

LAURA SHOVAN

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY:

Laura Shovan has over 25 years of experience as an educator and is a longtime poet-in-the-schools for the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC). Her articles, essays, and poetry for adults and children have been published in newspapers, literary journals, and anthologies. Laura worked with twice-exceptional students as co-Chair of the Howard County Public Schools' Gifted and Talented Advisory Committee and as an educational consultant and essay coach for college-bound teens with learning differences.

In addition to her work as an educator, Laura is former editor of the literary journal *Little Patuxent Review*. Her chapbook, *Mountain, Log, Salt and Stone*, won the inaugural Harriss Poetry Prize. Laura edited the Maryland Writers' Association anthology *Life in Me Like Grass on Fire: Love Poems* and co-edited *Voices Fly: An Anthology of Exercises and Poems from the Maryland State Arts Council Artists-in-Residence Program*. Among many honors for her writing and community advocacy, Laura represented Baltimore at the 100 Thousand Poets for Change World Conference in Salerno, Italy in 2015. A Pushcart Prize nominee, Laura was the 2015-2016 Howard County Poetry and Literature Society's Writer in Residence. She founded and co-hosts a monthly literary reading and open mic event, Wilde Readings. She is currently an editor and book coach for The Writer's Ally, focusing on poetry manuscripts, as well as middle grade and young adult novels.

The Last Fifth Grade of Emerson Elementary, Laura's debut novel-in-verse for children, was published in 2016. It won the CYBILS Award for poetry, was an NCTE Notable Verse Novel, a Bank Street Best Children's Book of the Year, and was included on the ILA-CBC Children's Choice Reading List, among other honors. Her second middle grade novel, *Takedown*, was selected by Junior Library Guild and PJ Our Way, and was on the ALA's 2019 Amelia Bloomer Project List of feminist books for children. Her novel *A Place at the Table*, written with author/activist Saadia Faruqi, was named a Sydney Taylor Notable in 2021. Laura's books have appeared on multiple state lists. She is a longtime poet-in-the-schools in her home state of Maryland and a regular Poetry Friday blogger. Her writing for children appears in many anthologies.

EXPERIENCE:

Maryland State Arts Council, Baltimore, MD

Artist-in-Residence, Poetry

2002-Present Ongoing grant to conduct poetry writing workshops for students and teachers in inclusive K-12 classrooms. Work closely with classroom educators to develop lessons and poetry prompts; adjust subjects and style to school's particular curriculum and students.

2020 Arts in Education Policy Revision Panel. Collaborated with fellow arts educators to assess and rewrite application and policy procedures for MSAC's Artist-in-Education Program.

2018 Artist Roster Jury. Worked with colleagues to review applications to MSAC's teaching artist residency program.

The Writer's Ally
Developmental Editor

2018-Present Serving clients of The Writer's Ally through substantively reviewing, editing, and providing feedback on traditional middle grade and young adults novels and novels-in-verse.

Bass Educational Services, Olney, MD
Educational Consultant

2013-2018 Educational consultant and essay coach for college-bound students with learning differences. Worked one on one with students and families on college lists, assessing institutions' resources for appropriate fit with students' needs and interests, and transition to college. Member: Independent Educational Consultants Association.

***Little Patuxent Review*, Howard County, MD**
Editor

2011-2014 Editor of an art and literary journal featuring the work of national and regional authors and artists. Managed volunteer staff members, organized contributor readings and literary exchanges, trained incoming editor. Collaborated with guest editors on themed issues. Developed *Little Patuxent Review* into a cultural resource as well as a nationally recognized print publication.

2013 Organized and ran a workshop-focused middle school writing festival for Howard County Public Schools, sponsored by *Little Patuxent Review*.

Poetry Editor

2015-2016 Reviewed poetry submissions and managed volunteer readers. Selected works for publication in collaboration with editor.

Howard County Poetry and Literature Society (HoCoPoLitSo), Howard County, MD
Writer in Residence

2015-2016 HoCoPoLitSo's Writer in Residence is a prestigious one-year position in partnership with the Howard County Public School System. Visited and ran poetry workshops for teens in ten of the county's twelve high schools. Led a hands-on professional development session for local educators on teaching poetry.

CityLit Project, “Write Here, Write Now,” Howard County, MD

Writing Instructor

2008-2009 Led and designed freelance reporting/essay and poetry classes for adult writers.

