Angeles Times*, among others. He has edited nonfiction books for publishers such as Oxford University Press and Health Communications Inc.



**A.B. Westrick** has been a teacher, paralegal, literacy volunteer, and coach for teams from Odyssey of the Mind to the Reading Olympics. From 2006 through 2012 she was the administrative director at James River Writers. A graduate of Stanford University and Yale Divinity School, in 2011 she completed an MFA in Writing from Vermont College of Fine Arts. Her novel *Brotherhood* debuted in the fall of 2013 from Viking/Penguin.



**Paige Wheeler** is a founding partner of Folio Literary Management, LLC. Paige has worked as an agent in both a literary and entertainment capacity; she founded Creative Media Agency. At New York-based Artists Agency, Paige repped writers and producers for television. Paige has worked with a wide variety of award-winning authors and celebrities, such as Nora Roberts, Robin Leach, and The James Beard Foundation. She currently represents international authors in commercial and upscale fiction, which includes women's fiction, mysteries, and suspense; as well as narrative nonfiction and self-help, popular reference projects and women's issues.



**Reba White Williams** worked for more than thirty years in business and finance in research at McKinsey & Co., as a securities analyst on Wall Street, and as a senior executive at an investment management firm. She graduated from Duke, earned an MBA at Harvard, and a PhD in Art History at CUNY. She is past president of the New York City Art Commission and served on the New York State Council for the Arts.



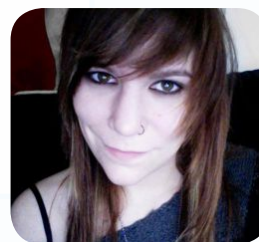
# OUR FIRST JRW T-SHIRT



We are thrilled to be working with Bonfire Funds to bring you the first ever James River Writers t-shirt! Our former board chair Maya Smart recommended the local business to us (it seems they started out doing some sort of basketball t-shirt), and they have provided the perfect partnership. JRW earns money for each t-shirt sold, but we don't have to worry about stocking t-shirts, guessing which size will be most popular,

or storing them in our office (which has about 2' x 2' of unused space).

Our new t-shirt design is a combination of our popular logo, designed by Carol Roper Hoffer, and the work of talented local graphic designer Kay Vanderlyn. Kay is a freelance Landscape Designer as well as a Sushi Chef at Momotaro Sushi in Richmond. She received her Bachelors of Landscape Architecture at the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry. While in college she realized her affinity for graphic design and moved to Richmond in hopes of continuing her education. In her free time she helps out with various aspects of design at Momotaro Sushi and is always looking for other ways she can use her talents to assist others in need of an artistic eye. She can be contacted at [Kay.Vanderlyn@gmail.com](mailto:Kay.Vanderlyn@gmail.com).



## THERE'S MORE AT [JAMESRIVERWRITERS.ORG](http://JAMESRIVERWRITERS.ORG)!

### EVENTS AND WRITING CLASSES

Volunteer Cathy Allen maintains a complete online calendar of upcoming literary events, including readings, book signings, and workshops.

You can subscribe via e-mail at [MeetUp.com](http://MeetUp.com). Thank you, Cathy!

### STAY CONNECTED!

Become a fan of JRW

Use the hashtag #jrw13 to tweet about the conference



### GET YOUR WORD ON

Our bi-monthly newsletter is read by nearly 1000 people. If you want breaking news about JRWC14, the most up-to-date information about our popular Writing Show, and first shot at our acclaimed Master Classes, please sign up on our website! Thank you to Jennifer Drummond for helping with the newsletter.

### MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

This year we launched our first members-only newsletter, sharing a few fun facts and an article focused on professional tips the first Friday of every month. We are brainstorming even more member benefits for 2014. But the best benefit of all is that you're supporting this great literary community. We wouldn't be here without you!

# JRW | PROGRAMS

## WRITERS WEDNESDAY



### Writers in Need of Inspiration Or Just a Night Out Step Out to Writers Wednesdays

Join fellow writers at Capital Ale House to raise a glass, down some food, and make connections. Writers mix and mingle in a purely social atmosphere.

