



legacy

EDELWEISS

erasing the margins

2023
INTERNSHIP
LOOKBOOK

afriware books

AfriWare Books is a Black owned bookstore that has served the community since 1993. We provide a platform to showcase authors, artists and advocates who infuse us with a sense of cultural pride. By sharing pertinent information about the history, accomplishments and suggested solutions to improve the community's well-being, AfriWare has distinguished itself as a beacon for cultural literacy. AfriWare makes the best of our rich African heritage available as expressed thru specialty products, books, and events.

MENTOR, NZINGHA NOMMO

Nzingha Nommo is the owner and founder of AfriWare Books, a premier African-centered bookstore, gift shop, and cultural event center located in Maywood, IL since 1993. She received her Bachelor's Degree from the University of Illinois (Chicago campus) in Electrical Engineering, and her Master's Degree from Georgia Institute of Technology's Electrical Engineering Program. She was employed as an MTS/System Engineer with AT&T for over ten years. Well into her technical career, she decided to pursue other interests peripherally to her background in the arts as a classical pianist.

In 1993, AfriWare was born out of her love of African history/culture and her passion for networking and representing cultural artists. She was also a Professor at DePaul University for ten years teaching a "Mathematical and Technological Literacy" class.

Ms. Nommo's leadership, integrity, technical expertise, musical experience, commitment to cultural excellence, and networking savvy is AfriWare's greatest asset. For over 20 years, Ms. Nommo has utilized her skills to coordinate/facilitate AfriWare's event's programming with a range of authors, community activists, and musical artists.



INTERN, KAYLA DILLINGHAM



Hi, my name is Kayla Dillingham. I am a sophomore at Proviso Math and Science Academy. I joined Afriware a few months ago and have loved it ever since. The people I work with are amazing along with the customers. Learning the business has been an experience for me. There is a lot left to learn but so far, every new thing I have loved doing. I currently have two jobs. I originally joined Afriware because my other job McDonald's wasn't giving me enough hours but I didn't want to quit. Now I have received more hours from McDonald's along with my responsibilities at the bookstore and I do not regret the decision to keep both jobs.

Working at both really shows me which one I prefer more, and which one interests me. I am always excited for Saturday's because that is the only time I am in store. For McDonald's I am not that excited, it isn't the same excitement or feeling when I am scheduled at McDonald's. I have worked since I was 15 and working at Afriware doesn't feel like a job to me, it feels like fun. I have loved reading ever since I was little. I was the kind of kid who got books for Christmas and was happy about it. I asked for them.

My favorite book is *Priory of the Orange Tree* and I am currently reading *The Blood of Emmet Till* by Timothy Tyson. I am very excited to participate in this program and learn more about Afriware.

INTERN, SUSAN WILLIAMS-DEW

My favorite book, Exodus (the the Bible). It has always been, and probably will be, my favorite, no matter what I read and learn.

I was born & raised in Connecticut. At 5 years of age, I and my two younger brothers were placed in foster care. I grew up in the one home vs. how the rest of my siblings were raised in multiple foster homes. I came to Illinois for opportunity. After working several temporary positions for Kelly Girl, I was hired by International Harvester as a technical librarian, which was a past position with a firm in Connecticut.

33 years later, I retired. I remarried in 2000, after being divorced since 1973, from my 1st spouse. My daughter grew up with a single parent. As a child, my absolute favorite pastime was reading. My dad, whom we saw regularly, enrolled me in several book clubs. My foster uncle made sure I had the recent editions of comic books; Superman; Batman, and every other publication available, a result of my penchant for reading. By the time I was 12 years old I had read every book in the house: the Classics; the Bible; the encyclopedias; childrens' books. I finally resorted to the Home Medical Journal, and realized I should quit that book, as I imagined every sickness contained therein. The one girlfriend from childhood reminded me that one day I was very angry, because I had nothing else to read. Some of the publications I had read several times! She suggested I start over, and I did.

My dad purchased for me a very old, huge, black typewriter. I taught myself to type, and would type event envelopes for my church. I am Baptist. As I got older, I was secretary for church groups. Sang in the Junior choir. My upbringing did not allow me to have friends; the woman who raised us would kids who came by, "...you can't play with these kids, they are state kids." I thought we were special. When I wasn't reading, I was watching other kids my foster parent took in.

