

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT AWARDS—SPRING 2022

DEADLINES AND ELIGIBILITY

Unless otherwise noted below, all students must submit application materials and supporting documents on the English Majors and Minors Canvas page, under Assignments, by **4:00 p.m. Friday April 29, 2022** in order to be considered for an award. Only a digital submission is required.

Application forms for individual awards (where required) are available on the English Majors and Minors Canvas page.

Qualifying Essays

For most awards, essays and scholarly work submitted for consideration must have been completed between May 2021 and April 29, 2022. Thus papers completed at the very end of the spring 2021 (e.g., final term papers) semester will be eligible for many of these awards.

Professors in the courses must nominate essays for submission to the Harry Finestone Award and the essays must come from 698D Fall 2021 or Spring 2022.

Students applying for the Professor Mitchell Marcus award may submit their papers from any one of their courses in the CSUN English graduate program.

** If you are currently receiving financial aid, please be aware that the bestowal of award money may affect your financial aid status. We encourage you to consult the financial aid office to discover how receiving award money might impact your personal financial aid status.

For awards requiring letters of recommendation from English Department faculty, students should request these letters as soon as possible. At the *bare minimum*, students should ask if a professor will be willing to recommend them a week before the application deadline. Many professors will need more time than one week. Students should also inform their recommenders of pertinent academic information about themselves in a brief résumé (i.e. overall GPA; GPA in English major; membership in university organizations such as clubs, athletic teams, or student government; full or part-time employment status; other awards or achievements associated with CSUN).

For awards involving an essay or writing sample, the maximum page length (if stated) does not include footnotes or a works cited list.

If you have any questions about these awards, please contact Dr. Kate Haake, 2021-22 Chair of the Awards Committee (kate.haake@csun.edu), or Dr. Beth Wightman, Chair of the Department of English (beth.wightman@csun.edu).

UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS

The Linda Nichols Joseph English Merit Scholarship

In memory of Linda Nichols Joseph, an English major who graduated from CSUN *cum laude* in 1981, up to four prizes of \$2,000 each will be awarded every year to undergraduate English majors who have demonstrated excellence in their studies. Particular consideration will be given to applicants who demonstrate financial need, who have taken a non-traditional path to college, or who demonstrate engagement in the discipline and/or commitment to further study in English. However, all applicants who meet the minimum GPA criterion are encouraged to apply.

Application Requirement: minimum 3.5 overall GPA

Application Materials: completed application form; letter discussing the applicant's qualifications for the award, including issues such as financial aid, and/or engagement in the discipline, and/or commitment to further study in English (1-2 pages); résumé or curriculum vitae; two letters of recommendation; Financial Aid release form (attached to application form).

The Lesley Johnstone Memorial Award

A prize of \$500 will be given to an undergraduate student who is the author of the best written work on some aspect of the natural world or environment. Eligible work, whether scholarly or creative, must have been written in an English class or for a class-related conference or publication.

Application Requirements: An application form and a copy of your essay.

The Joan Nessian Creative Writing Prize in Children's Literature

In memory of Joan Nessian, book enthusiast and grandmother to English graduate alum, Jason June, a prize of \$1,000 will be awarded every year to a Junior, Senior, or Graduate English student for outstanding creative work intended for children in the following formats: picture books, chapter books, middle grade novels, young adult novels, comic books, graphic novels, creative non-fiction (such as memoir or biography; excludes text books/academic papers). Particular consideration will be given to underrepresented voices and those who see writing for children playing a key role in their future. Recipients must be Junior, Senior or Graduate students who are in good standing in any specialization of the English program.

Application Materials: A 200-300 word statement about what writing for children means to the applicant plus **one** of the following (all entries typed, double-spaced): 2-3 picture book manuscripts (text only; illustrations discouraged unless you are an artist/illustrator), OR the first 10 pages of a chapter book manuscript and a 1-page synopsis of the complete story, OR the first 20 pages of a middle grade novel and a 1-page synopsis of the complete story, OR the first 20 pages of a young adult novel and a 1-page synopsis of the complete story, OR the first 20 pages of a comic book or graphic novel (text only; illustrations discouraged unless you are an artist/illustrator) with a 1-page synopsis of the complete story.

The Robert apRoberts English Honors Essay Prize

To commemorate Robert apRoberts, Professor Emeritus and founder of the Honors Program, an annual prize of \$250 will be awarded to the English Honors student whose paper completed in the Honors Revision Seminar (497A) is judged to be the best submitted during that academic year.

Application Requirements: Applicants must be enrolled in the English Honors Program, submit application form and a copy of the essay.

The Deborah Averill Award in Creative Writing

An award of \$250 will be awarded to a female student who has had more than a one-year absence from school and returned after overcoming obstacles. The applicant, in either the undergraduate or graduate creative writing program, will submit a creative writing sample not to exceed ten pages (in any genre), as well as a 1-2 page personal statement.

The Kitty Nard Memorial Scholarship

In memory of Kitty Nard, a lecturer in the Department of English for many years, a \$1000 Scholarship will be awarded each year to a single parent with a declared major in any area in the Department of English. The scholarship recipient must be a student in good standing currently enrolled at CSUN. **Application requirements:** application form; unofficial CSUN transcript; one letter of recommendation; and a statement (max. 2 single-spaced pages) on what passion(s) lie behind your desire to get an English degree at CSUN. The statement should also address what is driving you to complete your education at this point in time.

