March 2016

Dear Young Author:

Congratulations! In recognition of your writing efforts, you have been selected to represent your school district at the 42nd Annual Illinois Statewide Young Authors Conference to be held Saturday, May 14, 2016, at Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois.

Please bring your original manuscript with you to the conference. The official conference seal will be given to you to be placed on your original manuscript. During the day, you will have an opportunity to share your original manuscript with other young authors.

To assist you and your family in planning for the conference, we have included the following with this document:

- Check-in information for students in Kindergarten through Grade 6
- Check-in information for students in Grades 7 and 8
- Complete conference schedule
- Biographies of the Illinois authors and entertainers who are participating in the conference
- Frequently asked questions about the conference

The following documents can be found at: http://www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org/yac.html

- Directions to Illinois State University
- Bloomington-Normal Area Hotel Map
- Young Authors Facilities & Parking Map
- Campus Area Restaurants Map

I hope you will enjoy the activities we have planned for you at the 42nd Annual Illinois Statewide Young Authors Conference.

Sincerely,

Christina Podraza Ed.D.
Young Author's Conference Coordinator
Illinois Language & Literacy Council

Please “like” us on Facebook for more information on the conference as well as an opportunity to interact with other young authors from around the state!
CONFERENCE CHECK-IN INFORMATION

Students in Kindergarten through Grade 6

On the day of the conference you should report to the Ballroom in the Bone Student Center at 9:00 a.m. for student check-in, where you will receive your room assignment and conference materials. Group Leaders will be in the ballroom as well holding placards displaying each group's room number. Following student check-in, the K-6 Group Leaders will escort their groups to the Opening Ceremony in Braden Auditorium at 9:30 a.m. Families of participants are invited to the Opening Ceremony as well. From there, students will walk with their group leader to the assigned rooms. Parents will remain in Braden Auditorium at this time to enjoy their guest speaker.

Students in Grades 7-8

On the day of the conference you should report to University High School at 9:00 a.m. for student check-in, where you will receive your room assignment and conference materials. Following student check-in, there will be an Opening Ceremony for all 7th and 8th grade participants and their families at University High School at 9:30 a.m. From there, you will walk with your group leader to your assigned rooms. Parents will go to Braden Auditorium in the Bone Student Center at this time to enjoy their guest speaker.

Please refer to http://maps.illinoisstate.edu/ for more information on parking and directions to campus.
42nd Annual Illinois Statewide Young Authors Conference

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE
May 14, 2016

9:00 a.m.  Student Check-In
Kindergarten through Grade 6
Ballroom, Bone Student Center (BSC)

Grades 7 and 8
University High School, Stroud Auditorium

9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.  Opening Ceremony and Welcome
Kindergarten through Grade 6
Braden Auditorium, Bone Student Center

Grades 7 and 8
University High School, Stroud Auditorium

10:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  Small Group Sessions and Author Visits

12:00 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.  Lunch for all Students
Kindergarten through Grade 6
Large Prairie Room, Bone Student Center

Grades 7 and 8
University High School

12:50 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.  Special Sessions with Story Tellers and Author Panels
K-Grade 2  Capen Auditorium, Edwards Hall
Grades 3 and 4  Ballroom, Bone Student Center
Grades 5 and 6  Braden Auditorium, Bone Student Center
Grades 7 and 8  Stroud Auditorium, University High School

1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.  Recognition of Young Authors/Closing Ceremonies
K-Grade 2  Capen Auditorium, Edwards Hall
Grades 3 and 4  Ballroom, Bone Student Center
Grades 5 and 6  Braden Auditorium, Bone Student Center
Grades 7 and 8  Stroud Auditorium, University High School

3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.  Author Book Signing (Optional Event)
Barnes & Noble University Bookstore, Bone Student Center

Parent Session
10:15 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.  Parent Session with Janet Nolan
Braden Auditorium, Bone Student Center

Please Note: Parents and family members are then on their own for lunch and have free time until the recognition ceremonies begin at 1:30 p.m.
GUEST AUTHORS/STORYTELLERS

42nd ANNUAL YOUNG AUTHORS’ CONFERENCE

MAY 14, 2016

Grades K-2

Jennifer Ward is an Illinois author with over twenty books published for children, including the 2016 Illinois Reads selection, *Mama Built a Little Nest*, illustrated by Caldecott Medalist Steve Jenkins. Her books have been translated into many languages and have been featured on national television, NPR, and in many publications.

Jennifer spent her childhood exploring the wild woods and prairies of Southern Illinois and spent her adult life tiptoeing over tarantulas and rattlesnakes in Southern Arizona. She now resides once again in IL where she writes full-time from her home.