I love books; I have a nice library. I don't read nearly as much as I should, and I know I can do better. Two wonderful grandsons; 15 and 17 years old, whom I spend much time carting to school, sports, movies. They are my heart.



fulton street books & coffee

Fulton Street Books & Coffee is a space to call home. It is a space to build community and to change our city through civic discourse. It is a space on a mission to increase literacy, with people at the center of all the work that we do. It is a space for coffee, books, and a good time. It is a space for you; you who have been longing for a space created with you in mind. At Fulton Street, we center the stories, narratives and lived experiences of people of color and marginalized communities. Welcome to Fulton Street. Welcome home.

MENTOR, ONIKAH ASAMOA-CAESAR

Onikah Asamoah-Caesar is the founder and owner of Fulton Street Books & Coffee in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Fulton Street Books & Coffee was created to center the stories, narratives, and lived experiences of Black, Brown, Indigenous, and marginalized communities.

Onikah moved to Tulsa in 2013 as a Teach for America Corps member. After her service, she worked on various state level criminal justice policy initiatives under the office of Senator Mike Johnston in Denver, Colorado. After moving back to Tulsa, she helped launch the Birth through Eight Strategy for Tulsa, an initiative of the George Kaiser Family Foundation, focused on creating a cycle of opportunity for Tulsa's most vulnerable families.

When she is not reading, Onikah enjoys good food, great hikes, spending time with friends and family, and traveling with her little one. Onikah holds a bachelor's degree in History from California State University at Fullerton and a master's degree in education from Johns Hopkins University.





INTERN, DIAMOND MARSHALL

Diamond Marshall, a graduate with honors in History from McPherson College, discovered her love for literature and reading while working as a librarian's assistant and exhibit curator. As a full-time community organizer and school board member for Tulsa Public Schools, Diamond is dedicated to promoting storytelling, narrative change, and literacy intervention. Recognizing the importance of representation, she believes in the power of books to inspire and empower.

Her favorite book is *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* by Taylor Jenkins Reid.

reparations club

Reparations Club is a concept bookshop and creative space curated by Blackness in Los Angeles, CA. Black-owned. Woman-owned.

MENTOR, JAZZI MCGILBERT

Jazzi McGilbert is a creative director and founder of Reparations Club, a concept bookshop & literary space in her hometown, South Central Los Angeles, CA. Jazzi cut her teeth in fashion with roles at Teen Vogue and NYLON, among others before retiring in pursuit of her curiosity and community. Since opening in 2019, Rep Club has partnered with Well Read Black Girl, Noname's Book Club, Nike, Virgil Abloh, and Beyoncé, and has been featured in the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, and Washington Post.



INTERN, CHICHI AGOROM

Chichi Agorom is a lifelong student of what it means to be fully human. She is a Certified Enneagram Teacher & Practitioner and is Associate Faculty with the Narrative Enneagram. She is also the author of the book, *The Enneagram for Black Liberation*, and the host of the podcast *From Armor to Ease*.

My current favorite book is *Friday Black* by Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah.

rock inked

Rock Inked is a Creative Management Company based in New York City, and a federally certified MWBE. We are a small team of project-oriented professionals with more than thirty years of experience in Print, Television, Radio, and Online media marketing and production. Rock Inked provides New Business Development, Project Management, and Marketing Consulting services in the areas of publishing, entertainment, and consumer products.

MENTOR, ROCKELLE HENDERSON

Rockelle Henderson is the president of Rock Inked, Inc., an author consulting, marketing, and literary management firm. She serves on the board of the Book Industry Charitable Foundation (BINC) and has previously led its communications and marketing committee.

Over a career that spans more than twenty years, Rockelle has held positions at Random House, Penguin, HarperCollins, and Disney/Hyperion. She's worked with authors such as Jacqueline Woodson, Karin Slaughter, Eriq La Salle, and Edward P. Jones, and on the marketing campaigns for books by Michael Crichton, Terry McMillan, Bill Gates, Stephen King, and Tom Brokaw.

In 2016, she founded the Bluffton Book Festival in Bluffton, South Carolina, a literary festival whose mission is to increase literacy levels in the southeast region of the United States; while bringing together local and national literary talent to raise awareness and funds for two charities—the Literacy Center of Bluffton/Hilton Head Island and the Binc Foundation.





