

**Chavonn Williams Shen**

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**Teaching Experience**

*December 2018 to Present*

Instructor, Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop

- Created and taught an introductory poetry class at Stillwater Prison titled, "The Poetics of Hip-Hop."
- Gave written feedback on students' poems and essays.
- Will be trained to teach at the Shakopee and Lino Lakes Prisons by 2020.

*Fall Semester 2018, Fall Semester 2019*

Teaching Assistant, Hamline University

- Teaching assistant for Hamline's Intro to Creative Writing class with Richard Pelseter-Weibe in 2018.
- Teaching assistant for Hamline's Advanced Poetry Workshop class with Gretchen Marquette in 2019.

*Spring Semester 2018*

Teaching Assistant, Normandale Community College, Introduction to Creative Writing

- Assisted the Creative Writing Department Chair, Kris Bigalk, in planning class activities and learning goals.
- Conducted tutoring sessions and held office hours.

*April 2018*

Teaching Artist, The Queer Trans Indigenous People of Color (QTIPOC) Conference

- Taught "Queer Poems of Protest" to conference participants.

*April 2017 to Present*

Teaching Artist, The Loft Literary Center

- Taught a poetry writing classes such as "Reclaiming Language Through Form: A Poet's Guide" to highlight writers of color's use of poetic form as an act of resistance against Euro-centric writing practices.
- Created a multi-session curriculums.
- Met with board members to make a pay-what-you-can class.

*September 2016 to June 2017*

Instructor, Anwatin Middle School

- Established the middle school's first ever Spoken Word and Poetry Club.
- Co-facilitated an after school homework help club with The Sanneh Foundation.
- Met weekly with 6<sup>th</sup> grade math, science, language arts, and social studies teachers to discuss student challenges and how to address them as a team.

*December 2015 to June 2016*

Instructor, Central High School

- Led the after school Spoken Word and Poetry Club.
- Tutored freshmen and sophomores in their English and math classes.

- Assisted math teachers with small study groups and keeping classroom order.

*March 2015 to July 2015*

Instructor, Nellie Stone Johnson Elementary School

- Taught poetry and spoken word to 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> graders.
- Participated and organized field trips as well as curated outside class performances.

*January 2014*

Instructor, Bancroft Elementary School

- Hosted two spoken word and poetry clubs for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders as well as 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> graders.

*June 2012 to September 2012*

Instructor, North Commons Park

- Created, programmed, and implemented a city-wide spoken word and poetry network for youth ages 12-19 in Minneapolis.
- Formed partnerships with North Minneapolis business and nonprofits for materials and community gatherings.
- Led performances, organized speakers, and planned field trips.

## **Education**

*Graduate School*

Hamline University, December 2019

Candidate for Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing

- Took Composition and Pedagogy to learn techniques for teaching a composition writing class.

*Undergraduate School*

Carleton College, March 2015

Major: Psychology; Minor: African American Studies

- Senior Thesis Title: Is Poetry A Therapeutic Tool To Heal Survivors of Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence?

## **Editorial and Contest Judge Work**

March 2019: Judge, Poetry Out Loud Contest

- Helped judge the annual Poetry Out Loud recitation contest for high schoolers
- Assisted in selecting the state winner who would go on to the national completion.

Spring 2018: Poetry Editorial Board Member, *Water~Stone Review*

- Complied and approved poetry submissions with other board members to create the 2018 edition of *Water~Stone Review*.

Fall 2017: Intern, Coffee House Press

- Read through slush piles sent to the press and created marketing reports for the head publishing editor

Spring 2017: Judge, Mentor Series in Poetry and Creative Prose for The Loft Literary Center

- Was a first round judge for 2017-2018 poetry applicants of The Loft's Mentor Series

Fall 2013: Intern, Office for United States Congressman Keith Ellison

- Wrote and edited speeches for Congressman Ellison

### **Conferences and Workshops**

Participant, Century College's Summer Acceleration Training with Dr. Sim Barhoum and Mark Manasse

Participant, 2019 Tin House Winter Workshop, led by Erica Dawson

Participant, 2018 Voices of Our Nation Arts Workshop (VONA), led by Patricia Smith

Planning Team Member, 2018 QTIPOC Conference

### **Selected Classes Taught**

Spring 2019: The Poetics of Hip-Hop at Stillwater Prison

Spring 2019: American Mythology Through Poetry and Prose at The Loft Literary Center

Spring 2018: Queer Poems of Protest at The QTIPOC Conference

Spring 2017: Reclaiming Language Through Form, A POC Poet's Guide at The Loft Literary Center

