



Association of Writers
& Writing Programs

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November 13, 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Association of Writers & Writing Programs Board of Directors Names New Board Chair

Norfolk, VA — The Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP) Board of Directors names Travis Kurowski as board chair. Kurowski replaces January Gill O’Neil, who was appointed board chair in 2022.

Kurowski has served on the AWP Board of Directors since 2022 and chaired the Mid-Atlantic Council, the AWP Board Development Committee, and the AWP Board Professional Standards Committee. He is an associate professor at York College of Pennsylvania, where he directs the writing program, and is the faculty advisor to *The York Review*. He has served on the mastheads of numerous magazines, including *Story*, winning a CLMP Firecracker Award.

In an introductory letter, found in full at awpwriter.org, Kurowski says: “It is an honor and privilege to serve as AWP board chair for 2025–2026, as we head to Baltimore for an incredible #AWP26, and as we navigate new obstacles and opportunities for writers, writing programs, and our literary community. . . . As we face attacks on education and the impacts of new technologies on writing, teaching, and publishing, I firmly believe our mission ‘to amplify the voices of writers and the academic programs and organizations that serve them while championing diversity and excellence in creative writing’ has never been more important.”

O’Neil, poet and associate professor at Salem State University, joined the AWP Board of Directors in 2015, served as vice chair for two years from 2020 to 2022, and became board chair in 2022. As board chair, O’Neil worked to further AWP’s mission by ensuring creative writing institutions remain a central part of the work, advocating for academic programs, championing the AWP HBCU and TCU fellowship programs (which originated during her tenure), and advancing AWP into its next era.

“We have been so lucky to have January at the helm. Her energy, wisdom, and positivity have guided AWP through many transitions. She is a pillar of grace, passion, and wisdom, and we are thrilled she will remain on AWP’s board of directors. I am also so excited that Travis will step up



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as our new board chair, and I know he will bring the same level of dedication and vision to the role,” says Executive Director Michelle Aielli.

The AWP Board of Directors voted on Kurowski’s appointment at its quarterly board meeting in November 2025. New executive appointments also include Jenny Yang Cropp (term 2022–2029) as treasurer. For a full list of the board of directors, visit the [AWP website](#).

For press inquiries or questions, please email Rachel Balzano, communications manager, at awpPR@awpwriter.org.

About AWP

AWP is a professional association of creative writers and writing programs. AWP provides support, advocacy, resources, and community to individual writers, academic creative writing programs, and organizations. The AWP Conference & Bookfair is the annual destination for writers, teachers, students, editors, and publishers of contemporary creative writing. It includes thousands of attendees, hundreds of events and bookfair exhibitors, and four days of essential literary conversation and celebration.

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