

Mentorship Experiences

Under the guidance of Courtney Skaggs, editor of the *Permafrost Literary Journal*, we covered a wide range of topics related to the fields of professional writing and publication. The mentorship began in Fall '22, and culminated in attending the 2023 AWP conference, the Association of Writers and Writing Programs, held this year in Seattle, Washington.

Fall Mentorship:

In the Fall, we focused on editorial and journal topics, as well as educational goals. As editor of the *Permafrost*, Courtney led myself and my co-mentee, Seneca, through the creation of a nationally recognized literary publication, *Permafrost*. We covered:

- Software for submissions used by journals and professional publishing companies
- Submission reviews
- The 'do and don't' of accepting pieces for a literary publication
- Identifying promising pieces and the level of editorial work needed
- How to create a cohesive theme or interconnected themes in a literary publication
- Introduced us to how an editorial boards function
- Learned the ins and outs of publication formatting
- Covered best practices for workshopping, feedback, and working with authors.
- Covered best practices for student organizations that focus on writing and workshopping.
- Discussed the pros and cons of different writing instruction and generative workshopping for students
- Learned about graduate school applications, the differences between an MA and a MFA, and the opportunities for both paths.

Mentorship in Literary Arts

Mentorship in Literary Arts - what exactly does that mean? As we found out, it encapsulates a great deal! The mentorship, under the guidance of Courtney Skaggs, editor of the *Permafrost Literary Journal*, introduced us to new professions, literary processes, and allowed us the opportunity to step into the professional literary world.

The mentorship culminated in attending the Associated Writers and Writing Publisher's Conference, the largest conference of its kind in North America. At the conference, we were given the opportunity to speak with current published writers, publishers large and small, and even meet with graduate programs from all over the country.



AWP 2022 Bookfair



Association of Writers and Writing Programs

AWP: Association of Writers and Writing Programs

Spring Mentorship:

In the Spring we shifted focus to the academic and professional world of literary arts. We heavily focused on the role of conferences, publishers, and explored the different styles of literary work, including literary journalism and creative nonfiction. We were also introduced to the range of publication opportunities. This culminated in our attending AWP, the Association of Writers and Writing Programs, the largest conference of its kind in North America. Held in Seattle, Washington, this year the conference had more than 10,000 attendees in every area of the literary arts, including:

- Nationally known publishing houses
- Small and independent publishers
- Established writers
- Debut authors
- Students – undergraduate, and graduate
- Professors and educators from all over North America

At the conference, we were encouraged to attend sessions that spoke to our interests, strengths and even encouraged to explore an area we had no prior interest in. These sessions were informative, creative, and enjoyable. It was an amazing experience to be in a place with so many authors, and it was a pleasure to speak with publishers on what they seek in manuscripts. It would be impossible to list all the topics covered by the conference, but some of the highlights include:

- Young adult and children's literature
- Minority voices in literature
- Military and veteran representation and voices
- Queer, trans, and women's literature and representation
- Pedagogical sessions such as mental health in Creative Nonfiction, and generative teaching

