Featured Illustrator

Calling all Nebraska illustrators!

We are currently filling Featured Illustrator slots for upcoming newsletters in 2024 & 2025. Please contact us to reserve your spot!

Upcoming Events

- **Virtual SCBWI Summer Conference**, August 1 - 4
- Self-Pub Quarterly Mtg, August 13 @ 7pm
- WFTIO: Novel Workshop, begins Sept. 7 @ 11am
- **Self-Publishing Basics Web Series**, Sept. 10 @ 7pm
- Save the Date: Illustrator Intensive, Nov. 9th
- Explore All Regional Virtual Events

Member Survey

We want to hear from you! All Nebraska members are invited to complete a member survey to share feedback and ideas for upcoming SCBWI Nebraska programs & events. This is your organization, so tell us what you need and how we can help!

Please submit responses by July 15th.

CLICK HERE TO TAKE SURVEY
With the official start of summer just days away, I can’t help but think about plans. Vacation plans. Pool plans. Family reunion plans. Back-to-school plans. And of course, writing plans. With a seemingly never-ending summer “to-do” list. I find that my professional writing often takes a backseat. But, while I may not be writing, rhyming, or researching as much as I would like, I find that summer is the perfect time to plan.

First, I take a look at my long list of story ideas and plan which ones to expand into first drafts. Then, I look at my current first drafts and plan which are ready for revisions. Next, I look at my revisions to see which might be ready for feedback from my critique groups. And finally, I revisit feedback from critiques earlier in the year to see if perhaps the notes spark any new creativity. And, if I have any time after all of that, I get out my notebook, go outside and just start writing.

This summer, I will also be working alongside Jennie Gollehon to plan upcoming events for the Nebraska region. As we plan, we would like to ask each of you to please consider completing the member survey. This is your organization, and we want to hear from you! Do you have a topic that you’d like more information on? An agent or editor you’d particularly love to submit to? Times that work best for you to attend events?

Any ideas, feedback, or suggestions that you have will greatly assist us in our planning efforts. We thank you in advance for sharing your thoughts with us.

Survey responses should be submitted by July 15th.

Happy Planning!

Heather Dawn Torres
Co-Regional Advisor

Happy Planning!

Heather
Adria Goetz is a senior literary agent and illustration coordinator at kt Literary. Adria got her start in publishing as an intern at Martin Literary Management in 2013 and began agenting in 2016. She represents picture books, middle grade, graphic novels, and adult fiction. Adria has eclectic taste but particularly enjoys projects that are tinged with magic, have so much heart you can practically hear their heartbeat, and have a compelling, commercial hook. She was recently proud to represent Indie bestseller THE CHRISTMAS BOOK FLOOD by Emily Kilgore and Kitty Moss, as well as THE OCEAN CALLS by Tina Cho, BATTER ROYALE by Leisl Adams, MILLIE FLEUR’S POISON GARDEN by Christy Mandin, IN THE GROVES by Andrea Cruz Floren, and THE CRESCENT MOON TEAROOM by Stacy Sivinski. In her spare time, Adria can be found rewatching Gilmore Girls for the millionth time, listening to Taylor Swift, and dreaming about the mossy stone cottage in the woods she would like to live in one day.

Adria is currently welcoming submissions for picture books, middle grade, adult fiction, and graphic novels. For picture books she is primarily looking for magical stories, stories with heart, humor, commercial concepts, and visually dazzling illustrations. For middle grade she loves whimsical storytelling, magical adventures, unique formats, a strong voice, and a distinctive hook. For adult fiction she is looking for upmarket fiction with book club potential, high concept rom coms, female-driven thrillers, and grounded speculative fiction. For graphic novels she is looking for MG/YA/Adult projects and is open to a wide range of genres from quiet contemporary to historical fiction to fantasy and is open to a wide range of illustration styles. You can read Adria’s full manuscript wishlist and learn more about the books Adria has represented on her website: adriagoetz.com.

Adria accepts submissions exclusively through Query Manager. Submit to Adria via this Query Manager link between June 15 and August 15, 2024.
What Are You, Lou? written by Danielle Herzog released on May 21 with Beaming Books. The inclusive and affirming story, champions diverse identities and encourages readers to embrace the unique mark they leave on the world. We are thrilled for you, Danielle!

Rebecca J. Gomez’s middle grade novel in verse, Mari in the Margins, released on May 14 from Bandersnatch Books! As the middle child of nine, Mari feels overlooked by her family, and with a new girl in town threatening Mari’s one stable friendship, she’s left alone with her thoughts—and her poetry journal. Congratulations, Rebecca!