Check [JamesRiverWriters.org](http://JamesRiverWriters.org) for details

**WHERE:** Capital Ale House  
Downtown, Innsbrook, and Midlothian  
**WHEN:** Second Wednesday  
of each month  
**TIME:** 5:30–7:30 PM



Patty Smith, Virginia Pye, and Nancy Zafris from the May Writing Show, River of Dust: The Gritty Truth about Editing.

### Inspiration. Motivation. Education.

#### The Writing Show is The Tonight Show with a literary bent.

In 2013, editors, screenwriters, young writers, debut authors, and a California producer joined us as we transitioned from our former venue at the Children's Museum of Richmond to our new home at The Camel. Attendees were entertained and educated on the craft and business of writing.

Did you miss out? Join us in 2014 for more writing, wit, and wisdom.

**WHERE:** The Camel,  
1621 W Broad St  
**WHEN:** Last Thursday of  
almost every month  
**COST:** \$10 in advance,  
\$12 at the door,  
\$5 students  
**TIME:** 6:30–8:30 PM



# JRW | CONTESTS

## the 2014 Best Poetry Contest



Wendy Miles, the 2012 winner.

### FIRST PRIZE:

\$500

publication of winning poem(s) in *Richmond Magazine* and a ticket to the annual James River Writers Conference.

### Two finalists

will each receive \$200.

Richmond

### DEADLINE (postmark):

Monday, December 16, 2013

### ENTRY FEE: \$15

Checks should be made out to James River Writers.

Submit up to four original, never-published poems for the single entry fee of \$15. A poet may enter only once.

### Submissions must be mailed to:

*Richmond* magazine  
Best Poetry Contest  
2201 W. Broad St., Suite 105  
Richmond, VA 23220

Submission guidelines are posted at [JamesRiverWriters.org](http://JamesRiverWriters.org)

## the 2013 Best Unpublished Novel Contest

### FIRST PLACE:

Laura Long for *What Will Burn*

### TWO FINALISTS:

Phyllis Haislip for *The Viscount's Daughter*

Derek Kannemeyer for *The Memory Addicts*

### James River Writers is pleased to announce the winners of the 2013 Best Unpublished Novel Contest.

Seventy-two writers submitted the first fifty pages of their manuscripts to be scored by a cadre of volunteer readers. A team of second-round judges—Maya Payne Smart, Gigi Amateau, and Douglas Jones—selected the three finalists from the top nine's complete manuscripts. Head judge Virginia Pye then determined the winner.



Laura Long, the 2013 winner.

# YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD

This year, with the leadership of Advisory Board Chair, Phaedra Hise, JRW launched its first Youth Advisory Board. The students listed below have been hard at work, giving us feedback, earning community service hours through volunteering (which included writing zombie stories and haiku at Arts and Culture Xpo, composing Writing Show recaps, and helping out with the conference), and in general improving our cool quotient.

2014 will bring new opportunities and challenges for our intrepid YAB, and we can't wait!

Isabelle Ammendolia  
Erin Bragg  
Kaitlin Britt  
Vasa Clarke  
Elizabeth (Lizzie) Farschon  
Emily Green  
Lily Hargis  
Ashley James  
Madeleine Jordon-Lord  
Jacqueline Lucente  
Chico Payne  
Annesha Sengupta  
Nathan Salle  
Erin Sweet  
Liz Wolfe  
Cassie Womack  
Rivanna Youngpool  
Kevin Yuan



Erin Bragg reads from her work at June on the James.

## MASTER CLASSES

In 2013 JRW offered two Master Classes during the year and six pre-conference Master Classes. In May award-winning author, series editor for the Flannery O'Connor award for short fiction, and manuscript consultant, Nancy Zafris offered a fun and challenging workshop examining short story structure and using in-class prompts to generate new work.

In June, best-selling and award-winning author, professor of creative writing, founding co-chair of James River Writers and co-founder of The Podium Foundation, David L. Robbins, conducted JRW's first Master Class series. The class met for eight short fiction workshops that focused on craft, self-editing, and the structural components of good story telling.

