

October 2018

Dear WNBA Members:

Once again, it's time to [nominate](#) a "living American woman who derives a part or all of her income from books and allied arts and who has performed meritorious work in the world of books beyond the duties or responsibilities of her profession or occupation" for our [WNBA Award](#), which will be presented in June 2019 in Washington, DC as part of our National Meeting.

Roz Reisner, dedicated archives miner, shares that the WNBA Award saw its origins in 1939 as a way of honoring Constance Lindsay Skinner, a WNBA beacon who envisioned expanding the organization's membership across the country. In addition to her professional work as a writer, she provided initial funding for *The Bookwoman*, which led to the formation of chapters in different cities. This capsule biography offers a taste of her life:

"Born in 1879 at a trading post in British Columbia, CLS became famous as a novelist, historian, juvenile book author, dramatist, and at the time of her death in 1939, editor of the Rivers of America series. Her American frontier stories included 'Silent Scot: Frontier Scout' (1925) and 'Red Man's Luck' (1931) and the historical 'Adventures in Oregon' (1920). She spent her childhood among fur traders, Indians, and mounted police. She attended school in Vancouver, wrote her first story when she was 5, produced her own 3-act operetta at 14, contributed to newspapers at 16, and while still in her teens got a job on a Los Angeles newspaper. Later she moved to New York and wrote fiction, poetry and historical books. Articles and motion pictures made of her works are still in use in schools." (Bookwoman, Vol. 27, no. 1, May 1964)

Look over the [list of previous winners](#). Does your nominee fit in this stellar company?

Keep a few things in mind:

- Consider nominating a woman whose work seems to have escaped notice, but whose impact is great. For example, 2010 winner Masha Hamilton, who founded the Afghan Women's Writing Project, is a beam of light in the encroaching darkness in the lives of women who've been swept from modern life to medieval conditions in a matter of decades.
- Nominate a woman likely to attend our award ceremony in June 2019 in Washington, DC, who doesn't already have a wall of awards, who will partner with WNBA in raising both her profile and ours.
- Your nominee may not be an author. Perhaps she's a publisher, a blogger, a bookseller (like 2012 winner Ann Patchett, founder of Parnassus Books in Nashville),

a literacy champion, an illustrator, a poet . . .

[Download the Nomination Form](#), and either in consultation with members of your chapter, or on your own (or both!), nominate an outstanding bookwoman. You are welcome to nominate more than one, but each on a separate form please.

Instructions on what to include, and when and how to submit your nomination, are on the form. Questions? Contact NC Weil, WNBA Award Chair, at ncweil2@gmail.com.

Deadline for nominations: November 25, 2018.

Recent WNBA Award Winners



[Dr. Carla Hayden](#) (2017) is Librarian of Congress. She was selected due to her commitment to making libraries relevant to the world, responsive to the trends of their times, and vital parts of the communities they serve. Before appointment to Librarian of Congress, Dr. Hayden headed the Baltimore library system. During her tenure there, the death of Freddie Gray (in 2015) in police custody caused significant unrest. Dr. Hayden kept the libraries open at a time when many stores were closed, saying, “We knew that [people] would look for that place of refuge and relief and opportunity.”



[Louise Erdrich](#) (2017) is an author and bookseller, winner of the National Book Award for *The Round House* (2012). Of Chippewa and German-American descent, she writes deeply-informed novels about cultural issues Native Americans face in the modern world. Winner of numerous prizes for her fiction, including the PEN/Saul Bellow Award for Achievement in American Fiction and the Library of Congress Prize in America Fiction, she owns a bookstore, [Birchbark Books](#), in Minnesota, where she lives with her daughters.



[Amy King](#) (2015) is a poet, professor, and board member of [VIDA Counts](#), an initiative to quantify the gender bias in selection of books for review, as well as reviewers themselves. By holding publishers and media accountable, VIDA has spurred efforts to include more women in that “tip of the iceberg” of books tagged for review among the many published each month. Women outnumber men in the reading public, so why should the views and works of women receive short shrift?



[Ann Patchett](#) (2012) is an award-winning and bestselling author of several works of fiction, among them, *Patron Saint of Liars*, named a New York Times Notable Book of the Year; *Taji*, winner of the Janet Heidinger Kafka Prize for best work of fiction; *Bel Canto*, which won both the PEN/Faulkner and Orange Prize in 2002; *The Magician's Assistant*; and her latest *Commonwealth*. In 2011, she



[Masha Hamilton](#) (2010), a novelist, journalist, and former foreign correspondent, founded the [Afghan Women's Writing Project](#) in 2009 to give women in that country a voice. AWWP maintains a website where Afghan women's writing is published under the mentorship of American AWWP participants. Recently, Masha partnered with Lebanese artist Hanane Kai to meet



[Kathi Kamen Goldmark](#) (2008) was an author, musician, literacy advocate, and formed the rock band [Rock Bottom Reminders](#) with, among others, fellow literary superstars Dave Barry, Amy Tan, and Stephen King. Their performances raised more than \$1.5 million in support of literacy and writing programs and freedom of expression. Ms. Goldmark died of

opened [Parnassus Books](#) in Nashville, becoming a powerful advocate for independent bookstores. In 2012 she was named one of *Time Magazine's* 100 Most Influential People in the World.

with Syrian women refugees to draw scenes from their lives as they shared their stories. View the Syrian Projects [here](#).

cancer in 2012.

Amendment to the WNBA Award

For our Centennial in 2017, we chose two women to honor with the WNBA Award: Librarian of Congress Dr. Carla Hayden and author Louise Erdrich.

Neither was able to attend our Centennial Celebration, though Dr. Hayden did travel to New York City the following week and graciously received the award at a smaller ceremony.

Text of the awards was read out at the Centennial Gala at Pen & Brush by NC Weil, Award Chair.

Discussion during our 2018 National Meeting in Charlotte centered on whether we should give the award to an honoree who does not attend our celebration. Many felt that no-shows slighted the award and our organization, so **we voted to present the award only to a woman willing and able to join us to accept the honor.**

Keep that in mind as you consider women to nominate.

Deadline for nominations: November 25, 2018.

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[Submission Guidelines 2018-19](#)

Newsletter background: Books highlighted from the WNBA's [Celebrating Women's Voices](#) centennial program

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