AWP’s Eighteenth Tweet Chat: #AWP Mentorship
July 14, 2016 from 2:00-3:00 p.m. ET

Writers of all levels! Hop to our tweet chat, today at 2pm ET, about our mentorship program. Use #AWP mentorship

#AWP mentorship
Writer to Writer, AWP’s Mentorship Program

looking forward to #AWP mentorship session

Great program. Tweet chat starts in 5 minutes. #AWP mentorship
moments away! #AWPmentorship

Thanks for tuning in to the #AWPmentorship tweet chat! We hope it will help you decide whether or not this program is "write" for you.

With us today is Membership Director and Writer to Writer Mentorship Program creator, @DianeZinna! #AWPmentorship

Also answering your questions for the tweet chat: our Membership Associate, Kenny Lakes (@usyboroda). #AWPmentorship
To ask a question about AWP’s Writer to Writer Mentorship Program at any time, use the hashtag #AWPmentorship.

Hello! I am Diane Zinna & today I’ll be tweeting about our wonderful Writer to Writer Mentorship Program! #awpmentorship

Also on w/ us today are many past mentors & mentees--they are here to help answer your questions about Writer to Writer! #awpmentorship

I'll tweet info about W2W and our upcoming mentee application period (8/1-8/12) plus lots of participant quotes & photos #awpmentorship

Mentor applications are accepted all year. Mentee applications are welcome on Submittable 8/1-8/12 for our Fall 2016 session. #awpmentorship

The window for mentee applications is short. Don't miss it! #AWPmentorship
@DianeZinna How does a writer choose a mentee?

@DianeZinna Hi Nancy! We give each mentor 3-4 apps and they choose the person they feel they can most help. #awpmentorship

A quote from mentor Jennifer Morales #AWPmentorship

“If you think your work is good, then fight for it. Pester everyone you know to advocate for you. And don’t give up.”

—Jennifer Morales, W2W Fiction Mentor, Fall 2015
A quote from mentee Khara House. #awpmentorship

"It was like discovering my inner voice in the form of another person."
Khara House
W2W Mentee
Spring 2015

We have about 7,000 individual members, and many are writers who have never been associated with an MFA program. #awpmentorship

That's interesting because when I joined in 2014 I assumed I must have been one of only a few with no MFA.
Definitely not, Michael! #awpmentorship

We also wanted to do something for those who are writing from backgrounds typically underrepresented in the literary world. #awpmentorship

Going on now: Is #AWPmentorship "write" for you?

We encourage apps from writers of color, LGBTQ & disability communities, those w/ no MFA. #awpmentorship

We don't just match people and step away! We check in regularly and provide space for participants to connect & share tips #awpmentorship
Being involved with the program all along the way is personally rewarding to me and helps me better understand our members. #awpmentorship

@awpwriter @DianeZinna Hi Diane, as someone who applied multiple times, is the demand way outpacing the number of mentors?

@awpwriter @DianeZinna Hi Michael! Your new website looks amazing, btw. We do try to keep the program small. #awpmentorship

@awpwriter @DianeZinna We do not accept every mentor who applies. Each session about 50% of the participants applied before. #awpmentorship

@DianeZinna @awpwriter Thanks @DianeZinna - Hope other writers will take advantage of the .ink deal. It's a great service.
There is no charge for the Writer to Writer mentorship program. The only requirement is that you’re an AWP member. #awpmentorship

You may have seen the W2W ad on the back of @poetswritersinc last issue. #awpmentorship
A quote from fiction mentor Alice Sebold #awpmentorship

“When insecurities warp the brain, a mentor can be there to lead the writer toward sanity.”

– Alice Sebold, Mentor, Spring 2016

Is there anything in particular that is being looked for with regards to mentees? #awpmentorship

Too often people apply with one-sentence answers to the questions. Tell us enough to find the right match for you! #awpmentorship

Too def. second this as a former mentor—getting a full picture was so helpful in selecting a mentee! #AWPmentorship
A quote from Irene Hoge Smith, AWP mentee last season

"‘Send me everything,’ said my generous and enthusiastic mentor, Claude Clayton (Bud) Smith. Knowing he’s got my back is a precious gift.”