JRW is grateful to VCU Honors College and the Visual Arts Center of Richmond for space. JRW Master Class chair Douglas Jones coordinated details behind the scenes.

Look for more Master Classes in 2014 as this popular hands-on format returns with even more opportunities!



(from left) Annesha Sengupta, Gbari Garrett, moderator Valley Haggard, Madeleine Jordon-Lord, Chico Payne, and Cassie Womack participate in the July Writing Show, Hearts and Minds: Exploring YA Fiction at the Source.



## JUNE ON THE JAMES

Highlights of the eighth annual literary soiree at Dominion's Riverfront Complex included fun and frivolous pictures from the photo booth (see more at [maradovisphoto.com/jrw.html](http://maradovisphoto.com/jrw.html)), the presentation of the Emyl Jenkins Award, the announcement of the Best Unpublished Novel award winner, poetry by JRW Youth Advisory Board member Erin Bragg, music by Tripp Johnson and Carter Gravatt, and an on-the-spot painting created by Eugene Vango.

James River Writers is proud to support literacy and all forms of writing, whether it's encouraging fledgling student efforts or sharing insider tips on the craft and business of publishing. We're thankful for the ways June on the James allows us to raise public awareness of our signature programs, community impact, and growing national reputation.



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Meg Medina & Javier Menéndez  
Thurston & Corell Moore  
Virginia Pye & John Ravenal  
Robert M. Sexton  
Maya & Shaka Smart

## EMYL JENKINS AWARD

JRW was pleased to present the third annual Emyl Jenkins Awards to the team of Sophia Volpi and Louise Ball and to Hampton Roads Writers. Sophia and Louise have worked tirelessly as co-Municipal Liaisons for their local NaNoWriMo and as co-founders of the WriterHouse SFF Group. Hampton Roads Writers, a non-profit group of professional and aspiring writers, has offered a wealth of valuable programs and resources to the Hampton Roads community.

The award honors the memory of Jenkins, who died in 2010, by recognizing organizations and individuals who continue her legacy of inspiring a love of writing and writing education in Virginia. Jenkins, a JRW board member, was a mentor and champion of writers at all levels.

JRW will begin accepting nominations for the 2014 award on January 1, with the deadline for entries March 31. The guidelines are posted at [JamesRiverWriters.org](http://JamesRiverWriters.org).



Sophia Volpi, Bob Sexton,  
and Louise Ball.



Lauran Strait accepting the award  
for Hampton Roads Writers.

