

# UCI Writing Project's Virtual Literacy Conference

**DEC. 15, 2021**

## The Way Forward: Creating Engaging and Equitable Literacy Practices for K-12 Learners

**A VIRTUAL DAY-LONG EVENT  
ON DECEMBER 15, 2021**

**8:45 A.M. - 3:30 P.M. (PST)**

**10:45 A.M. - 5:30 P.M. (CST)**

**11:45 A.M. - 6:30 P.M. (EST)**

**FEATURED KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:**

**CORNELIUS MINOR  
TROY HICKS**

**WORKSHOPS BY:**

**Maisha Winn**

**Jennifer Fletcher**

**Richard Koch**

**Micah Bournes**

**Mary Howard**

**Mary Widtmann & Hue-An Wren**

**Marianne Stewart & Laseanda Wesson**

**Virginia Nguyen & Stacy Yung**

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THE NATIONAL WRITING PROJECT

# SCHEDULE

8:45 - 10:15 PST  
10:45 - 12:15 CST  
11:45 - 1:15 EST

**MORNING KEYNOTE ADDRESS**  
BY **CORNELIUS MINOR**

[THE WAY FORWARD: ENGAGEMENT, EQUITY,  
AND ACCESS BEYOND THE PANDEMIC](#)

10:15 - 10:30 PST  
12:15 - 12:30 CST  
1:15 - 1:30 EST

**BREAK**

10:30 - 11:45 PST  
12:30 - 1:45 CST  
1:30 - 2:45 EST

**MORNING WORKSHOPS** (CLICK NAMES TO VIEW WORKSHOP INFORMATION)

- [Mary Howard](#)
- [Mary Widtmann & Hue-An Wren](#)
- [Richard Koch](#)
- [Micah Bournes](#)
- [Maisha T. Winn](#)
- [Jennifer Fletcher](#)
- [Marianne Stewart & Laseanda Wesson](#)

11:45 - 12:30 PST  
1:45 - 2:30 CST  
2:45 - 3:30 EST

**LUNCH BREAK**

12:30 - 2:00 PST  
2:30 - 4:00 CST  
3:30 - 5:00 EST

**AFTERNOON KEYNOTE ADDRESS**  
BY **TROY HICKS**

[DIGITAL DILIGENCE: BUILDING MINDFUL PRACTICES  
INTO A CROWDED CURRICULUM](#)

2:00 - 2:15 PST  
4:00 - 4:15 CST  
5:00 - 5:15 EST

**BREAK**

2:15 - 3:30 PST  
4:15 - 5:30 CST  
5:15 - 6:30 EST

**AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS** (CLICK NAMES TO VIEW WORKSHOP INFORMATION)

- [Mary Howard](#)
- [Richard Koch](#)
- [Troy Hicks](#)
- [Micah Bournes](#)
- [Maisha T. Winn](#)
- [Jennifer Fletcher](#)
- [Virginia Nguyen & Stacy Yung](#)

# MORNING KEYNOTE

## The Way Forward: Engagement, Equity, and Access Beyond the Pandemic

**8:45 - 10:15 a.m. PST**

10:45 - 12:15 p.m. CST

11:45 - 1:15 p.m. EST

### Keynote Description

We came to this work because we want a better future. We struggle through the hard parts because there is a vision of a less-hard tomorrow. These outcomes are not guaranteed, however. We know that, as a profession, brighter horizons necessitate purposeful work. When we consider all that we want for children and communities, this work must be done with respect to our unique and shared histories, identities, and social realities.... and we are just the people artful enough to do it. In this keynote address, Cornelius Minor will consider the way forward beyond the pandemic, and how we can create engagement, equity, and access in the literacy classroom.



**Cornelius Minor** is the author of *We Got This: Equity, Access and the Quest to Be Who Our Students Need to Be*. A Brooklyn-based educator, he works with teachers, school leaders, and community organizers to support equitable literacy reform. He has partnered with the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, the International Literacy Association, and Literacy Collaborative. Along with his wife and partner, Kass Minor, he has established The Minor Collective, a community-based movement to foster sustainable change in schools.

