

## Promising Young Writers Advisory Committee

**Charge:** *The NCTE Promising Young Writers program makes use of an advisory committee and state coordinators. Their charges are as follows:*

*Advisory Committee: To advise the NCTE staff on the nature, policies, and procedures regarding the NCTE Promising Young Writer Awards, including the following issues:*

- *To develop a specific plan for involving more public schools in the awards, especially those with large nonwhite populations.*
- *To prepare a written set of recommendations for the NCTE Executive Committee regarding the following: revision of the structure of the award to mitigate the negative effects of competition on student identity and learning; consideration and development of diversified awards: that recognize development of English Language Learners in writing in their first language as well as English composition; that recognize remarkable improvement or growth in writing; that recognize multimodal composition (digital or non-digital); and that recognize remarkable risk-taking with the process of writing, instead of the exclusive focus on the final draft.*
- *To consider and make recommendations for ways that the work might interface with NCTE's National Day on Writing.*

*State Coordinators: To advise the NCTE staff on any changes that should be made in the NCTE Promising Young Writers program; to review judging procedures; to recommend judges; to recommend ways to publicize the program; to coordinate judging of papers within the state; to help disseminate information about the winners; and to suggest topics for the impromptu theme.*

For more information on the Promising Young Writers Program, please go to:  
<http://www2.ncte.org/awards/promising-young-writers/>.

**Major activities: What major actions, projects, initiatives, or studies in your charge have been completed by your group since July 1, 2016? In each activity describe the more important features of the work, and connect your work to the NCTE Vision Statement, if applicable.**

**1. What actions, projects, initiatives, or studies are “in progress” at this time?**

Initiatives	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beginning with the 2017 PYW brochure, revise procedural language (e.g., in the prompt, guidelines/requirements, and judging criteria) to more explicitly invite <b>writing of various genres</b> by naming such kinds of writing and by providing a list of possible examples. Some of the types of writing to be highlighted, in addition to traditional forms historically targeted by the PYW program, are as follows:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ writing with multiple media and in digital environments,</li> <li>○ writing in disciplines other than the English language arts (ELA),</li> <li>○ collaborative writing,</li> <li>○ writing in communities other than school, and</li> <li>○ multilingual writing, including AAL.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>The 2017 Theme prompt and brochure invite writing of various genres (including multiple media), writing from other disciplines (including but not limited to those required by the Common Core State Standards for Writing), and writing produced through eighth-grade writers' participation in communities beyond school. In each of these categories, we have attempted to provide specific examples.</p> <p>We have yet to invite writing that is collaborative, partly because this change would involve revision of the current judging criteria and guidelines.</p> <p>However, the current judging criteria and guidelines can be applied to the new categories we have elicited.</p> <p>We intend to devote more effort to the possibility of inviting multilingual writing in 2018.</p> <p>We hope to make progress on these goals by September 2018.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make it possible for young writers to <b>nominate themselves</b> for the program and <b>submit their own entries online</b>.</li> <li>• Appeal more directly to young writers through social media and the PYW page of the NCTE Web site by adding the following <b>promotional videos</b>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A brief promotional video featuring an interview with YA author Gordon Korman, who wrote and published his first novel, <i>This Can't Be Happening at MacDonal Hall</i>, as a middle-school student. (This interview has already been recorded and is available for upload.)</li> <li>○ A series of short testimonial videos in which past PYW winners discuss their experiences with the program. (These videos would be recorded by those past winners who volunteered to create this resource/marketing initiative.)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Following the 2016 convention, the committee chair, Dr. Ann Lawrence, had a phone call with Linda Walters-Moore and Carrie Stewart about these initiatives. A number of collaborative opportunities have been proposed and are in progress.</p> <p>The promotional video continues to be a work in progress: in addition to an interview with YA author Gordon Korman, we have solicited testimony from former PYW winners, including Dr. Anne Whitney (now a professor and active member of NCTE!), as well as more recent winners (from Susan Houser's former middle school students).</p> <p>We hope to have made progress by September 2018.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a <b>parallel challenge for NCTE Student Affiliates across the US</b> by which these groups of prospective ELA teachers would create short promotional videos for the PYW program. NCTE Student Affiliates would receive guidelines detailing the audience, purposes, and logistics of the PYW program. Sample video footage would also be provided for optional use. Each NCTE Student Affiliate would then have a specified period of time to compose and submit their entry. The winning promotional video would appear on the PYW page of the NCTE Web site and on social media. All participating NCTE Student Affiliates would receive certificates of recognition. This separate challenge would strengthen NCTE Student Affiliates by providing them with a collaborative professional-development project. This off-shoot program would also bolster each group's connections to NCTE and perhaps encourage attendance at local and national NCTE conferences.</li> </ul>	<p>We have not been able to move forward with this idea.</p> <p>However, we have begun to explore the possibility of piloting this initiative with a single state NCTE student affiliate group (Florida).</p> <p>We hope to have made progress by September 2018.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Publish</b> winning and recognized PYW entries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ on the PYW page of the NCTE Web site,</li> <li>○ in the National Gallery of Writing, and</li> <li>○ on social media.</li> <li>○ Appropriate permissions would</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>We continue to explore the logistics of realizing these initiatives with NCTE representatives who design and administer the PYW support materials. We hope to have made progress by September 2018.</p>

