

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



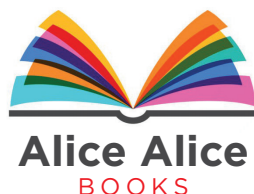
“It is not what happens to you that
determines your life ... but how you respond.”

—Marilyn Van Derbur Adler, ADLER FAMILY FOUNDATION



Tattered Cover
Book Store

Bringing Books & People Together Since 1971





A head for writing and a heart for story . . . Put these together with beauty, brains, and generosity, and you have today's **Emcee, Mara Purl.**

Mara has won over 70 book awards as the author of her best-selling *Milford Haven Novels* series. She serves as founding board member of the Colorado Authors Hall of Fame, a frequent speaker at author and writers' conferences

in California and Colorado, and an advocate for literacy in the U.S. and the U.K. Mara consults on authoring projects with a range of fellow authors, and is an Audible narrator and audio producer.



Janice Carroll is at the heart of the Colorado Boulevard bookstore. As its manager, she's been with the Barnes & Noble company for over 25 years and has been encouraging literacy and reading within the book lover community for a long time. She loves watching children fall in love with books to start their reading journey. Janice

loves to read, paddle board, & spend time with her two daughters, Sadie & Cecelia. She met her husband, Joe at B&N. The Colorado Authors Hall of Fame is indebted to her support of authors and the success of the Book Fairs that have been held within her store.

WELCOME TO THE COLORADO AUTHORS' HALL OF FAME ASPIRING AUTHORS SCHOLARSHIPS

The Board members of the Colorado Authors' Hall of Fame are thrilled that you have chosen to be here for the second class of the Aspiring Authors Scholarship recipients. It's a special day where we get to celebrate and support new unpublished authors who are residents of Colorado.

This year's authors-to-be come from diverse backgrounds and represent a variety of genres. Applications were received from both fiction and nonfiction men and women writers ranging from 20 to 78!

The winners will receive up to \$2,000 in cash plus the ability to participate in special mentorship program designed to set the stage for their author success. The Scholarships were open to applicants who:

- were beyond 20 years of age;
- were legal Colorado residents;
- were unpublished in their personal or a pen name with no previous books published in a traditional, independent or self-published venue;
- have a desire to become a successful, published author;
- included a brief statement on what they would do with any monies received;
- included a sampling of their already written work of at least 20 pages; and
- included an essay of "why I want to write and become an author."

Scholarships are given out in even-numbered years. Applications will open on January 1, 2026 and close on May 31, 2026. The next awarding will be in September of 2026.

The Colorado Authors' Hall of Fame is an all-volunteer 501c3 nonprofit organization that was originally founded in 2014 with a vision to recognize and preserve the recorded accomplishments of past and present authors who have created and published books. Both Legacy and Living authors who have shared their words of wisdom, encouragement and entertainment are celebrated. The Hall ensures that their insight and visionary achievements will not be forgotten.

Throughout the year, volunteers help with the many projects, programs, and events planned by the Board of Directors. All share the same goal of educating society about the contributions of Colorado connected remarkable authors and ensuring their legacy for future generations.

Thank you for being here to support their gifts to us, and congratulations to all the 2024 Scholarship winners.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Janet Briles". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Janet" and last name "Briles" clearly distinguishable.

Founder

2022 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

VANESSA GOMEZ, SPEAKER



Vanessa was a winner of the Aspiring Authors Scholarship in 2022. Her forthcoming novel, *Broken Angel* will be published this winter. Through her writings, she hopes to help young minds. Her father saw her holding a simple child's journal one day. On the first page, he had written a note of encouragement about struggling with

emotions signed with loving familiarity 'My little Butterfly'; a hand-drawn butterfly proud and prominent on the page. It was from that moment she began her writing journey. Her love for writing grew as her inner struggle quelled. The experiences and memories brought on by her anger were the inspiration for writing her first book in the eighth grade.

*Her love for writing grew as
her inner struggle quelled.*

2022 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

CHRIS “IDAHO BONES” VEASEY, SPEAKER



An adventurer, non-traditionalist, and a life-long storyteller, **Chris** has added filmmaker and art and science teacher to his resume.

Several years ago, after a string of sudden and decidedly impractical events, Chris became Idaho Bones. He celebrated his 28th birthday unemployed, single, and homeless. He was lost and wanted to get found.

A Finalist in the Aspiring Author Scholarships, he recreated his 2,200 epic mile quest to rediscover who he was along the entire Appalachian Trail in his book, *Uncivilized: Learning to Trust My Untamed Nature on the Appalachian Trail* through his own publishing house to boot: Wandering Bones Press, LLC last year. The story he tells is one of nonconformity and trust in the universe, written as a hope that you too will be able to find your own “unstuck” self.

