

2022



INDIANA AUTHORS AWARDS

AUTHOR BIOS

SPEAKER

PROGRAM



LINDSEY ALEXANDER, POETRY SHORTLIST HONOREE



Lindsey D. Alexander is a writer who lives in Bloomington, Indiana. Her book *Rodeo in Reverse* is the winner of the 2017 New Southern Voices Poetry Prize selected by Sean Hill. Her poems have appeared in *The Southern Review* and Poets.org, among other outlets. To read more of her writing, visit LDAlexander.com or [subscribe to her newsletter](#).

Available for **virtual** events.

JOHN DAVID ANDERSON, CHILDREN'S SHORTLIST HONOREE



John David Anderson is a critically-acclaimed middle-grade novelist, lifelong Hoosier and Indianapolis native. His books for young people include *One Last Shot*, *Finding Orion*, *Posted*, *Sidekicked*, *Ms. Bixby's Last Day*, and *Granted*, a 2019-2020 Young Hoosier Book Award finalist. A graduate of Indiana University, he currently spends his free time hiking and biking through Fort Harrison park with his family, searching for the most delicious root beer in the universe, jamming on his piano, and encouraging kids to read. Also, he doesn't like pickles.

Available for **virtual and in-person** events.

GABRIELLE BALKAN, CHILDREN'S SHORTLIST HONOREE



Gabrielle Balkan is best known for non-fiction books that delight readers ages 5-12 with curious and essential facts about the United States, animal record-breakers, and ground-breaking artists. In a starred review, Kirkus said *Whose Bones? An Animal Guessing Game* was “An excellent and even playful introduction to the skeletal system of both human- and animalkind.”

Recommended by the National Council for the Social Studies-Children's Book Council and International Literacy Association, Gabrielle's books include *The 50 States*, *50 Cities*, *Book of Bones*, *Book of Flight*, and *Georgia O'Keefe: She Saw the World in a Flower*.

During school visits, Gabrielle and students have lively conversations about making choices in non-fiction, the editing process, and enjoy playful guessing games. A librarian at the Saint Francis International School said Gabrielle “had our students so engaged with movement, discussion, drawing, learning, and having a really fun time! Her visit certainly inspired our students to want to be authors and illustrators!”

Gabrielle grew up across from the Indiana State Fair in Indianapolis with oodles of cats, a handful of dogs, and teacher parents. She now lives in the Hudson Valley where she enjoys geocaching and reading in the sun. Visit her online at www.gabriellebalkan.com and chat with her on social media at [@gabriellebalkan](https://twitter.com/gabriellebalkan).

Available for **virtual and some in-person** events.

AXTON BETZ-HAMILTON, NONFICTION SHORTLIST HONOREE



Axton Betz-Hamilton is the author of *The Less People Know About Us: A Mystery of Betrayal*, *Family Secrets*, and *Stolen Identity*, which received the 2020 Edgar Award for Best Fact Crime. A Portland, Indiana native, she graduated from Jay County High School, where she was a member of the Academic and Speech Teams. She was also a 10-year member of Jay County 4-H. Even though she is a native of Portland, she spent much of her free time as a child in Winchester, Indiana, skating at the Starlite Skating Center and making holiday fruit baskets at the Winchester Marsh store.

Betz-Hamilton earned a B.S. in agricultural economics and an M.S. in consumer sciences and retailing, both from Purdue University. She also earned a Ph.D. in human development and family studies from Iowa State University and a graduate certificate in family financial planning from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Currently, she is an assistant professor of consumer affairs at South Dakota State University. She and her husband, Robert, have six cats.

Available for **virtual** events.

