

McDermott Matheric Application

City of Coconut Creek Poet Laureate Application

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## City of Coconut Creek Poet Laureate Application

### Biographical Information

As a South Florida native, born and raised in Broward County, I've always felt a deep connection to this vibrant and diverse region and that sentiment has only intensified after living in Coconut Creek for the past fourteen years. This bond with my home state and local community has profoundly influenced my writing, and is particularly evident in my first poetry collection, *Visions on Alligator Alley* (2015). My enduring ties to Coconut Creek are also apparent in all aspects of writing or the teaching projects I take on.

My journey in the world of words began with my studies in creative writing earlier in my career. At Florida State University, I earned a Bachelor of Arts in English with a concentration in creative writing and earned my Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing with a focus on poetry from Florida International University. Although I had tinkered with journal writing and excelled at research essay writing in my advanced and honors high school and undergraduate courses, poetry writing didn't come into my life until I was diagnosed with learning disabilities my junior year of college. As an adult learner with dual exceptionalities, I turned to poetry to find that I was in some ways gifted with learning differences and poetry allowed me a way to cathartically express my struggles and to find the beauty in my unique way of experiencing the world.

Poets often write poetry as a form of self-expression and artistic creation, allowing us to explore complex emotions, ideas, and experiences in a unique and powerful way. For me, writing poetry is not just a hobby but a calling, a means to make sense of the world, connect with others on a deeper level, and leave a lasting impact through the beauty and insight of words. I also find the written word as a means to create community.

My professional life centers around my role as a tenured Professor of English at Broward College and also the many roles I've had within the poetry community such as creating and curating literary events. My position at Broward College allows me to share my love for literature and writing with students every day. I've been deeply honored to receive two Endowed Teaching Chair Awards, (2014, 2022), and to be named the 2022 Distinguished Professor of the Year by the Association of Florida Colleges. As a poetry events coordinator, I volunteered for many years with the Miami Book Fair International, served for a decade as the Festival Coordinator of the Palm Beach Poetry Festival, initiated my own 501(c)(3), Orange Island Arts Foundation, and still regularly plan events for Broward College and with the Broward County Libraries.

These relationships and recognitions fuel my commitment to excellence in education and community service. This passion I have for education and community engagement led me to my current pursuit of a Ph.D. in Higher Educational Leadership and Research Methodology at Florida Atlantic University. Through this program and my history of poetic studies, I'm exploring innovative practices in higher education and ways to strengthen community connections, which are vital for fostering a rich literary culture.

Living in Coconut Creek with my family, I continue to draw inspiration from the unique landscape and community of neighbors around me. Whether I'm teaching, writing, or organizing events, my goal remains the same: to foster a deep appreciation for Florida's environment and culture through the power of words. It's a journey that constantly reminds me of the beauty and importance of our local literary resources.

For specific information about my biographical background, please see my Curriculum Vitae included within the Additional Resources section. Unlike a resume, which is usually a

concise summary, my Curriculum Vitae provides a robust account of my academic qualifications, research experience, publications, presentations, awards, and other relevant accomplishments.

### **Poetry Experience**

Now a professional poet for over two decades, my journey with poetry began during my college years when I switched from studying business to pursuing a B.A. in Creative Writing at Florida State University. I wanted to be a corporate events planner, organizing philanthropic events to help communities on behalf of non-profit or capital ventures, which sparked my initial major in the college of business. The pivot to focusing my studies on poetry came after I discovered I was neurodivergent. My passion for poetry continued to grow as I furthered my education, earning an MFA in Creative Writing from Florida International University. This academic journey not only honed my skills but also deepened my appreciation for the art form.

My poetic journey began by taking a senior-level undergraduate course at the Florida State University with poet David Kirby, a Florida Humanities Lifetime Achievement Award for Writing recipient, Griffin Poetry Prize International, National Endowment for the Arts Fellow and Guggenheim Fellow, who recognized my talent for writing in a six-week writing workshop. He encouraged me to continue my studies of the written word by applying to Masters of Fine Arts programs around the country. I was accepted into the M.F.A. program at Florida International University, where I was only one of three poets accepted and was also awarded a graduate assistantship. My graduate thesis committee was comprised of poet Campbell McGrath, a MacArthur Foundation “Genius Award” winner and recipient of a Kinglsey Tufts Poetry Award, Guggenheim Fellowship, Witter Brynner Fellowship from the Library of Congress, and a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Poetry in 2017; and with poet Denise Duhamel, National Endowment for the Arts Fellow and Guggenheim Fellow serving as my committee chair. In my

graduate years, I worked with and studied poetry as literary and aesthetic opportunities and was also given the opportunity to work as an editor on the school's literary magazine *Gulfstream*. I was one of few afforded the opportunity to take a course that was only offered to three students entitled, "Creative Writing Pedagogy," where I learned intricate methods for how to encourage community members to write and find their voice.

Additionally, knowing my background in events planning, the M.F.A department gave me the opportunity to help with the Writer's on The Bay Series, a visiting writing series, where I helped coordinate trips and the details of events for public reading and writing workshops. This led me to an internship my final semester of the M.F.A. with the Palm Beach Poetry Festival, which extended itself to a decade long career serving as the Festival Coordinator. My role with the festival was to orchestrate all the logistics for one of the country's largest week-long festival of poetry, working with poets, agents, city officials, and numerous literary figures on a national and sometimes international level. These experiences gave me the opportunity to work closely with leading poets on the national and international levels, some of whom I am close with to this day.

In 2015, I reached a significant milestone in my poetic career with the publication of my first book of poetry, *Visions on Alligator Alley*, with Lominy Books. I was named the 2014-2015 Poet in Residence at the Girls' Club of Fort Lauderdale, an art gallery that showcases work of leading women artists. My project was to merely write a few ekphrastic poems about the art within the gallery. However, these few poems quickly became several until it snowballed into a full-length manuscript telling the fictional story on a lead character and her journey into adulthood living in South Florida. This collection culminated years of work in poetry and studying fiction and reflected my experiences and observations of life in South Florida. The title

itself evokes the unique landscape and culture of our region, capturing the essence of what it means to be a "poet of place."

Over the years, I've been published by reputable literary journal, magazines, but most notably, since January 2024, the following have been accepted for publication: "Flame and Draft" appeared in the March 10, 2024, issue XI of *The Dew Drop*; "Check, Mate" appeared in the March 17, 2024, issue of *The Sad Girl Diaries*; "Magellanic" appeared in the April 1, 2024, issue of *Closed Eye Open*; and the poem "Within" will appear in the September 1, 2024, issue 27 of *Wild Roof Journal*. It was also the quarterly featured poem for the City of Coconut Creek's Poet Laureate webpage on July 1, 2023.

My dedication to teaching and writing has been further recognized through endowed teaching chair positions. I was the recipient of the 2014/2015 Wells Fargo Endowed Teaching Chair of Broward College, and more recently, the 2022-2023 Robert Elmore Family Endowed Teaching Chair. In 2022, I was named the Distinguished Professor of Florida for the Association of Florida Colleges out of all twenty-eight state college institutions. Most recently, I was awarded a 2024 Broward County Cultural Division Individual Artists Grant for my work in the community with poetry.

One of my most cherished honors came in September 1, 2022, when I was invited by the Mayor of Coconut Creek to serve as the city's first-ever Poet Laureate, the first of any municipality of Broward County. This role has allowed me to connect more deeply with my community, using poetry to tell the stories of our city and its people. As I continue to write and teach, I'm constantly inspired by the "Creekers," the residents of Coconut Creek who share their experiences and photos with me, often prompting new haikus and poems. This ongoing

interaction with my community keeps my poetry fresh and relevant, always grounded in the place and people I call home.

This role has inspired me to start a "love-story project" based on the connections I've made, allowing me to explore human relationships and shared experiences through poetry. This project is a near-complete full-length book of poems. Hearing of this project, I was given an invitation by the Fine Arts Work Center, an artist-led organization based in Provincetown Massachusetts, August 4 to August 9, 2024, to work with Poet Brenda Shaughnessy, finalist for the Kinglsey Tufts Poetry Award and also the Griffin International Prize, a Guggenheim Fellow and a PEN/open Book Award winner, on finalizing my manuscript of work as a complete book for possible publication. Additionally, I received the invitation to attend the summer Teachers of Poetry conference, July 21-26, 2024, hosted by the Poetry Foundation at DePaul University in Chicago, Illinois.

### **Poetry Styles and Themes**

My poetic style is intrinsically linked to this place I call home. Every day, I find inspiration in the vibrant landscape around me - from the dramatic storm clouds to the playful iguanas, from breathtaking sunsets to delicate orchids. As a self-described "poet of place," I draw significant inspiration from my surroundings. My poetry frequently features elements of the South Florida environment, such as storm clouds, iguanas, sunsets, orchids, and local wildlife and I use them as extended metaphors to represent what goes on inside the self. This focus on the natural world is not merely descriptive but serves as a lens through which I examine broader themes of community, identity, and the human experience. I believe strongly in the power of accessibility and universal appeal in poetry, and I lean heavily into the trope of the extended metaphor to make my poems universal and accessible to all readers.



For example, when I began the project of my first book of poems, *Visions on Alligator Alley* (2015), I wanted to capture the essence of Alligator Alley - not just its physical beauty, but the way it lives and breathes in the hearts of those who know it. I found myself drawn to the idea of ekphrastic poetry, using visual art as a springboard for my verses. It felt like the perfect way to create a dialogue between the written word and the visual landscape that inspires me daily. As I wrote, I discovered that these poems were weaving themselves into a larger narrative. Each piece became a thread in a tapestry that told a story of this place and its people. I painted with words, describing the lush greenery, the gliding alligators, the storm clouds gathering on the horizon. But more than that, I tried to capture the spirit of our community - the shared experiences, the collective identity that binds us together. *Visions on Alligator Alley* is more than just a book to me. It's a testament to the power of place, a celebration of the natural world, and an exploration of what it means to belong. As I look at the finished product, with its blend of poetry and visual art, I feel a sense of pride and gratitude.

Poet Denise Duhamel, National Endowment for the Arts Fellow and Guggenheim Fellow, referred to *Vision on Alligator Alley* as a “road trip you won’t want to miss.” The current Poet Laureate of Kansas, Traci Brimhall, said my work “summons stories out of modern art but roots the poems in the Florida of Coppertone tans, moldy hotel rooms, and Everglades hitch-hikers.” Additionally, poet David Kirby, a Florida Humanities Lifetime Achievement Award for Writing recipient, Griffin Poetry Prize International, National Endowment for the Arts Fellow and Guggenheim Fellow, said I “write like a painter, splashing words on boldly and with raw beauty.” My first book represents not just my vision, but the collective vision of a community, captured through the lens of Alligator Alley. It's my hope that readers will find in these pages a piece of themselves, and perhaps see their own surroundings with new, poetic eyes.

Being a "poet of place" isn't just about describing what I see; it's about using these local elements as a lens to explore broader themes of community, identity, and of the human experience. Every day, I share an original poem on my Facebook page, and I love engaging with my community - my fellow "Creekers" - by writing haikus in response to photos they send me to write the ekphrastic seventeen syllable poems. It's a way of making poetry a part of everyday life, of finding the extraordinary in the ordinary. Numerous times throughout the week, I work with Coconut Creek residents to write poems for specific occasions in their lives or to help them craft their own poems based on their own lived experiences. My poetry for the city aligns with sustainability, butterflies, parks, environment, climate, quality of life, inclusivity, hope, service excellence, innovation, small-town sentiments, and smart growth – all the things that are highlighted within the city's mission and their Vision 2023 statement.