**Maryland Humanities Council, “Totally Ekphrastic: Picturing America through Poetry,”
Baltimore, MD**

Visiting Teacher

2008-2009 One of six poets leading writing workshops throughout Maryland schools. Students wrote poetry in response to images from the National Endowment from the Humanities’ “Picturing America” curriculum.

***Baltimore’s Child Magazine*, Baltimore, MD**

Contributing Freelance Writer

2001-2009 Articles covering education, learning disabilities, children’s sports, community life and the arts.

***The Baltimore Sun*, Columbia, MD**

Contributing Freelance Writer

2001- 2008 Coordinator/reporter for weekly education feature, Howard County section. Worked with deputy bureau chief to coordinate story line-up. Articles covered a wide variety of programs, events, and educators in area schools of all levels. Additional articles on religion and the arts.

GT Summer Institutes, Howard County Public School System, Howard County, MD

Workshop Instructor

2005-2007 Developed curriculum for and taught two-week journalism writing and newspaper design workshop for advanced-level students, grades 5-8.

Northern Highlands Regional High School, Allendale, NJ

Teacher of English

1994-1999 Tenured teacher at high school ranked 5th in state by *New Jersey Monthly Magazine*. Courses taught: Creative Writing, English 9, Honors Humanities (11-12), Journalism, Literature about Society (10-12), Writer’s Workshop. Teaching certification: English & Substitute, K-12.

Publications Adviser

- 1998-1999 Literary Magazine: Co-advised award-winning student magazine, *Loch & Quay*. Assisted student staff in magazine production, including selecting and editing entries, layout, and sales.
- 1994-1998 Student Newspaper: Co-advised award-winning newspaper, *The Highland Fling*. Worked with student staff of 10+ in all aspects of newspaper production, such as developing ideas for articles, researching and reporting, writing, editing, layout on PageMaker, photography and advertising.

The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Morristown, NJ

Poetry Assistant

- 1996, 1998 Assisted in many aspects of the biennial poetry festival. Coordinated poetry reading by student award-winners. In 1998, assisted with live telecast of student discussion with poet Robert Pinsky.

New Jersey Council of Teachers of English (NJCTE)

Newsletter Editor, *NJCTE Focus*

- 1997-1999 Responsible for editing and publishing quarterly newsletter. Duties included selection of and editing articles.

Workshop Leader

- 1998 Co-led “Forming a Teachers-who-write Collaborative” workshop at NJCTE conference. Topics included: writing resources, running a critique session with peers.

EDUCATION:

Master of Arts in Teaching - English, 1994
Montclair State University, Upper Montclair, NJ

Bachelor of Fine Arts - Dramatic Writing, 1991
New York University, Tisch School of the Arts, NY, NY
Founder’s Scholar, Honors Graduate

VOLUNTEER WORK/CONTEST JUDGE:

Wilde Readings

Founder and Co-host

2016-Present Free literary reading series with two featured authors and open mic. Monthly community event, September through June. Currently taking place online.

Mentor

2020-Present Coaching two high school students through the process of starting their own open mic series for teens.

The United States Board on Books for Young People (USBBY)

IBBY-Asahi Award Committee Member

2020-2021 Work with colleagues on nominations and selections for award recognizing a group or institution that makes a lasting contribution to book promotion programs for children and young people.

February Poetry Project

Founder and Moderator

2014-Present Annual month-long community write-in. Thirty to forty participants generate writing prompts on a central theme and share first draft poems each day for the month of February.

Pitch Wars

Co-Mentor

2016-2017 One on one book coaching, global feedback, and line editing on middle grade manuscript for online author mentoring program. Assisted mentees in setting goals and meeting deadlines for the program.

Mentee

2013-2014 Worked on *The Last Fifth Grade of Emerson Elementary* with mentor Joy McCullough.

Autumn Leaves, Bruun Studios, Baltimore, MD

Writer

2014 Multi-disciplinary community arts project. Writers and artists worked together to create portraits of seven Baltimore City elders. Included final art show and performance event.

Gifted & Talented Advisory Committee, Howard County Public School System

Co-Chair

2007-2013 Worked closely with HCPSS educators and administrators on policy and procedures for established GT program. Founded annual GT Educator Recognition event.