ROBERT BLAEMIRE, NONFICTION SHORTLIST HONOREE



Robert Blaemire has been an active participant in politics all of his adult life. Born and raised in Indiana, his career began at the age of 18 upon entering George Washington University. His employment with Senator Birch Bayh (D-IN) began in 1967 during Bob's freshman year and concluded with Bayh's unsuccessful re-election campaign in 1980 against Dan Quayle. Those 13 years saw Bob rise from volunteer worker to office manager to executive assistant in the Senate office. His campaign experience with Bayh began by traveling with the candidate throughout the 1974 re-election campaign, continued with a variety of responsibilities in the 1976 Presidential campaign and, finally, political director of the 1980 campaign. Also during this period, Bob completed his B.A. in political science and his M.A. in legislative affairs

at George Washington University.

After the 1980 defeat, he founded a political action committee, The Committee for American Principles, an organization seeking to combat the growing role and influence of the New Right in political campaigns. He began his career providing political computer services in 1982, eventually joining with and starting the Washington Office of Below, Tobe & Associates. During the more than 20 years he has worked in this area of politics, his clients have included the Dukakis for President Campaign, both Clinton-Gore campaigns, Gore-Lieberman, Kerry-Edwards and dozens of governor, senate, congressional, mayoral and local campaigns and state Democratic Parties in 26 states.

Bob's first book was published in 2019, a biography of his former boss, Senator Birch Bayh. He lives in Rockville, Maryland and has two sons, Nick and Dan.

Available for **virtual and some in-person** events.

MAURICE BROADDUS, GENRE WINNER



An accidental teacher (at the Oaks Academy Middle School), an accidental librarian (the School Library Manager which is part of the IndyPL Shared System), and a purposeful community organizer (resident Afrofuturist at the Kheprw Institute), **Maurice Broaddus**'s work has appeared in *Lightspeed Magazine*, *Weird Tales*, *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*, *Asimov's*, *Uncanny Magazine*, with some of his stories having been collected in *The Voices of Martyrs*. His novels include the urban fantasy trilogy, *The Knights of Breton Court*, the steampunk novel, *Pimp My Airship*, and the middle grade detective novel series, *The Usual Suspects*.

He co-authored the play *Finding Home: Indiana at 200*. His novellas include *Buffalo Soldier*, *I Can Transform You* and *Orgy of Souls*. As an editor, he's worked on the *Dark Faith* anthology series, *People of Colo(u)r Destroy Horror*, *Fireside Magazine* and *Apex Magazine*. Learn more about him at MauriceBroaddus.com.

Available for **virtual and in-person** events.

DEBRA KANG DEAN, POETRY SHORTLIST HONOREE



Debra Kang Dean is the author of five collections of poetry, the most recent of which are *Totem: America* (Tiger Bark, 2018) and the prize-winning chapbook *Fugitive Blues* (Moon City Press, 2014). BOA Editions published her first two full-length collections of poetry: *News of Home* (1998), co-winner of the Sheila Margaret Motton Award, and *Precipitates* (2003), which was nominated for the William Carlos Williams Award. *Back to Back* (1997) won the Harperprints Poetry Chapbook Competition, judged by the late Ruth Stone, and in collaboration with Russ Kesler, she wrote *Mourning's Spell* (FLP, 2013), a chapbook of renku that includes linocuts by Laurel Leonetti.

Her poems have been featured on *Poetry Daily*, *Verse Daily*, *The Writer's Almanac*, and on the Academy of American Poets' *Poem-a-Day*; and they have been anthologized in *Best American Poetry*, *Never Before*, *America! What's My Name*, *Intersecting Circles*, and *Unsettling America*, among others. Her poems also appear in two new anthologies: *The World I Leave You: Asian American Poets on Faith and Spirit* (Orison, 2020) and *They Rise Like a Wave: Asian American Women Poets* (Blue Oak, winter of 2020). Her essays are included in the expanded edition of *The Colors of Nature: Culture, Identity, and the Natural World* (Milkweed, 2011) and in *Until Everything Is Continuous Again: American Poets on the Recent Work of W. S. Merwin* (Wordfarm, 2012).

For decades, whether practicing poetry or taiji, she has been captivated by the beauty of lines and form, and among her influences are her maternal grandmother's patchwork quilts and Bashō's *haikai no renga*. Born in Hawai'i a few years before it became the 50th state, she is of Korean and Okinawan ancestry. She lives in Bloomington, Indiana, and is on the faculty of Spalding University's School of Creative and Professional Writing.

