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INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION HONORS NEW VOICES IN CHILDREN'S & YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

NEWARK, Del. (June 20, 2024) — The International Literacy Association (ILA) announced this week the winning authors of its 2024 Children's and Young Adult Book Awards—a program reserved for new authors who have published only their first or second book and already demonstrate “exceptional and unusual promise” for the field.

Themes across the winning books include friendship, identity, cultural heritage, environmental awareness, social justice and resilience. These books offer readers imaginative and complex narratives that explore the depths of human experience, providing opportunities for reflection, inquiry and engagement with both personal and global issues.

Selected from submissions from around the globe, this year's winners also represent a remarkable array of new voices, each contributing significantly to the richness of children's and young adult literature.

The 2024 award winners are as follows:

Primary Fiction

- Winner: Ruth Whiting for *Lonely Bird* (Candlewick)
Honor: Kevin Johnson for *Cape* (Macmillan)

Primary Nonfiction

- Winner: Jessica Lanan for *Jumper: A Day in the Life of a Backyard Jumping Spider* (Macmillan)
Honor: Shannon Earle for *The Penguin of Ilha Grande: From Animal Rescue to Extraordinary Friendship* (Charlesbridge)

Intermediate Fiction

- Winner: Zach Weinersmith for *Bea Wolf* (Macmillan)
Honor: Malia Maunakea for *Lei and the Fire Goddess* (Penguin)

Intermediate Nonfiction

- Winner: Willie Mae Brown for *My Selma: True Stories of a Southern Childhood at the Height of the Civil Rights Movement* (Macmillan)
Honor: Katharina Weiss-Tuider for *Mission: Arctic: A Scientific Adventure to a Changing North Pole* (Greystone Kids)

Young Adult Fiction

- Winner: Angeline Boulley for *Warrior Girl Unearthed* (Macmillan)
Honor: Ari Tison for *Saints of the Household* (Macmillan)

Young Adult Nonfiction

- Winner: Sarah Myer for *Monstrous: A Transracial Adoption Story* (Macmillan)
Honor: Monica Edinger and Lesley Young for *Nearer My Freedom: The Interesting Life of Olaudah Equiano by Himself* (Lerner)

“Selecting the winners from such a talented pool of authors was a challenging but incredibly rewarding process. The chosen books stood out for their originality, depth and the promise they show for future contributions to children’s and young adult literature,” said Sonja Ezell, chair of the ILA Children’s and Young Adult Book Awards Committee and a clinical assistant professor at The University of Texas at Arlington.

“These stories are more than just books,” she said. “They are powerful tools for fostering empathy, understanding and a sense of community among young readers.”

Now in its 49th year, the ILA Children’s and Young Adult Book Awards feature several notable names among previous winners including Lindsay Mattick (whose ILA-winning title *Finding Winnie* won the Caldecott Medal), Juana Martinez-Neal (whose ILA-winning title *Alma and How She Got Her Name* received a Caldecott Honor and was named a Boston Globe-Horn Book Honor Book), and Jessica Love (whose ILA-winning title *Julián Is a Mermaid* won the Stonewall Book Award).

This year’s winners were announced during a free webinar, Promoting Understanding With International Literature, held in partnership with the United States Board on Books for Young People on Tuesday, June 18. For more information or to register for the on-demand recording, visit [ILA’s Digital Events](#) page. Additional information on the book awards can be found on the [ILA Children’s and Young Adults’ Book Awards](#) page.

About the International Literacy Association

The International Literacy Association (ILA) is a professional membership organization of literacy educators, researchers and experts spanning 128 countries. For more than 65 years, ILA has set the standard for how literacy is defined, taught and evaluated, connecting research and practice to improve the quality of literacy learning across the globe. Through its Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals, ILA provides an evidence-based benchmark for the development and evaluation of literacy professional preparation programs. ILA collaborates with partners across the world to develop, gather and disseminate high-quality resources, which include three peer-reviewed and edited journals—The Reading Teacher, Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy and Reading Research Quarterly. Learn more at literacyworldwide.org.

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