Forthcoming books by Jennifer include *Feathers and Hair, What Animals Wear*, illustrated by Jing Jing Tsong, (Simon & Schuster), *What Will Grow? Seeds!*, illustrated by Susie Ghahremani, (Bloomsbury), *How to Find a Bird*, (Simon & Schuster), and *Wild About Birds! 52 Art, Science & Journaling Activities for Families Who Love Feathered Friends.* Visit her website to learn more! jenniferwardbooks.com

Lori Degman is the award-winning author of two rhyming picture books, *1 Zany Zoo* (Simon & Schuster, 2010), which won the Cheerios New Author Contest and Cock-a-Doodle Oops! (Creston Books, 2014), which was a 2015 International Literacy Association Honor Book. Her first picture book in prose, *Norbert’s Big Dream* (Sleeping Bear Press) will be published August 1, 2016. She is a teacher of Deaf & Hard of Hearing students and lives in a northern suburb of Chicago.

Grades 3-4

Patricia Hruby Powell danced throughout the Americas and Europe with her dance company, One Plus One, before becoming a writer of children’s books. She has marveled at the spirit, courage, and beauty of Josephine Baker for a long time. While visiting schools as a storyteller/author and working as a librarian, she realized what a great role model Josephine Baker could be to young people. Her picture book *Josephine: The Dazzling Life of Josephine Baker* has garnered various Honors including the Robert F. Sibert, Coretta Scott King (for Illustration), Boston Globe Horn Book for Nonfiction, Bologna Ragazzi Nonfiction; and Parent’s Choice Gold for Poetry. Her other picture books are *Blossom Tales, Zinnia*, and *Frog Brings Rain*. Her documentary novel *Loving vs. Virginia* (Chronicle 2017) for young adults is a Junior Library Guild Selection for 2017 and her middle grade nonfiction *Struttin’ With Some Barbecue* (Charlesbridge) is forthcoming in 2017. She feels honored to be the 2016 Nonfiction Mentor for We Need Diverse Books as well the 2016 SCBWI-Michigan Writing Mentor. You can visit Patricia online at talesforallages.com.
Jennifer Allison’s illustrated novel *IGGY LOOMIS: SUPERKID IN TRAINING* has been selected by the Illinois Reading Council for the 2015 Illinois state reading list. The *Iggy Loomis* books are fast-paced, humorous adventures that focus on sibling rivalry and how to handle an “annoying” little brother with superpowers. Ms. Allison is best known for her five *Gilda Joyce: Psychic Investigator* mysteries for middle-grade readers, which have received numerous starred reviews and an Edgar Award nomination from Mystery Writers of America. A former news reporter and high school English teacher, Jennifer Allison teaches writing workshops at K-12 schools throughout the country. She currently resides in Chicago, IL with her husband and three children. Contact Jennifer at www.iggyloomis.com or www.gildajoyce.com.

Nancy J. Cavanaugh is the award-winning author of *This Journal Belongs to Ratchet* and *Always, Abigail*. She has been an elementary and middle school teacher, as well as a school library media specialist. Her latest middle grade novel, *Just Like Me*, is a funny, uplifting summer camp story about unlikely friendships and finding your place in the world. She and her husband and daughter enjoy winters in sunny Florida and eat pizza in Chicago the rest of the year.

**Grades 5-6**

A former newspaper journalist, Kate Hannigan writes fiction and non-fiction for young readers. Her historical fiction *The Detective's Assistant* earned starred reviews and was named to Booklist and Chicago Public Library's "Best of 2015" lists, as well as an Amelia Bloomer Project pick for 2015. Her early middle-grade series with Disney-Hyperion, *Cupcake Cousins*, continues this fall with Book 3 publishing in September. Kate has found her passion in researching about women forgotten by the history books, and she will have two new picture book biographies publishing in the coming years with Calkins Creek. When she's not writing, Kate can be found taking longs walks with a nervous Australian shepherd in her neighborhood on Chicago's South Side. Visit her online at KateHannigan.com.

Andrew Brumbach grew up square in the hippie community of Eugene, Oregon, surrounded by artists and musicians and storytellers. He studied art in Texas, traded bond options in Chicago, and spent a few years lost in the neon neighborhoods of Tokyo. Somewhere along the way, he married the girl of his dreams and had four practically perfect kids, but he never overcame his weakness for the power and transport of story. Now he lives in suburban Illinois but secretly daydreams about chasing bandits across the desert with Lawrence of Arabia and Gertrude Bell under cloudless, starry skies. The Eye of Midnight is his first novel.

