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THE WRITERS VOICE OF CENTRAL NEW YORK DOWNTOWN WRITERS CENTER and WRITERS VOICE WRITING WORKSHOPS – FALL 2026

WE HAVE AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT!

It's hard to believe, but the Arts and Education Branch of the YMCA, and our Writers Voice Program, are 25 years old!

We're celebrating this important milestone with a special event in combination with this year's CNY Book Awards! Join us for an evening of food, art, music, dancing, and so much more!

**October 16, 2026
5:30 PM to 9 PM
Bellevue Country Club**

Visit [YCNYARTSANN26.givesmart.com](https://ycnyartsann26.givesmart.com) or scan the QR code to confirm your sponsorship and support today!



KEY TO COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

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|---------------|--|
| BEG | Beginner. These courses are open to all students, but are designed specifically for new writers. |
| INT | Intermediate. These courses are for students with writing experience and some familiarity with workshops. |
| ALL | All. These courses are for writers of all experience levels—including beginners! |
| PRO | PRO/Advanced. Space may be limited in these courses for students not enrolled in PRO. A manuscript review may also be required for new students. |
| GEN | Generative. These courses focus on creating new work through exercises and prompts. |
| SEM | Seminar. These courses examine literary schools, craft, and/or writing theory in practice; reading is often required. |
| WRK | Workshop. These courses focus on peer critique and/or revision strategies. |
| MS | Multiple Styles. Classes will incorporate multiple instruction styles. |
| DWC | Course will take place in-person at the Downtown Writers Center |
| ONLINE | Course will take place online (e.g., Zoom) |
| HYBRID | Students can join either in-person at the Downtown Writers Center or online. |
| ASYNCH | Students write and share work without a weekly scheduled class. |

FALL 2026 CREATIVE WRITING COURSES

POETRY COURSES

ADVANCED POETRY WORKSHOP

(PRO - WRK - ONLINE) with Phil Memmer. Mondays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts October 19. Refine your writing and learn from others in this workshop that studies how great poems work, designed for writers with workshop experience and whose goal is publication. Please call 315-474-6851 x480 or email for more details.

LET'S GET STARTED: AN INTRO TO POETRY

(BEG - MS - ONLINE) with Georgia Popoff. Mondays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts October 19. Have you always wanted to write poetry? Has it been a while? This class will introduce the fundamentals of poetry, and you can expect to talk, write, and read about what makes a poem.

SHALLOW WORLD, DEEP IMAGE

(INT - MS - ONLINE) with Derek Pollard. Tuesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts October 13. Tired of the culture of the soundbite? Want more from poems than just another tweet? This workshop, equal parts writing, critique, and discussion, will give you the chance to cultivate your own "art of attention."

OPEN POETRY WORKSHOP

(ALL - WRK - DWC) with Misha Tentser. Tuesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts October 13. We'll read contemporary poems and write in a space geared towards formal exploration, joy, and revision. Generative exercises will steer our writing and feedback will help us refine and specify.

POETRY OF MINDFUL ELDERING

(ALL - GEN - ONLINE) with Gloria Hefferman. Tuesdays, 10 AM to 12 PM. 8 weeks, starts October 13. Do you know the difference between aging and elderying? Getting old and growing older? Read poems from mindful elders and write poems that celebrate this rich, inspiring season of life.

MORE POETRY COURSES

POSTCARD POEMS: BIG IDEAS IN SMALL SPACES

(ALL - MS - ONLINE) with Sara Parrott. Thursdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts October 15. Write poems of immediacy, inner vision, and amazed observation based on premade postcards or your own designs.

DIFFERENT DAY, DIFFERENT DRAFT

(INT - GEN - ONLINE) with Ona Gritz and Dan Simpson. Thursdays, 5 to 7 PM. 8 weeks, starts October 15. We'll discuss craft through close study of mentor texts and draft new poems through prompts, play, ample writing time, and constructive sharing in this supportive poetry workshop. You'll leave with 8 new drafts!