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# MORNING WORKSHOPS

10:30 - 11:45 a.m. PST (12:30 - 1:45 p.m. CST, 1:30 - 2:45 p.m. EST)

## Moving from the WHAT IS to the WHAT IF: Possibilities for Addressing the Literacy Divide (Grades K-6)

### Description

In spite of highly successful intervention such as Reading Recovery, schoolwide misconceptions, misplaced trust in one-size-fits-all quick fixes continue to widen the equity divide. This is largely due to lack of respect for the professional learning process and blind faith that a thirty-minute 'fix-it room' will make up for what happens the other six hours. In this session, Mary Howard shares considerations for addressing this great divide from a collective stance.



**Mary Howard** is the author of several books including *Good to Great Teaching RTI from All Sides*, and *Moving Forward with RTI*. A reading consultant and literacy coach, she specializes in reading recovery and supports teachers across the country in creating high-quality, literacy awareness for every child.

# MORNING WORKSHOPS

10:30 - 11:45 a.m. PST (12:30 - 1:45 p.m. CST, 1:30 - 2:45 p.m. EST)

## STUDENT, AGENCY, VOICE, AND CHOICE IN WRITING (Grades K-6)

### Description

What does agency look like in the post-pandemic elementary classroom? Learn how to weave in author's craft, authentic voice, and choice into your writing curriculum as a way to empower students and get them excited about fiction and nonfiction writing. This session explores strategies that enable and inspire students to generate ideas that they own and want to write about. Activities will include culturally relevant poetry writing, fiction writing that promotes a celebration of identity, and creative ways to write nonfiction. Digital applications such as Thinklink, Flippity, and Jamboard will also be shared.

**Mary Widtmann** is an educator at Newport-Mesa Unified School District, CA. She has been a classroom teacher for grades 2-6, an ELA TOSA, and currently teaches 5th grade at the district's Cloud Campus - an alternative virtual school. Additionally, Widtmann works at the University of California, Irvine as a Co-Director of the UCI site of the National Writing Project. She is a co-author of *Thinking Tools for Young Readers and Writers: Strategies to Promote Higher Literacy in Grades 2-8*.



**Hue-An Wren** is a TOSA in the K-12 Office of Instructional Technology at Garden Grove Unified School District, CA. Prior to that, she was an elementary teacher for 12 years where she has been able to implement technology with students as young as kindergarten. She has accreditation in a variety of edtech organizations including Google for Education, Seesaw, and Common Sense Media and she enjoys working in these communities to bring best practices in digital learning to her district. Hue-An earned her doctorate in Learning Technologies from Pepperdine University. Her research focuses on using digital online communities such as fan fiction websites to teach writing skills.

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# MORNING WORKSHOPS

10:30 - 11:45 a.m. PST (12:30 - 1:45 p.m. CST, 1:30 - 2:45 p.m. EST)

## Mindful Writing Workshop:

### Session One - Core Principles and Guidelines -

### Trauma-Informed Teaching is an Act of Love, (and Equity) (Grades K-12)

#### Description

Nothing may be more urgent in education today than incorporating mindfulness and trauma-informed practices into our teaching. The level of adolescent suicide attempts, the number of students dropping out or left behind, and the consequences of the pandemic all ask educators to be responsive to student emotional healing as well as for their learning. Happily, in the mindful writing workshop we can achieve both quality writing and also restorative experiences.



**Richard Koch** has taught writing at both the University of Iowa and Adrian College, Michigan. He is past Director of the Southeast Michigan Writing Project, and now serves on the Core Leadership of the Western Pennsylvania Writing Project at the University of Pittsburg. He is author of *The Mindful Writing Workshop: Teaching in the Age of Stress and Trauma* and co-author (with Jean Petterson) of *The Portfolio Guidebook: Implementing Quality in an Age of Standards*. A Book Study series on *The Mindful Writing Workshop* is available through the National Writing Project at the "Teacher Studio."

[www.mindfulwritingworkshop.net](http://www.mindfulwritingworkshop.net)

# MORNING WORKSHOPS

10:30 - 11:45 a.m. PST (12:30 - 1:45 p.m. CST, 1:30 - 2:45 p.m. EST)

## Abolish the Canon: Contemporary Poetry in Secondary Classrooms (Grades 6-12)

### Description

In this workshop, Micah Bournes contrasts his disinterest in the poetry he was assigned in public education with the immediate excitement and curiosity he experienced the first time he came across a diverse contemporary poetry community. He will talk about expanding the type of poetry often analyzed in classrooms and how to introduce it to students in a way that will draw them instead of repel them from one of humanity's most important art forms.



