SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Sharon J. Washington
Executive Director
National Writing Project
Berkeley, CA

Dr. Sharon J. Washington is the Executive Director of the National Writing Project (NWP). She has more than two decades of professional experience and scholarly work in social justice education, higher education administration, teacher preparation, outdoor recreation, sports, and the arts. Throughout her career, Dr. Washington has demonstrated a strong commitment to the importance of high-quality literacy instruction for all students, and professional development for teachers across the K–16 spectrum. Prior to joining NWP, Dr. Washington was the Interim Director of Faculty Equity Programs at the University of California Office of the President in Oakland, California. She has also held a number of academic positions, including Special Assistant to the President for Diversity Initiatives at Bennett College for Women in Greensboro, North Carolina, and Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs at Spelman College in Atlanta. Dr. Washington is a member of the steering committee of Campus Women Lead, an alliance promoting a multicultural women-led agenda for the sustained transformation of higher education for the 21st century. Dr. Washington holds a PhD in education from The Ohio State University, a master's degree from Central Michigan University, and an undergraduate degree from The Ohio State University.

Juan Williams
Journalist and Renowned Author
Washington, DC

Juan Williams, one of America’s leading political commentators and writers, is the author of the critically acclaimed biography—Thurgood Marshall: American Revolutionary. When not writing bestsellers, Williams is the Senior Correspondent for National Public Radio and Political Analyst for Fox News Channel. He regularly appears on Fox News Sunday, The O'Reilly Factor and Special Report. Mr. Williams began his professional journalism career at The Washington Post. He has won several awards for his work as an investigative journalist and opinion columnist. He has also won an Emmy Award for his work in television documentary writing. He is the author of several books, including Black Farmers in America; Enough: The Phony Leaders, Dead-End Movements, and Culture of Failure That Are Undermining Black America –and What We Can Do About It; Eyes on the Prize: America’s Civil Rights Years, 1954-1965 (a companion volume to the critically-acclaimed television series), I’ll Find A Way Or Make One: A Tribute to Historically Black Colleges and Universities, My Soul Looks Back in Wonder: Voices of The Civil Rights Experience, and This Far by Faith: Stories from the African American Religious Experience.
Joel Malley
Tenth and Twelfth Grade English Language Arts Teacher
Cheektowaga Central High School
Cheektowaga, NY

Joel Malley is in his ninth year as an English teacher and his third year at Cheektowaga Central High School in Cheektowaga, New York. Mr. Malley views technology as an important pedagogical tool that inspires his students to develop a true appreciation for the art of writing. Mr. Malley uses digital projects such as blogging, podcasting, and digital storytelling to enhance and enrich the learning experience for his students and to promote both traditional and evolving forms of literacy. Mr. Malley also writes a blog, Buried in Wires, which explores teaching writing in the digital age, and was featured on Teachers Teaching Teachers, a weekly webcast on the EdTechTalk channel of the WorldBridges network. Mr. Malley is the technology liaison for the Western New York Writing Project and has led workshops on the use of technology in the classroom for other teachers and for schools. He is also an active member of City Voices, City Visions, a partnership with the University of Buffalo which explores how digital video composition impacts student learning.

Robert Rivera-Amezola
Fourth Grade Teacher
Frances E. Willard Elementary School
Philadelphia, PA

Robert Rivera-Amezola is a fourth grade teacher at Frances E. Willard Elementary School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Mr. Rivera incorporates multimedia into classroom learning and says that podcasts motivate his English language learners to extend their new language skills as they tackle complex subjects. Working together, Mr. Rivera and his fourth-graders conduct research, write scripts, and record audio broadcasts for publication on the Internet. Through his affiliation with the Philadelphia Writing Project, Mr. Rivera has led local and national workshops on podcasting for publishing student work and the use of digital tools to develop critical digital literacies. Mr. Rivera also serves on the Leadership Team of the National Writing Project’s English Language Learners Network.
Jennifer Woollven
Tenth Grade Language Arts Teacher
Eastside Memorial Green Tech High School
Austin, TX

Jennifer Woollven is a tenth grade Language Arts teacher at Eastside Memorial Green Tech High School in Austin, Texas. Ms. Woollven is in her eleventh year of teaching and her second year at Green Tech, a New Tech Network and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) school which implements a project-based-learning curriculum. Ms. Woollven uses technology in her classroom as a way to collaborate and to improve students' problem-solving skills. She believes the integration of technology into the classroom also highlights its function in everyday life. Ms. Woollven is the technology liaison for the Central Texas Writing Project at Texas State University. She has designed and led technology workshops for fellow teachers and has given local and national presentations on digital poetry and students’ use of online tools to create multi-media projects. Ms. Woollven holds a master’s degree in educational technology.

Tom Rudin
Senior Vice President for Advocacy, Government Relations and Development
The College Board
Washington, DC

Tom Rudin is senior vice president for advocacy, government relations, and development at the College Board. As the College Board's chief representative in Washington, DC, he works on behalf of the Board's institutional members to promote public policy, legislation, and education programs that connect students to college success. Mr. Rudin served as executive director of grants planning and management at the College Board from 1996 to 2002. Before that, he spent four years as coordinator of special projects for EQUITY 2000®, the College Board’s national education reform program. Before joining the College Board, Mr. Rudin was a policy analyst at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland.

In 1991, Mr. Rudin taught courses in U.S. public policy, human rights, and organizational management as a visiting instructor at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey. In the early 1980s, he directed the work of the Governor’s Task Force on Science and Technology for North Carolina Governor James B. Hunt, Jr. Mr. Rudin was also involved with new state initiatives, such as the North Carolina Biotechnology Center and the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Purdue University, and he holds master's degrees in public administration and in social work from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.