As Coconut Creek's first Poet Laureate, I've had the incredible opportunity to delve deeper into themes of community connection, personal growth, and the interplay between human life and our natural environment. In essence, my work is about weaving together the threads of our local culture, the natural beauty that surrounds us, and our personal narratives. Through my poetry, I strive to create a rich tapestry that reflects both the unique character of our community and the universal aspects of the human condition. It's a journey of continuous discovery, and I'm grateful for every moment of it.

### **Contributions to the Poetry Community**

I've had the privilege of immersing myself in the vibrant world of poetry, both as an organizer and participant in numerous events that celebrate the written word. My journey as a poet and educator has led me to take on various roles within the literary community, each offering unique opportunities to share my passion and inspire others. One of my most cherished

responsibilities is serving as the first Poet Laureate of Coconut Creek, a position I've held since September 2022. This appointment has allowed me to bridge the gap between poetry and the public, organizing workshops and events that bring the beauty of verse to our community.

In my two years of service to the community, I have coordinated or been part of twenty-nine events or activities either directly related to or stemming from my position as laureate. I've shared 316 poems in various forms of publication, and I edited and published one anthology, *Poetry in the Park: Nature of Place*, highlighting the poems and photos of participants of the "Poetry in the Park: Nature of Place" writing workshop series offered through a Broward County Cultural Division Individual Artist Grant where I led participants through writing techniques that help them connect with nature and express their creativity. These sessions not only fostered a love for poetry but also created a space for community members to share their voices and experiences.

Similarly, working with the diverse populations within our community resonates with me. In January of 2023, I was invited to speak with the members of the Coconut Creek Senior Center located at the city's Community Center complex to discuss how to analyze and interpret poems. I also was granted the opportunity on May 24, 2023, to visit Mr. Gutierrez' eighth grade social studies class at Lyon's Creek Middle School to teach them how to write poems, which they later shared at the city's Juneteenth event. There have been numerous events and activities that stand out in my tenure as laureate, but the one that has touched me the most due to its impact on the community is the Little Free Library I had built and installed at the Winston Park Nature Center. It has become an institution of its own because the citizens of all ages, background, reading levels, and interest of genre who daily engage with the "book box" when taking a book they share a book for their neighbors to enjoy thus promote literacy throughout the community.

My involvement in the poetry scene in the last few years also extends to collaborations with other esteemed poets and literary figures. For instance, I recently co-led a poetry workshop with Richard Blanco, the First Miami-Dade Poet Laureate and President Obama's Inaugural Poet, as part of the Coral Springs Festival of the Arts. We also collaborated on October 23, 2023, on a cross-county match up of political figures to recite their Favorite Poem and to explain their reasoning for their love behind them. These collaborations not only enrich my own practice but also bring diverse perspectives and experiences to our local literary community, inspiring participants to explore new forms and themes in their writing.

Additionally, the relationships I've brought into my position with the city have been fortified. I have offered numerous poetry events at the North Regional Broward County Library over the years, and more so during the past two years. The library events, like many others I organize, aim to demonstrate the power of poetry in processing emotions and connecting with others through shared experiences with diverse populations. As I continue my work within various poetry organizations and the broader literary community, my goal remains constant: to promote poetry as a vital form of expression, accessible to all, and capable of enriching our lives in countless ways among the residents of Coconut Creek.

For specific information about my contributions to the poetry community, please see the list of items I completed in the last two years serving as poet laureate as well as my Curriculum Vitae found within the Additional Resources section.

### **Goals**

I am deeply honored and excited to have served as the First Poet Laureate for the City of Coconut Creek, the first of any municipality in Florida, and I look forward to continuing in this position. This role represents a unique opportunity to blend my passion for poetry with my

commitment to community engagement and arts education advocacy. My interest in continuing as the Coconut Creek Poet Laureate stems from a desire to make the arts more vibrant and accessible in our community. As an educator and advocate for the arts and education, I believe that poetry has the power to connect people, inspire creativity, and shed light on the shared experiences that make our city unique, which is precisely what this art has done for me. By continuing in this role, I hope to carry on the platform I've created where the voices of our diverse community can be heard and celebrated through the medium of poetry.

There are three projects I hope to execute in the upcoming laureate cycle. One that I can speak about that is already in development is the initiation of the poetry writing group Poets @ Heart, that begins August 7 at the North Regional Broward County Library in Coconut Creek. Twice a month, poets will meet to share poems they've created within a critique group. The second project I am hoping to launch during my next appointment is the "Poem du Jour: Verse Desserts." I would like to collaborate with Coconut Creek businesses and eateries in having a featured poem as a menu insert or a table card written by local artists to integrate local restaurants into the Creek's cultural identity, thus celebrating their establishments within the art and culture context. Finally, I aim to secure another grant with the Broward Cultural Division to invite Soldier-Poet Brian Turner, Lannon Literary Fellow and Guggenheim Fellow, here to Coconut Creek to offer a series of veterans-centered events and activities in collaboration with the re-dedication of the city's upcoming redeveloped Veterans Park. Coconut Creek holds a special place in my heart, and I see these projects as opportunities to work as a poet of place. I want to capture the essence of our city - its natural beauty, its people, and its spirit through my work. I aim to foster a deeper appreciation for our local environment and culture, encouraging residents to see their surroundings through a new, poetic lens.

As a published poet and experienced educator, I bring a wealth of knowledge and skills to this role. I'm eager to use these abilities to develop programs and initiatives that will engage people of all ages in the art of poetry. Whether through workshops, public readings, or collaborative projects, I hope to inspire others to explore their own creativity and find their poetic voice. Ultimately, my interest in becoming the Coconut Creek Poet Laureate is rooted in the belief that poetry can be a powerful tool for community building and personal growth. I see this role as a chance to shine a light on our community through the arts, creating a legacy of creativity and expression that will enrich our city for years to come. I am thrilled to embark on this journey and look forward to weaving the stories and experiences of Coconut Creek into the fabric of our shared poetic narrative.

### **Video**

A video that highlights my work as Poet Laureate can be found on my YouTube channel, @LauraMcDermottMatheric, entitled:

Laura McDermott Matheric reads “A Scene From Veterans Park” and “Remembering is Giving”

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jjt1pDGbkls&t=7s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jjt1pDGbkls&t=7s)

Other works of mine can be found on my YouTube Channel or on the City of Coconut Creek’s Poet Laureate webpage, social medias, or their YouTube Channel.

## Poems

Poem on Parks shared at the May 29, 2024, Memorial Day Event:

### A Scene in Veterans Park

A flag unfurls  
in the airless breeze,  
ripples of stars and stripes,  
whispering prayers in the quiet dawn,  
a ballet of shadows among the oaks  
who stand guard in silent rows.  
If you listen closely, you can hear  
dog tags jingle like windchimes' song  
a melody sways as sunlight pirouettes  
through the branches  
over a sun-kissed earth.  
Remember those who  
surrendered their tomorrows for ours.  
As poppies bloom crimson,  
we circle the flagpole  
speaking not only of the loss,  
but also legacy.  
Sorrow's gravity pulls,  
but gratitude blossoms eternally,  
a buoyancy through histories.  
The first scarlet streak of sunrise  
paints the eastern tree line  
as crocuses blaze crested drifts,  
purple and yellow bright against the fading white.  
A morning dove's solitary coo  
breaks the silence in a melancholy salute  
to those fallen, those sacrificed  
for the greening renaissance about to begin.  
the air whispers a warm breath of earth,  
loamy and rich with the decay of last year's growth.  
a single raindrop drums –  
nature's soldiers are mustering for a new offensive.  
Life's fresh recruits mass in greater numbers every day,  
marching in with birdsong's battle hymn.  
they honor the perished of renewal,  
salute the fallen by blooming again.

Poem on Butterflies shared as the October 2022 Quarterly Poem

**Butterfly Haiku**

Summer sun setting  
on the horizon. Look! A  
Monarch Butterfly.

Orange fades to black.  
The nightingale's sweet music  
trills through the silence.

Song blooms like jasmine –  
the scent chases the fat moon  
through the eastern sky.

Vapors trail that sky  
in the dance on the Monarch;  
swirling, jagged steps.

The moon's dance leads west.  
Together they dip behind  
fluttering monarchs.

Having slept, the sun  
spans her wings in early hours.  
black becomes orange.



Poem on Quality of Life, Inclusivity, Hope and Small-Town Sentiments  
shared as the October 2023 Quarterly Poem

### Book Box

At the mouth of the thousand-foot trail,  
a library hums in a thicket of winds  
through cypress trees and giant ferns,  
an enormous choir of authors  
singing inside their covers.  
Clancy next to Chaucer,  
who is next to Seuss,  
who is next to Steele,  
who is next to Dahl,  
a cacophony of music,  
one gigantic chord of language.  
Beauty spills out of this cedar box  
the way wildfires burn,  
butterflies wild the wind,  
and the way the Coconut Creek sunsets glow,  
loud songs for many quiet hearts.

I hear the mother reading to her son  
on a bench in the distance, a book about  
planes and sharing and community.

I see a girl lying at the mouth of slide  
to the rocket ship play yard  
feet dangling in space,  
a Mae Jemison bio  
floating over her head  
as she sing-songs the words  
aloud on the pages.

I taste the excitement  
of the father of twins as he thumbs  
his way through a  
hot rod mag, distracted from  
the cat and mouse chase  
of his children,  
a shriek of youth just out of reach.

I feel every breath the universe breathes.  
The smell of the park's flowers reminds us  
why the rain is necessary

and proves the need for a shared book,  
forever obsessed with the wind's song  
dancing through the trees. We may never  
know the power of a moment until it becomes a memory.

We read ourselves away from ourselves,  
not skipping chapters,  
reading every line,  
meeting every character,  
the stories keep evolving.

I can tell you a thing as sure as the sun and rain  
with the same energy this poet notices  
the colorful sounds of the flora and fauna;  
this city's pages hold lyrics  
within the galaxies within our hearts.

Poem on Quality of Life, Inclusivity, Smart Growth and Small-Town Sentiments  
shared at the August 25, 2022, Poet Laureate Appointment

**Ode to My Muse, the City's Unofficial Social Media Pages: an Ars Poetica**

~for my Coconut Creek neighbors

Some days, the pen dances on paper.  
Others, I must drag the cursor across each line.  
My poems rise from community forums,  
in the sea of posts about brake lights congesting Lyons Road  
and in the Publix check out because Miss Pam  
is longer there, and neither is her aisle 3 register,  
now replaced by rows of self-checkout machines.

They're found in the hummed song of 3am choppers  
pinged to the beat of the message board notification  
that inquires about their flutter, and that TikTok rhythm  
of a wheelie-popping tween bicycle gang marauding through town.

They'll slither in like that snake thread under venomous suspicion,  
and tiptoe by like the North Creek coyote caught in the Ring Camera gaze,  
or in that stalking prance of the neighbor's free-range cat going after Egyptian Geese.

You can spot these poems in the sunrise photos over Lake Julie  
and the crescent moon treescapes nesting amongst the branches of Sabal Pines Park.  
You'll see them in the sticky-faced cotton-candied candid festival selfies,  
the videos of cha-cha'ing hips swaying to the beat of last month's cover band,  
and the snapshots of the tchotchkes bought at the Hometown Market.

You'll know them the way one knows the unpredictable flight of the Monarch,  
or the unmistakable shrill from the lakeside limpkin claiming his territory.  
They'll be found in the misspelled complaints about city policies  
with self-incriminating admission of violations.

I search for the namesake waterway of Coconut Creek.  
I collect these poems from the rain barrels distributed last Arbor Day.  
When asked, I'll say a poem has the same number of meters as the Monarch Hill Landfill.

I'll tell you these morsel truths, but you'll only remember the flavor –  
like a finely ground seasoning, just a dash.


My findings will ignite my poems until they set fire to my pen  
with that feel when exasperation hits enter to post –  
when thoughts, misspelled words, brains, heart,  
and keystrokes collide into one.