—Irene Hoge Smith, Mentee, Spring 2016
Listen to KittyMouth @stefburn

How often can you apply for the mentee program if you're turned down the first time? #AWPmentorship

@stefburn 1/2 You are absolutely encouraged to apply as often as you wish! #awpmentporship

@stefburn 2/2 It may just be that the mentor right for you is waiting for you in another session. #awpmentporship

We look for mentors who will, above all, be supportive, responsive, and open to learning from the experience themselves. #awpmentorship

The awesome sense of community was a surprise bonus of my #AWPmentorship

Here are our supportive, responsive, amazing W2W mentors from last session: http://bit.ly/1r1Cltr #awpmentorship
What are the benefits of this mentorship? 

Colette Lunday @ColetteLunday

@sagevalentine having an #awpmortorship lets you step out of your comfort zone with a companion and guide

Ladybuglizzie @sagevalentine

@ColetteLunday Thank you for answering me :)

Colette Lunday @ColetteLunday

@sagevalentine you are welcome!

Diane Zinna @DianeZinna

@sagevalentine There are so many. For the mentors AND the mentees. To have a writerly friend, a guide, a true listener. #awpmentorship

Ladybuglizzie @sagevalentine

@DianeZinna That's exactly what I need. Thank you for answering me. :)
Mentors volunteer their time and receive a free one-year AWP membership. #awpmentorship

When pairing people, we like to think there is a bit of magic at work. #awpmentorship

Quote from Catherine Keefe, AWP mentee from last season #awpmentorship

"Use every single moment, piece of advice, and nugget of knowledge you can. Work hard at what you’re being taught. Laugh with each other. I tried to always offer my mentor something with each interaction: an observation, a quote, a new book, an invitation to read her work. This kept me from feeling like a take-take-taker. Set commitments to each other. Keep them. Be grateful."

-Catherine Keefe, Mentee, Spring 2016

I didn’t know I needed a mentor until I had one. I have grown in ways I didn’t expect #awpmentorship
Naima Hazelton @NaimaHazelton

When is the mentee application going up? I see the mentor one, so if I could ask past mentees what they focused on...

Diane Zinna @DianeZinna

Hi, Naima! From August 1-12, the mentee application will be available on Submittable. #awpmentorship

Naima Hazelton @NaimaHazelton

@DianeZinna Oh, okay. Can’t obsess about the questions then, lol.

Diane Zinna @DianeZinna

@NaimaHazelton @awpwriter I think the questions show that we care about your journey and not just your level or publications. #AWPmentorship

Diane Zinna @DianeZinna

We tend to set aside the apps from those looking at this as a fast path to publication. #awpmentorship
W2W is about relationship building between 2 writers and their mutual growth. Mentors often state they learn just as much. #AWPmentorship

Do some of the mentors and mentees continue a relationship or stay in contact after the program is over? #AWPmentorship

Absolutely, Emily! We send out surveys to past participants and almost everyone is still in contact #AWPmentorship

We send 3 applications, along with writing samples, to each mentor. The mentor chooses the 1 person they want to work with. #AWPmentorship

This past session all of our mentees were women: http://bit.ly/216bgYq #AWPmentorship
Diane Zinna @DianeZinna

Mentors don't tend to look for the best or most accomplished writer. They look for the person they think they can best help. #AWPmentorship

Seth Brady Tucker @Airbornepoet

#awpmentorship This is a great program for both mentors and mentees alike. Be warned, however: autocorrect changes mentees to menses!

Naima Hazelton @NaimaHazelton

#AWPmentorship What did you focus on in your applications, mentees? Strengths/weaknesses, goals, past mentor/mentee experiences, etc?

R.L. Maizes @RL_Maizes

@NaimaHazelton The questions in the application gave me an opportunity to think deeply about what I wanted from a mentorship. @awpmentorship

Naima Hazelton @NaimaHazelton

@RL_Maizes Did you find that or something else though the process? I have ideas…but you don't know what you don't know, you know?

R.L. Maizes @RL_Maizes

@NaimaHazelton not sure what you are asking. Can you explain?
@RL_Maizes Did u get what you wanted out of the mentorship process? In retrospect, did u discover something u weren't explicitly expecting?

@NaimaHazelton my mentor was generous in sharing his story. The program got everyone thinking big picture. And my cohort became close.

Mentees then have the final decision on whether that person is best for them. #AWPmentorship

@DianeZinna Oh, I learned something there...didn't know they *choose* mentees!
Yes, the mentors come into it wanting to work with YOU. #AWPmentorship

@DianeZinna gut feeling! I opened the app and thought oh, there she is!!!