Available for **virtual and in-person** events.

HELEN FROST, CHILDREN'S SHORTLIST HONOREE



Helen Frost, a poet, anthologist, playwright, and writer for children and teens, has lived in Fort Wayne for twenty-nine years. She has received an Indiana Authors Award for her body of work and three Individual Artist Fellowships from the Indiana Arts Commission. When not an applicant, she has served on the literature panel as a juror. Helen was awarded a 2009-2010 National Endowment for the Arts Literature Fellowship in Poetry and the 2021 Scott O'Dell Award for her book *All He Knew*.

Hello, I'm Here! is her fifth collaboration with photographer Rick Lieder, all published by Candlewick Press, each one celebrating a different aspect of the natural world. She is also the author of the picture book, *Monarch and*

Milkweed, illustrated by Leonid Gore, published by Atheneum in 2008 and now in its 18th printing.

Born in Brookings, South Dakota, Helen lived there until she was eleven, then moved to Massachusetts, and later graduated from Syracuse University with a degree in Elementary Education and a concentration in English. She received her Masters degree in English from Indiana University in 1993.

Helen has written books for readers of all ages. She is married and has two sons. She enjoys travel, hiking, beaded gourd-work, and raising and releasing monarch butterflies. Helen's website is www.helenfrost.net.

Available for **virtual and in-person** events.

BRYAN FURUNESS, FICTION SHORTLIST HONOREE



Bryan Furuness writes novels for people who think life is funny and heartbreaking at the same time. He also likes editing, especially when he gets to put together a collection of stories around a wild theme, like retellings of classic adventure stories. A teacher at Butler University, he's interested in creative process, collaboration, retellings, and helping people get started with writing. For more Furuness, see www.bryanfuruness.com

Available for **virtual and in-person** events.

EUGENE GLORIA, POETRY WINNER



Eugene Gloria is the author of four books of poems—*Sightseer in This Killing City* (Penguin-Random House, 2019), *My Favorite Warlord* (Penguin, 2012; winner of the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award), *Hoodlum Birds* (Penguin, 2006), and *Drivers at the Short-Time Motel* (Penguin, 2000; a National Poetry Series selection and recipient of the Asian American Literary Award). He is the John Rabb Emison Professor of Creative and Performing Arts and English Professor at DePauw University.

Available for **virtual and in-person** events.

KATIE HESTERMAN, EMERGING SHORTLIST HONOREE



Katie Hesterman is the debut author of *A Round of Robins*, a collection of 16 plucky, playful poems that takes the reader on a journey through the nesting cycle of a robin pair. Her book was a nominee for the 2020 Bill Martin, Jr. Award, a 2019 NCTE Notable Poetry Book and included on The Horn Book 2018 Summer Reading List.

A nurse by profession, Katie has traded her stethoscope for a keyboard, but still listens closely to the hearts of children. Her favorite author perk is sharing her love of language with students through interactive storytelling and poetry workshops.

Katie resides in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where she and her husband have raised their own brood of three. For more information, please visit www.katiehesterman.com.

Available for **virtual and some in-person** events.

MICHAEL HOMOYA, CHILDREN'S SHORTLIST HONOREE



Michael Homoya authored the scientific text for *Wake Up, Woods*, the Indiana selection for the Library of Congress' Center for the Book and recipient of the 2020 GardenComm Silver Medal of Achievement. He has written over 75 scientific papers, popular articles, and books about Indiana's natural features, including *Orchids of Indiana* and *Wildflowers and Ferns of Indiana Forests: A Field Guide*.