I put this pen to paper  
to write the words about this city  
my voice can't deliver alone.

I need my community to write these.

**Declaration**

I hereby declare that the information provided in this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: 

Date: July 1, 2024

## References

Letters of support from list are included within the Additional Resources section:

Robery Ayen  
773-814-9538  
robertayen@gmail.com  
relationship: fellow Coconut Creek resident, poetry enthusiast

Jason Cheseborough  
954-560-3377  
Jsinslayer77@aol.com  
relationship: fellow Coconut Creek resident, poet

Dr. David Kirby  
Robert O. Lawton Distinguished Professor, The Florida State University  
850-345-8370  
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relationship: mentor in poetry, editor

Anthea M. Pennant-Wallace  
Associate Vice President  
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954-201-8458  
apennant@broward.edu  
relationship: mentor in leadership, classmate

Richard Ryal  
Adjunct Professor of English  
richryalmss@gmail.com  
954-303-5441  
relationship: mentor in poetry, editor, best friend

Hayley St. John-Ayre  
Regional Programming Coordinator, Broward County Library  
954-201-2657  
hstjohnayre@broward.org  
relationship: collaborator, supervisor of poetry projects at the North Regional Library

Anthony Torres, LCSW  
Contract/Grants Administrator, Broward County Cultural Division  
352-279-2336  
mranthony.torres@yahoo.com  
relationship: collaborator, supervisor of Poetry in the Park grant

### **Additional Resources**

- Seven Letters of Support from Members of the Community
- Notable Achievements During Tenure as Poet Laureate 2022-2024
- Curriculum Vitae



**The Florida State University**  
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-1580

*Department of English*

David Kirby  
Robert O. Lawton Distinguished Professor

Phone/fax: 850-345-8370  
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June 17, 2024

City Commissioners  
Coconut Creek Government Center  
4800 West Copans Road  
Coconut Creek, FL 33063-3879

Dear Commissioners:

I'm writing to enthusiastically recommend Ms. Laura McDermott Matheric as your next poet laureate.

It seems as though I've known Laura since forever, or at least from the summer of 2003, when she was in an undergraduate class of mine here at Florida State. She was my breakthrough student that summer, and if you've had any classroom experience, I bet you know what I mean: a handful of students can't be helped, probably the majority doesn't need your help, and then there is the group that you're really there to teach, the three or four who have the basic equipment and skills and are on the verge of putting it all together.

Laura McDermott, as I knew her then, was such a one. It took her all of three poems to get going: the first one was okay, the second was about the same, and then she took off. Poems three, four and thereafter were the kinds of poems that get published: smart, funny, exuberant, yet exquisitely crafted. And she's just gotten better since, which is no surprise, considering that she studied with the best at Florida International, got her MFA there, and has been writing and publishing while working fulltime and being a wife and mom as well.

As you know, Laura is a woman of immense charm, poise, and maturity. She's at the perfect point in her life to continue the good work she has done for Coconut Creek already; she still has the energy of her youth but also the experience to work wonders for you.

And look at her track record. You understand, of course, that being a poet laureate is about one thing, and that is teaching. The laureate has to be an educator par excellence, and there's none better than Laura Matheric, as the evidence shows. She was the 2014 Wells Fargo Endowed Teaching Chair Award Recipient at her school, and then again eight years later the 2022 Robert Elmore Family Endowed Teaching Chair Award



Recipient as well as the 2022 Distinguished Professor for the Association of Florida Colleges.

My heavens! Most of us career professors receive either no teaching awards and maybe one if we're lucky, but she has racked up three already, and her career is far from over. In fact, it's about to get better as she finishes her work to get a Ph.D. in Higher Educational Leadership and Research Methodology at Florida Atlantic University. She'll keep on learning, teaching, educating, and, most importantly, poetizing, and at every level. The work she has done for Broward County and Coconut Creek includes classes and workshops and presentations and events of all kinds, and as we're in regular touch, I assure you there are a lot more where those came from.

In other words, she's got a long, long way to go to complete the journey she began with me. What else can I say? You know her already. You know Laura Matheric is a breath of fresh air, an ambitious and talented writer, and one whose eagerness to share her love of poetry with others is contagious. She's a people magnet; I've never met anyone who doesn't think so. She's a self-sustaining operation. Laura's got the juice flowing, and there's plenty to spare.

As I say, I've had my eye on Laura McDermott Matheric for nigh on to twenty-one years now. If I'd had to fill out a Yelp review on her back then, I'd have given her five stars out of five. Today, I'd make it six. You're lucky to have her, and I urge you to keep her.

Yours sincerely,

*David Kirby*

David Kirby  
Robert O. Lawton Distinguished Professor of English

**WILLIS HOLCOMBE CENTER**  
111 East Las Olas Blvd.  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

June 15, 2024

**INSTITUTE FOR  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**  
111 East Las Olas Blvd.  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

**A. HUGH ADAMS  
CENTRAL CAMPUS**  
3501 S.W. Davie Road  
Davie, FL 33314

**NORTH CAMPUS**  
1000 Coconut Creek Blvd.  
Coconut Creek, FL 33066

**JUDSON A. SAMUELS  
SOUTH CAMPUS**  
7200 Hollywood/Pines Blvd.  
Pembroke Pines, FL 33024

**PINES CENTER**  
16957 Sheridan St.  
Pembroke Pines, FL 33331

**WESTON CENTER**  
4205 Bonaventure Blvd.  
Weston, FL 33332

**MIRAMAR AUTOMOTIVE/  
MARINE CENTER**  
7451 Riviera Blvd.  
Miramar, FL 33023

**MIRAMAR TOWN CENTER**  
2050 Civic Center Place  
Miramar, FL 33025

**TIGERTAIL LAKE CENTER**  
580 Gulfstream Way  
Dania Beach, FL 33004

Dear Selection Committee,

I have known your current poet laureate, Laura McDermott Matheric, for two decades. We met in graduate school at FIU's Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing program as fellow poets. I immediately began helping her with public poetry events she created to promote our writing art to the wider community than just the university. I was consistently impressed by her as a person, as a writer, and for her firm commitment to engaging production values that made her poetry events popular within the larger Miami-Dade cultural community.

Laura and I have continued working together. We share our work with each other before releasing pieces into the publishing world, I work gladly as her editor, and we are colleagues as English professors at Broward College. Though I'm no longer a Coconut Creek resident, we remain in constant communication and get together for tea and professional development far more often than I do with any others in my writing circle because Laura and I share a commitment to a public role for poetry in specific and all the other arts as well.

I've closely followed Laura's career as the poet laureate of Coconut Creek. I'm impressed with the way she took a narrowly-defined position and expanded it to include public readings, community writing workshops, and other events despite her demanding commitments to her family, her extensive duties at Broward College, and her current pursuit of a doctoral educational degree at FAU. She is a powerhouse who keeps her commitments religiously, always attentive to the audiences she reaches each time. And now she is developing a couple of publishing projects that will showcase the Coconut Creek community and its aspiring writers.

Laura is all-in when she commits to any responsibility. In the long time she's been in my life, I've never known her to initiate something and not complete it. She published a book of poems, no small achievement these days, and is producing a second publishable manuscript. She has a network not only of fellow Florida writers but also nationally respected poets. Her poetry speaks for a wide audience, which allows her to connect with many people who had not felt any strong interest in poetry until they meet Laura in any of her professional roles. And something I have huge respect for is that as bright and performative her public presence often is, she stands on a foundation of professionalism, taking full responsibility and care for how she reaches her audience.

It would be easy to write far more about Laura's compelling constellation of virtues and personal drive that have empowered her to take what seemed originally to be a mostly ceremonial role of poet laureate and transform that into a strong continual service for elevating The Creek's cultural resources in the wider public eye. She has collaborated with various writers and other artists not only within Coconut Creek but also across the county and in collaborations with parallel representatives in Miami-Dade County. Almost all of these efforts entirely originated with her personal value commitment to give the arts a stronger voice in South Florida and Coconut Creek a more eloquent presence in the state.

Laura McDermott Matheric is a dynamic presence in all her undertakings. She has the personality and determination to make what could have been a local footnote into an undeniable presence in her home community and the wider area. It's hard to imagine what would happen to Coconut Creek's poet laureate position if a less developed, less talented writer with less drive and commitment were to take her place. I encourage you to make the most of her contributions for as long as you can.

Cheers,  
*Richard Ryal*  
Richard Ryal Toumey  
[richryalmss@gmail.com](mailto:richryalmss@gmail.com)  
954-303-5441

June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024

City of Coconut Creek  
City Commissioners and City Manager  
4800 W. Copans Road  
Coconut Creek, FL 33063

Re: Letter of Support for Laura McDermott Matheric

Dear Mayor, Commissioners and City Manager of Coconut Creek,

I commend you for establishing a poet laureate position in the city two years ago, and I applaud you for appointing Laura McDermott Matheric as the city's first poet.

As the Associate Vice President of Adult and Community Education at Broward College, I have taken notice of the strides Professor McDermott has made to promote literacy through education and its accessibility through this position of laureate. She has made this position not just about what she can do as a poet writing and reciting her own original poems, but more so about what she can help residents do as writers. McDermott is a teaching artist. She empowers others and does this by fostering a community and developing a network throughout the city, county, and even the country thus establishing a cross-disciplinary that weaves in multi-sectors of various organizations. She's developed a curriculum that is not only academically sound in the written word, but one that also helps participants find their own artistic voice.

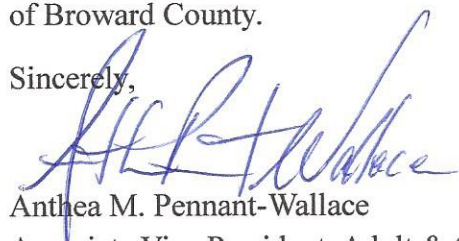
Additionally, as a classmate of Professor McDermott in the Ph.D. program at Florida Atlantic University's Higher Educational Leadership and Research Methodology, I have witnessed how she takes the material we are learning in our doctoral studies and uses her experiences in the laureate position and weaves them together. This laureate position provides a sound example for her theoretical application. What I've noticed in her programming with the city is that Professor McDermott has brought value to your residents. She is also in a consistent state of professional development, for she is in turn applying the lessons learned in the Ph.D. program and other poetry conferences and workshops into this laureate position to meet the needs of your Coconut Creek community.

As you move through the application process for the city's poet, I hope you will take inventory of the added value Laura McDermott Matheric has brought into your city through community education noting the attention other outside entities are now giving Coconut Creek because of these initiatives, and then I trust you will give Professor McDermott the opportunity to continue

to grow this laureate program she has laid the foundation for, which will allow for partnership to flourish and the established activities to have forward momentum.

I know what Professor McDermott is capable of as a colleague at Broward College. I know her unwavering belief in community education as I sit beside her in class at Florida Atlantic University. I know that she will continue to apply all that into this laureateship. And I am certain she will be the right applicant to do that. Therefore, I am writing to extend my support of Laura McDermott Matheric's continuation as the First Poet Laureate of Coconut Creek, the first of any municipality of Broward County.

Sincerely,



Anthea M. Pennant-Wallace

Associate Vice President, Adult & Community Education



June 16, 2024

Dear City of Coconut Creek,

I am writing to extend my support of Laura McDermott Matheric's continuation as the First Poet Laureate of Coconut Creek, the first of any municipality of Broward County.

I first worked with Laura a decade ago when she was organizing a veterans' project within the community that involved poets, artists, and veterans. How she fostered collaboration with numerous counterparts to make a cohesive festival of activities was amazing. I can attest to her work ethic to event planning, her keen eye to write and deliver academic quality poetry, and her ability to cultivate community through the written word. Through the course of several professional encounters since, these attributes became more apparent through numerous literary engagements that solidified her stature as a leader within the poetry community locally and nationally. She is well respected throughout the poetry community.