**Micah Bournes** is a poet and musician from Long Beach, California. He has released five studio albums, is the author of "[Here Comes This Dreamer](#)," and co-editor of the "Fight Evil With Poetry" anthology.

# MORNING WORKSHOPS

10:30 - 11:45 a.m. PST (12:30 - 1:45 p.m. CST, 1:30 - 2:45 p.m. EST)

## Transformative Justice Possibilities: Leveraging the 5 Pedagogical Stances (Grades 6-12)

### Description

In this session, participants will engage in the Transformative Justice Teacher Education design principles which seek to leverage restorative justice theory and practice in engaging equity and justice work. Participants will journey through the 5 pedagogical stances --including *History Matters*, *Race Matters*, *Justice Matters*, *Language Matters*, and *Future Matters*-- with opportunities to engage in exercises used in restorative and transformative justice workshops offered at the Transformative Justice in Education (TJE) Center in the School of Education at the University of California, Davis.



**Maisha T. Winn** is the Chancellor's Leadership Professor and the Co-Founder and Co-director (with Torry Winn) of the Transformative Justice in Education (TJE) Center in the School of Education at the University of California, Davis. Her program of research examines the ways in which teachers and/or adult allies for youth in schools and in out-of-school contexts practice "justice" in the teaching of literacy. Professor Winn was named an American Educational Research Association Fellow (Spring 2016). She is the author of *Girl Time: Literacy, Justice, and the School-to-Prison Pipeline*, *Justice on Both Sides: Transforming Education through Restorative Justice*, and *Restorative Justice in the English Language Arts Classroom* (with Hannah Graham and Rita Alfred).



# MORNING WORKSHOPS

**10:30 - 11:45 a.m. PST** (12:30 - 1:45 p.m. CST, 1:30 - 2:45 p.m. EST)

## **Nurturing Students' Sense of Agency by Teaching Them to Write Rhetorically (Grades 7-12)**

### **Description**

A rhetorical approach to writing instruction empowers students to take control of their own process and choices. When we teach students how to analyze and respond to diverse rhetorical situations, we honor and nurture their agency. Instead of telling students what to write, we develop the procedural and conceptual knowledge that supports their growth as independent problem solvers. In this interactive session, Jennifer Fletcher shares strategies for cultivating the rhetorical principles and practices that help writers effectively communicate across contexts. These include inquiry-based activities for genre and audience analysis, language study, and rhetorical problem solving.



**Jennifer Fletcher** is a Professor of English at California State University, Monterey Bay, where she coordinates the undergraduate program for future English teachers. Before joining the faculty at CSUMB, she taught high school English for more than ten years in Southern California. She is the Steering Committee Chair for the California State University's Expository Reading and Writing program (ERWC) and the author of *Teaching Arguments*, *Teaching Literature Rhetorically*, and *Writing Rhetorically*.

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# MORNING WORKSHOPS

10:30 - 11:45 a.m. PST (12:30 - 1:45 p.m. CST, 1:30 - 2:45 p.m. EST)

## Honoring Community Stories in a Diverse Classroom (Grades 7-12)

### Description

Stories are gifts we have the privilege of giving and receiving, but creating a community that is ready to treat stories with honor and care is a challenging task in the post-pandemic classroom. What do you do when someone gives you a story? Help students use an authentic voice to "tell a story" in any classroom model, whether it be face-to-face, virtual or hybrid. In this workshop, we will examine multiple ways to share stories, including harnessing the power of social media. Marianne Stewart and Laseanda Wesson will create a criteria for determining the best means of transmitting a story while keeping an authentic voice intact and honoring the storyteller. Participants will leave with specific, practical takeaways for creating community through the sharing and honoring of stories.

**Marianne Stewart** teaches English and Theater at Cypress High School in Anaheim, CA. She is the Co-Director of the UCI Writing Project and a Lecturer in the UCI School of Education. She has been honored as Teacher of the Year and is also a poet and a performer.



**Laseanda Wesson** is an English teacher and Professional Development Coordinator at Spirit Christian Academy in Tustin, CA., and a guest Lecturer at Vanguard University. She is an Associate Director of the UCI Writing Project and has been honored as Teacher of the Year.