Homoya earned B.A. and M.S. degrees in botany at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, after which he taught elementary school science on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota and biology at Southwestern Community College in North Carolina. For 37 years he served as botanist/plant ecologist for the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Nature Preserves before retiring in 2019. Homoya is a Fellow and former president of the Indiana Academy of Science as well as board member and immediate past president of the Indiana Native Plant Society. He is currently an adjunct faculty member in biology at both Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis and Marian University. In 2019 Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb awarded him the Sagamore of the Wabash for his contributions to preserve Indiana's natural heritage. Other honors include the Indiana Academy of Science Distinguished Scholar Award, the Distinguished Career Public Service Award from Conservation Law Center, and the Barbara J. Restle Lifetime Conservation Award from Sycamore Land Trust. Homoya lives in Brownsburg with his wife Barbara and is fortunate to have their two sons Aaron and Wes, daughter-in-law Andréa, and grandsons Enzo and Soren living in nearby Indianapolis.

Available for **virtual and in-person** events.

ROBIN LEE LOVELACE, EMERGING SHORTLIST HONOREE



Robin Lee Lovelace wrote short stories in the nineties and was published in literary magazines such as *North American Review*, *the Crucible*, *Buffalo Spree* and *Punchnet's*. In 2000, Robin won second place in the Ohio Valley Fiction Contest, then life got in the way and she didn't start writing again until 2012.

In 2017, Robin won the grand prize in a one-act play contest, presented by the 30XNinety theatre in Mandeville, a suburb of New Orleans. In June 2019, Robin's novella *Savonne, Not Vonny*, won the Etchings Press prize for 2019. In March 2020, Robin was the 2nd Runner-Up for the Daisy Pettles House writer-in-residency competition for her story called *The Hexens of Jackson County*. In April 2021, Robin was named one of ten finalists for the Stowe SAG/INDIE Screenwriting Fellowship. In June 2021, her novella *Savonne, Not Vonny* was named as the Grand Prize Winner for the Chanticleer International Book Awards (CIBA) program for short stories, novelettes, and novellas. In August, Robin's story *Uncle* won the Marguerite McGlinn Short Fiction Prize for 2021.

Robin is a lifelong resident of Indiana; born and raised in the Fountain Square area of Indianapolis. Currently, Robin lives in Hendricks County, with her husband, Dan, and her dog, Amy.

Available for **virtual and in-person** events.

NANCY KRIPLEN, NONFICTION SHORTLIST HONOREE



Nancy Kriplen is a former magazine and newspaper journalist who now specializes in writing biographies. Her most recent book *J. Irwin Miller: The Shaping of an American Town* (Indiana University Press, 2019), is a biography of the Columbus, Indiana corporate leader, arts patron and civil rights supporter. Thanks to Miller's leadership and financial support, Columbus, a small town in southern Indiana, is considered one of the country's most important centers of midcentury modern architecture.

Born and raised in Indianapolis, Nancy (Lowe) Kriplen is a graduate of Purdue University where she was editor-in-chief of the campus daily newspaper, *The Exponent*. She was on the editorial staffs of TIME magazine in New York and Scripps Howard's *Indianapolis Times*. Her articles have appeared in the *New York Times*, *Smithsonian*, *Discover* and other publications.

Kriplen's other books include the biographies *Dwight Davis: The Man and the Cup* (about the donor of tennis's Davis Cup) and *The Eccentric Billionaire: John D. MacArthur – Empire Builder, Reluctant Philanthropist, Relentless Adversary*, about the insurance and real estate magnate whose fortune funded the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Kriplen has received a Lilly Endowment Creative Renewal grant and was a fellow at Ragdale, a Chicago-area artist residency. She and her late husband are the parents of three adult children and five grandchildren.

Available for **virtual** events.

MICHAEL MARTONE, FICTION SHORTLIST HONOREE



Michael Martone's new book, *The Complete Writings of Art Smith, The Bird Boy of Fort Wayne*, will be published by BOA Editions Ltd., in October of 2020.