As the Grants Administrator for the Broward County Cultural Division, I am pleased to be working with Laura who won one of the Division's Individual Artist Grants. The fact that she chose to deliver this poetry project, Poetry in The Parks: Nature of Place, in three parks of Coconut Creek confirms her dedication to the city, her appreciation for its natural habitats, and her desire to engage residents in her hometown. She has a clear desire to make art accessibility to all members of the community and her passion to help people find their own artistic self is evident. She selflessly gives of herself to make others grow in themselves.

As you deliberate to choose the poet for the next cycle, I encourage you to examine Laura not just as an artist, but also to look at the foundation she's only just begun laying the groundwork for. She brings value into the community. The relationship she's established with the citizens, the libraries, the cultural divisions, and other professional poets in the nation specifically as laureate are items that need to be grown even further, so that this position of laureate is built into the fabric of the community for years to come. Laura is clearly the one to make that happen.

Sincerely,

Anthony Torres, LCSW

Executive Director, Combat Hippiers

Contract/Grants Administrator, Broward County Cultural Division

June 17, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to highly commend Laura McDermott Matheric for her outstanding contributions to our community through her work as the Poet Laureate of Coconut Creek. During her time as the Poet Laureate, Laura has demonstrated exceptional talent, dedication, and passion for poetry, greatly enriching our cultural environment.

In April 2023, in recognition of National Poetry Month, Laura conducted a series of four workshops titled "Writing Poetry Portraits of Our Life." These workshops were transformative for those who attended. Laura provided a safe and supportive environment for self-expression by guiding participants through various poetic forms and themes and encouraging them to explore and document their person experiences. The feedback from these workshops was overwhelmingly positive highlighting Laura's ability to foster creativity and connection through poetry.

Building on the success of the previous year, I invited Laura to present a workshop at our 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Tell Your Story. It's Your Write" event on February 24, 2024, at the North Regional/Broward College Library. This presentation was not only engaging and thought provoking but also left a lasting impact on all who attended. I received numerous requests from attendees asking for more poetry events at the library which is testament to Laura's ability to inspire and motivate others to share their own stories through writing poetry.

On March 10, 2024, Laura presented along with Richard Blanco, the fifth Presidential Inaugural Poet in U.S. History, "Learn from the Laureates: A Poetry Craft Chat during which they shared invaluable insights into the art of poetry. Their expertise and approachable teaching style made the session both educational and enjoyable for poets of all skill levels. Participants left with a deeper understanding of poetic techniques and a renewed enthusiasm for their own writing.

For National Poetry Month in April 2024, I invited Laura to present a series of 4 workshops at the North Regional/Broward College Library. "Writing to Connect Us" emphasized the power of poetry to bring people together, bridge gaps and create understanding. Again, Laura's thoughtful and inclusive approach ensured that every participant felt heard and valued, further solidifying her as a well regarded and influential figure in our community.

The Poet Laureate of Coconut Creek, Laura McDermott Matheric has positively impacted the community of Coconut Creek through her efforts to promote and celebrate poetry. Her talent, generosity, and commitment to fostering a love of poetry in others is truly commendable. I have no doubt that she will continue to inspire those around her through her work.

Sincerely,

Hayley St.John-Ayre

Regional Programming Coordinator

Broward County Library

June 14, 2024

City of Coconut Creek Commissioners  
4800 West Copans Road  
Coconut Creek, Florida 33-63

Dear Commissioners and City Manager:

I am pleased to recommend the continued support of, Laura McDermott Matheric, our current City of Coconut Creek, Poet Laureate for another term. As a resident of Coconut Creek along with my partner and neighbors, we follow Ms. Matheric daily online and attend events she offers within the community. For instance, we follow her quarterly poems and the CREEKU on her professional poetry social media page, and several of us took part in her, Poets-On-Demand exhibition at the Butterfly Festival 2024. For myself, it was one of the main attractions of our city's annual Butterfly Festival. Watching the visiting poets typing away on vintage typewriters and even being able to participate with my descriptive prompts for a poem designed for me was an enlightening experience. We all received our poems via email tailored to the thoughts on our minds that day. We were all very impressed and the experience was one that left a lasting impression.

Additionally, one evening, my neighbor at Wynmoor showed me a photo he took and really enjoyed of a sunset from his window at his building in Granada. I asked him if I could submit it to Ms. Matheric for review. A few days later, she produced a Haiku poem much to our delight which we of course had to share with our friends right away. This warm gesture is something that a novice lover of poetry cannot put to words. The way she makes the community feel part of the arts and encourages us to express ourselves is something we need more of in this city.

Laura McDermott Matheric continued impact on our great city is a positive asset for all residents to enjoy. A daily positive affirmation that is tailored to all who read her works of art. Therefore, please accept my support of her continuing to being a much-needed impact through poetry within our community.

Kind regards,  
Robert Ayen  
2002 Granada Dr., F2  
Coconut Creek, Florida

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**Jason Cheseborough**

5300 NW 55th Blvd, Apt. 103  
Coconut Creek, FL  
(954)-560-3377  
[lunchbox7795@gmail.com](mailto:lunchbox7795@gmail.com)  
[jsinslayer77@aol.com](mailto:jsinslayer77@aol.com)

16th June 2025

**Coconut Creek City Commission**

4800 W. Copans Rd  
Coconut Creek, FL 33063

To whom it may concern,

Please accept this letter of recommendation for Laura McDermott Matheric, and her bid to remain the Poet Laureate of Coconut Creek.

I've always been interested in writing. It's something I'm fairly decent at, going back to high school and my brief time in community college. I had been wanting to get back into writing poetry after years off from it, due to no real inspiration. Well, I finally found that inspiration and wrote something. At the same time, I had received a CocøGram email about Creek having a poet laureate. Who knew? So on a whim, I attended an event Laura hosted, at the Rowe Activity Center in January 2023. Too shy to showher my work, I left the event and felt a missed opportunity.

That opportunity would come again shortly thereafter. I began to see her doing "Creeku" poetry: a haiku poem created by Laura, with a corresponding photograph taken somewhere in Coconut Creek, as the foundation of the haiku. She would then post these on social media. I go for walks anywhere from four to five times a week, usually along the 44 Lyons-Wiles-Winston Park Blvd corridor. On a whim, I sent her a picture. The next day, there was a haiku based on it on social media. The marriage of nature photography and poetry is beautiful; two great arts conjoined as one.



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As 2023 went on, Laura and I struck up a friendship over my photography, and her words. I kept my writing going, and attended workshops she's hosted that year, as well as 2024, to better hone my skills. She's taught me thoughts and concepts I never knew of before, as I'm someone who "shoots from the hip" when writing. I tend to write eulogies and ekphrastic poems. Two words I've never heard before meeting Laura.

Earlier this year, at her request, I was part of the Poem Depot Laura organized and ran, at the 2024 Butterfly Festival this past February. Laura, myself, and four other individuals wrote over 200 pieces of on demand poetry...on typewriters no less, to festival patrons who would fill out a form, and we'd write what they requested. The response was amazing from young and old. Some of the people who received these poems were instantly drawn to tears. As for myself, the event felt like a religious experience: our words moved people. And I couldn't have done it without Laura's guidance and love of the art of the written word.

So I say, in closing, art is important: be it sculpture, painting, dance, music, and certainly the literary arts. Poetry is a way to paint a picture in the reader's mind, to get them to think and feel a way maybe they didn't before. Through the city of Coconut Creek's commitment to the poetic arts, and Laura McDermott-Matheric, I have grown as a writer, and look to learn more from her, and to pass onto others what her being the city's Laureate has taught me.

Sincerely,

**Jason Cheseborough**

## Notable Achievements During Tenure as Poet Laureate 2022-2024

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY** Boca Raton, Florida May 2023 – Present  
*Doctor of Philosophy* – currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Higher Educational Leadership and Research Methodology

**BROWARD COUNTY CULTURAL DIVISION** Fort Lauderdale, Florida May 2024  
Recipient of an Individual Artist Grant to offer “Poetry in the Parks: Nature of Place” as a three-part workshop series in various parks throughout the city of Coconut Creek highlighting their natural habitat as a mean source to write poetry about.

**THE ASSOCIATION OF FLORIDA COLLEGES** Association of Florida Colleges November 2022  
Named the 2022 Distinguished Professor for the state of Florida by the Association of Florida Colleges

### EVENTS

**BROWARD COUNTY CULTURAL DIVISION** Coconut Creek, Florida Summer 2024  
Recipient of an Individual Artist Grant to offer “Poetry in the Parks: Nature of Place” as a three-part workshop series in various parks throughout the city of Coconut Creek highlighting their natural habitat as a mean source to write poetry about.

**CITY OF COCONUT CREEK** Coconut Creek, Florida May 27, 2024  
Featured poet at the Memorial Day Ceremony sponsored by the City of Coconut Creek, Florida

**THE NORTH REGIONAL BROWARD COUNTY LIBRARY** Coconut Creek, Florida  
Featured poetry instructor of a four-part for National Poetry Month workshop entitled "Writing to Connect us with the Emotions: Poetry of Pathos."

**World of Brigadeiro: Participant Reading** April 24, 2024  
Organized a poetry reading event sponsored by the North Regional Broward County Library and the City of Coconut Creek, Florida

**Lettering the Love Letter** April 15, 2024  
Explored strategies for crafting passionate and precise poems of the various definitions of love.

**Embracing Grief with Gratitude** April 10, 2024  
The workshop explored how grief is a moving and illuminating source for poetry.

**Composing from Compassion** April 1, 2024  
Workshop that examined how poets make sense of the world, express their deepest emotions, create healthy coping strategies for deep personal needs or articulate an overwhelming sense of joy.

**THE CORAL SPRINGS COCONUT CREEK REGION CHAMBER** Spring 2024  
Guest lecturer for the Chamber of Commerce Biz Academy. Taught a four-part series entitled “AI and the New Business Reality for Coral Springs and Coconut Creek.

**MY FAVORITE POEMS CROSS-COUNTY MATCH UP** Aventura, Florida October 21, 2023  
Organized a reading as part of a twenty-person panel “favorite poems” reading in collaboration with the Office of Poet in the Miami-Dade County office of Mayor Daniela Levine Cava in collaboration with President Obama’s Inaugural Poet, Richard Blanco.

**THE SUPPLIER DIVERSITY EXCHANGE** Statewide Event, Florida September 29, 2023  
Featured guest poet at the annual partnership conference between Broward College Office of Supplier Relations & Diversity and The Florida Department of Management Services Office of Supplier Diversity.