LATITUDE: A POETRY WORKSHOP

(ALL - GEN - ONLINE) with Tim McCoy. Thursdays, 6 to 8 PM, 8 weeks, starts October 15. Eight weeks of generative writing guided by visionary poets from Peru, Brazil, Japan, Cuba, Egypt, and beyond. Read work that breaks every rule you know, and then write poems only you could make.

EXPLORING AMERICAN WOMEN POETS:

1900 TO 1975

(PRO - SEM - ONLINE) with Yvonne Murphy. Mondays, 6 to 8 PM, 8 weeks, starts October 19. Explore the American women poets who redefined form, identity, political resistance, and everyday life through their verse. We'll analyze their craft and discuss ways to incorporate their writing directly into our own.

MORE FALL 2026 CREATIVE WRITING COURSES

DRAMATIC WRITING

SNAP, CRACKLE, POP! PLAYWRITING WORKSHOP

(PRO - WRK - ONLINE) with Len Fonte. Thursdays, 6 to 8 PM, 8 weeks, starts October 15. Conflict, diction, and disruption are the basic tools of the playwright. We'll review them in a series of exercises and quickly move into writing a ten-minute play or a portion of a longer piece. Writers should have prior experience with playwrighting.

NONFICTION COURSES

GUIDED AUTOBIOGRAPHY

(BEG - MS - ONLINE) with Cheyenne Dorsagno. Mondays, 1 to 3 PM, 8 weeks, starts October 19. Share your life story, 2 pages at a time! One-word prompts make it easy: pride, generosity, spirituality, ethics, coping, goals. Positive feedback only. Start your memoir or meaningfully reflect.

THE FALL FLOW: NONFICTION WORKSHOP

(ALL - WRK - ONLINE) with Georgia Pop-off. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM, and Thursdays, 1 to 3 PM, 8 weeks, starts October 14 and 15. Expect to share and receive comments and constructive critique. New members are welcome, but at least one prior nonfiction workshop is encouraged, so join us if you need a supportive group!

WRITING ABOUT ART FOR THE PUBLIC

(ALL - MS - ONLINE) with Susan Keeter. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM, 4 weeks, starts October 14. Learn how art criticism works to help art (and music, movies, and more) be understood in different ways by others. Visit galleries, performances, etc. and talk with guest speakers.

MORE NONFICTION COURSES

REFINING AND REVISING A LIFE

(ALL - GEN - ONLINE) with Kayla Blatchley. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM, 8 weeks, starts October 14. A generative memoir workshop focused on deepening and refining purpose and voice. Great for writers currently working on a project or wanting to create new work.

FICTION COURSES

THE WRITER'S LIFE, PART ONE

(BEG - MS - ONLINE) with Chris DelGuerio. Tuesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts October 13. This three-part series returns! What makes a successful writer? This class helps beginners learn how to keep a healthy mindset and routine, avoid obstacles, and fulfill their writing goals!

OPEN FICTION WORKSHOP

(ALL - WRK - ONLINE) with Hannah Nash. Tuesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts October 13. In this friendly workshop, open to writers of all levels, you will share work and talk openly about what is and isn't working in each other's writing.

INCLUSIVE IMAGINATION IN SCIENCE FICTION

(ALL - MS - ONLINE) with Savannah Stephens. Sundays, 2 to 4 PM. 8 weeks, starts October 18. This class empowers writers to identify and address representation in media and science fiction. Learn to write characters and worlds that respectfully include everyone.

MORE FALL 2026 CREATIVE WRITING COURSES

CROSS-GENRE COURSES

WRITING VERSE NOVELS FOR TEENS

(INT - MS - ONLINE) with Ona Gritz. Wednesdays, 7 to 9 PM, 8 weeks, starts October 14. Young Adult readers respond to the quick pace and emotional resonance of stories in verse. Learn to build a novel poem by poem. Some knowledge/love of MG and YA literature needed.