@DianeZinna enthusiasm; strong sample; a true fit for this program, not someone asking for help placing complete manuscript; dedication

@NaimaHazelton @awpwriter I wanted to explore a different form of teaching (and learning) & help other queer writers of color grow.

@DianeZinna @awpwriter The quality of her writing, for sure. But also the opportunity to assist a queer POC in navigating the writing world.
Any tips you'd give your sibling on what to include in application? #AWPmentorship so exciting that this opportunity is out there! thanks!!


@DianeZinna, thank you!! Much appreciated. Regards from Jerusalem, Israel

@RuthEbenstein 2/2 These give you a sense of the kinds of questions we ask. Be open. Give us enough info to find YOUR mentor #awpmentorship

@DianeZinna, I hear you. I'll have a look. I'm VERY open in sharing. Agree that it's critical - matchmaking is an art. Thanks for your time.

Getting so may questions! Thank you! It may take me a bit of time to address them all, but I will! #AWPmentorship
For our mentors on this chat—What advice do you have for future Writer to Writer mentors? #AWPmentorship

@DianeZinna Be true to your story, give you heart in it.

And for our mentees on this chat—What advice do you have for future Writer to Writer mentees? #awpmentorship

@DianeZinna participate in all that you can, Skypechats, modules, and don't be shy about communicating with your mentor. #AWPmentorship

@DianeZinna don't be afraid to take the challenges from your mentor. They want be a mentor and they are sharing their path #awpmentorship
A quote from past W2W mentor Emilia Phillips: @gracefulemilia #awpmentorship

“I wanted to cultivate a sense of generosity and a habit of challenging myself.”

–Emilia Phillips, Mentor, Spring 2016

#AWPmentorship Once and future mentors, what do you personally hope to get out of working with a mentee? Other than the gratis membership :)

@NaimaHazelton I found that the program also helped me grow as a writer—a welcome challenge to consider writing practices from either “side”
@rmennies I've found that - in areas where I've mentored/taught - teaching it made it clearer to me. Like that?

@NaimaHazelton yes definitely! you’re never too experienced to skip interrogating your own writing practices.

@rmennies Oh, nice!

@awpwriter I wanted to explore a different form of teaching (and learning) & help other queer writers of color grow.

@awpwriter Oh, yes, I saw not-traditionally represented communities was a criteria. Do you think *confidence plays into that?
@NaimaHazelton @awpwriter Yes. The "successful" writing world is super male, white & hetero. Tough for LGBTQ/POC writers to envision success.

@NaimaHazelton @NaimaHazelton

@MoralesWrites @awpwriter That's why I didn't accept an invitation to MFA/PhD from my professor. Tho my college mentors were great.

@MoralesWrites @awpwriter Oh, yes, I saw not-traditionally represented communities was a criteria. Do you think *confidence plays into that?

@NaimaHazelton @awpwriter my main reason for applying will be advice re: manuscript revisions - approach, sequence, etc.
A quote from Lara Palmqvist, who took part as a mentee while residing in the Ukraine last season 

"The writing world (and, let’s be honest, the world at large) could use more of Writer to Writer’s inviting, we-all-rise-together mentality. It’s rare, unfortunately, but that also makes me cherish what this program helped us build all the more.”

–Lara Palmqvist, Mentee, Spring 2016

Sometimes apps from people of color express a desire for a mentor with the same background & those mentors aren’t there. #awpmentorship

Mentor applications are available year-round. Apply today. 

http://bit.ly/1IS31v2  #AWPmentorship

Mentee applications will be available August 1–12. Put it on your calendar! 

http://bit.ly/1IS31v2  #AWPmentorship
Again, AWP membership is required to apply, but there is no additional fee. #awpmentorship

Our mentoring sessions cover six modules over a three-month period. #AWPmentorship

Module 1 focuses on beginnings: “What initially attracts you most to a piece of writing?” #AWPmentorship

Module 2 is all about community and connections: “How can I find a community that will support me?” #AWPmentorship

Module 3 centers on craft: “What is the most interesting craft or forms exercise you have taught or done?” #AWPmentorship

Module 4’s topic is revision: “Have you ever started a new piece with a section you removed from another?” #AWPmentorship
Module 5 looks at publishing: “What is something you didn’t expect that happened as a result of your being published?” #AWPmentorship

Module 6 examines sustaining a writing life: How do you make time to write while dealing with family & job responsibilities? #AWPmentorship

@DianeZinna Can you explain the modules?