<b>CITY OF COCONUT CREEK</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	June 16, 2023
Organized featured student-poets at the Juneteenth event sponsored by the City of Coconut Creek, Florida.		
<b>CITY OF COCONUT CREEK</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	May 29, 2023
Featured poet at the Memorial Day Ceremony sponsored by the City of Coconut Creek, Florida		
<b>LYONS CREEK MIDDLE SCHOOL</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	May 24, 2023
Featured poet in Mr. Oliver Gutierrez' 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies class, teaching the students how to write poems for Juneteenth.		
<b>WORLD OF BIGADERIO</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	April 26, 2023
Organized a poetry reading event sponsored by the North Regional Broward County Library and the City of Coconut Creek, Florida.		
<b>THE NORTH REGIONAL BROWARD COUNTY LIBRARY</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	
Featured poetry instructor of a four-part National Poetry Month workshop entitled "Writing Poetry Portraits of Our Lives."		
<b>Poems that Bear Witness</b>		April 12, 2023
Explored how poetry archives historic experiences and developed writing strategies to clarify our own truths about history.		
<b>Poems of Place</b>		April 10, 2023
Explored writings poems about various places that map our lives.		
<b>Poems about Family and Its Utterly Unique Bonds</b>		April 5, 2023
Explored how families are as complicated as the individuals that make them up		
<b>Write What You Know</b>		April 3, 2023
Examined how poets make sense of the world, express their deepest emotions, create healthy coping strategies for deep personal needs or articulate an overwhelming sense of joy.		
<b>BROWARD COLLEGE</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	March 16, 2023
Featured poet alongside Ashley M. Jones, Poet Laureate of Alabama, as part of the 2023 AHCD SpringFest event titled, "An Evening with America's Poet Laureates: A Virtual Panel."		
<b>THE SENIOR CENTER</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	January 19, 2023
Featured poetry lecturer on the art of poetry entitled "What's in Your Poem?" sponsored by the City of Coconut Creek, Florida		
<b>CITY OF COCONUT CREEK</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	December 9, 2022
Featured poet at the "Jazz Under the Stars" event sponsored by the City of Coconut Creek, Florida		
<b>CITY OF COCONUT CREEK</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	November 11, 2022
Featured poet at the Veterans Day Ceremony sponsored by the City of Coconut Creek, Florida		
<b>CITY OF COCONUT CREEK</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	August 25, 2022
Poetry reading and appointment as First Poet Laureate of the City of Coconut Creek, Florida, first of any municipality in Broward County, Florida		
<b>CITY OF COCONUT CREEK</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	May 30, 2022
Featured poet at the Memorial Day Ceremony sponsored by the City of Coconut Creek, Florida		

## PUBLICATIONS

- WILD ROOF JOURNAL: Issues #27** September 1, 2024  
"Within"
- CREE-KU** July 1-31, 2024  
Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of July published on social media.  
#Creeku2023
- CITY OF COCONUT CREEK'S POET LAUREATE PAGE** July 2024  
Quarterly poem entitled "Independence Day," written about the City of Coconut Creek, Florida
- POETRY IN THE PARKS: POETRY OF PLACE** BiblioBoard, Broward County Libraries July 20, 2024  
Editor of an anthology, a collection of poetry and artwork, from participants who attended the Broward County Cultural Division Individual Artist Grant supported project, "Poetry in the Parks: Nature of Place."
- CREE-KU** June 1-30, 2024  
Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of June published on social media.  
#Creeku2023
- PURPLE INK PRESS** June 1, 2024  
"Half February: Classroom 1216, 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts"
- THE CLOSED EYE OPEN: Issue XI** April 1, 2024  
"Magellanic"
- CREE-KU** March 1-31, 2024  
Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of March published on social media.  
#Creeku2023
- THE SAD GIRL DIARIES** March 17, 2024  
"Check, Mate"
- THE DEWDROP** March 10, 2024  
"Flame and Draft"
- CREE-KU** February 1-29, 2024  
Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of February published on social media.  
#Creeku2023
- CREE-KU** January 1-31, 2024  
Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of January published on social media.  
#Creeku2023
- CREE-KU** August 1-31, 2023  
Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of August, published on social media.  
#Creeku2023
- CHAMELEON CHIMERA: AN ANTHOLOGY OF FLORIDA POETS** July 15, 2023  
"Half February: Classroom 1216, 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts"
- CITY OF COCONUT CREEK'S POET LAUREATE PAGE** July 2023  
Coconut Creek, Florida Quarterly poem entitled "Within," written about the City of Coconut Creek, Florida
- CREE-KU** April 1-30, 2023  
Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of April, published on social media.  
#Creeku2023

***CITY OF COCONUT CREEK'S POET LAUREATE PAGE***

November 2023

Coconut Creek, Florida Quarterly poem entitled ""The Season's First Golden Trumpet,"" written about the City of Coconut Creek, Florida

***CREE-KU***

January 1-31, 2023

Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of January, published on social media. #Creeku2023

***CITY OF COCONUT CREEK'S POET LAUREATE PAGE***

January 2023

Quarterly poem entitled ""Butterfly Poem,"" written about the City of Coconut Creek, Florida

***CREE-KU***

December 1-31, 2022

Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of December, published on social media. #Creeku2022

***CITY OF COCONUT CREEK'S POET LAUREATE PAGE***

November 2023

Poem entitled ""Our Baggage: a Creekside Collaborative Poem,"" written in collaboration with military veterans who live in the City of Coconut Creek, Florida

***CREE-KU***

September 1-30, 2022

Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of September, published on social media. #Creeku2022

**LAURA MCDERMOTT**  
**3906 Northwest 56 Street**  
**Coconut Creek, Florida 33073**  
LauraMcDermottMatheric@gmail.com  
954-756-1117

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● Educator ● Poet ● Literary Event Planner ●

A poet with more than twenty years of event planning experience and nineteen years of teaching experience in developmental to advanced/honors level writing in such areas as composition, creative writing, literature and business writing; tutoring various genres of writing, as well as learned pedagogical skills for high school and collegiate level writing; and a completion of a college composition practicum and a college creative writing practicum from Florida International University (FIU). Demonstration of capabilities in classroom management in both a traditional and an online community by establishing a creative environment, implementing lesson plans and conducting classroom activities from freshman level to senior level writing, as well as literature and leadership. Gained business experience in diverse fields including event planning, professional development, editing and publishing, and other areas related to the literary arts. Previously served as a Senior Instructional Designer for the Title V I-Nest grant and has been a Professor of English at Broward College since August 2010 while also serving as the Dual Enrollment Faculty Coordinator since 2020. Received recognition for accomplishments as the 2008 Conference on College Composition and Communication Professional Equity Project Grant Recipient, a finalist for the 2016 Professor of the Year award, and a six-time nominee for the Endowed Teaching Chair Award of Broward College, ultimately being named the 2014 Wells Fargo Endowed Teaching Chair Award Recipient, and then again eight years later as the 2022 Robert Elmore Family Endowed Teaching Chair Award Recipient. Also named the 2022 Distinguished Professor for the Association of Florida Colleges. Involved with numerous community organizations including founding the Orange Island Arts Foundation in 2014 and is the President of the Women’s Club of Coconut Creek 2021-2024. First book of poetry, *Visions on Alligator Alley: an Ekphrastic Story in Verse*, was released by Lominy Books in 2015. She is pursuing a Ph.D. in Higher Educational Leadership and Research Methodology at Florida Atlantic University, and currently serves as the first Poet Laureate for the City of Coconut Creek, Florida, first of any municipality in Broward County.

### **EDUCATION**

<b>FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY</b> <i>Doctor of Philosophy</i> – currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Higher Educational Leadership and Research Methodology	Boca Raton, Florida	May 2023 – present
<b>FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY</b> <i>Master of Fine Arts</i>	Miami, Florida	April 2007
	English – Creative Writing: Concentration in poetry	
<b>FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY</b> <i>Bachelor of Arts</i>	Tallahassee, Florida	April 2004
	Major: English – Creative Writing, Minors: Business and Education	

### **INSTRUCTIONAL EXPERIENCE**

<b>BROWARD COLLEGE</b> <i>Department of English and Journalism</i> Tenured Faculty Professor of English Full-time Temporary Instructor Full-time Temporary Instructor Part-time Instructor	Pembroke Pines, Florida	August 2010 – present Spring 2010 Fall 2009 Spring 2007 – Summer 2009
Regularly teach five or six courses a fall and spring semester as well as summer terms that are typically blended on campus, synchronous or asynchronous online. Such courses are ENC0017, ENC1101, ENC1102, LIT2000, CRW1001 and CRW1300. Currently serving as the Dual Enrollment Faculty Coordinator for high school teachers instructing general education courses. Also served as the Alpha Delta Rho chapter advisor of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society housed on the South campus.		

- FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY** Miami, Florida Summer 2006 – Fall 2010  
*School of Arts and Science – Department of Public Administration*  
 As a part-time instructor, taught one online section of Personal Growth and Organizational Development and twenty-two sections of Communications Skills for Policy and Management, including web-enhanced and fully online sections, as well as designed and implemented writing courses to meet the specific needs of newly promoted police sergeants, fire lieutenants, and civilians who work for the Broward County Sheriff’s Office.
- FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY** Miami, Florida Fall 2006 – December 2010  
*School of Arts and Sciences – Department of English*  
 As a part-time instructor, taught six web-enhanced section Introduction to Creative Writing and three sections of Composition, including designing and implementing a course titled ENC 2301, “Writing for Transfer Students.”
- JOHNSON AND WALES UNIVERSITY** North Miami, Florida Fall 2008 – August 2010  
*College of Arts and Sciences*  
 As a part-time instructor, taught three sections of Introduction to Literary Genres and three sections of Freshman Composition.
- THE ART INSTITUTE OF FORT LAUDERDALE** Fort Lauderdale, Florida Fall 2008 – Spring 2009  
*General Education Department*  
 As a part-time instructor, taught two sections of Freshman Composition.
- FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY** Miami, Florida Summer 2004 – Spring 2007  
*Graduate Teaching Assistant*
- Creative Writing Program’s Study Abroad Trip to Ireland – *Assistant Director*  
 Developed promotional campaigns and coordinated travel plans
  - Online Writing Lab – *Promotions Assistant / Writing Tutor*  
 Provided tutoring, coordinate and facilitate in-class mini-presentations
  - University Learning Center – *Writing Tutor*  
 Provided tutoring, enrichment programs, and mini presentations to struggling writers
  - Freshman Interest Groups – *Assistant Program Coordinator*  
 Coordinated learning communities for incoming freshman students
- BARRY UNIVERSITY** Miami Shores, Florida Fall 2006  
*School of Arts and Sciences*  
 As a part-time instructor, taught two web-enhanced sections of Basic English Composition for first-year students who have not had instruction in formal academic writing or students who need remedial English writing instruction.
- THE SCHOOLBOARD OF LEON COUNTY** Tallahassee, Florida January 2003 – June 2004  
*Substitute Teacher*

## **NON-INSTRUCTIONAL EXPERIENCE**

- BROWARD COLLEGE** Weston, Florida January 2020 - present  
*Dual Enrollment Faculty Coordinator*
- Provides support to dual enrollment offsite instructors with a focus on course content and curriculum, the enforcement of college and department policy, as well as following the course syllabus and course outline
  - Act as a liaison to the Associate Deans and the high school adjunct instructors to collect and review syllabi from each instructor
  - Send reminders about turning in syllabi, completing enrollment verification, and entering grades in accordance with the academic calendar
  - Meet with Associate Deans as needed to identify areas of need to assist dual enrollment adjunct faculty
  - Contact adjunct instructors individually to assess their needs; connect new instructors with veteran instructors or mentors; organize professional development opportunities for the dual enrollment adjunct instructors, which may include advanced training on D2L, instructional training, etc.; collaborate with the Center for Teaching Excellence & Learning and/or the Instructional Design team for appropriate training

**BROWARD COLLEGE**

Pembroke Pines, Florida

September 2016–August 2017

*Senior Instructional Designer of the Title V, I-Nest Grant – Business Pathway**During the one-year contractual grant position:*

- Designed, developed, and managed a comprehensive professional development program for faculty integrating technologies and sound instructional pedagogies in the online environment for pathway faculty who were developing and/or redesigning contextualized web-enhanced, blended, and fully online courses.
- Provided leadership for instructional design issues and tasks related to the Pathways programs related faculty, programs and departments in regard to contextualization.
- Guided faculty in the design or redesign and development of course objectives, course content, course assessments, instructional strategies and activities for contextualizing Pathway courses offered in various delivery formats including e-learning.
- Participated in assessment of courses by collecting and reviewing syllabi from each faculty member, ensuring alignment with BC and Quality Matters standards, Federal copyright guidelines, and regional accreditation requirements.