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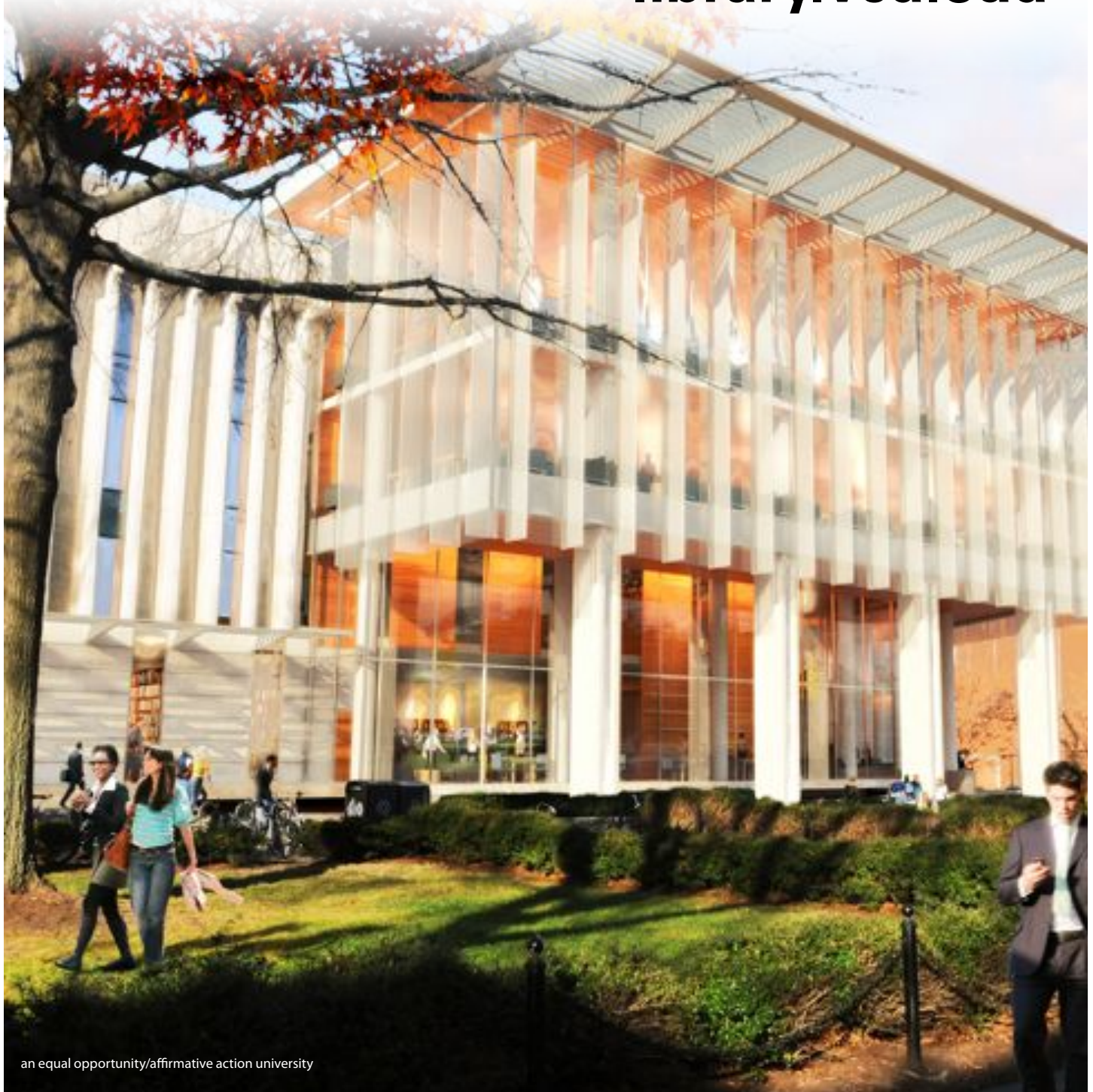
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In addition, JRW is grateful for the support of our members and other donors whose names are too numerous to be listed here. Thank you, everyone!

**Breaking ground** in 2014 for a new library building in the heart of the Monroe Park Campus, VCU Libraries salutes the writers who rely on our research collections and thanks you for your continuing support.