“*Uncivilized* is now published and sells out when I do bookstore signings.”

Chris is currently working on a sequel to *Uncivilized* titled *Unattached*, as well as a screenplay. A few outlines for fiction are patiently waiting in his notebook, eager to be seen between bound hardcovers in the years to follow.

MEET THE ASPIRING AUTHORS SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Zaida Amador born in Guatemala, finds joy in Colorado's lakes, rivers, and comedy movies. Her most treasured moments center around her son, Izaiah, and her cat, Rio. Zaida's remarkable journey of survival and resilience has fueled her passion for helping others discover their inner strength.

Inspired by her own life experiences, Zaida was motivated to write a book, offering inspiration and guidance to those facing adversity. She considers it a privilege to encourage others to persevere even in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges. Zaida believes deeply in the transformative power of resilience and hopes to empower individuals to find hope and purpose along their journeys. When not working or mentoring, she enjoys exploring the beauty of nature and finding humor in everyday life.



THE JUDGES SHARED:

This writer has a lot of potential. She uses language effectively and clearly—and this story needs to be told!



Julia Jackson is a writer, a musician, and a former public school teacher residing in Colorado. She derives inspiration from growing up in the Southwest, otherworldly sci-fi ideas, and her experience when she played in an all-woman indie-punk band, achieving mild success: It was the comradery of her fellow ladies in the band and the joy of music which inspires her most.

Julia has lived and traveled across South America and Africa which has heavily influenced her global lens on life. Her work thus far has been shaped by her experiences and the idea that a better world exists for us all. She states, “If my readers experience joy, laugh a little on their reading journey, and think about social and environmental justice, then I will feel accomplished.”

THE JUDGES SHARED:

Her writing delivers a lively interaction with the characters who come together in a chance encounter in the desert—perfect for women’s friendship and chick lit readers.

Jillie Jennings is a sunshine enthusiast who loves singing in the rain. Growing up in a suburb of Denver, her heart has always belonged to the mountains. However, she adventured out on her own and left a piece of herself in the pacific northwest, graduating from Willamette University with a Spanish major, music minor. She continued on to receive a masters degree at Portland State University, becoming a speech-language pathologist and expert in childhood development.



Jillie shared: “In a twist no one saw coming, a little girl who struggled with learning to read for years, I decided to become a children’s book author who supports little ones in finding their own voice. My creative heart for composing songs on my guitar led to little stories that turned into children’s books. Why? Because, what’s more fun than story time? Nothing. It fills my childhood memories and has been passed down for generations. I hope to continue the legacy of joy and laughter during shared story time, through my belief that words have immense power. I try my best to fill mine with the utmost love.”

THE JUDGES SHARED:

The author’s voice is woven with fun concepts for little ones. Her stories are clever and show originality and real potential in today’s children’s market.



Becky Jensen is a writer and podcast contributor who lives in a little cabin on a big river in northern Colorado. Her work has appeared in *Sierra*, *Colorado Country Life*, *The Road She's Traveled*, *Wild Women*, and *Out There* podcast.

Nominated for the Pushcart Prize, her essay "Follow the Hula Girl" was the lead story in *Rise*, winner of the Colorado

Book Award. Becky is currently finishing her debut memoir about hiking the 500-mile Colorado Trail in a last-ditch effort to start living—or die trying. More information at BeckyJensenWrites.com.

THE JUDGES SHARED:

Her book needs to be in print. Wonderful blend of humor, truth and prose. This author creates empathy without a "poor me" theme.

Adia Reynolds is a senior attending Fort Hays State University where she studies English with a writing concentration alongside a grant writing certificate. She is published across thirteen magazines, and volunteers as a staff editor with three. She has recently completed her first novel, a fantasy post-apocalypse, with many more speculative fiction works on the horizon. When she is not writing, she thinks about writing. When that is not an option she plays video games, reads, and posts creative writing tips on Instagram.



THE JUDGES SHARED:

Author is great at building tension—will the Earth survive?—and knows a lot about mushrooms, using them as a key element within her writing!

MEET THE ASPIRING AUTHORS



Brittney Exline is a software engineer, writer, and speaker based in Denver, CO. She attended the University of Pennsylvania at 15, where she was the youngest African American to be accepted into an Ivy League and the youngest student accepted into the Engineering School. After graduating in 2011 with a degree in Computer Science, she became the country's youngest engineer

when she started working in Boston area startups at 19 years old.

Brittney recently graduated with a Master's degree in Computer Science from Georgia Institute of Technology in Spring 2024. She is also in the 2022-2024 cohort of Lighthouse Writer's Book Project, working on a memoir about growing up gifted, competing in pageants, and working in tech as a Black woman.