Fall 2016 to Spring 2017: Poetry and Spoken Word at Anwatin Middle School

Winter 2015 to Spring 2016: Poetry and Spoken Word at Central High School

Spring 2015 to Summer 2015: Poetry and Spoken Word at Nellie Stone Johnson Elementary School

Winter 2014: Poetry and Spoken Word at Bancroft Elementary School

Summer 2012 to Fall 2012: Spoken Summer: A Poetry and Spoken Word Workshop at North Commons Park

### **Classes Assisted in Teaching**

Fall 2019: Advanced Poetry Workshop at Hamline University

Fall 2018: Introduction to Creative Writing at Hamline University

Spring 2018: Introduction to Creative Writing at Normandale Community College

### **Awards, Fellowships, and Nominations**

2019 Excellence in Teaching Fellow presented by The Loft Literary Center

2018 First Runner-Up for the *Los Angeles Review* Flash Fiction Contest  
Flash fiction, "To My Dear Friend: Letters from the Desk of President Jefferson"

2018 Forward Prize Nominee for Individual Work  
Poem, "To My Grandfather Who Voted with Guns"

2018 Winner of the *Landlocked Magazine* Poetry Contest

Poem, "Mississippi in Three Parts" selected as winner by Ely Shipley, presented by *Landlocked Magazine*

2018 Winner of the Community Excellence Award presented by University of Minnesota's Gender and Sexuality Center for Queer and Trans Life

- Honored for contributions to the queer and trans community for the 2018 QTIPOC Conference with other conference planning team members

2016-2017 Poetry Winner of the Mentor Series in Poetry and Creative Prose presented by The Loft Literary Center

2017 1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner of the Still I Rise Grant presented by *Alternating Current Press*

2017 Finalist for the Best of the Net Prize presented by *Sundress Publications*

2017 Nominee of the Pushcart Prize presented by *Alternating Current Press*

2017 Finalist for the Charter Oak Awards presented by *Footnote #4: A Literary Journal of History*

2016 Fellow, The Givens Foundation for African American Literature

### **Publications**

Forthcoming: One flash fiction story, "To My Dear Friend: Letters from the Desk of President Jefferson," to be published in *Los Angeles Review*

Forthcoming: One poem "The Ballad of Luella and the Tame Parrott," to be published in *Footnote #4: A Literary Journal of History*

One poem, "Ode to the Decrepit Auction Block Seen on the Way to My Grandfather's House," to be published in *Yemassee*

March 2019: One creative nonfiction essay, "Proper Nouns," published in *Permafrost Magazine*

February 2019 to Present: Book review editor for *Hematopoiesis Press*

December 2018: One poem, "Misplaced Litany," published in *Cosmonauts Avenue*

December 2018: One blog post, "Beyond Toni Morrison: Top Twin Cities Bookstores for Buying Books by People of Color," published in *The Water~Stone Review Blog*

October 2018: Two poems, "Self Portrait as a Chair" and "Constellations" published in *The Indianapolis Review*

October 2018: One poem, "Why Not to Pick Scabs," reprinted in *Nat.Brut*

October 2018: One poem, "How to Tell If You're Dead," published in *Midway Journal*

August 2018: One poem, "Mississippi in Three Parts," published in *Landlocked Magazine*

July 2018: One book review, *What Happens When A Man Falls From the Sky*, published in *Runestone Literary Journal*

July 2018: Two poems (featured poems for National Black Poetry Day), "Inventory of a Black Girl" and "Gourmet Ars Poetica," published in *Aquifer: The Florida Review Online*

June 2018: One poem, "Why Not to Pick Scabs," published in *Burningword Literary Journal*

April 2018: One poem, "To My Grandfather, Who Voted with Guns," published in *The A3 Review*

October 2017: One article, "WeChat in China and Casual Anti-Blackness," published in *There She Goes*

June 2017: One poem "Alternate Names for Poetry" and one creative nonfiction essay "On Being" published in *The Coil*.

### **Selected Readings**

April 27th, 2019: Co-hosted The Great Twin Cities Poetry Read with Anthony Ceballos at Moon Palace Bookstore

June 2018 to Present: Co-host of the bi-monthly Read and Response Series with Anthony Ceballos at Subtext Bookstore

May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018: Featured poet at the University of Minnesota's 2018 Future Services Institute Summit

April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017: Reader for The Great Twin Cities Poetry Read with Poetry Asylum at Moon Palace Bookstore

September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2017: Emcee and featured reader for Lit Crawl at The Public Functionary

May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017: Fellow performance for The Loft Literary Center's Mentor Series Reading at Open Book