Literature Contest Judge/Judging Committees

- Andrew Glaze Poetry Prize, *Birmingham Arts Journal* (Adult)

- Caldwell Nixon Jr. Award, North Carolina Poetry Society (Poem for Children Written by an Adult)
- Children’s and Young Adult Bloggers Literary Awards (CYBILS), Poetry and Young Adult Literature
- Enoch Pratt Free Library Poetry Contest (Adult)
- Howard County Library Word Up! Poetry Contest (Grade 6–Age 21)
- Maryland Reflections PTA Arts Competition, Howard County, MD Literature Judge (K-12)
- Maryland Reflections PTA Arts Competition, Maryland State Literature Judge (K-12)
- Maryland Writers Association Short Works Contest, Poetry (Adult)
- Poetry Out Loud, Howard County, MD Judge
- Regional Poetry Contest sponsored by Caroline, Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne’s, and Talbot County, MD Arts Councils (Student and Adult)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:

- Academy of American Poets
- The Authors Guild
- Eastern Shore Writers Association
- Maryland Writers Association
- National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
- SCBWI
- The United States Board on Books for Young People (USBBY)

PUBLICATIONS:

CHILDREN’S BOOKS

- *A Place at the Table, with Saadia Faruqi* (Clarion Books/HMH, 2020)
- *Takedown* (Wendy Lamb Books/RHCB, 2018)
- *The Last Fifth Grade of Emerson Elementary* (Wendy Lamb Books/RHCB, 2016)

CHILDREN’S ANTHOLOGIES

- *Coming of Age: 13 B’nai Mitzvah Stories*, ed. Henry Herz and Jonathan Rosen (Albert Whitman & Co, 2022)
- *Rhyme & Rhythm: Poems for Student Athletes*, ed. Sarah Donovan (Archer, 2021)
- *Hop to It: Poems to Get You Moving*, ed. Janet Wong and Sylvia Vardell (Pomelo Books, 2020)
- *GREAT MORNING! Poems for School Leaders to Read Aloud*, ed. Janet Wong and Sylvia Vardell (Pomelo Books, 2018)
- *The Poetry of US: More than 200 poems that celebrate the people, places, and passions of the United States*, ed. J. Patrick Lewis (National Geographic, 2018)
- *Pet Crazy: A Poetry Friday Power Book*, ed. Janet Wong and Sylvia Vardell (Pomelo Books, 2017)

- *Poems Are Teachers: How Studying Poetry Strengthens Writing in All Genres*, Amy Ludwig VanDerwater (Heinemann, 2017)

CHILDREN'S ARTICLES

- "Count Down the Days with a Waiting Chain: Crafts You Can Make," *Highlights for Children*, 2006
- "An Eye for Insects," Article, *Highlights for Children* (publication pending)
- "The Queen of Sherwood Forest," Article, *Highlights for Children* (publication pending)

BOOKS FOR ADULTS

- *Voices Fly: Exercises and Poems from the Maryland State Arts Council Artist-in-Residence Program*, co-edited with Virginia Crawford (CityLit Press, 2012)
- *Life in Me Like Grass on Fire: Love Poems*, Editor (MWA Books 2011)
- *Mountain, Log, Salt and Stone* (CityLit Press 2010)

POETRY

2021

- *Bowery Gothic*: "The Skiff"
- *This Is What America Looks Like*, ed. Caroline Bock and Jona Colson: "There Must Be a Gate," "Mendacity"

2020

- *Bay to Ocean*, ed. Emily Rich and Tara Elliott: "Baking Sourdough," "Danae Addresses Covid 19"
- *Bowery Gothic*: "Caldera"
- *Poetry Hall*: "Cheer Down," "Haiku"

2019

- *G 8B Variety #105*: "Reflection"

2018

- *Dragonfly Arts Magazine*: "There Must Be a Gate," "Jailbird," "Found Poem: Janet Mock's Women's March Speech, 2017"

2017

- *Bared: Contemporary Poetry and Art on Bras and Breasts*, ed. Laura Madeline Wiseman: "The Mammographer," "Poems about Breasts"
- *The Poet's Billow*: "Baking Challah"
- *Resist Much Obey Little: Inaugural Poems to the Resistance*, ed. Boughn, et al.: "Election Night"
- *Two Countries*, ed. Tina Schumann: "Pastoral with Hedgehog," "The Swimmer"