THE JUDGES SHARED:

A stream of consciousness that opens up the frustrations of exit interviews in today's workplace woven with emotional reactions and choices that go array.

SCHOLARSHIP FINALISTS

Janice Kerbel, also known as Janice Zoilo Seay Kerbel. She was born in the Philippines, and grew up in the USA. She wears many hats—a writer, a small business owner, a devoted wife, a mother of two, a sister, and a daughter. She graduated from Westwood College with an Associate Degree in Graphic Design, a Bachelor's in Visual Communication, and a Master's in Media Design from Full Sail University.



Janice has been writing from middle school to adulthood. In her writing career, she goes by two different pen names: JZS Kerbel for her *Fantasy* series and Janette Zoirose for her *Paranormal Romance* series. Her debut series in the realm of paranormal romance is *The Night Huntresses* series.

THE JUDGES SHARED:

For sci-fi readers, her characters are interesting, inviting the reader into the development of the Night Huntress group.

COLORADO AUTHORS HALL OF FAME BOARD



Judith Briles (Founder and President) is an encourager to authors and writers and known as The Book Shepherd. She is a Speaker, Author and Publishing expert, Host of the *AuthorU, Your Guide to Book Publishing Podcast*, and the Founder and the CEO of *TheBookShepherd.com* and Mile High Press. She's the author of 47 books earning over 55 national book awards and published in 17 countries. Judith was the first person to receive the Dan Poynter Legacy Award in Nonfiction. She is honored to be named a Woman of Distinction from the Girl Scouts; is the Founder of *AuthorYou.org*, the Colorado Authors' Hall of Fame and visionary for the Aspiring Authors Scholarship program.



Mara Purl (Vice President) is the author of the best-selling *Milford-Haven Novels & Novellas* which have won 70-plus book awards and made several best-seller lists. Her hit audio drama *Milford-Haven, U.S.A.*, reached 4.5 million listeners on BBC Radio, and became the basis for her books. As an actress, Mara is best known as "Darla Cook" on *Days Of Our Lives*, as well as for leading stage roles, and co-authored (with Erin Gray) *Act Right*. With more than 200 audio plays to her credit, as well as screenplays and theatrical plays, Mara is a frequent speaker at writing conferences and women's events, is an Audible narrator of audio books and has won 10 awards as an audio performer.



Mary Salas (Treasurer) Mary is the Director of Wealth Management & Planning at Wealthspring Financial Partners. Since 2004, she has served as a financial advisor and financial planner for individuals, families, and business owners. She has also held roles as a commercial real estate lender/manager, asset manager and mortgage banker. As a business owner herself, she recently completed a succession plan by selling her financial advisory firm to Wealthspring Financial Partners and is enjoying the transition to semi-retirement. She is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Colorado Society of Certified Public Accountants.



Julianna Adams (Secretary) Juliana is an author, filmmaker, nurse, and teacher. She has lived in Colorado for the last 46 years. As a nurse, she delivered care for 53 years. Her book, *The Joy of Nursing, Reclaiming our Nobility* focused on the concepts of Joy and Nobility, and what it meant to her transition from novice to expert.

These concepts resonated with people that wanted to be a nurse, those in their active years of being a nurse, to those that were disillusioned and created standing room only engagements. For 12 years, she has taught within the ESL system—English is a Second Language with emigrants landing in the Metro-Denver area. She serves on the Denver Women's Press Club board. Juliana is currently working on a poetry book that may never be published but is extremely satisfying.



Pat Comiskey is the founder of Comiskey & Company, PC, is a full-service CPA firm specializing in taxation, accounting and auditing for construction, agriculture, and other industries for twenty-five years founded in 1984. Based in Denver, Colorado, he specializes in business advisory services, including tax planning and compliance, business valuations, and retirement/estate planning.



Doug Gilbert is a highly experienced international entrepreneur, academic, and business professional. His current focus includes serving as the CEO of Lone Tree Academics LLC, an academic services provider serving higher education, and a recent startup of EduPartner Solutions, a Data Analytics as a Service (DAaaS) venture

assisting higher education institutions with student success strategies. He also serves as doctoral faculty for Walden University (USA), a visiting professor at Vilnius University (Lithuania), and doctoral faculty for UBIS University (Switzerland). He led the international transformation projects for Novartis—a Swiss multinational, and co-founded the City of Castle Pines.



