

Denise Low

Biographical Information

Denise Low, Ph.D., is chair of the English Department at Haskell Indian Nations University, where she also teaches creative writing and American Indian Studies courses.

Her book, *Words of a Prairie Alchemist*, a collection of essays, was published by Ice Cube Press (2006). A poem collection, *Thailand Journal*, was named a notable book of 2003 by the Kansas City Star, and her book, *New & Selected Poems, 1980-1999*, was published by Penthe Press. She also edited *Wakarusa Wetlands in Word & Image* for the Lawrence Arts Center's Imagination & Place Committee (2005).

Low was guest co-editor of Teaching Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony, a special issue of American Indian Culture and Research Journal, UCLA, 28.1 (2004). Her articles, essays, and reviews of American Indian literature appear in *Studies in American Indian Literature*, *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, *American Indian Quarterly*, *Midwest Quarterly*, *Kansas City Star*, and others.

She is a 5th generation Kansan of mixed German, Scots, Lenape (Delaware), English, French, and Cherokee heritage. She is a member of the Prairie Writers Circle of The Land Institute.

Campaign Statement

"I remember how thrilled I was at my first AWP conference to find like-minded folk. That was in Austin, twenty-some years ago, and I continue to attend AWP conferences for renewal and support. Because of AWP, I have had a richer, more productive life as a writer, professor, administrator, and now Poet Laureate of the state of Kansas. I hope to serve the AWP membership as a board member.

"I have a varied background, including both a PhD in English literature and a creative writing MFA: I have seen both sides of academics. My publications include ten books of poetry and essays; scholarship (Cheyenne ledger art is my major interest); and reviews. I am dean of the College of Humanities & Arts at Haskell Indian Nations University, my academic home since 1984. In addition, I have been visiting professor of creative writing at the University of Richmond and the University of Kansas. I was the poetry judge for AWP's Intro awards, and I have judged many contests, presented readings, edited (KU and Washburn University publications), and been a publisher. My husband and I have a small literary press that specializes in American Indian, African American, and other Midwestern voices (www.marnmothpublications.com).

"As a teacher of creative writing and administrator at Haskell (I have British, German and some Native heritages), I have seen the power of words to transform people's lives, even when the English language is a conflicted second or third language. I have experience in developing creative writing curricula and assessment in a tribal university. I like the versatility of my job, from budget challenges to long-range planning to advocacy for the faculty. I have used AWP position papers and other resources to help improve my college.

"I have seen the role of AWP develop to serve professional writers as well as academics; and I have seen AWP grow from several hundred members to more than five thousand. It is an adaptive, responsive organization. As I have ventured into online course instruction and blogs (www.deniselow.blogspot.com). I have come to appreciate the foresightedness of this organization in its development of electronic and people resources. The fundamental goals of AWP, stated in its strategic plan, are to encourage community, excellent teaching, excellent writing, good literature, and stability of AWP. As Kansas Poet Laureate, I travel across my state and also nationally to publicize the importance of word arts, and these goals are good guidance. Deepening language experiences is so important during this critical time in United States history. As a board member I hope to represent many kinds of writers and to help support an organization that has meant so much to me personally."