Chavonn Williams Shen

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**Teaching Experience**

*January 2022 to Present*

Instructor, St Paul Conservatory for the Performing Arts

* Taught advanced poetry workshop to high school juniors and seniors.

*February 2020 to Present*

Teaching Artist, Upstream Arts

* Taught social and emotional skills through the arts to people with disabilities.
* Participated in creating curriculum for Art of Relationships - a sex education and relationship class designed for people with disabilities of a variety of ages.

*Fall Semester 2020 to Present*

Instructor, Century College

* Taught Composition I and Composition II to first and second year students.

*December 2018 to Present*

Instructor, Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop

* Created and taught an introductory poetry classes at Stillwater, Shakopee, and Moose Lake prisons
* Gave written feedback on students' poems and essays.
* Trained to teach or volunteer in any state prison.

*Fall Semester 2018, Fall Semester 2019*

Teaching Assistant, Hamline University

* Teaching assistant for Hamline’s Intro to Creative Writing class with Richard Pelseter-Weibein 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 through The Sanneh Foundation.
* Met weekly with 6th 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 3rd through 5th 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 1st and 2nd graders as well as 3rd through 5th 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.

**Selected Classes Taught**

Spring 2022: Poetry of Recovery at Moose Lake Prison

Fall 2021: Poetry of Recovery at Shakopee Prison

Winter 2020: The Poetics of Hip-Hop at Stillwater Prison

Fall 2019: Poetry - A World of Forms at Shakopee Prison (Co-taught with Sam Stokley)

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: Teaching Assistant, Advanced Poetry Workshop at Hamline University

Fall 2018: Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Creative Writing at Hamline University

Spring 2018: Teaching Assistant, Introduction to Creative Writing at Normandale Community College

**Education**

*Graduate School*

Hamline University, December 2019 Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Creative Writing

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

*Undergraduate School*

Carleton College, March 2015 Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Psychology; Minor: Africana Studies

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

**Editorial Work**

September 2019 to April 2021: Writing Coach for Tyler Sit's book, *Staying Awake* (forthcoming in 2021)

* Researched anti-racist and queer theory texts to use in *Staying Awake,* a memoir centered in Christian liberation theology.

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

* Compiled 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

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

* Wrote and edited speeches for Congressman Ellison

**Work as a Contest Judge**

July 2019, July 2020: Judge for Silverwood Park Poetry Trail

* Selected 6 poets throughout the state of Minnesota to have their writing featured on the Silverwood Park Poetry Trail.
* (In July 2020) selected 6 incarcerated writers who were participants in Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop and featured their writing on the Poetry Trail.

March 2019: Judge, Poetry Out Loud Contest

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

* First round judge for 2017-2018 poetry applicants of The Loft’s Mentor Series

**Select 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

Participant, 2018 Voices of Our Nation Arts Workshop (VONA), led by Elmaz Abinader

Planning team and organizer, 2018 Queer and trans IPOC Conference

**Awards, Fellowships, and Nominations**

2022 McKnight Writing Fellow

2021 Best of the Net Nominee

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 1st Place Winner of the Still I Rise Grant presented by *Alternating Current Press*

2017 Finalist for the Best of the Net 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**

December 2021: One creative nonfiction essay, "For T," published in *Queer Hands of God*

April 2021: One poem, “The Ballad of Luella and the Tame Parrott," published in *Footnote #4:*

*A Literary Journal of History.*

October 2020: Three poems, "Tress (noun)," "Press Release," "Walthall County" published in *Anomaly*.

June 2020: Two poems, "To Be Soft" and "Communion" published in *Diode Poetry.*

March 2020: One flash fiction story, "To My Dear Friend: Letters from the Desk of President Jefferson," published in *The* *Los Angeles Review.*

December 2019: One poem, "Ode to the Decrepit Auction Block Seen on the Way to My Grandfather's House," published in *Yemassee*

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

February 2019 to August 2019: 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 poet 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 and Reading that I Hosted**

May 22nd, 2021: Co-hosted and co-organized the Silverwood Park Poetry Trail celebration featuring incarcerated writers in partnership with Silverwood Park and Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop at Silverwood Park

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 14th, 2018: Featured poet at the University of Minnesota’s 2018 Future Services Institute Summit

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

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

May 9th, 2017: Fellow performance for The Loft Literary Center’s Mentor Series Reading at Open Book