Mike Howard is a global security leader, contributing to the field through key roles in numerous industry organizations: CSO Roundtable Advisory Board, International Security Management Association (ISMA), Security Industry Association (SIA), Board of Director, US State Department Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC),

Technical Threats and Risk Committee, and the former Chief Security Officer (CSO) for Microsoft Corporation where he held global responsibility for vital security functions including operations, investigations, risk mitigation, crisis management, executive protection, security technology, strategy, intelligence, and employee awareness. As the author of *The Art of Ronin Leadership*, he speaks as a subject matter expert on security and leadership. His fiction includes the action thrillers, *Full Circle* and *Blood Circle*. He and his wife Janice created the Michael and Janice Howard Foundation providing resources for disadvantaged youth in the Las Vegas metropolitan area.



Linnea Tanner an award-winning author of historical fiction / fantasy set in ancient Rome and Britain. She has extensively researched ancient history, mythology and archaeology, and has traveled to sites described in her books. A Colorado native, she attended the University of Colorado and earned both her bachelor's and master's

degrees in chemistry. Linnea is a past president of the Denver Woman's Press Club, a volunteer reviewer for the Historical Novel Society, and a blogger who hosts author blog tours and reviews their books.



Richard Rieman wanted to be Superman, but he couldn't fly, so he decided to be Clark Kent instead. After a long career as a radio news reporter, anchor, and Washington Bureau Chief, Richard turned his storytelling skills to the world of audiobooks. He has narrated and produced hundreds of Indie-published audiobooks and is the author

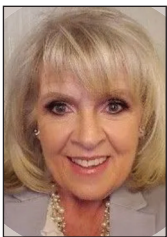
of the award-winning book, *The Author's Guide to Audiobook Creation*.

Richard was a volunteer narrator for Learning Ally, reading books for the blind, as well as being a ski guide for blind skiers. Combining both interests, he created the “Imagination Storybooks” Nonprofit to make hundreds of illustrated books accessible to blind and deaf children in video and audio-book formats. Richard has progressive Glaucoma. “I am losing my eyesight,” says Richard, “but not my vision.” His latest book for children is *The Day the Clouds Went Away*.



Barbara Winter has been recognized for her leadership by the Southern Colorado Women’s Chamber of Commerce, the Colorado Council of Girl Scouts, *Colorado Springs Business Journal*, Pikes Peak YMCA, the Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce, Silver Key Senior Services, and Leadership Pikes Peak. She is the former Chief

Community Officer at Ent Credit Union where she coordinated community outreach and philanthropy along the Front Range. She currently serves on the boards of the Penrose-St. Francis Health Foundation, Goodwill of Colorado Foundation, ComCor, Pikes Peak Community Foundation, Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center, the Manitou Springs Urban Renewal Authority, and the Colorado Springs 2C Road Advisory Committee.



Jill Wright is affectionately known as the Queen of Shine. She’s a Heart Centered Leader and CEO of Executive Shine and has been recognized by both *Forbes* and *Harvard Business Review* for transforming the culture of client-based services. In addition, she founded Master Your Impact to share her 33 years of experience by

Speaking and Consulting to inspire other leaders to unleash the human potential within their organizations through the power of belief and authentic connection. She is also the host of “The Shine Factor” podcast.



CLASS OF 2023

Jeanne Abrams

Kathleen O'Neal Gear

Temple Grandin

William "Bill" Hamilton

Peter Heller

Commander/Dr. Mary Kelly

Patricia "Patty"

Nelson Limerick

Thomas Jacob Noel

Linda Wommack

Philip Yancey's

Abelardo "Lalo" Delgado

John Denver

Community Achievement Award

Barnes & Noble

Best Bookseller for

Colorado Authors

Class of 2021

Kevin J. Anderson

Avi

Sandra Dallas

Carol Fenster

W. Michael Gear

Penny Rafferty Hamilton, Ph.D.

Robert Heinlein

Charlotte Hinger

Justin Matott

James Michener

Manuel Ramos

Patricia Raybon

Richard Weissman

Flint Whitlock

John Edward Williams

Hannah Marie Wormington

Lifetime Achievement: Sue Lubeck

The 2019 Inaugural Inductees

Madeleine Albright

Marilyn Van Derbur Adler

Rex Burns

Margaret Coel

Clive Cussler

Sybil Downing

John Dunning

John Fielder

George Cory Franklin

W C Jameson

Jerry Jenkins

Stephen King

Louis L'Amour

Ann Parker

Minnie Reynolds

Helen Thorpe

Jill Tietjen

Kris Tualla

Connie Willis

Mary Taylor Young

Ann Haymond Zwinger

Lifetime Achievement: Joyce Meskis



THEREFORE, I, Jared Polis, Governor of the State of Colorado, do hereby officially proclaim on this 11th day of SEPTEMBER, 2023 to be known as

"COLORADO AUTHORS HALL OF FAME DAY"

In the State of Colorado



GIVEN under my hand
and the Executive Seal of
the State of Colorado, this
first day of September, 2023


Jared Polis
Governor

Notes