INTERN, BRIAN DYKE

My name is Brian Dyke and I live in Los Angeles, California. I am a rising senior at Pepperdine University where I am studying Business Administration. My favorite book is Dracula by Bram Stoker and in my free time I like to hang out with my friends and hike. Some of my interests are sports, real estate, and community outreach.

socialight society

Socialight Society is a local independent bookshop, celebrating Black women and Black literature. We curate classic, contemporary, and children's titles predominately authored by Women of Color, who often lack representation in traditional bookstores. Socialight Society is conveniently located in the Lansing Mall.

MENTOR, NYSHELL LAWRENCE

Nyshell Lawrence is a celebrated poet + creative entrepreneur, living in Michigan with her husband and children. Her life and work are a celebration of Black womanhood.

In 2021, she created Socialight Society, an independent bookshop that specifically caters to Black women who often lack representation in traditional bookstores. Recently featured in The New York Times, The Root, and Oprah's Book Club; Socialight Society curates classic, contemporary, and children's titles written for and by women of color.

As a Lansing native, Nyshell is invested in serving the local community, and passionate about creating space for Black authors, artists, and creatives.



INTERN, SIERRA BOUYER



A little bit about me. I was born in Dallas, TX, but my dad felt a calling to come back to his hometown, so he and my mother moved back to Lansing when I was two. I grew up in the inner city, graduating from Sexton High School (Go Big Reds!) with honors, and I just finished up my freshman year of college at Liberty University in Virginia. I've always been a huge reader and writer. I'm currently attaining my major in Writing with a minor in History and Creative Writing. My desire is to be an author and my interests lie in YA Romance, Fantasy, and some Middle-grade Fantasy.

My favorite book is a hard one. I have so many favorites, but one I rave about all the time is *Excuse me while I ugly cry*, by Joya Goffney. It's a wonderful love story that's so wholesome and left me kicking my feet and giggling. I can't wait to begin working at Socialight Society and with Edelweiss, and again thank you for the opportunity.

spirit bound press

Spirit Bound Press is a revolutionary imprint birthed from the resounding need for ancestral tellings of spirituality, magic, and wellness. We exist to publish storytellers who honor their roots, cultures, practices, and experiences and believe their works are a conduit for truth and resistance.

We advocate for the diversification of literature and publishing while striving to create an equitable hub representative of the values and diversity of our team, authors and the places they represent. We are our communities' stories, wisdom, medicine, and magic.

At Spirit Bound Press, we recognize our responsibility to shift harmful narratives and dynamics within the publishing community. We give the power back to the storytellers because our stories are our resistance. We actively chose to honor antiracist, decolonial, and inclusive principles. Our devotion to amplifying marginalized voices and combating the harmful narratives in traditional publishing guides us!

MENTOR, JULIET DIAZ

Juliet Diaz (She/They) is an Indigenous Taino Cubana award-winning bestselling author and representative of The Indigenous Peoples Movement. She comes from a long line of brujx, medicine people, and seers.

With a deep-seated passion for spiritual and literary activism, Juliette was motivated to create a space for ancestral tellings of spirituality, magic, and wellness. And so, Spirit Bound Press was birthed. Our mission is to give the power back to the storytellers because our stories are our resistance. Juliette's works include *Witchery: Embrace the Witch Within*, *Plant Witchery*, *The Altar Within*, *Seasons of The Witch Oracle Deck* series and *Earthcraft Oracle deck*.



INTERN, NOOR SAGER

Noor Sager is an 18-year-old, fantasy enthusiast, literary & theater fan, and D&D nerd! They're here to write and bring some laughter to the table.



INTERN, PHOEBE LOK

Hello! My name is Phoebe Lok. I currently live in Syracuse, NY, though I am from Brooklyn, NY. I recently graduated from the University of Rochester with a Bachelor's in Linguistics and a Bachelor's in East Asian Studies. My favorite book is *Pale Fire* by Vladimir Nabokov. In my spare time, I enjoy reading and writing poetry, singing, and crocheting!



tessera editorial

Tessera Editorial is an all BIPOC, all remote organization for marginalized people and people of color who meet author/publisher needs as developmental editors, copy editors, proofreaders, sensitivity readers, and writers. By creating a space where marginalized people can learn and work with the tools of publishing that they may otherwise not have access to, we hope to improve the vastness of the book and publishing landscape.

