

# **2019 LGBTQ Writers Caucus Meeting at AWP19**

## **BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

- Samantha Tetangco, President
- Julia(n) Leslie Guarch, Vice President
- Marlena Lynne, Communications Coordinator

## **BOARD MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE**

- Zane DeZeeuw, Secretary - Could not make it to AWP; also decided to step down as Secretary

**55 members in attendance** (excluding Board Members)

Note: Meeting minutes were taken by Julia(n) Leslie Guarch and Samantha Tetangco in the absence of Zane, the Caucus's Secretary, who could not attend.

## **CAUCUS MEETING SCHEDULE**

### **1. Welcome**

- a. Current Board introduction (Name / quick intro / pronouns)
  - i. Brief explanation of each role
- b. **Purpose of this meeting/Overview of the next 1.25 Hours:**
  - i. Updates on what has been happening throughout the year and an overview of the caucus to help you stay connected
  - ii. Community Building & Gathering Feedback to report to AWP
  - iii. Elections for Next Year's Board

### **2. 2019-2020 Executive Board Reports & Updates**

- a. Caucus overview for new / first time attendees
  - i. Overview of the Year & Timeline of what to expect from the Caucus in upcoming year (also for those interested in joining the board!) - **Sam**
  - ii. Staying Connected throughout the year - Communication & Social Media Outreach – FB, Blog, Twitter, Instagram - **Marlena**
    - a. LGBTQ Writers Caucus Blog:  
<https://lgbtqwriterscaucus.wordpress.com/>
    - b. Private Facebook group:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/337720386280712/>
    - c. Caucus social media accounts:
      1. Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/LGBTQWritersCaucus/>

2. Twitter: <https://twitter.com/lgbtqwriters>
  3. Instagram:  
[https://www.instagram.com/lgbtq\\_writers\\_caucus/](https://www.instagram.com/lgbtq_writers_caucus/)
  4. Tumblr: <http://lgbtq-writers-caucus.tumblr.com/>
- d. Caucus Email Distribution List -  
lgbtq.writers.caucus@gmail.com
  - e. #AWPLGBTQ / #AWP19

C. Next Year AWP Call for Proposals – What to look out for on the FB group; (caucus generated spreadsheet, panel review support, etc) – **Julia**

- **Event Proposal Deadline:** May 1, 11:59 p.m.

D. Other Updates & Announcements?

1. Fundraiser and Queer Mixer with Lambda

- a. Hosting Another Mixer with Lambda Literary. This will take place at [CC Slaughters Nightclub and Lounge, 219 NW Davis St, Portland, OR 97209](https://www.facebook.com/ccslaughtersnightclubandlounge) & 8 p.m. on Thursday, March 28th - right after the meeting!
  - i. Special shout out to everyone who contributed, but **especially to Gertrude Press and the Gertie Book Club** who made a couple of large donations.
- b. Increased communications/outreach with/from AWP
  - i. Call for craft essays from the “Writer’s Chronicle” - Email from Chloe Schwenke, AWP Interim Executive Director
  - ii. AWP also added a new Literary Caucuses page & “promoting all caucus meetings in our social media accounts leading up to the conference”
- c. Living Handbook: updated with each new board - **Sam**
- d. Safety concerns & Conflicted feelings about AWP’s response– **Julia**

### III. Icebreaker & Connection Building –

A. Overview - **Sam**

- a. Excuse to hand out business cards. Way to find a group of people who will be walking over to the mixer. Members more comfortable with expressing their opinions and concerns.
- b. **Notekeeper for each group** – to write contact information, and to be used throughout the meeting for various bits of feedback - We will collect these.

B. Icebreaker & Group Discussion – **Marlena** Talk to those around you:

- What panels have you checked out?
- What panels are you looking forward to?
- In terms of AWP in general, what are you liking so far?
- What types of things do you want AWP to improve on?
- How do you feel about representation of queer writers this year?
- Are you going to the mixer? Why/why not?
- Are you interested in being on the Caucus Board?

#### **4. BOARD ELECTIONS**

1. President: **Samantha Tetangco** - stepping down as President
2. Vice President: **Julia(n) Leslie Guarch** - stepping down as Vice President
3. 2 Social Media Coordinators: **Marlena** - stepping down as Communications Coordinators
4. Secretary: **Zane** (Not present at meeting) - stepped down as Secretary

#### **2019 – 2020 BOARD MEMBERS**

(all nominated and voted in)

Bruce Owens Grimm, President

A Poythress (A.P.), Vice President

Eduardo Ballester, Secretary

Megan Bronson, Communications Coordinator

And Schuster, Communications Coordinator

Alan Lessik, Treasurer (New Position)

#### **List of MEMBER CONCERNS**

**(Curated from each small group's written and verbal notes)**

- **ACCESSIBILITY:**
  - Extend the time between panels (15 minutes is not enough time for those with disabilities; allows more time to connect with panelists as well)
  - Either record panels and offer them on the website for a limited time after the conference, preferably captioned
  - Offer Skyping as an option for panelists who cannot attend; offer live streaming purposes for such members as well
  - Ensure tech support is available (many panels had technical issues without a way to get assistance; some panelists not even able to present)
- **REQUESTS FOR AWP (NOT REGARDING ACCESSIBILITY)**

- Offer a section of time for AWP members to voice concerns to AWP; scheduled at a time no other event or panel is scheduled
  - Staggering the Caucuses so that members of AWP do not need to choose between caucuses with which they identify
  - Include clear option for pronouns on badges and in the bios (Ex. “Writing Writer (they/them) is a...”)
  - Having clear signage for gender neutral bathrooms on map and at conference entrances
  - Clearly indicate who chooses featured events/panels and why
  - Give preference to convention centers with easily accessible gender neutral bathrooms (in number as well as accessibility for abled and disabled members)
  - Ensure queer identities are represented in non-queer focused panels
  - Request feedback and suggestions about security
- CAUCUS SPECIFIC INITIATIVES:
    - Utilize Wednesday for connecting and socializing with people
      - “Orientation”
      - Table with queer friendly folks set up near entrances, potentially with available LGBTQ resources
    - Include snacks in LGBTQ Writers Caucus Meeting
    - Make another spreadsheet for panel ideas
    - Fund another mixer, preferably closer to the convention center
    - More communication and action between Caucuses
    - Help members from particular areas or areas of expertise to connect outside of AWP
      - Utilize surveys created last year
    - Create a budget for LGBTQ Writers Scholarships
    - Share LGBTQ resources, safe spaces, and LGBTQ Guide for San Antonio
    - Guidebook to queer agents, editors, and presses
    - Guidebook to queer-friendly agents, editors, and presses
    - Continue to promote member publication news
    - Continue to send panel proposals to members for approval/suggestions
      - David Groff
- FUTURE PANELS:
    - Panels about screenplay
    - Panels focusing on LGBTQ Projects in the area (ex. Gay & Lesbian Archive of the Pacific NW, ONE Archive @ USC, etc.)
    - Caucus of Caucuses Meeting

- POSITIVE FEEDBACK:
  - Best quality panels so far (in terms of content and representation)
    - Continue to add more queer representation on other panels for the future

### **Caucus Interaction**

- Minority Caucuses are communicating through Caucus of Caucuses Facebook group and duel members