FALL READING SERIES BOOK CLUB

(ALL - SEM - ONLINE) with the Writers Voice. Wednesdays, 4:30 to 5:30 PM. 8 weeks, starts September 23. Read and discuss the books in our Fall Reading Series on Friday nights! Best of all, Book Club is FREE: you just buy the books in our series at a discount and we'll mail them to you ahead of time!

ADVANCED PROSE WORKSHOP

(PRO - WRK - ONLINE) with Yvonne Murphy. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts October 14. Refine your writing and learn from others in this workshop that studies how great fiction and nonfiction work, designed for writers with workshop experience and whose goal is publication. Please call 315-474-6851 x480 or email for more details.

WRITING LONGER WORK

(INT - MS - HYBRID) with Gemma Cooper Novack. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 15. This popular workshop is back! Do you have a great idea for a book, but get stuck on the beginning? Do you write short stories, but want to make the leap to something longer? We'll sharpen our skills for going the distance through exercises critiques. You don't need to have started your book to take this class —just bring your ideas and commitment!

FALL 2026 INSTRUCTOR BIOS

KAYLA BLATCHLEY is a fiction writer and writing teacher living in Syracuse, NY. She teaches fiction, nonfiction, and everything in between.

TIM CARTER is the Director of Writing Workshops at the Writers Voice of CNY. His books are *Remains* and *The Pigs*.

GEMMA COOPER-NOVACK is a queer writer, playwright, scholar, and writing coach. She's the author of *We Might As Well Be Underwater*.

CHRIS DELGUERCIO is a writer, teacher, editor, and lecturer. His new collection of short stories is *An Unsettled Score* (2023).

CHEYENNE DORSAGNO is a journalist and autobiography guide, specializing in therapeutic nonfiction.

LEN FONTE is a SALT Award-winning playwright. He has taught play-writing at Syracuse University and is a theater critic for the Post-Standard.

ONA GRITZ's poems and essays have appeared widely. Her memoir, *Everywhere I Look*, received the Clara Johnson Award.. Ona's YA verse novels include *Take a Sad Song*, a Kirkus best YA title.

GLORIA HEFFERNAN is the author of four poetry collections, most recently *Moments of Color and Cloud*. Her craft book *Exploring Poetry of Presences* won the Central New York Book Award.

TIM MCCOY's poems have appeared in the *Notre Dame Review*, *BlazeVOX*, and others. He graduated from the Syracuse University MFA program and teaches writing in the Syracuse area.

PHIL MEMMER founded the Writers Voice of CNY in 2000. His sixth book of poems, *Cairns*, was published in 2022.

YVONNE MURPHY teaches creative writing and studio art at SUNY Empire State University. Her first book, *Aviaries*, won the Carolina Wren Prize in Poetry.

HANNAH NASH is a fiction writer from Massachusetts. She graduated from Syracuse University's MFA program in 2026.

SARA PARROTT is the author of *Tipping the Water Jar of Heaven*. Her poems have appeared in *Michigan Quarterly Review*, *Dappled Things*, and *Light on the Walls of Life*.

DEREK POLLARD is Series Editor for the Poets on Poetry Series (Univ. of Michigan Press). His books include *On the Verge of Something Bright and Good* (Barrow Street), and, with Derek Henderson, *Inconsequentia* (BlazeVOX).

GEORGIA A. POPOFF is the author of five books of poetry, most recently, *Living with Haints* (2024). She is Poet Laureate Emerita of Onondaga County and series editor for University of Michigan Press's *Under Discussion* book series.

DANIEL SIMPSON's most recent poetry collection, *Inside the Invisible*, won the Propel Poetry Prize. He serves as flash nonfiction editor for *Wordgathering*.

OLIVIA SILVER teaches poetry, fiction, and drama. She delights supporting the voices of her emerging writers through her work at the Young Authors Academy.

SAVANNAH STEPHENS is a genre-blending fiction author. Her debut novel *Witch Queen Rising*, was an Amazon Editors' Pick for Best Sci-Fi & Fantasy (April 2026).

MISHA TENTSER is a poet from Tucson, Arizona. He is the author of the chapbook *Born in the Wrong Desert*.