@stickpoet Hi Michael! I just tweeted a few module questions if you scroll backwards. Or email me: diane@awpwriter.org #awpmentorship

@DianeZinna I saw them, Thank you! this has been interesting.
These module questions I posted are just examples. Each module includes several q's and then activities to do together. #AWPmentorship

We have had some very memorable pairings. #AWPmentorship

@realjefferyhess runs a writing group w/ military vets; was paired with a military wife longing to tell her husband's story. #AWPmentorship

We had a writer working on an opera libretto about a Native American tribe paired with the amazing Native author @ehhayes. #AWPmentorship

@rmennies, whose WWII-era book the Glad Hand of God Points Backwards was paired with a writer working on a similar theme #AWPmentorship

Because an MFA program isn’t the only or always the best option #AWPmentorship
A beautiful quote from @rmennies, past W2W mentor #awpmentorship

"The best advice I've ever received about my writing is to remember that we're writers (art-makers) first, and authors second."

--Rachel Mennies
W2W Mentor, Spring 2015
Our first playwrights, @kellyjo9 @dgwriter wrote of their W2W experience: http://bit.ly/1Opp9uK #AWPmentorship

2 writers with disabilities wrote of their W2W experiences: http://bit.ly/1Rok6AC #awpmentorship
Last session we selected fewer than 50% of the people who applied to serve as mentors to participate.  

@DianeZinna How wonderful that you have so many fine people to choose from!

Before choosing our mentors, we look at all of the mentee applications first to see what that round’s applicants are wanting.  

@DianeZinna it is great to match with a mentee

@brandigranett has served with us twice--two great, unique pairings!

As a mentee it was fascinating to learn the journey of an accomplished writer, the bumps and setbacks, and the successes.
We want our mentors to have pure intentions, too. If it's clear they are applying to promote a book, we set the app aside. #AWPmentorship

We celebrate our mentors and mentees in our social media and at the AWP conference. #AWPmentorship

Speaking of the conference, I'll post some pictures now of faces you may have seen at the AWP Booth at the LA Bookfair #AWPmentorship

Mentor-mentee pair Brandi Granett @brandigranett & her mentee, Taylor Lauren Ross @Taylorlaurenr #AWPmentorship
Mentor-mentee pair Najiyah Maxfield & her mentee Cynthia Huijgens #AWPmentorship

Listen to KittyMouth @stefburn

So if I'm looking for a Black mentor, there's a possibility that one may not be present that is familiar with my genre? #AWPmentorship

@stefburn read back in the last #AWPmentorship chat and they matched an indigenous mentee and mentor which was, I think, the 'magic' at wrk

@stefburn I think it was 7/7.
@NaimaHazelton okay thanks I'll check that out.

@stefburn I'm in the same boat. Writing a historical non-fiction at an AA hospital. If not now, maybe another session.

Diane Zinna @DianeZinna

@stefburn 2/2 Last season, for example, we had 19 pairings. Divided by 4 genres...you can see how it can be challenging! #awpmentorship

Diane Zinna @DianeZinna

@stefburn 1/1 We actively reach out to writers of color to be mentors but it's possible we won't have a WOC in your genre @awpmentorship

Diane Zinna @DianeZinna
Mentor-mentee pair Lori Ostlund @Loriostlund & Whitney Wimbish @whitneycwimbish

At the W2W LA conference reception: Sharon Estill Taylor & her mentee, Mariah Mottley #awpmentorship
At the W2W LA conference reception: Mentor Norma Cantú @normaelia & her mentee, Mele Martinez #awpmentorship

At the W2W LA conference reception: Mentor Kristiana Kahakauwila & her mentee, @SeaStachura #awpmentorship
Their joint reading made the bartender cry: Mentor Fred Arroyo & his mentee, @anandalima #awpmentorship

Though we didn't expect this, almost half of our mentors have asked to serve again. #awpmentorship.

Mentors need to be AWP member in good standing and have at least one published book. #awpmentorship.
Great program! a tremendous help to my writing life and pointed me in the right direction. Grateful for the opportunity #AWPmentorship

@er_walling Can you give us an idea of how many mentors and mentees apply each time? #AWPmentorship

1/2 It varies...I would say between 200 and 400 apps from potential mentees each session. #AWPmentorship

2/2 If you don’t get matched one season, try again! Your mentor may be just waiting for you! #AWPmentorship

#AWPmentorship was a v rich experience; my mentee & I are still in touch & she's working on a couple of diff fiction mss --@ChristineSneed
This whole conversation alone inspires and injects hope and a sense of community! I keep saying, WOW, and great. Thanks!