**BROWARD COLLEGE / AACTE**

Fort Lauderdale, Florida

January 2013 – May 2013

*Coordinator, Educational Support for Veterans*

- Completed a five-month long study I led on behalf of Broward College for the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education based on an ask by then Second First Lady of the United State, Dr. Jill Biden.
- Gathered recommendations for what Broward College should adopt in compliance with assisting veteran-students.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Summer Artist Residency	Fine Arts Work Center Provincetown, MA	August 4-9, 2024
Poetry Teachers Institute	The Poetry Foundation	July 22-26, 2024
AI Institute	Broward College	April 17, 2024
Poetry Teachers Institute	The Poetry Foundation	July 10-14, 2023
Aspen Words: Poetry Workshop with Major Jackson	The Aspen Institute	June 18-24, 2023
Leading by Lasso	Broward College	February 17, 2023
Bullet Journaling	Broward College	February 18, 2023
Designing Student-centered Courses	Association of College and University Educators	April 10, 2022
Inclusive Teaching Project	Broward College	April 13, 2022
Mindfulness in a Post-Pandemic Classroom	Broward College	April 8, 2022
Foundations for Rubrics	Broward College	March 30, 2022
Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning	Broward College	March 27, 2022
Video Editing in Adobe Rush	Broward College	March 13, 2022
Designing effective writing Assignments	Broward College	March 23, 2022
The Male Minority Initiative	Broward College	February 21, 2022
Designing quality Blended Online	Broward College	February 16, 2022
Appy Hour – Best Classroom Applications	Broward College	February 10, 2022
Best Practices in Asynchronous Learning	Broward College	January 31, 2022
Getting Ready to Teach Blended	Broward College	December 15, 2021
Inspiring Inquiry & Lifelong Learners in You Online Course	Association of College and University Educators	November 29, 2021
Enrollment Verification	Broward College	November 24, 2021
Honorlock (Self-paced)	Broward College	October 6, 2021
Online Entrepreneurial Mindset Facilitator Training	Broward College	May 7, 2021
SLS Instructor Training	Broward College	April 30, 2021
Promoting Active Online Learning	Association of College and University Educators	April 11, 2021
President’s Leadership Academy / Leadership Broward	Broward College	April 23, 2021
Development of Professional Learning Course	Broward College	March 12, 2021
Facilitation of Professional Learning course	Broward College	March 12, 2021
Create Inclusive & Supportive Online Learning Environment	Association of College and University Educators	December 6, 2020
Demystifying IPS: An Academic Discussion	Broward College	September 18, 2020
Advanced Zoom for Faculty	Broward College	August 25, 2020
Contextualization Project Workshop	Broward College	May 3, 2020
Blackboard Collaborate	Broward College	March 20, 2020
Tutor.com Training	Broward College	January 24, 2020
Microcredentials and Digital Badges in Higher Education	Academic Impressions	November 22, 2019
Dual Enrollment Myth Busters	Broward College	February 22, 2019
Emerging Leaders and Transforming Lives	Association of Florida Colleges	November 3, 2017



Academic Discipline & Department Meetings	Broward College	February 22, 2015
Intro to the Online Student Veteran Sensitivity	Broward College	February 22, 2015
Phi Theta Kappa (Ptk) and You	Broward College	February 22, 2015
English Faculty Retreat	Broward College	January 22, 2015
English & Journalism Dept. Strategic Planning	Broward College	September 18, 2015
From Soldier to Successful Student:	Broward College	June 15, 2015
Intro to D2L Version 10.4 Face to Face	Broward College	April 29, 2015
General Education Task Force	Broward College	April 17, 2015
English Faculty Retreat	Broward College	February 20, 2015
Academic Discipline & Department Meetings	Broward College	February 20, 2015
Meet the Honors Institute	Broward College	February 20, 2015
Academic Integrity Issues and Solutions	Broward College	February 20, 2015
Honors by Contract	Broward College	January 30, 2015
English Faculty Retreat	Broward College	January 28, 2015
International Honors	Broward College	October 24, 2014
Online Workday Travel Card Training	Broward College	July 1, 2014
Online P-Card Workshop	Broward College	July 1, 2014
Academic Discipline & Department Meetings	Broward College	February 21, 2014
Everything Honorable	Broward College	February 21, 2014
Where in the World is Broward College?	Broward College	February 21, 2014
Collegewide English Faculty Retreat	Broward College	February 7, 2014
Teaching English Language Learners in Gen-ed	Broward College	January 28, 2014
Effective Practices for Teaching Blended Classes	Broward College	March 24, 2013
From Soldier to Successful Student	Broward College	March 18, 2013
Getting Ready to Teach Online (Online)	Broward College	March 11-12, 2013
D2L Assessments and Grades	Broward College	February 27, 2013
From Soldier to Successful Student: Acclimating	Broward College	February 22, 2013
Developing Strategies That Will Increase Grant	Broward College	February 22, 2013
Collegewide English Department Retreat	Broward College	February 1, 2013
Fau Doctoral Program Information Session	Broward College	October 29, 2012
Success-Put Another Tool in Your Engagement Toolkit	Broward College	October 20, 2012
Creating A Climate of Success for All Students	Broward College	October 20, 2012
Bcae-Feli (Pd Credit or Stipend Awarded)	Broward College	August 7, 2012
Academic Discipline Meetings	Broward College	February 24, 2012
Student Assistance Program	Broward College	February 24, 2012
QEP - A Collaborative Effort	Broward College	February 24, 2012
New Faculty Institute- Session 1-Faculty Panel	Broward College	January 6, 2012
Introduction to DESIRE2LEARN (D2L)	Broward College	November 28, 2011
SLS Instructor Training Program	Broward College	October 15, 2011
Grademark: Streamlined Grading of Papers	Broward College	June 23, 2011
Cid - Student System Viewers	Broward College	June 1, 2011
Crw 5934 - Graduate Coursework	Florida International University	May 28, 2011
Eng 5058 - Graduate Coursework	Florida International University	May 28, 2011
Crw 5331 - Graduate Coursework	Florida International University	April 30, 2011
Academic Discipline Meetings	Broward College	February 25, 2011
Educational Planning	Broward College	February 25, 2011
Promoting Academic Integrity in Your Classes	Broward College	February 25, 2011
20111 English Faculty Retreat	Broward College	November 5, 2010
Blogging for 21ST Century Student Engagement	Broward College	October 18, 2010
To Blog or Not to Blog	Broward College	October 18, 2010
New Hire Orientation	Broward College	August 17, 2010

## **SERVICE TO THE COLLEGE**

Dual Enrollment Faculty Coordinator	<i>Coordinator</i>	Spring 2020 - Present
Designed Research Skills Writing Course BU and Repository for BrowardUP	<i>Course Developer</i>	Fall 2022
Designed Technical Writing Course BU and Repository for BrowardUP	<i>Course Developer</i>	Fall 2022
College-wide Blended ENC 1102 Contextualized Course Development	<i>Course Developer</i>	Fall 2017

Instructional Calendar Committee	<i>Co-Chair</i>	Fall 2020 – Summer 2023
President’s Leadership Academy	<i>Committee Member</i>	February 2020 – April 2021
College-wide Blended ENC 1102 Contextualized Assignment Designer	<i>Course Developer</i>	Spring 2020
Pathways Core Team	<i>Committee Member</i>	Fall 2018- Fall 2019
FAST Teams	<i>Committee Member</i>	Fall 2017-Spring 2019
Strategic Initiative	<i>Committee Member</i>	Fall 2017- Spring 2018
Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)	<i>Scholar</i>	Fall 2017- Spring 2018
College-wide Blended ENC 1102 Contextualized Course Development	<i>Course Developer</i>	Fall 2017
College-wide Blended ENC 1101 Contextualized Course Development	<i>Course Developer</i>	Fall 2017
College-wide Blended ENC 1102 Course Development	<i>Course Developer</i>	Summer 2016
College-wide Blended ENC 1101 Course Development	<i>Course Developer</i>	Summer 2016
Online Student Veteran Sensitivity	<i>Program Developer</i>	Fall 2015 – Spring 2016
General Ed. Task Force Information Literacy Rubric	<i>Committee Member</i>	Spring 2015
Endowed Teaching Chair Selection Committee	<i>Committee Member</i>	Fall 2015 – Spring 2016
English Department M.F.L.A. Festival	<i>Co-Chair</i>	Fall 2015 – Spring 2016
English Department Book Selection Committee	<i>Co-Chair</i>	Fall 2015 – Spring 2016
General Education Task Force	<i>Committee Member</i>	Fall 2015
Search Committee: Assistant Professor of English	<i>Committee Member</i>	Fall 2015
From Soldier to Successful Student Training	<i>Program Developer</i>	Spring 2013 – Summer 2015
MLK Day of Service Grant Committee	<i>Committee Member</i>	Fall 2014 – Spring 2015
English Department M.F.L.A. Festival	<i>Co-Chair</i>	Fall 2014 – Spring 2015
Phi Theta Kappa, Alpha Delta Rho	<i>Chapter Advisor</i>	January 2011– December 2014
Search Committee: Assistant Professor of English	<i>Committee Member</i>	Summer 2012
Black History Month Planning Committee	<i>Committee Member</i>	Fall 2012 – Spring 2013
Search Committee: Assistant Professor of Chemistry	<i>Committee Member</i>	Spring 2011
Hispanic Heritage Month Planning Committee	<i>Committee Member</i>	Fall 2011 – Spring 2012
Hispanic Heritage Month Planning Committee	<i>Committee Member</i>	Fall 2010 – Spring 2011
Black History Month Planning Committee	<i>Committee Member</i>	Fall 2010 – Spring 2011

**SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY**

<b>WOMEN’S CLUB OF COCONUT CREEK</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	June 2018 – Present
<i>Member and Current Club President</i>		
Works closely with city commissioners and the mayor in the management of a 501(c)3 organization that supports youth endeavors through the sponsorship of an annual scholarship award, which is a set of monetary awards based on academic merit, financial need, community service, and other scholastic activities that is granted to students who are currently in their senior year of high school and reside within the City of Coconut Creek. To date, \$325,350.00 in scholarships have been awarded to 455 Coconut Creek youth.		
<b>PALMETTO ACADEMY OF LEARNING AND SUCCESS</b>	Myrtle Beach, South Carolina	October 31, 2022
<i>Judge for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Spooky Story Contest</i>		
Guest author judging a middle grades short story writing contest.		
<b>GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH</b>	Deerfield Beach, Florida	June 2019 – Present
<i>Sunday School Teacher; AWANA Small Group Leader</i>		
Organize and oversee classroom with a range of tasks including developing lesson plans and leading children in educational activities with age-appropriate teachings. Assist parents and caretakers in the spiritual trainings and religious education of their children in every phase of their spiritual formation and mental development by motivating, encouraging, and guiding the children with stories and scriptures that can ignite within them the responsibility to be good, reasonable people.		
<b>GUILD FOR ART AND LITERATURE OF COCONUT CREEK</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	August 2014 – June 2020
<b>(Officially registered as Orange Island Arts Foundation)</b>		
<i>Founding President</i>		
Founded a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation in the State of Florida, that encourages creativity; cultivates learning; and engages youth, established and aspiring artists, and the community at large with the literary arts.		
<b>PHI THETA KAPPA INTERNATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY</b>		April 2013 – 2018
<i>Alumni Coordinator</i>		
Chartered and coordinated the alumni chapter for the Florida region		

<b>MIAMI BOOK FAIR INTERNATIONAL</b> <i>Volunteer</i>		Fall 2004 – Present
Regularly volunteer services to assist in the planning and execution of the annual fair		
<b>GIRLS' CLUB</b> <i>2014- 2015 Writer-in-Residence</i>	Fort Lauderdale, Florida	November 2014–October2015
Created writing projects and workshops centered on the year-long exhibit, “The Moment. The Backdrop. The Persona.”		
<b>PALM BEACH POETRY FESTIVAL</b> <i>Festival Coordinator</i>	Lake Worth, Florida	August 2005 – June 2014
Coordinated and publicized an annual literary event in Palm Beach County, Florida, Florida, which showcased workshops, reading, professional and up-and-coming local and national writers.		
<b>THE ART INSTITUTE OF FORT LAUDERDALE</b> <i>Student Employment Advisor</i>	Fort Lauderdale, Florida	May 2008 – February 2009
Assisted students with resume review and proper business etiquette. Planned and publicize monthly professional development-based events. Performed employment job searches for part time and full-time work, as well as for internships. Acted as liaison between students, the institution and employers.		
<b>THE LITERARY SALON</b> <i>Event Coordinator</i>	North Miami, Florida	July 2005 – May 2007
Planned, publicized and ran monthly literary events at the Luna Star Café in North Miami, Florida, which showcased professional and up-and-coming local and national writers.		
<b>THE SCHOOLBOARD OF LEON COUNTY</b> <i>Educational Tutor</i>	Tallahassee, Florida	August 2003 – June 2004
Tutored students in the Florida Writes – essay portion of the FCAT, the Adult Community Education and General Educational Development Tests’; and the Florida State University’s Service-Learning Project.		