COURSES FOR TEENS

YOUNG AUTHORS ACADEMY

(ALL - WRK - HYBRID) with Gemma Cooper-Novack and Olivia Silver. Saturdays, 12 to 2 PM. 10 weeks, starting October 17. YAA is a workshop for students in grades 6 through 12 who are on fire to write! Free for Syracuse City School District students or YMCA of CNY members.

Want to know more?

Contact Tim Carter

Email: tcarter@ymcacny.org

Phone: 315-474-6851 x480

Website:

ymcacny.org/young-authors-academy

WORKSHOP REMINDERS...

Enrollment is first-come, first-served.

Class times are Eastern.

We don't call to confirm registrations;

however, we'll call you if there is any problem.

Refunds are not given after a course begins. (If a course is canceled, payments are refunded.)

If a course has a required text listed in its description, you will need to obtain that text before the first class meeting.

THANK YOU

The Writers Voice of CNY is supported with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency, with the support of the office of the Governor and the NYS Legislature. Additional support by Onondaga County and CNY Arts.



**Council on
the Arts**



REGISTRATION FOR YMCA OF CNY MEMBERS

STEP 1: GO TO YMCACNY.ORG/MYACCOUNT.

Create a new account or enter your valid YMCA of CNY membership email and password.

STEP 2: REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM. Click

"Activities" in the upper right-hand corner, and then click "Register for a program."

STEP 3: SEARCH FOR PROGRAMS. Type

"creative writing" into the search bar and use the filters to find the right class for you.

STEP 4: COMPLETE REGISTRATION. To take

advantage of your free course benefit as a Y-member of CNY, use promo code "DWCFALL26" when you register.

Please note that you must complete your transaction for your free course, then start a new transaction for any additional courses.

REGISTRATION FOR Y-USA and ALL OTHER STUDENTS:

Register by phone with a credit card by calling (315) 474-6851 x480.

Paying by check? Call first to reserve your place, then return to your registration form with check payable to the YMCA to:

The YMCA's Downtown Writers Center, 340 Montgomery St., Syracuse, NY 13202

Members of a YMCA outside of YMCA of Central New York are eligible to take workshops at a discount!

Use promo code "DWCYUSA."

<https://ymcacny.org/dwc>

FALL 2026 WORKSHOP REGISTRATION

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2026

Late registrations, when space is available, are subject to a \$15 late fee.

Courses (Please mark with an X)	Member Level	YMCA	WV	Non-member
____ Advanced Poetry Workshop		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ Let's Get Started: An Intro to Poetry		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ Shallow World, Deep Image		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ Open Poetry Workshop		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ Poetry of Mindful Eldering		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ Postcard Poems		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ Different Day, Different Draft		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ Latitude: A Poetry Workshop		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ Exploring American Women Poets		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ Snap, Crackle, Pop!		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ Guided Autobiography		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ The Fall Flow (Wednesday)		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ The Fall Flow (Thursday)		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ Writing About Art for the Public		Free*	\$100	\$130
____ Refining and Revising a Life		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ The Writer's Life, Part One		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ Open Fiction Workshop		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ Inclusive Imagination in Sci-Fi		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ Writing Verse Novels for Teens		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ Fall Reading Series Book Club		\$165	\$165	\$165
____ Advanced Prose Workshop		Free*	\$130	\$170
____ Writing Longer Work		Free*	\$130	\$170

*YMCA of CNY members are entitled to one free class per season, per membership (a family membership counts as one membership). Additional fees (Book Club, late fees) still apply. All other Y members from anywhere in the country are eligible for "WV Member Rate" discount. Call 315-474-6851 x480 for more information.

TOTAL _____ NAME _____ EMAIL _____

ADDRESS (city, state, zip) _____ PHONE _____

YMCA of CNY MEMBER? YES / NO (If yes, please specify branch) _____

WRITERS VOICE MEMBER? YES / NO

Y MEMBER FROM ANOTHER YMCA ? YES / NO (If yes, specify) _____

ALL STUDENTS please refer to page 5 for details about registering for classes online.