Recent books are *The Moon Over*

Wapakoneta; Brooding; Memoranda; Winesburg, Indiana; Four for a Quarter, Not Normal, Illinois: Peculiar Fiction from the Flyover; Racing in Place: Collages, Fragments, Postcards, Ruins, a collection of essays; and *Double-wide*, his collected early stories. *Michael Martone*, is a memoir in contributor's

notes. *Unconventions: Writing on Writing* and *Rules of Thumb*, edited with Susan Neville, are craft books. He is also the author of *The Blue Guide to Indiana*,

published by FC2. The University of Georgia Press published his book of

essays, *The Flatness and Other Landscapes*, winner of the AWP Award for

Nonfiction, in 2000. With Robin Hemley, he edited *Extreme Fiction*. With Lex Williford, he edited *The Scribner*

Anthology of Contemporary Short Fiction and *The Touchstone Anthology of Contemporary Creative Nonfiction* Martone is

the author of five other books of short fiction including *Seeing Eye; Pensées: The Thoughts of Dan Quayle; Fort*

Wayne Is Seventh on Hitler's List; Safety Patrol; and Alive and Dead in Indiana. He has edited two collections of

essays about the Midwest: *A Place of Sense: Essays in Search of the Midwest* and *Townships: Pieces of the Midwest*. His

stories and essays have appeared in *Harper's, Esquire, Story, Antaeus, North American*

Review, Benzene, Epoch, Denver Quarterly, Iowa Review, Third Coast, Shenandoah, Bomb, Story Quarterly, American Short

Fiction and other magazines.

Martone was born and grew up in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He attended Butler University and graduated from Indiana University. He holds a M.A. from The Writing Seminars of The Johns Hopkins University.

Martone has won two Fellowships from the NEA and a grant from the Ingram Merrill Foundation. His stories have won awards in the *Italian Americana* fiction contest, the *Florida Review* Short Story Contest, the *Story* magazine Short, Short Story Contest, the Margaret Jones Fiction Prize of *Black Ice Magazine*, and the first World's Best Short, Short Story Contest. His stories and essays have appeared and been cited in the *Pushcart Prize, The Best American Stories* and *The Best American Essays* anthologies. In 2013 he received the national Indiana Authors Award, and in 2016, the Mark Twain Award for Distinguished Contribution to Midwestern Literature. Michael Martone is recently retired as a professor at the University of Alabama where he had been teaching since 1996. He has taught creative writing classes for 40 years. He has been a faculty member of the MFA Program for Writers at Warren Wilson College since 1988. He also taught at Iowa State University, Harvard University, and Syracuse University.

Available for **virtual and some in-person** events.

CHANTEL MASSEY, EMERGING SHORTLIST HONOREE



Chantel Massey (she/her) is a poet, author, teaching artist, educator, and anime lover based in Indiana. Massey has received fellowships with Hurston/Wright Foundation and The Watering Hole. She is a 2019 Best of Net Award nominee and author of [Bursting At The Seams](#) (VK Press, 2018). Massey founded the literary arts organization, [UnLearn Arts](#), cultivating and amplifying the craft and wellness of BIPOC writers.

Massey's work advocates for human rights and social justice. She explores their depth with confessional and emotional honesty through Blackness, womanhood, identity, memory/archive, familial relationships, the process

and act of giving up self- betrayal, and the riot of Black joy. Massey is on a life-long mission to inspire curiosity, celebration, and creativity and to challenge how we engage with the world. Her work can be found in Solstice Literary Magazine, [Indianapolis Review](#), [Turnpike Magazine](#), and other forthcoming online and print publications.

Alongside performing poetry, Massey serves as board member and Community Outreach Committee member for youth poetry organization, [Word As Bond](#), editor at [Sidepiece Magazine](#), co-host for Tea's Me Cafe Open Mic with poet, Eric Saunders, every first Friday. By day she is a special education teacher providing an equitable education to little humans, a student at Marian University studying to better provide for those little humans, and a [Caliban Art Board Member](#).

Available for **virtual and in-person** events.