2016

- *Fledgling Rag*: "Bathing After Acupuncture," "Night Blooming Cereus," "Pool of Yarn"

2015

- *Big Bridge*: "Cold War," "Fringe," "Futurotic"
- *The Gunpowder Review*: "Prelude," "Thanksgiving," "The Bell"
- *Hides the Dark Tower*, ed. Kelly A. Harmon and Vonnie Winslow Crist: "The Tower"
- *Mipoesias*, ed. Grace Cavalieri: "Arts and Craft"
- *My Cruel Invention*, ed. Bernadette Geyer: "Eyes on the Back of My Head"

- *The Potomac*: “Cold War,” “Language Arts”
 - *Raising Lilly Ledbetter: Women Poets Occupy the Workspace*, ed. Carolyn Wright, M.L. Lyons, Eugenia Toledo: “The Mammographer”
 - *Woven Tail Press*: “The Day You Quit Me,” “Forsythia after Spring Snow,” “Equinox”
- 2014
- One: “Derecho”
- 2013
- *Barely South Magazine*: “Eyes on the Back of My Head”
 - *The Fourth River*: “Ad Astra,” “Equinox,”
 - *New Verse News*: “Greetings from Fort McClellan,”
 - *Paterson Literary Review*: “Honor Roll”
 - *Qarrtsiluni*, “Aphids,” “Rattlesnake Bites Man in Walmart Garden Center”
 - *Seminary Ridge Review*, “The Parable of the Piano Bench”
 - *Switched-on Gutenberg*, “Peter Rabbit”
- 2012
- *Naugatuck River Review*, “Pomegranate”
 - *New Verse News*: “Robotics”
- 2011
- *Little Patuxent Review*: “Route 1, Delaware”
 - *Tidal Basin Review*, “Futurotic”
 - *Verse Daily*: “The Listening of Plants”
- 2010
- *Gunpowder Review*: “Blizzard,” “Wedding”
- 2009
- *Gunpowder Review*: “American Flamingo,” “In Early Spring”
 - *Joyful Online*, “Because We Were Rushing to Catch the Bus”
 - *Little Patuxent Review*: “Driving Home from the Poetry Festival,” “Wooly Bully”
- 2008
- *Little Patuxent Review*: “The Listening of Plants,” “Brother”
 - *New Lines from the Old Line State*, ed, XXX: “Brother,” “Mountain, Log, Salt and Stone”
- 2004
- *Jewish Women’s Literary Annual*: “Night Sounds,” “Mountain, Log, Salt and Stone”
- 2002
- *Jewish Women’s Literary Annual*, “Train Station”
- 2001
- *Paterson Literary Review*: “Red Crayon”
- 2000
- *Lips*: “Newly Married,” “Dentate”
 - *Paterson Literary Review*: “Baba Yaga,” “Adolescence Prepared Me for This,” “Driving Home from the Poetry Festival, 1996”
- 1999
- *Paterson Literary Review*: “Rites”
- 1998

- *Global City Review*: “Dear Sister, Unborn”
- *Paterson Literary Review*: “Dear Sister, Unborn,” “Quickening”

MIDDLE GRADE AWARDS & HONORS:

A Place at the Table

- CCBC Choices 2021
- Kansas NEA Reading Circle
- Nerdy Book Club Award, Middle Grade
- Oklahoma Library Association’s Children’s Sequoyah Masterlist
- Sydney Taylor Notable
- Tablet Magazines Best Jewish Children’s Books of 2020
- Texas Library Association Lone Star Reading List
- Wisconsin State Reading Association “Just One More Page” List

Takedown

- Amelia Bloomer List of Recommended Feminist Literature for Birth through 18
- Bank Street Books of the Year List
- Junior Library Guild Selection
- Missouri Association of School Librarians Mark Twain Award Nominee
- PJ Our Way Selection
- Wisconsin State Reading Association “Just One More Page” List

The Last Fifth Grade of Emerson Elementary

- Arnold Adoff Poetry Award for New Voices Honor Book
- Bank Street Best Children’s Book of the Year
- CYBILS Award for Poetry
- Library of Congress, Discover Great Places through Reading, Maryland Selection
- ILA-CBC Choices Reading Lists, Children’s Choices
- Lectoria Book Award Master List
- NCTE Notable Verse Novel
- Nerdy Book Club Award, Poetry and Novels in Verse
- SCBWI Crystal Kite Finalist, Midatlantic Region