GRADUATE AWARDS

The Professor Mitchell Marcus Prize in English

In memory of Mitchell Marcus, a former Professor in the Department (1958-1983), a prize of \$4,000 will be awarded each spring semester to the graduate student whose achievements in the study of English are considered by the faculty as the most distinguished.

Application Requirements: the candidate must have classified status as a graduate student, hold a minimum 3.75 GPA, submit the completed application form, two current letters of recommendation from English Department faculty, a personal statement (max. 2 single-spaced pages), and a writing sample (max. 20 double-spaced pages), résumé (max. 2 pages).

The Mahlon Gaumer Award

In honor of Mahlon Gaumer, a professor of English at CSUN from 1969-1997, who specialized in linguistics and Medieval literature, an award of \$500 will be given to a graduate student who is the author of the best critical essay on English literature—with emphasis on the use of language.

Application Requirements: application form, essay (max. 20 double-spaced pages), the essay will not have been considered in previous English department competitions, the applicant must be enrolled as a graduate student, papers must analyze English or American literature with an emphasis on the use of language.

The Harry Finestone Award in English

In honor of Harry Finestone, a gifted teacher and innovative administrator at CSUN from 1962-1983, an award of \$750 will be presented each year to the graduate student with the most distinguished essay in the study of literature completed in the department's capstone graduate seminar, ENGL 698D. The essay must be nominated by the instructor of the course in which the student was enrolled. The Awards Committee will evaluate the nominated essays on the following criteria: originality of concept; potential scholarly impact; logical, effective organization; and clarity, coherence, and elegance of prose style.

Application Requirements: application form, minimum 3.5 GPA (verified by unofficial transcript), hard copy of the essay, letter from course instructor (submitted directly to the Awards Committee Chair) nominating the essay for this award.

The Irene Clark Scholarship for Rhetoric and Composition

The Irene Clark Scholarship for Rhetoric and Composition awards \$500 for a paper written by a Department of English graduate student on a topic in rhetoric and composition during the 2020-2021 academic year.

Application Requirements: application form, essay (max. 20 double-spaced pages), the applicant must be enrolled as a graduate student, essays must focus on a topic in rhetoric and composition.

The Joan Nesson Creative Writing Prize in Children's Literature

In memory of Joan Nesson, book enthusiast and grandmother to English graduate alum, Jason June, a prize of \$1,000 will be awarded every year to a Junior, Senior, or Graduate English student for outstanding creative work intended for children in the following formats: picture books, chapter books, middle grade novels, young adult novels, comic books, graphic novels, creative non-fiction (such as memoir or biography; excludes text books/academic papers). Particular consideration will be given to underrepresented voices and those who see writing for children playing a key role in their future. Recipients must be Junior, Senior or Graduate students who are in good standing in any specialization of the English program.

Application Materials: A 200-300 word statement about what writing for children means to the applicant plus **one** of the following (all entries typed, double-spaced): 2-3 picture book manuscripts (text only; illustrations discouraged unless you are an artist/illustrator), OR the first 10 pages of a chapter book manuscript and a 1-page synopsis of the complete story, OR the first 20 pages of a middle grade novel and a 1-page synopsis of the complete story, OR the first 20 pages of a young adult novel and a 1-page synopsis of the complete story, OR the first 20 pages of a comic book or graphic novel (text only; illustrations discouraged unless you are an artist/illustrator) with a 1-page synopsis of the complete story.

The Angeline Olliff Memorial Scholarship

In memory of Angeline Olliff, a former graduate student and teaching associate in the Department of English, a \$250 scholarship will be awarded in spring 2021 to a Rhetoric and Composition graduate student or a Teaching Associate in any specialization (creative writing, literature, rhetoric and composition).

Application Requirements: application form, a writing sample or detailed lesson plan, and a cover letter of no more than 500 words that explains how their own research or teaching practices showcase how the power of language can affirm agency and subsequently elevate one's voice, as asserted in Angie Olliff's words: "Somehow I had learned early on that there is power in having a voice, and my writing shows my often inelegant struggle to find this power, to assert (and often defend) my place. I am encouraged, though, because my increasing awareness of both my evolving literary voice and my sensitivity to my environment will enable me to write more consciously. As I write more consciously, I will wield the words most meaningful to me, and I will use my voice with agency." The writing sample should show the student's proficiency in research that exemplifies the power of language. Essays can be assignments previously written for a class. Lesson plans and/or essay prompts must detail the expected student outcomes and be clear on how the lesson reinforces the power of language and finding one's own voice.

The Deborah Averill Award in Creative Writing

An award of \$250 will be awarded to a female student who has had more than a one-year absence from school and returned after overcoming obstacles. The applicant, in either the undergraduate or graduate creative writing program, will submit a creative writing sample not to exceed ten pages (in any genre), as well as a 1-2 page personal statement.

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Application requirements: application form; unofficial CSUN transcript; one letter of recommendation; and a statement (max. 2 single-spaced pages) on what passion(s) lie behind your desire to get an English degree at CSUN. The statement should also address what is driving you to complete your education at this point in time.