KEVIN MCKELVEY, POETRY SHORTLIST HONOREE



Kevin McKelvey is a place-based poet, writer, designer, and social practice artist. He teaches at University of Indianapolis and directs the MA in Social Practice Art. His first book, [Dream Wilderness Poems](#), is a poetic trail guide for the [Deam Wilderness Area](#) near Bloomington that represents years of exploration in the Hoosier National Forest. Other poems are collected in [Indiana Nocturnes](#), a collaboration on Indiana's urban and rural divide with another native Hoosier, Curtis L. Crisler. McKelvey has been a writer-in-residence in the Long-Term Ecological Reflections program at the H.J. Andrews Experimental Forest in Oregon and at Isle Royale National Park in Lake Superior. This inspired him to bring this model to Indiana, working with local land trusts to create annual, centuries-long creative and scientific

reflections on natural areas, including [NICHES Land Trust](#) and [ACRES Land Trust](#). His work in novels, essays, social practice, and placemaking continues to explore the intersections of art, writing, ecology, gardening, food, and farming. McKelvey attended DePauw University in Greencastle and completed his MFA in Poetry and Creative Writing at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

Available for **virtual and in-person** events.

SAUNDRA MITCHELL, YOUNG ADULT WINNER



Sandra Mitchell has been a phone psychic, a car salesperson, a denture-deliverer and a layout waxer. She's dodged trains, endured basic training, and hitchhiked from Montana to California. The author of nearly 20 books for tweens and teens, Mitchell's work includes Edgar Nominee *Shadowed Summer*, *The Vespertine* series, Lambda Finalist *All the Things We Do in the Dark*, and the *Camp Murderface* series with Josh Berk. She's also the editor of three anthologies for teens, *Defy the Dark*, *All Out* and *Out Now*. She always picks truth; dares are too easy.

Available for **virtual** events.

MELISSA STEPHENSON, EMERGING WINNER, NONFICTION SHORTLIST HONOREE



Melissa Stephenson earned her B.A. in English from The University of Montana and her M.F.A. in fiction from Texas State University. Her writing has appeared in publications such as *The Washington Post*, *The Rumpus*, *Ms. Magazine*, and *Narratively*. Her memoir, *Driven*, was released by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt in 2018. The book was longlisted for the Chautauqua Book Prize and selected for Target’s Discover New Writers program. Though born and raised in Indiana, Melissa now lives in Missoula, Montana with her two kids.

Available for **virtual** events.

JAMES STILL, DRAMA WINNER



James Still’s plays have been produced throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, South Africa, China and Japan. His plays have been nominated four times for the Pulitzer Prize. Still’s work includes a trilogy of linked plays: *The House That Jack Built* (Indiana Repertory Theatre), *Appoggiatura* (Denver Center Theatre) and *Miranda* (Illusion Theater, Minneapolis); *April 4, 1968: Before We Forgot How to Dream* (Indiana Repertory Theatre); two plays about the Lincolns: *The Widow Lincoln* and *The Heavens Are Hung in Black* (both premiered at Ford’s Theatre in Washington, D.C.); a play for one actor about culinary icon James Beard called *I Love to Eat* (Portland Center Stage); a play for 57 actors called *A Long Bridge Over Deep Waters* (Cornerstone Theater Company); *Looking Over the President’s Shoulder* at

theatres across the country; and *And Then They Came for Me: Remembering the World of Anne Frank* at theatres around the world. His short play *When Miss Lydia Hinkley Gives a Bird the Bird* was a winner of Red Bull Theater’s Short New Play Festival.

Still is an elected member of both the National Theatre Conference in New York City and the College of Fellows of the American Theatre at the Kennedy Center. He received the Otis Guernsey New Voices Award from the William Inge Theatre Festival and the Todd McNerney National Playwriting Prize from the Piccolo Spoleto Festival and has been nominated for five Emmys. He is the playwright in residence at Indiana Repertory Theatre and artistic affiliate at American Blues Theater in Chicago. He lives in Los Angeles.

Available for **virtual and some in-person** events.