## **PUBLICATIONS**

### **BOOKS**

***POETRY IN THE PARKS: POETRY OF PLACE***      BiblioBoard, Broward County Libraries      July 20, 2024  
Editor of a collection of poetry and artwork from participants who attended the Broward County Cultural Division Individual Artist Grant supported project, “Poetry in the Parks: Nature of Place.”

***ORANGE ISLAND REVIEW, vol. 2 no. 1***      Beating Windward Press      November 21, 2016  
Managing editor for a journal of a collection of poetry and artwork from high school students throughout the U.S. and edited entirely by a high school editorial staff.

***ORANGE ISLAND REVIEW, vol. 1 no. 2***      Beating Windward Press      November 18, 2015  
Managing editor for a journal of a collection of poetry and artwork from high school students throughout the U.S. and edited entirely by a high school editorial staff.

***VISIONS ON ALLIGATOR ALLEY***      Lominy Books      August 29, 2015  
Published an ekphrastic story in verse inspired by the 2015 Girls’ Club Fort Lauderdale gallery exhibit “The Moment. The Backdrop. The Persona.” Poems inspired by artwork from the exhibit depict a story through verse as well as by visual landscape by tracing the journey of a Florida woman who struggles with the overwhelmingly masculine world she lives in, and with feelings of desire, longing, and deep mourning.

***ORANGE ISLAND REVIEW, vol. 1 no. 1***      Beating Windward Press      April 22, 2015  
Managing editor for a journal of a collection of poetry and artwork from high school students throughout the U.S. and edited entirely by a high school editorial staff.

***GULF STREAM LITERARY MAGAZINE***  
Book review accepted for publication      Fall 2006

*Finance and Marketing Director* October 2006 –  
December 2006  
Financial analysis  
Event coordinating  
Budgeting  
Press releases  
Read submissions

*Business Editor*  
April 2006 – October 2006  
Event coordinating  
Liaison for reading events  
Solicited bids for contractors  
Pres releases  
Read submissions

*Associate Editor*  
January 2006 – April 2006  
Read submissions

POETRY

**WILD ROOF JOURNAL: Issues #27**  
“Within”

September 1, 2024

**CREE-KU**

Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of June published on social media. #Creeku2023

June 1-30, 2024

**PURPLE INK PRESS**

“Half February: Classroom 1216, 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts”

June 1, 2024

**THE CLOSED EYE OPEN: Issue XI**

“Magellanic”

April 1, 2024

**CREE-KU**

Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of March published on social media. #Creeku2023

March 1-31, 2024

**THE SAD GIRL DIARIES**

“Check, Mate”

March 17, 2024

**THE DEWDROP**

“Flame and Draft”

March 10, 2024

**CREE-KU**

Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of February published on social media. #Creeku2023

February 1-29, 2024

**CREE-KU**

Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of January published on social media. #Creeku2023

January 1-31, 2024

**CREE-KU**

Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of August published on social media. #Creeku2023

August 1-31, 2023

**CHAMELEON CHIMERA: AN ANTHOLOGY OF FLORIDA POETS**

“Half February: Classroom 1216, 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Language Arts”

July 15, 2023

**CITY OF COCONUT CREEK'S POET LAUREATE PAGE**

Coconut Creek, Florida Quarterly poem entitled ““Within” written about the City of Coconut Creek, Florida

July 2023

**CREE-KU**

Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of April published on social media. #Creeku2023

April 1-30, 2023

**CITY OF COCONUT CREEK'S POET LAUREATE PAGE**

Coconut Creek, Florida Quarterly poem entitled ““The Season's First Golden Trumpet” written about the City of Coconut Creek, Florida

March 2023

**CREE-KU**

Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of January published on social media. #Creeku2023

January 1-31, 2023

**CITY OF COCONUT CREEK'S POET LAUREATE PAGE**

Quarterly poem entitled “Butterfly Poem” written about the City of Coconut Creek, Florida

January 2023

<b>CREE-KU</b>		December 1-31, 2022
Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of December published on social media. #Creeku2022		
<b>CITY OF COCONUT CREEK'S POET LAUREATE PAGE</b>		November 2023
Poem entitled "Our Baggage: a Creekside Collaborative Poem" written in collaboration with military veterans who live in the City of Coconut Creek, Florida		
<b>CREE-KU</b>		September 1-30, 2022
Wrote a haiku a day about the city of Coconut Creek throughout the month of September published on social media. #Creeku2022		
<b>SLIVER OF STONE</b>		March 28, 2015
"Rebirth" and "Summer Solstice"		
<b>THE WHIMSICAL PROJECT</b>		December 2, 2014
"Scenes from the Rearview Mirror"		
<b>POETS AND ARTISTS</b>		August 1, 2013
"Mechanics," "A Childhood Glossary of Auto Mechanics," "Glossary of a First Love," "Glossary of a Heartbreak," and "Glossary of the Dating Bluebook"		
<b>SCREW IOWA!</b>		March 7, 2010
"My First Car"		
<b>VIEW FROM VIRGINIA KEY</b>		January 25, 2010
One poem accepted for publication		
<b>EIGHT CENT JOURNAL: A MODERN ANTHOLOGY OF MIAMI POETS</b>		April 9, 2011
"Ampersand"		
<b>FIVE CENT JOURNAL: A MODERN ANTHOLOGY OF MIAMI POETS</b>		November 8, 2009
"My First Car"		
<b>THREE CENT JOURNAL: A MODERN ANTHOLOGY OF MIAMI POETS</b>		May 2, 2009
"There's a Miami in Ohio"		
<b>TWO CENT JOURNAL: A MODERN ANTHOLOGY OF MIAMI POETS</b>		March 21, 2009
"Jesus on a Diet"		
<b>ONE CENT JOURNAL: A MODERN ANTHOLOGY OF MIAMI POETS</b>		February 6, 2009
"Rolling Back the Odometer"		
<b>KEY WEST WRITER'S CONFERENCE ONLINE ANTHOLOGY</b>		Fall 2006
Editor of an online anthology published in conjunction with Carnegie Mellon University Press and Florida International University. One poem accepted for publication.		
<b>MAKING WAVES</b>		Spring 2006
Three poems accepted for publication		
<b><u>PRESENTATIONS / WORKSHOPS</u></b>		
<b>BROWARD COUNTY CULTURAL DIVISION</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	Summer 2024
Recipient of an Individual Artist Grant to offer "Poetry in the Parks: Nature of Place" as a three-part workshop series in various parks throughout the city of Coconut Creek highlighting their natural habitat as a mean source to write poetry about.		
<b>CITY OF COCONUT CREEK</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	May 27, 2024
Featured poet at the Memorial Day Ceremony sponsored by the City of Coconut Creek, Florida		

**THE NORTH REGIONAL BROWARD COUNTY LIBRARY**

Coconut Creek, Florida

Featured poetry instructor of a four-part for National Poetry Month workshop entitled "Writing to Connect us with the Emotions: Poetry of Pathos."

**World of Brigadeiro: Participant Reading**

April 24, 2024

Organized a poetry reading event sponsored by the North Regional Broward County Library and the City of Coconut Creek, Florida

**Lettering the Love Letter**

April 15, 2024

Explored strategies for crafting passionate and precise poems of the various definitions of love.

**Embracing Grief with Gratitude**

April 10, 2024

The workshop explored how grief is a moving and illuminating source for poetry.

**Composing from Compassion**

April 1, 2024

Workshop that examined how poets make sense of the world, express their deepest emotions, create healthy coping strategies for deep personal needs or articulate an overwhelming sense of joy.

**THE CORAL SPRINGS COCONUT CREEK REGION CHAMBER**

Spring 2024

Guest lecturer for the Chamber of Commerce Biz Academy. Taught a four-part series entitled "AI and the New Business Reality for Coral Springs and Coconut Creek.

**MY FAVORITE POEMS CROSS-COUNTY MATCH UP**

Aventura, Florida

October 21, 2023

Organized a reading as part of a twenty-person panel "favorite poems" reading in collaboration with the Office of Poet in the Miami-Dade County office of Mayor Daniela Levine Cava in collaboration with President Obama's Inaugural Poet, Richard Blanco.

**THE SUPPLIER DIVERSITY EXCHANGE**

Statewide Event, Florida

August 30, 2023

Featured guest poet at the annual partnership conference between Broward College Office of Supplier Relations & Diversity and The Florida Department of Management Services Office of Supplier Diversity.

**CITY OF COCONUT CREEK**

Coconut Creek, Florida

June 16, 2023

Organized featured student-poets at the "Juneteenth" event sponsored by the City of Coconut Creek, Florida.

**CITY OF COCONUT CREEK**

Coconut Creek, Florida

May 29, 2023

Featured poet at the Memorial Day Ceremony sponsored by the City of Coconut Creek, Florida

**LYONS CREEK MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Coconut Creek, Florida

May 24, 2023

Featured poet in Mr. Oliver Gutierrez' 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies class teaching the students how to write poems for Juneteenth.

**WORLD OF BIGADERIO**

Coconut Creek, Florida

April 26, 2023

Organized a poetry reading event sponsored by the North Regional Broward County Library and the City of Coconut Creek, Florida.

**THE NORTH REGIONAL BROWARD COUNTY LIBRARY**

Coconut Creek, Florida

Featured poetry instructor of a four-part for National Poetry Month workshop entitled "Writing Poetry Portraits of Our Lives."

**Write What You Know**

April 3, 2023

Workshop that examined how poets make sense of the world, express their deepest emotions, create healthy coping strategies for deep personal needs or articulate an overwhelming sense of joy.

**Poems about Family and Its Utterly Unique Bonds**

April 5, 2023

The workshop explored how families are the complicated as the individuals that make them up.

**Poems of Place**

April 10, 2023

Explored writings poems about various places that map our lives.

**Poems that Bear Witness**

April 12, 2023

Explored how poetry archives historic experiences and develop writing strategies to clarify our own truths about history.