# AFTERNOON KEYNOTE

## Digital Diligence: Building Mindful Practices into a Crowded Curriculum

**12:30 - 2:00 p.m. PST**

**2:30 - 4:00 p.m. CST**

**3:30 - 5:00 p.m. EST**

### Keynote Description

Current debates about "technology addiction" and "excessive screentime" place educators in a bind. On the one hand, educational expectations demand that we teach with technology while, on the other hand, we know we must attend to our students' emotional and intellectual development. In this session, we will explore empathetic, intentional approaches that help students protect their privacy, maximize their attention, pop their filter bubbles, and understand the ways knowledge is created and circulated in a digital world. With practical teaching tips and suggested text sets to spur dialogue, we will develop our own alert, intentional stance, discovering ways in which we can teach with digital diligence.



**Troy Hicks** is Professor of English and Education at Central Michigan University, where he teaches master's and doctoral courses in educational technology. He is also Director of the Chippewa River Writing Project, a site of the National Writing Project. A former middle school teacher, he has received numerous accolades, including from the Michigan Reading Association (Teacher Educator Award), Central Michigan University (Excellence in Teaching Award), and the Initiative for 21st Century Literacies Research (Divergent Award for Excellence). An ISTE Certified Educator and trained as a facilitator in digital storytelling through StoryCenter, Hicks consults with a number of educational companies and non-profit organizations and presents regularly at national educational conferences. He has authored dozens of books, including *The Digital Writing Workshops*, *Creating Confident Writers: For High School, College, and Life*, and *Mindful Teaching with Technology: Digital Diligence in English Language Arts*.

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# AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

2:15 - 3:30 p.m. PST (4:15 - 5:30 p.m. CST, 5:15 - 6:30 p.m. EST)

## Re-Envisioning Interventions as Passionate Literacy Endeavors Across Each Learning Day (Grades K-6)

### Description

Sadly, it is often children who need passion-fueled literacy most who are subject to a one-size-fits-all interventions in a "fix-it" room while ignoring possibilities that abound in the remaining six hours. Mary Howard will share specific ways to expand our lens of intervention possibility so that we can widen our collective reach with joy in mind regardless of the setting.



**Mary Howard** is the author of several books including *Good to Great Teaching RTI from All Sides*, and *Moving Forward with RTI*. A reading consultant and literacy coach, she specializes in reading recovery and supports teachers across the country in creating high-quality, literacy awareness for every child.

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# AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

2:15 - 3:30 p.m. PST (4:15 - 5:30 p.m. CST, 5:15 - 6:30 p.m. EST)

## Mindful Writing Workshop:

### Session Two - Key Steps for Launching Trauma-Informed Teaching of Writing - Teachers are not Therapists, But Schools Must be Therapeutic (Grades K-12)

#### Description

This session will briefly review guiding principles (from Session One) and clarify key steps for weaving trauma-informed teaching into our writing workshop. Richard Koch will demonstrate how to establish a Respect Agreement, positive protocols, and writing that is both healing and powerful. We will also discuss how participants might implement these steps. Saving students' creativity can save the world.



**Richard Koch** has taught writing at both the University of Iowa and Adrian College, Michigan. He is past Director of the Southeast Michigan Writing Project, and now serves on the Core Leadership of the Western Pennsylvania Writing Project at the University of Pittsburgh. He is author of *The Mindful Writing Workshop: Teaching in the Age of Stress and Trauma* and co-author (with Jean Petterson) of *The Portfolio Guidebook: Implementing Quality in an Age of Standards*. A Book Study series on *The Mindful Writing Workshop* is available through the National Writing Project at the "Teacher Studio."

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## A Deeper Dive into Building Mindful Practices: A Conversation with Troy Hicks (Grades 4-12)

### Description

Please bring your questions and ideas from the keynote straight into this follow-up conversation. Here you discuss some of the tools shared in the keynote with Troy Hicks in more detail, connect more directly to your classroom practice, and look at more examples of student work. You will help make this session happen, so please come prepared to interact, learn, and think about how to integrate digital literacies into your teaching.



**Troy Hicks** is Professor of English and Education at Central Michigan University, where he teaches master's and doctoral courses in educational technology. He is also Director of the Chippewa River Writing Project, a site of the National Writing Project. A former middle school teacher, he has received numerous accolades, including from the Michigan Reading Association (Teacher Educator Award), Central Michigan University (Excellence in Teaching Award), and the Initiative for 21st Century Literacies Research (Divergent Award for Excellence). An ISTE Certified Educator and trained as a facilitator in digital storytelling through StoryCenter, Hicks consults with a number of educational companies and non-profit organizations and presents regularly at national educational conferences. He has authored dozens of books, including *The Digital Writing Workshops*, *Creating Confident Writers: For High School, College, and Life*, and *Mindful Teaching with Technology: Digital Diligence in English Language Arts*.