ANNIE SULLIVAN, EMERGING SHORTLIST HONOREE



Annie Sullivan is the author of the young adult books *A Touch of Gold*, *Tiger Queen*, and *A Curse of Gold*. She recently sold the movie rights to *A Touch of Gold* to the producer of *National Treasure*, *The Lego Movie*, and the Batman movies.

Annie grew up in Indianapolis, Indiana, and received her master's degree in creative writing from Butler University. She loves fairytales, everything Jane Austen, and traveling. Her wanderlust has taken her to every continent, where she's walked on the Great Wall of China, found four-leaf clovers in Ireland, waddled with penguins in Antarctica, and cage dived with great white sharks in South Africa. You can follow her adventures on Instagram and

Twitter (@annsulliva) or on her blog: anniesullivanauthor.com.

Available for **virtual and some in-person** events.

BILL SULLIVAN, NONFICTION SHORTLIST HONOREE



Bill Sullivan, Ph.D., is the author of *Pleased to Meet Me: Genes, Germs, and the Curious Forces That Make Us Who We Are* (National Geographic Books, August 2019). Sullivan is the Showalter professor at the Indiana University School of Medicine with joint appointments in the department of Pharmacology & Toxicology and Microbiology & Immunology. He has been a scientist and teacher for more than 20 years and has published more than 100 papers in peer-reviewed scientific journals and textbooks, and dozens of articles in the popular press.

Sullivan's research on infectious disease is internationally recognized, and he is frequently invited to give talks at universities, healthcare industries, and scientific conferences around the world. He has attracted millions of dollars in research funding from the National Institutes of Health, American Heart Association, and the Indiana Clinical & Translational Sciences Institute. Sullivan serves on several editorial boards, including *mSphere*, a scientific journal issued by the American Society for Microbiology, *ASBMB Today*, the monthly magazine of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, and *PLOS SciComm*, a blog dedicated to the craft of science communication. In 2014, he co-founded a popular science blog called [THE 'SCOPE](#) that used pop culture news to teach people about science. Sullivan contributed regularly until it ceased operation in 2019, at which point it had attracted nearly 400,000 page views. He also serves on the board of [The da Vinci Pursuit](#), an Indianapolis-based organization focused on connecting science, art, and community.

Sullivan obtained his doctorate in cell and molecular biology from the University of Pennsylvania in 1997. He worked two years at the pharmaceutical company Eli Lilly before returning to academia to run his own laboratory. His research centers on a parasite called *Toxoplasma gondii* that people catch from kitty litter or contaminated food. Unbeknownst to them, billions carry this stealthy parasite in their brain, where some scientists say it can cause neurological diseases such as schizophrenia or rage disorder. The notion that a stealthy parasite might affect a person's behavior sparked the idea that led to *Pleased to Meet Me*. In the book, Sullivan makes the case that we do not have much control over our personality and behavior; rather, we are influenced by hidden biological forces that include our genes, epigenetics (how the environment activates genes), and microbes. The good news is that by exposing these hidden forces, we gain a better understanding of why we do the things we do and how we might become our best selves.

As an award-winning researcher, teacher, and science communicator, Sullivan has been featured in a wide variety of outlets, including *CNN*, *Fox & Friends*, *The Doctors*, *Science Fantastic with Dr. Michio Kaku*, *Doctor Radio*, *Indianapolis Star*, *All IN*, and more. He has written for *The Washington Post*, *National Geographic*, *Discover*, *Scientific American*, *COSMOS*, *Psychology Today*, *The Conversation*, and more. He has presented at local schools, libraries, and at sci-fi conferences including Gen Con and Starbase Indy. Visit him at authorbillsullivan.com and on Twitter @wjsullivan.

Available for **virtual and in-person** events.