Nominated for:

- Massachusetts Children’s Book Award
- New Hampshire Great Stone Face Book Award
- Pennsylvania Young Reader’s Choice Awards
- Rhode Island Children’s Book Award
- Utah 2018 Beehive Poetry Award
- Wisconsin State Reading Association Children’s Book Awards

POETRY AWARDS & HONORS:

- Allen Ginsberg Poetry Awards Honorable Mention, 1998, 2001, 2011
- Bermuda Triangle Prize Finalist, 2017
- Blossoms of Hope First Prize Poem, 2018
- Clarinda Harriss Poetry Prize, 2010, Winner, *Mountain, Log, Salt, and Stone*
- Gettysburg Review Conference for Writers Scholarship Winner, 2012
- Pushcart Prize Nomination, 2020
- Rita Dove Poetry Award Finalist, 2012

SELECTED GUEST POSTS AND INTERVIEWS:

- “Does poetry have a place in Common Core?,” Op-Ed, *The Baltimore Sun*
- “Found in Translation: A Guest Chat by Author Laura Shovan & Translator Patricia Bejarano Fisher,” Guest Post, *Latinx in Kidlit*
- “How to Layer in Emotion for More Powerful Scenes,” Craft Article, *The Writer’s Ally*
- “A Long Way to Go on Gun Violence,” Guest Post, *Nerdy Book Club*
- “Pandemic School Life: Holding Space for Student Grief,” Guest Post, *A Novel Mind*
- “Parental Depression + Finding One’s Place as a 1st-Gen Child,” Guest Post, *A Novel Mind*
- “The Poet & the Poem,” Library of Congress, Interviewed by Grace Cavalieri
- “When Children Write about Abuse,” Guest Post, *Nerdy Book Club*
- “Writing Kid Lit Series,” In Conversation with Thanhha Lai, *The Ivy Bookshop*
- “The Writing Life,” Interviewed Jason Reynolds, *HoCoPoLitSo*,

APPEARANCES AND WORKSHOPS:

100 Thousand Poets for Change, Salerno, Italy
 ALA Poetry Blast
 An Open Book Foundation
 Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP)
 Baltimore Book Festival
 Bay to Ocean Writers Conference
 Books by the Banks
 Busboys & Poets
 California Library Association
 Chesapeake Children’s Book Festival
 CityLit Festival
 Collingswood Book Festival
 Eastern Shore Writers Association Conference
 Harbor Springs Festival of the Book
 Hood College
 International Literacy Association
 Johns Hopkins University
 Kentucky Reading Association
 Library of Congress
 Maryland Association of School Librarians

MidAtlantic SCBWI
Middle Grade Magic
Missouri Association of School Librarians
National Press Club Book Fair
National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
NerdCamp: Michigan, New Jersey, Long Island
New Jersey Library Association
New Jersey Council of Teachers of English
Princeton Children's Book Festival
Providence Book Festival
SCBWI Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia
State of Maryland Literacy Association
SUNY Binghamton
Texas Library Association
Tweens Read
The United States Board on Books for Young People (USBBY)
Virginia Festival of the Book
Virginia Hamilton Conference
The Writers Center

Selected Presentation Topics:

- “Building Better Readers Through Poetry,” State of Maryland Literacy Association, 2016
- “Connecting with Readers Through Novels in Verse,” NCTE , 2020 (Virtual Panel)
- “Dismantling the Patriarchy: Girl Power in New Middle Grade Fiction,” Texas Library Association, 2020 (Virtual Panel)
- “The Legacy of Jella Lepman: Children’s Literature as a Source of Hope, Strength, and Joy,” USBBY, 2019
- “More Than Just Friendships: Allies in Middle Grade Fiction,” Texas Library Association, 2021 (Virtual Panel)
- “Poetry Speaks Who I Am: Writing Verse Novels,” SCBWI MD-DE-WV, 2021 (Webinar)
- “The Power of an Unstable Setting,” Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP), 2018
- “Shaping Our Nation: Stories of First-and Second-generation Americans,” NCTE, 2019
- “Who’s Missing? And Who’s Here Now? Children’s and YA Lit,” CityLit Festival, 2021 (Virtual Panel)