

For Immediate Release
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16 Colorado Aspiring Authors Win Publishing Scholarships

July 13, 2026, Denver, Colorado. The Colorado Authors Hall of Fame (the Hall) will deliver 16 scholarships valued at over \$10,000 each to aspiring Colorado authors-to-be. Each scholarship consists of cash and an intensive one-year coaching-mentoring program created by the Hall. The scholarships are part of its commitment to encourage, support, and nurture Colorado-connected authors.



This year's winners will be honored at a luncheon celebration on Friday, September 11, 2026, at the Inverness Denver in Englewood, Colorado. The public is welcome and tickets are available on the Hall's website: **www.ColoradoAuthorsHallofFame.org**.

The number of applicants was significantly larger than previous years' submissions. Applicants ranged from 26 to 78 years of age. The judges were so impressed with the quality and variety that they asked the Hall's board if the number of honorees could be expanded. It was, adding a new category, Runner Up, and allowing for more Finalists. Previously, there were two categories: Winners limited to five and Finalists limited to three. Entries were both fiction and nonfiction and genres consisted of fantasy, mystery, biography, and business.

The 2026 full Scholarship Winners to be honored are: **Mallory Decker, Emma Needell, Molly Heines, Tiffany Nieslanik, and Sam Rosewilde.**

The three Runners Up to be honored include: **Erin Jones, Jim Roome, and Stacey Naughton.**

The six Finalists to be honored include: **Lucas Cunningham, Susan Loriho, Emily Richardson, Terry Schultz, Farrah Yeganeh, and Zachary Walker.**





The Colorado Authors Hall of Fame Scholarship is open to applicants in even-numbered years who:

- have not had their work published in a book;
- are not AI generated;
- are over 20 years old;
- are legal Colorado residents;
- have a desire to succeed as an author and in the field of publishing; and
- must include a sample of their work of at least 20 pages and an essay of why they want to become an author.

The application process included writing an essay of up to 1,000 words on the topic: “Why I Want to Write and Become a Published Author” along with how they intend on using the cash award. Essays were evaluated for excellence of writing, creativity, and grammar, by a panel of judges consisting of writing coaches, industry professionals, and published authors.

Of the recipients of the 15 previous scholarship winners and finalists, four have published their books and four have completed manuscripts, ready for the next step. Previous winner, and now successfully published author, Julia Jaxsun will speak at the special event about her experience in publishing and now bookselling.

The scholarships were envisioned by founder of the Hall, Dr. Judith Briles. She shares, “Writing and publishing a book is like climbing one of our Rocky Mountain fourteeners.” It requires years of preparation, unbelievable stamina, and courage. Facing that blank page is like starting an ascent. When you reach the top by completing the book, authors can suddenly see farther than ever before. This vision from the pinnacle is the gift authors give their readers. Now, the Hall would like to give a gift back to Colorado authors who desire to reach the publishing summit. Their impact on countless readers in providing entertainment, enlightenment, and solutions is immeasurable.”

The Colorado Authors Hall of Fame is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Its mission is “to honor and promote the works of outstanding published authors from all genres and generations with a vibrant connection to Colorado, to ensure their legacies will not be lost.”

Information about the application process, nomination criteria for the 2025 Hall Inductees, donations, events, board members can all be found at www.ColoradoAuthorsHallofFame.org.

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