Jodi Adam’s third book in The Train Rolls On series releases on July 16th! The Train Rolls On To The County Fair, is a rhyming picture book that teaches perseverance and teamwork where a determined train races the clock to deliver rowdy farm animals to the county fair in time for the biggest competition of the year. Way to go, Jodi!
Meet Danielle Herzog! Danielle is an educator administrator (former school counselor) by day, and by night a kid lit writer, mother and member of one ridiculously insane large Italian family. As a freelance writer, she has contributed to The Washington Post, The Chicago Tribune, Parenting, The Huffington Post, Nickelodeon, and more, covering topics from parenting to education and mental health.

Danielle is also a speaker and workshop leader on counseling, education, writing, and blogging, with on-air reporting experience. Her debut picture book, *What Are You Lou?* released in May 2024 with Beaming Books.

When Lou, a fluffy-tailed, giant-eared, colorful animal, is asked by the other animals to define himself, he isn't able to give a one-word answer. Lou isn’t a lemur. Or a snake. Or an armadillo. Lonely and confused, Lou runs away from that dreaded, repetitive question: “What are you, Lou?” But when his atypical traits save him during a frightening encounter in the jungle, Lou realizes he doesn’t need to fit into one box. He’s Lou, and that’s what matters most.

Inclusive and affirming, *What Are You, Lou?* champions diverse identities and encourages readers to embrace the unique mark they leave on the world. Lou’s journey to self-acceptance will resonate with readers whose identities lie outside society’s supposed norms. Danielle’s book celebrates standing out in a world that is constantly trying to box us in.

Find out more about Danielle on her website:
www.danielleherzog.com
Calling all novel writers! Want to write a novel for kids but not sure where to start? Have lots of ideas but not sure which ones will work best? Join us for Writing From the Inside Out: Novel Workshop led by Author George Jreije. This Collaborative Workshop series consists of an eight-month virtual workshop that meets twice a month from September 2024 to April 2025. George Jreije will guide collaborative groups through the process of planning, researching, and writing novels for kids and teens. George is a published author who will help you understand how to approach writing novel manuscripts from the writer's perspective.

To affirm the need for increased representation in every facet of the children’s and YA book industry, SCBWI Nebraska is offering two full scholarship slots for the Writing from the Inside Out Novel Workshop. Click here for scholarship details.
Don't miss out on these scholarship opportunities to attend the upcoming SCBWI Virtual Summer Conference, August 1-4, 2024.

**GENERAL CONFERENCE SCHOLARSHIP - JUNE 18 DEADLINE**
This scholarship provides tuition to any SCBWI member experiencing financial hardship.

**BIPOC SCHOLARSHIP - JUNE 18 DEADLINE**
Two scholarship grand prize winners will receive tuition to the SCBWI Virtual Summer Conference.

**STUDENT ILLUSTRATOR SCHOLARSHIP - JUNE 18 DEADLINE**
Two conference scholarships for full-time graduate or undergraduate students studying illustration.

**SCBWI EMERGING VOICES AWARD - JULY 30 DEADLINE**
The grant was created to foster the emergence of diverse voices in children’s books. Two writers or writer-illustrators will each receive: Full tuition to the 2024 SCBWI Summer Conference, publicity, and career development opportunities.

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**Nebraska Critique Groups**

Are you looking for someone to critique your manuscript, hook, pitch, logline, or query letter?

**Join a critique group today!**
Email Judith Snyder, Critique Group Coordinator
scbwi.nebraska.critiques@gmail.com

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**Illustration Submission**

Would you like for your art to be featured in our future newsletter? Please send to: Heather at scbwi.nebraska.newsletter@gmail.com
Label file as firstname_lastname.jpeg. (no bigger than 8 mb)
It only makes sense that, to have a layered pitch, there must first be a layered story. Adding layers to your work was precisely the topic of May’s Shop Talk.

We all know the most important first step of writing is to get that first draft onto the page. The first draft becomes your foundation. With each subsequent revision, you add and perfect all the right parts - strong first lines, memorable characters, a plot twist or two, and finally, a satisfying ending. As each revision improved, did you know you had likely been adding layers to your story?

Layers can be anything from voice, to style, to pace, to climatic turning points, to themes – such as “coming of age” or “being one with nature.” Elements of STEM, lyricism, or an arc of time such as morning-to-night or a seasonal change can also enhance story layers. Does your manuscript take place in a certain era? Do you highlight the use of the five senses? All of these create the depth and weight that agents and editors seek.

As the agent from the Meet & Pitch described, it is best if your writing has emotional depth, so that the reader can connect with the story. Each time you revise, think about what layers can be added to enhance an emotional connection with your reader.

Take one of your works-in-progress and write down the layers that already exist. Are there ways to add a few of the items mentioned above for an even more rich and rewarding story? And remember, when you’re ready to write the pitch, be sure to include your layers there as well.

*Shop Talks will resume in September. Enjoy the summer!
Take Flight With Help From Our Volunteers

LEADERSHIP

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