<p>need to be obtained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On the NCTE Web site, provide explicit guidance to prospective and practicing teachers on how to use published winning and recognized PYW entries as <b>mentor texts</b> for writing instruction both in ELA and in other curricular areas. Support these guidelines through <b>additional tagging and links</b> on the NCTE Web site.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Diversify the PYW judging panel</b> to include writing teachers who specialize in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>multimodal and digital composition,</li> <li>disciplines other than ELA,</li> <li>collaborative writing,</li> <li>community literacy and public writing, and</li> <li>teaching writing to speakers of other languages, including AAL.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Provide judges with additional professional-development resources</b> (e.g., an e-mail linked to resources already posted on the NCTE Web site) to facilitate their evaluation of a wider range of genres submitted as PYW entries.</li> <li>Beginning with the 2018 PYW brochure, <b>provide teachers with similar professional-development resources</b> (e.g., an e-mail linked to resources already posted on the NCTE Web site) to facilitate their promotion of more diverse student participation in the program.</li> <li>Beginning with the publication of the 2018 PYW brochure, <b>involve NCTE Affiliates</b> (including and beyond Student Affiliates) in promoting the PYW program by appealing to the NCTE Affiliate Leadership for support.</li> <li>Establish connections with <b>TESOL</b>, and through this organization, with <b>ELL writing teachers</b>.</li> </ul>	<p>We have yet to begin work on these initiatives, but we hope to have made progress by September 2018.</p>

**2. What have you accomplished so far, and what is your timeline for future work?**

Please see the previous section.

**3. How has the work of your group contributed to NCTE’s role in shaping the profession of teaching and/or the understanding of literacy in educational contexts?**

The PYW program continues to address the emphasis on (1) capacity building for literacy learning by encouraging partnerships among various stakeholders (for example, our current projects involve collaboration with other local committees (FCTE Student Affiliates) and with a celebrity author in order to improve the way teachers can present the program in the classroom via NCTE’s website. This project also appeals to (2) educator leadership at various levels by foregrounding the work of teachers (in this

case, preservice teachers involved in the affiliates, and teachers of various disciplines, thus encouraging collaboration among those responsible for literacy writ large), as well as author-educators like Korman. PYW remains a means for teachers to encourage students to write for authentic audiences, across disciplinary subject areas, thus addressing (3) authentic assessment. Finally, by soliciting Korman's help in advocating for the value of middle school writing, the PYW program continues to promote NCTE's programs and positions, and the value of writing as a tool for all disciplines, in keeping with (4).

**Ann M. Lawrence, Chair**