**[library.vcu.edu](http://library.vcu.edu)**



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**HENRY HART, 2010**

**ELEANOR ROSS TAYLOR and CHARLES WRIGHT, 2009**

**DAVID WOJAHN, 2008**

**CLAUDIA EMERSON, 2007**

**GEORGE GARRETT and BRIAN HENRY, 2006**


**ELIZABETH SEYDEL MORGAN and RON SMITH, 2005**

**carole**



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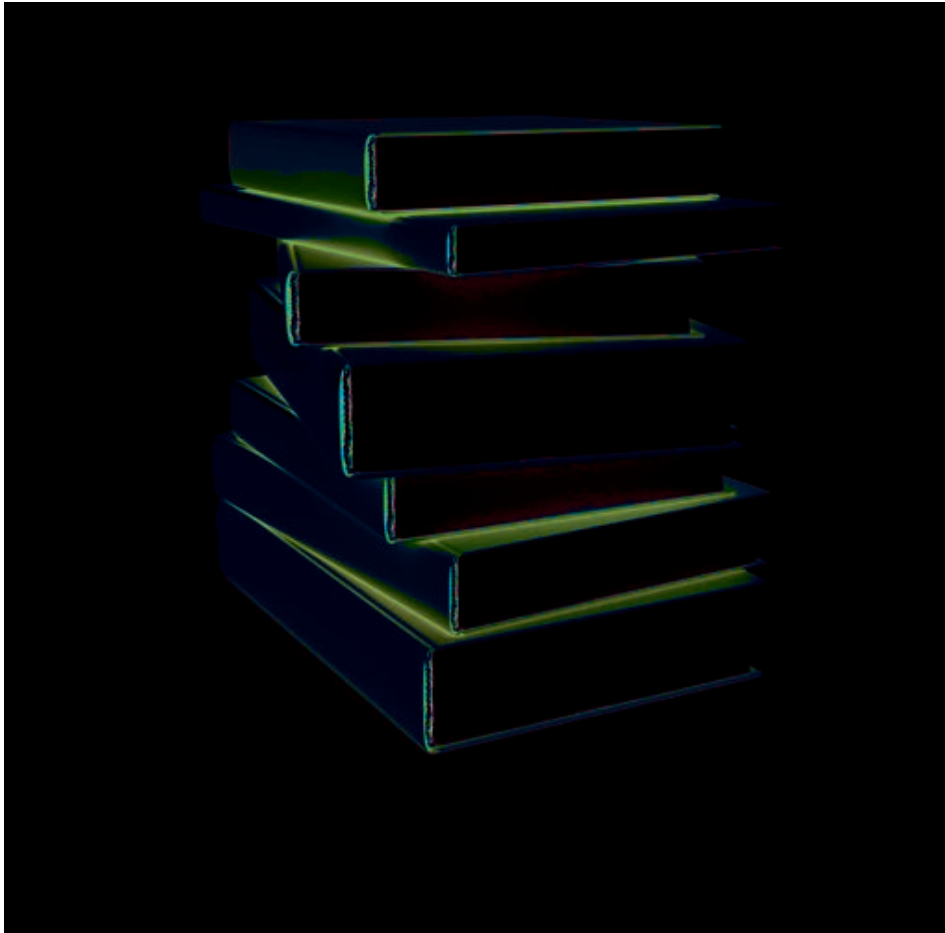
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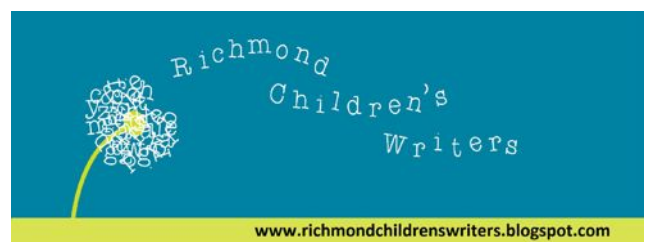
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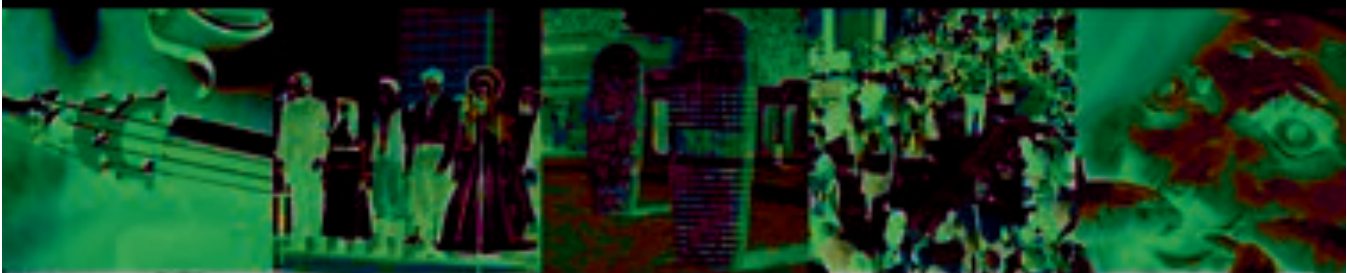
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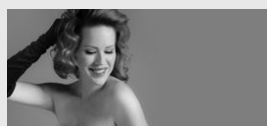
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