"The program was amazing! Great questions to jumpstart conversations w/ my mentor. " --Ann DeVilbiss, Mentee, Spring 2016

“Indebted to my mentor, Fred Arroyo, for his insight, patience, & guidance.” – Mona Alvarado Frazier, Mentee, Fall 2014

The program is also a chance to get to be part of a community of writers. Mentees help and support one another.

Keep your questions coming! I’m getting faster at these!

Hope people see that the workshop model isn't the be-all-end-all. Mentoring-Protege is time-honored tradish.
A quote from mentor Earl Swift. #AWPmentorship

“We writers are much like rivers—we’re the sum of many streams. As a mentor, I hope to serve as a useful stream.”

—Earl Swift,
W2W Creative Nonfiction Mentor,
Fall 2015

A quote from past mentor dawn lonsinger #AWPmentorship

“Mentoring has come to resemble a spiritual practice for me, because I think it has as much to do with sharing what I have learned about writing and literature, as it does with teaching compassion, passion, risk, courage, and civic engagement.”

—dawn lonsinger, Mentor, Spring 2016
A quote from past mentee @JuliaLaxer #AWPmentorship

My mentor was emotionally present for me, which helped me in those times when I was doubting my writing and, consequently, myself.

--Julia Laxer
W2W Mentee, Spring 2015

A quote from past mentor Kristiana Kahakauwila #awpmentorship

“Write the book you want to read. I like this advice because it's a reminder that so many stories are still silenced, are still unavailable. If you feel like your story isn't represented out there, then write it.”

—Kristiana Kahakauwila,
W2W Fiction Mentor, Fall 2015
#AWPmentorship so much to ask...what if you don't know what you don't know. I'm sure I could make a guess, but what's a good way to examine?

A quote from mentee @WhitneyCWimbish #awpmentorship

"I have never learned so much from one person in such a condensed amount of time."

Whitney Wimbish, W2W Mentee
Spring 2015
A quote from Michael Broder, past W2W mentor #AWPmentorship

“Some people are mentorship magnets—everybody wants to help them the moment they meet them—and other people are not. I was not. And I think those are the people who need the most help. But they need help from people like me, who realize how hard it can be to get the help you need.”

—Michael Broder, W2W Poetry Mentor, Fall 2015

A quote from @Kerrin_McCadden, past W2W mentor #AWPmentorship

“The relationships forged in mentorship give the mentee an avenue for all those dark-of-the-night questions—a place to really ask them with intent and open ears.”

—Kerrin McCadden, W2W Poetry Mentor, Fall 2015
A quote from Leslie Schwartz, past W2W mentor. #AWPmentorship

“Mentoring is an extraordinary experience and one I rely on to keep my own creative self alive.”

—Leslie Schwartz,
W2W Fiction Mentor, Fall 2015

A quote from past W2W mentor, @RachelHowzell Hall #AWPmentorship

“I want to pay it forward, be there for someone who may feel as marginalized as I did.”

—Rachel Howzell Hall,
W2W Fiction Mentor, Fall 2015
I see a ton of questions coming to my email box, too! Email me your questions: diane@awpwriter.org #AWPmentorship

For more information about the Writer to Writer Mentorship Program: https://www.awpwriter.org/community_calendar/mentorship_program_overview ... #AWPmentorship

And not having an MFA works well for #AWPmentorship so...hopeful.

My mentee didn't have an MFA, but had written a couple book drafts, stories, lectures--doing the work! Apply!

Thank you all for taking the time to learn about Writer to Writer Mentorship Program today. It has been a joy! #AWPmentorship
Thank you so much. And thanks to all the #AWPmentorship community for answering questions and giving feedback!

Thanks for joining us for our #AWPmentorship tweet chat!

Find all of our previous chats in our archive: https://www.awpwriter.org/community_calendar/tweet_chats ... #AWPmentorship

Hey, everyone applying: let’s tweet when we get our applications submitted? Just for accountability! For me, lol. #AWPmentorship

Great advice from the #AWPmentorship Tweet Chat. Can't wait to send in my application again next month!
#AWPmentorship is a powerful and affirming program! Highly recommend it!

At LA #awp16 Conference Mentor @minalh & mentee @pdkeenen #awpmentorship APPLY NOW meet your mentor!