Grades 7-8

Brianna DuMont is author of the Changed History series, which makes history come alive by exposing its murky underbelly. The first book in the series, Famous Phonies: Legends, Fakes and Frauds Who Changed History, includes gems about “I-must-not-tell-a-lie” George Washington and school-less Shakespeare. Starting in June 2017, her National Geographic spin-off series Weird But True: Extra Credit will debut with U.S. Presidents. When she’s not writing quirky books, Brianna travels the world in search of great museums and historical sites. When she’s at home, she is a full-time writer and researcher who is quickly becoming best friends with her local librarian. She and her family live in Chicago, Illinois.

Peter Kujawinski is the author of the New York Times bestseller Nightfall, a young adult thriller published in 2015 by Putnam/Penguin. Previous books, also with co-author Jake Halpern, include Shadow Tree (2013), World’s End (2012) and Dormia (2010). In addition, Peter writes nonfiction – most recently, his piece on a road being built in Canada’s Arctic was the lead travel article in the Sunday, February 14 edition of the New York Times. Previously, Peter was an American diplomat, on assignment in places like Israel, Haiti, France, and the United Nations in New York. From 2012-2015, he was the U.S. Consul General in western Canada, based in Calgary. Peter now lives in Chicago with his family.

Storytellers and Parent Speaker

Chris Fascione performs his fun, participatory show, “Bringing Literature to Life, “ in which he acts out library books, for school assemblies, Reading Knights, libraries and other family venues annually. Chris is a “Storytelling World” award winner, has been featured through “Reading is Fundamental” and highlighted at the Connecticut and Illinois Storytelling Festivals. As a professional storyteller/actor, Chris incorporates his acting, mime, juggling, and comedic skills to both entertain and lead children into the world of books, promoting literacy and a love of reading. www.ChrisFascione.com

Jeff Miller is a tall drink of water from Kent, Ohio. He is a big fan of snow, camping, taking steps two at a time, and LeBron James—but he likes writing books best. He lives and performs in Chicago, where he tells stories about working at summer camps, building houses in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, and drinking far too much lake water as a child. Visit him at www.jeffmillerbooks.com.

Parent Speaker

Janet Nolan is the author of fiction, non-fiction, and historical fiction picture books. Her titles include: Seven and a Half Tons of Steel (Fall, 2016), PB&J Hooray! Your Sandwich’s Amazing Journey from Farm to Table, The Firehouse Light, A Father’s Day Thank You, and The St. Patrick’s Day Shillelagh. Janet’s engaging include: Packing a Writer’s Toolbox, Growing a Book – From Idea to Publication and Non-Fiction Fun! Janet would love to come to your school and talk about her favorite subject, writing! You can learn more about Janet at her website: www.janetnolan.com.
QUESTIONS WE’VE BEEN ASKED

Each year we receive many calls from parents and other adults who plan to accompany students to the Young Authors Conference. This year we’re attempting to anticipate your concerns and answer some of the questions you may have about your child’s participation.

How will my child be supervised at the Conference?

Each young author is assigned to a small group of 10-15 young authors of the same age. Each group will be supervised by a volunteer leader and assistant group leader. Most of these volunteers are currently elementary teachers; others may be university professors, librarians, etc. All have given generously of their time and energy to make the Conference a success. The volunteer leaders stay with their groups throughout the entire day, including lunch, until the young authors meet their parents at the end of the recognition ceremony.

May I stay with my child throughout the day?

We ask you not to remain with your child after the young author reports to his or her classroom at the beginning of the day. As explained previously, the young authors will be well supervised.

I have other children who are not young authors. May they stay with my child who is a young author?

No. We cannot accommodate children other than the young authors.

What is there for parents and other adults to do while the young authors meet?

We have planned a session for adults accompanying children to the Conference. (See Conference Schedule for details.) Additionally, parents are welcome to sit at the back of the auditorium during the afternoon sessions (the storytelling sessions for grades K-2 and 3-4 and the author panels for grades 5-6 and 7-8), and, of course, parents are especially welcome during the Recognition Ceremonies.

What should my child wear to the Conference?

We suggest that children wear clothing that will be comfortable as they move through the day’s activities. Please keep in mind that the young authors may move from one building to another so a warm jacket and comfortable shoes might be a good idea.

Will my child receive lunch at the Conference?

Yes. All young authors will be served a pizza lunch with a cookie. The cost of lunch is included in the registration fee, which was paid when students were registered for the Conference.

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If you have other questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Illinois Literacy Council representative Dr. Christina Podraza at cpodraza@naperville203.org or Dr. Sue Anderson at anderbrose@aol.com. Illinois State University Conference Services at 800/877-1478.
Young Author’s Coordinator – Make sure you print out the 5 maps on the ISBE or IRC website and attach them to this packet.

Directions to ISU
Parking Map
Hotel Map
Facilities Map
Restaurants Map