<b>BROWARD COLLEGE</b>	Pembroke Pines, Florida	March 16, 2023
Featured poet alongside Ashley M. Jones, Poet Laureate of Alabama, as part of the 2023 AHCD SpringFest event is titled, "An Evening with America's Poet Laureates: A Virtual Panel."		
<b>THE SENIOR CENTER</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	January 19, 2023
Featured poetry lecturer on the art of poetry entitled "What in Your Poem?" sponsored by the City of Coconut Creek, Florida		
<b>CITY OF COCONUT CREEK</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	December 9, 2022
Featured poet at the "Jazz Under the Stars" event sponsored by the City of Coconut Creek, Florida		
<b>CITY OF COCONUT CREEK</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	November 11, 2022
Featured poet at the Veterans Day Ceremony sponsored by the City of Coconut Creek, Florida		
<b>CITY OF COCONUT CREEK</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	August 25, 2022
Poetry reading and appointment as First Poet Laureate of the City of Coconut Creek, Florida, first of any municipality in Broward County, Florida		
<b>CITY OF COCONUT CREEK</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	May 30, 2022
Featured poet at the Memorial Day Ceremony sponsored by the City of Coconut Creek, Florida		
<b>NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERISTY</b>	Davie, Florida	November 14, 2019
Featured poet at the event "The Humane Experience – Poet and Art in Healthcare," sponsored by Martin and Gail Press Health Professions Division Library at NSU		
<b>SWIRL WINE BISTRO</b>	Coconut Creek, Florida	October 27, 2019
Featured poet at the event "Sunday Salon South Florida," a reading sponsored by Orange Island Arts Foundation		
<b>ASSOCIATION OF FLORIDA COLLEGES</b>	Palm Harbor, Florida	November 1-3, 2017
Lead an Educational Concurrent Session entitled "Seeing the Forest for the Trees: Using the Charrette Design Process to Create and Integrate Contextualized Gen Ed Learning Activities with Career-themed Material" at the 68th AFC Annual Meeting and Conference. Discussed the charrette design process – a collaborative exercise – how contextualized activities help students see the relevance in content they may not find inherently interesting, and shared information collected from its use.		
<b>GIRLS' CLUB</b>	Fort Lauderdale, Florida	June 25, 2016
Read poetry at part of the event "Flip Out," an exhibit of sketchbooks by local artists and the release of the catalog <i>Self-Proliferation</i>		
<b>THE GALERY AT THE AVALON</b>	Orlando, Florida	June 14, 2016
Featured poet at the event "There will be Words #46"		
<b>LUNA STAR CAFE</b>	North Miami, Florida	June 2, 2016
Featured poet at the event "Return of the Native Son"		
<b>BLACK DOG ON THE SQUARE</b>	Tallahassee, Florida	May 26, 2016
Featured poet at the event "Literary Night"		
<b>INKWOOD BOOKS</b>	Tampa, Florida	May 10, 2016
Featured poet at the monthly reading series		
<b>MIAMI BOOK FAIR INTERNATIONAL</b>	Miami, Florida	November 22, 2015
Read poetry as part of a panel event		
<b>GIRLS' CLUB</b>	Fort Lauderdale, Florida	September 26, 2015
Read newly released book of poems at launch party celebration		
<b>BOOKS AND BOOKS</b>	Coral Gables, Florida	September 13, 2015
Guest poet for the Writer's on the Bay Reading Series		
<b>GIRLS' CLUB</b>	Fort Lauderdale, Florida	March 19 and 28, 2015
<i>The Moment: Decoding Instances</i>		
Led workshop that examined characters and the relationships they build from the perspective of one episode in life.		

*The Backdrop: The Language of Landscape*

April 16 and 25, 2015

Led workshop that examined how the description of scene and place can reveal so much about characters and the relationships they build by discussing poems which use the page as its canvas.

*The Persona: The Fitting Room*

May 21 and 30, 2015

Led workshop that examined the persona poem from the point of view of a speaker—the voice that sings or cries or whispers in the reader’s ear – as a means to find closure in a situation or to understand human nature

<b>MIAMI BOOK FAIR INTERNATIONAL</b> Read poetry as part of a paneled event	Miami, Florida	November 22, 2014
<b>MIAMI BOOK FAIR INTERNATIONAL</b> Read poetry as part of a paneled event	Miami, Florida	November 23, 2013
<b>PALM SPRINGS NORTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</b> Honored guest speaker at the Author’s Tea	Palm Springs North, Florida	October 24, 2013
<b>MIAMI BOOK FAIR INTERNATIONAL</b> Read poetry as part of a paneled event	Miami, Florida	November 24, 2012
<b>MIAMI BOOK FAIR INTERNATIONAL</b> Read poetry as part of a paneled event	Miami, Florida	November 19, 2011
<b>MIAMI BOOK FAIR INTERNATIONAL</b> Read poetry as part of a paneled event	Miami, Florida	November 20, 2010
<b>MIAMI BOOK FAIR INTERNATIONAL</b> Member of a Miami Poetry Collective’s paneled poetry reading entitle “Eventually We Noticed the Smoke: A Poeme-Fleuve”	Miami, Florida	November 15, 2009
<b>HIALEAH GARDENS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</b> Honored guest speaker at the Author’s Tea	Hialeah Gardens, Florida	March 20, 2009
<b>DADA RESTAURANT</b> Guest judge of a slam poetry contest for the National Poetry Slam (NPS) district finals	Delray Beach, Florida	April 28, 2008
<b>BROWARD COLLEGE, SOUTH CAMPUS</b> Guest poetry instructor for Barbra Nightingale’s undergraduate literature class	Pembroke Pines, Florida	April 21, 2008
<b>BOOKS AND BOOKS</b> Guest poet for the Writer’s on the Bay Reading Series	Coral Gables, Florida	September 23, 2007
<b>NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY</b> Guest workshop leader of “Award Winning Poets” for the Life Long Learning Institute	Miami, Florida	December 7, 2006
<b>FIU’S WOMEN’S STUDIES CONFERENCE</b> Organized a discussion panel to read at Florida International University. Presented a research project entitled, “A Creative Partnership: The Consciousness of Plath and Hughes.”	Miami, Florida	March 28, 2006
<b>PALM SPRINGS NORTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</b> Honored guest speaker at the Author’s Tea	Palm Springs North, Florida	October 6, 2005
<b>NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY</b> Honored guest reader of poetry in conjunction with the Hannah Kahn Poetry Foundation	Davie, Florida	September 16, 2005
<b>FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY</b> Guest judge of a slam poetry contest for Denise Duhamel’s undergraduate poetry class	Miami, Florida	November 29, 2005
<b>FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY</b> Guest poetry instructor for Scott Kass’ undergraduate Introduction to Creative Writing class	Miami, Florida	November 3, 2005
<b>FIU’S WOMEN’S STUDIES CONFERENCE</b>	Miami, Florida	March 29, 2005



## **INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE**

### **WEDDINGS BY ELAINE**

Tallahassee, Florida

January 2002 – June 2004

*Wedding Coordinator Intern*

- Assisted in wedding planning preparations and during the matrimonial rehearsal and ceremony
- Scheduled and confirm event reservations
- Assisted in the 2002 annual meeting of the Florida Funeral Directors Association

### **FLORIDA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION**

Tallahassee, Florida

August 2001 – December 2001

*Meeting Planner Intern*

- Assisted department chairman in planning several association meetings
- Scheduled and confirmed event reservations
- Designed spreadsheets and sent mailers via mail merge
- Traveled onsite to a monthly association meeting

## **HONORS AND AWARDS**

- 2024 Broward County Cultural Division Individual Artists Grant Recipient
- 2022 Distinguished Professor for the Association of Florida Colleges
- 2022 Finalist for the Association of Florida College's Professor of the Year Award
- August 25, 2022, appointed First Poet Laureate of the City of Coconut Creek, Florida
- 2022 Robert Elmore Family Endowed Teaching Chair Award Recipient of Broward College
- Nominated as an Endowed Teaching Chair Award Recipient of Broward College in 2022, 2021, 2019, 2014, 2012, and 2009
- ACUE: Inspiring Inquiry & Lifelong Learners in Your Online Course microcredential December 2021
- ACUE: Promoting Active Online Learning microcredential April 2021
- ACUE: Creating an Inclusive and Supportive Online Learning Environment microcredential December 2020
- 2019 Sabbatical Recipient of Broward College
- Nominated as the 2016 Professor of the Year
- SPD Project Proposal Grant Recipient Summer 2015
- 2014 Wells Fargo Endowed Teaching Chair Award Recipient of Broward College
- Portion of the poem "Scenes from the Rearview Mirror" earned Third Honorable Mention in the 2013 Poetry Society of Virginia's Adult Contest renamed as "Visions on Alligator Alley"
- Awards earned as the advisor of the Alpha Delta Rho Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa
  - Broward College Student Life Awards for the Phi Theta Kappa chapter, Alpha Delta Rho
    - Advisor of the Year
    - Organization of the Year
    - Event of the Year: Student Veterans Week
  - Regional Awards for the Phi Theta Kappa chapter, Alpha Delta Rho
    - Five-Star chapter status for 2012
    - First place in the Florida region for its "Honors in Action Project"
    - Fourth place in the Florida region as a "Most Distinguished Chapter"
    - Awarded one scholarship to send a member to the Phi Theta Kappa 2012 Honors Institute in Denver, Colorado June 2012
  - International Awards for the Phi Theta Kappa chapter, Alpha Delta Rho
    - Five-Star chapter status for 2012
    - Named in the top 100 of several thousand chapters within the organization
    - Awarded with 50 other chapters as having a "Most Distinguished chapter"
    - Named with 28 other chapters for conducting the "Most Distinguished Honors in Action Project"
    - Awarded five separate Pinnacle Awards for increasing member enrollment 151% from previous years
    - Awarded the Paragon Advisor award out of 1500+ chapter advisors within the Phi Theta Kappa organization
- 2008 Conference on College Composition and Communication Professional Equity Project Grant Recipient
- Florida International University Graduate Assistantship Recipient
- Bright Future's Merit Scholarship Recipient
- Dean's List – Florida International University
- Dean's List – Florida State University

## **AFFILIATIONS**

- Association of Florida Colleges (AFC)
- Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE)
- The Association of Writers and Writing Programs (AWP)
- Council for the study of Community Colleges (CSCC)
- Delta Epsilon Iota – Academic Honor Society
- Graduate English Association – Florida International University
- Leadership Broward
- Lambda Iota Tau – International Honor Society for Students of Literature
- Miami Poetry Collective
- Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society (PTK)
- Phi Sigma Theta – National Honor Society
- Quality Enhancement Plan Scholar
- Society of Poetic Elements – Florida State University
- Women’s Club of Coconut Creek – Coconut Creek, Florida
- United Faculty of Florida (UFF)

## Poet Laureate Reference Questions

Applicant's name: Laura McDermott Matheric Date: 7/29/2024

Reference: Dr. David Kirby, Editor

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1. How do you know the applicant?

Laura was his student at FSU. They have stayed in touch over the last 20 years.

2. Can you describe the applicant's poetic style?

Generous, accessible. A public poet as opposed to an academic poet.

3. Have you heard the applicant recite a poem in a live environment?

Yes X

No

4. If yes, please describe the experience.

Miami Book Festival. She relates to the audience. Has them eating out of the palm of her hand.

5. Why do you think the City should name the applicant as the next Poet Laureate?

She is a terrific person, a terrific poet, and a great representation of our City.

## Poet Laureate Reference Questions

Applicant's name: Laura McDermott Matheric Date: 7/29/2024

Reference: Robert Ayen

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1. How do you know the applicant?

Met Laura at a meeting.

2. Can you describe the applicant's poetic style?

Brilliant. She is the only person who can get him to stop moving. To stop and actually think.

3. Have you heard the applicant recite a poem in a live environment?

Yes X

No

4. If yes, please describe the experience.

Butterfly Festival, she had typewriters set up, did a poem for him. He was blown away.

5. Why do you think the City should name the applicant as the next Poet Laureate?

She is so popular in the City of Coconut Creek. She is very good for our community. Likes that she uses photos from our City to go along with the poems, feels it brings a more personal touch.