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\*Repeat of Morning Workshop

### Description

In this workshop, Micah Bournes contrasts his disinterest in the poetry he was assigned in public education with the immediate excitement and curiosity he experienced the first time he came across a diverse contemporary poetry community. He will talk about expanding the type of poetry often analyzed in classrooms and how to introduce it to students in a way that will draw them instead of repel them from one of humanity's most important art forms.



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# AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

**2:15 - 3:30 p.m. PST** (4:15 - 5:30 p.m. CST, 5:15 - 6:30 p.m. EST)

## Scaffolding Literacy Learning for Autonomy (Grades 7-12)

### Description

Scaffolds are temporary structures intended to support and extend learning and move novices toward mastery. Effective scaffolds don't substitute a simpler task for a more complex one; they support students in developing the procedural and conceptual knowledge that enables them to grapple with complexity. Over-scaffolding, on the other hand, undermines students' autonomy by telling students what to do and how to do it, thereby increasing their dependence on teacher directives. In this interactive session, Jennifer Fletcher shares strategies for fostering students' independence and expertise as readers and writers.



**Jennifer Fletcher** is a Professor of English at California State University, Monterey Bay, where she coordinates the undergraduate program for future English teachers. Before joining the faculty at CSUMB, she taught high school English for more than ten years in Southern California. She is the Steering Committee Chair for the California State University's Expository Reading and Writing program (ERWC) and the author of *Teaching Arguments*, *Teaching Literature Rhetorically*, and *Writing Rhetorically*.

# AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

2:15 - 3:30 p.m. PST (4:15 - 5:30 p.m. CST, 5:15 - 6:30 p.m. EST)

## #STOPAAPIHATE Educator Workshop

### Description

Since March 2020, there has been a rise in anti-Asian hate. In Orange County alone, we have seen a 1200% rise in hate crimes against Asian Americans. A report released in May 2021 found that Asian Americans are more stressed by anti-Asian hate than COVID-19. Please join Virginia Nguyen and Stacy Yung, as they share how educators can help end anti-Asian hate. During this workshop, participants will gain a better understanding of the lived experiences and history of AAPIs along with anti-racist teaching resources and specific strategies to better support your AAPI students and build allyship in your school community.



**Virginia Nguyen** is a history teacher at Portola High School in Irvine, CA and a UCI Writing Project Teacher/Consultant; **Stacy Yung** is a former history teacher and current EdTech/Instructional Design Consultant. Between them, Virginia and Stacy have over 30 years of combined teaching experience. As Asian American women, they have a passion for AAPI advocacy, commitment to social justice, equity, culturally responsive teaching, and leadership in DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion). Together they have national experience holding workshops, leading presentations, educator training, and curriculum development. Together they co-founded Educate to Empower, whose mission is to empower educators and change the world.

Website: [www.edutoempower.com](http://www.edutoempower.com)

# HOW TO REGISTER

Follow the registration button below to purchase entry into the conference. Once your purchase has been processed, you should receive an automated e-mail receipt with an order number. We will then send you an invitation to SCHED, an online event platform, to select your workshops. You will be prompted to create an account to receive session links, materials, and updates leading up to the event.

 **Register Now**

**Single Registration : \$150.00**

**NWP Affiliates Registration : \$75.00**

**Five Registration Group Discount: \$600.00**

For group registrations, please make sure to enter first/last names and e-mail addresses for all five registrants during checkout, separating each with a comma.

## **Payment with Purchase Order/Batch Registrations:**

- Download [Purchase Order/Batch Registration spreadsheet](#).
- Fill out spreadsheet for each registrant in the P.O.
- E-mail to [uciwritingproject@uci.edu](mailto:uciwritingproject@uci.edu) with e-mail title "VLC Registration - P.O# \_\_\_\_".
- Once received, we will generate an invoice and return to listed administrator.
- Registrants will be sent confirmation e-mails of registration with invitation to SCHED.

**If you have any questions regarding your registration, please reach out to us at [uciwritingproject@uci.edu](mailto:uciwritingproject@uci.edu).**