**For Immediate Release**

The **Alabama Writers Cooperative** invites all literary enthusiasts and word aficionados to its virtual **Annual Conference** on **August 20th-22nd**. The conference aims to strengthen and support the development of writers and poets across Alabama and beyond. Admission to the conference is free to members and non-members alike, though registration is required.

***The aim of the conference is to underscore the AWC’s mission, which is to nurture and engage a diverse community of Alabama writers.***

In partnership this year with the **Emmet O’Neal Public Library** in Mountain Brook and the **Birmingham chapter of PEN America**, AWC is proud to present keynote speakers **Randi Pink** and **Angela Jackson-Brown**. Pink is the author of *Into White* and *Girls like Us.* Jackson-Brown wrote *When Stars Rain Down, House Repairs,* and *Drinking from a Bitter Cup.*

Another highlight of this year’s conference is the expanded participation of established publishing industry professionals. Literary agent **Erin Clyburn** of The Jennifer DiChiara Literary Agency will review pitches by AWC members and offer feedback. There will also be a first-page reading panel, featuring Clyburn and literary agents **Jemiscoe Chambers-Black** (Andrea Brown Literary Agency) and **Kaitlyn Johnson** (Belcastro Literary Agency).

Other featured faculty in this year’s conference are **Alabama Poet Laureate** **Jennifer Horn**; **2021** **Caldecott Honor** **winner Karim Shamsi-Basha**; horror novelist **Shaun Hamill**; mystery writer **Hank Early**; screenwriter and novelist **Joel Eisenberg**; and literary agent **Alec Shane** (Writers House).

The conference will also feature presentations by novelist and past AWC board president **T. K. Thorne**; Birmingham-based journalist **Monique Jones**, author of *The Book of Awesome Black Americans*; filmmaker and professor, **Katie Boyer**; renowned local spoken-word artist, **Voice Porter**; decorated poet and director of UAB’s Ada Long Creative Writing Workshop, **Tina Braziel**; and recent NEA Fellowship-winner and director of the Stokes Center for Creative Writing at the University of South Alabama, **Charlotte Pence**.

 In addition, AWC members will have the opportunity to submit samples of their original works in progress for free manuscript consultations offered by Mobile-based fiction writer **Adam Prince**; past AWC president and Alabama Poet Laureate emeritus, **Sue Brannan Walker**; and **TJ Beitelman**, who serves as current AWC president and chairs the Creative Writing department at the Alabama School of Fine Arts.

AWC is one of the oldest continuing writers’ organizations in the United States. Writers, aspiring writers, publishers, and members of the literary community are welcome to join. Sharing information, developing ideas, honing skills, and receiving practical advice are hallmarks of the annual conference.

For more information and to register for the AWC Annual Conference, visit <https://alabamawriterscooperative.org>.

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Questions should be directed to ACW Conference Chair JJ Jones at jjsayspoetryplz@me.com.