



Association of Writers
& Writing Programs

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Association of Writers and Writing Programs Announces Interim Executive Director

Norfolk, VA — Michelle Aielli has been named interim executive director of the Association of Writers and Writing Programs (AWP). AWP is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides support, advocacy, resources, and community to writers, college and university creative writing programs, and writing organizations. Aielli's appointment follows the [retirement of Executive Director Cynthia Sherman](#) in June and is part of a plan by the AWP Board of Directors to hire a permanent executive director, for which they have launched a national search.

Aielli is a book-publishing veteran with over twenty-five years of experience. Most recently she was vice president and publishing director of Hachette Books at Hachette Book Group, where she comanaged the publishing process for the imprint's annual list of over eighty frontlist titles, grew their catalog of opinion-driven nonfiction voices across many categories, and oversaw the imprint's marketing and publicity teams. Prior to her role as VP and publishing director, Aielli served as the imprint's associate publisher and executive director of publicity, as well as director of publicity for Little, Brown and Company, among other roles within Hachette Book Group and other publishing houses. She has spoken at several publishing courses, including the NYU Summer Publishing Institute and Harvard Business School.

Throughout her career, Aielli has managed high-profile campaigns for—and championed the work of—many bestselling and critically acclaimed authors, including Schuyler Bailar, Michael Connelly, Harry Dunn, Michael Eric Dyson, Nikita Gill, Jonathan Safran Foer, Elin Hilderbrand, Luis Miranda, James Patterson, Keith Richards, J. K. Rowling, Alice Sebold, Donna Tartt, Stephanie Land, Lindy West, and more.

Aielli joined the AWP Board of Directors in 2020, from which she resigned to accept the interim executive director position. "I'm honored to be AWP's interim executive director. As a member of the board of directors, I had the privilege of working closely with AWP's hardworking staff and board to uphold AWP's mission in support of writers and the organizations that serve them," Aielli says. "I've dedicated my career to amplifying writers and their work, and I look forward to continuing that work at AWP, identifying opportunities and developing new initiatives for our community amidst an ever-evolving literary landscape."

Of Aielli's appointment, Chair of AWP Board of Directors January Gill O'Neil says, "As writers, we understand the power of storytelling, and with Michelle Aielli at the helm as interim executive director, I am confident that AWP's narrative will continue to grow in strength and reach. Michelle's leadership and dedication to elevating writers will ensure that AWP remains a vibrant and supportive community. We are excited for this next chapter and all the possibilities it holds for our members and the literary world."



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For more information on AWP, please visit 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.