LARRY SWEAZY, GENRE SHORTLIST HONOREE



Born and raised in Anderson, Indiana, author **Larry D. Sweazy** is a multiple-award winning author of 18 novels, 34 short stories, and over 80 non-fiction articles and book reviews. An early reader, he was raised in a home filled with paperback books brought home from the factory and watched a lot of 1960s westerns and 1970s detective shows on television. Stories have always been a safe place to turn to in difficult times, and early on Larry thought he might want to be a writer. A notebook, a journal, and something to read were always close by. After a stint in the United States Air Force, he worked a lot of jobs, including time spent as an insurance salesman, a restaurant manager, a janitor, and for the last 23 years, he has worked as a freelance back-of-the-book indexer as well as writing fiction. As an indexer, Larry has written

indexes for over 1000 books on a wide variety of topics ranging from computer science, cookbooks, and anthropology books. His career as an indexer inspired the Marjorie Trumaine Mystery series, and Larry continues to work in the field today (indexing only books that interest him).

Larry was 49 when his first novel, *The Rattlesnake Season* (2009), was published. Since then, he has been awarded eight national writing awards, including the Western Writers of America Spur Award (2), Best Books of Indiana Award (1), the Will Rogers Medallion Award (2), the Elmer Kelton Book Award (1), the Willa Award (1), and most recently the Western Fictioneers Peacemaker Award for Best Novel (1). He has also been short-listed and been a finalist for four awards and has served as an award judge for several well-known genre writing organizations. His books have been translated in Italy and Turkey. He currently serves on the faculty and board of directors for the Midwest Writers Workshop, is a member the faculty for the Indiana Writers Center, teaches writing workshops, and speaks about creativity and writing as often as possible. Larry lives in Noblesville, Indiana with his wife, Rose, and is hard at work on his next novel. More information can be found at www.larrydsweazy.com.

Available for **virtual and in-person** events.

SHARI WAGNER, POETRY SHORTLIST HONOREE



Shari Wagner is a former Indiana Poet Laureate (2016-2017) and the author of three books of poems: *The Farm Wife's Almanac*, *The Harmonist at Nightfall*, and *Evening Chore*. Her poetry has appeared in *North American Review*, *Indiana Review*, *Shenandoah*, *The Writer's Almanac*, and *American Life in Poetry* and was performed as part of *Finding Home: Indiana at 200*, a production of the Indiana Repertory Theatre.

Wagner's writing awards include grants from the Indiana Arts Commission, two Creative Renewal Fellowships from the Arts Council of Indianapolis, and Shenandoah's The Carter Prize for the Essay. She earned an M.F.A from Indiana University and teaches for the Indiana Writers Center and IUPUI's Religion, Spirituality, & the Arts Initiative.

As a writer, Wagner, who was born in Goshen and grew up in Wells County, is influenced by an appreciation for Indiana's history and landscape, as well as her cross-cultural experiences in Somalia, Kenya, Honduras, Haiti, and among the Clifton-Choctaw of Louisiana. With her father, Gerald Miller, she co-authored the non-fiction books, *A Hundred Camels* and *Making the Rounds: Memoirs of a Small-Town Doctor*. She and her husband Chuck live in Westfield and are the parents of two grown daughters. You can learn more about her by visiting her websites at www.shariwagnerpoet.com and www.throughthesycamores.com.

Available for **virtual** events.

CHRIS WHITE, FICTION WINNER



Chris White is an award-winning playwright and screenwriter whose debut novel, *The Life List of Adrian Mandrick*, was published by Touchstone Books (Simon & Schuster) in 2018. It was called “stunningly honest” (Chicago Review of Books), “intense and poignant” (Library Journal starred review), “...with a life-affirming conclusion that reminds us that endangered species aren't the only ones that need to change and adapt in order to survive” (The New York Times Book Review).

White's plays have been produced nationally and internationally, and her play *Rhythms* won the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding New Play. She received an Award of Merit at the Women's Independent Film Festival in Los

Angeles for her feature-length screenplay *Weasel in the Icebox*; her screenplays have twice made first cut at the Sundance Screenwriters Lab; and her short film *Mud Lotus* was an official selection at U.S. festivals. White is a professor of English at DePauw University teaching creative writing and lives with her family near the town of Bainbridge, Indiana on Big Walnut Creek. For more information, visit www.chriswhitewriter.com.

Available for **virtual and in-person** events.