MENTOR, GRACE WYNTER

Grace Wynter is a writer and professional editor whose clients include an array of traditional and indie publishers and authors. She has an MBA in Marketing from Georgia State University and a Professional Certificate in Editing from the University of Chicago. She is the co-managing editor of Tessera Editorial, a consortium of BIPOC editing professionals working to make publishing more accessible to all.



MENTOR, YASMIN MCCLINTON

Yasmin is an author, editor, and former English teacher based in the South. She holds a degree in English, a minor in Education, and a Masters in Literacy and Technology. She is a member of Sisters in Crime and Crime Writers of Color. Yas is also the managing editor for Tessera for on-going client accounts as well as performing other duties for client and editor relations.



INTERN, TIFFANY GONZALEZ

Tiffany Gonzalez is proud Latina, a former English teacher, and lifelong reader with a passion for all things books. She studied English literature, language, and criticism (with a focus on gender and sexuality studies) to develop both her analytical eye and her attention to detail for all types of texts.

Her favorite genres are Mystery, Thriller, Horror, Fantasy, Sci-Fi, YA, and of course LGBTQ+ novels that offer the representation Tiffany wished for as a child. In her spare time she can be found curled up with her cats, listening to spooky music as she pairs a gothic novel with a steamy chai.



1977 books

1977 Books is a volunteer-run abolitionist bookstore and community space in Montgomery, Alabama.



MENTORS, STEF BERNAL-MARTINEZ AND ALISON MOLLMAN

Stef Bernal-Martinez and Alison Mollman are the co-creators of 1977 Books, an abolitionist bookstore and free-to-use community space that opened in 2019 in Montgomery, Alabama. When Stef moved to Montgomery in 2018, she started a book club that focused on racial and social justice, and the first book read was *How We Get Free: Black Feminism & The Combahee River Collective*.

That book club, and the tenets set forth in the Combahee River Collective's 1977 statement, were the inspiration for 1977 Books and serve as our core values. 1977 Books is a site for revolutionary learning and organizing, and as the Combahee River Collective stated, "we are ready for the lifetime of work and struggle before us." For 1977 Books, that work involves highlighting the literature of BIPOC and queer authors, sending books and materials to incarcerated people throughout the South, and creating a safe space for people in Montgomery to organize and get free.

INTERN, CIERA ROGERS

I am Ciera Rogers, a multimedia artist with a primary focus in photography and digital illustration. Reading has been a hobby of mine for as long as I can remember but after reading Nancy Drew: The Secret of the Old Clock, I was hooked.

With the goal of promoting amateur creative writers and artists, I served as an editor and chief editor of Huntingdon College's literary magazine, The Prelude. This experience led me to develop a greater appreciation for the publishing process and pursue the desire to uplift stories from creatives of diverse backgrounds.



guest speakers

KRISTA ARONSON

Founder & Director, Diverse BookFinder



Krista Aronson is an Associate Dean of Faculty and Professor of Psychology at Bates College and the Founder and Director of Diverse Book Finder. Her scholarship focuses on illuminating how people come to understand complex social constructs like race and ethnicity, including how children process and understand race as well as appropriate, effective, and productive ways to discuss this topic with them; specifically, the effective use of picture books to enhance intercultural relationships and self-understanding during childhood. Her own identity as a biracial woman deeply informs her work.

The Diverse BookFinder and associated work are the focus of her active research, which represents a substantial portion of the professional effort of the faculty at Bates.

K.C. BOYD

Advocate & Librarian

K.C. Boyd is a school librarian with the District of Columbia Public Schools System. She has previously worked as the Lead Librarian for the East St. Louis School District #189 in East St. Louis, IL., a Area Library Coordinator for Chicago Public Schools and a District Coordinator for the Mayor Daley Book Club for Middle School Students. She is a second generation educator and holds Master's degrees in Library Information Science, Media Communications, and Education Leadership. Boyd was the national 2022 School Library Journal Magazine, "Librarian of the Year."

Boyd currently serves on the executive boards for the District of Columbia Library Association and Washington Teachers Union. She is an active committee member for the American Library Association Chapter Council representing Washington D.C., and EveryLibrary Institute/Advisory Board. Boyd is also a member of the District of Columbia Public Schools Library Corps and serves on the AASL School Library Event Promotion Committee. Boyd currently is a National Ambassador representing the Washington D.C. area for Checkology Virtual Classroom and The News Literacy Project. She is also the recipient of the American Consortium for Equity in Education 2022 Excellence in Equity Award, and the 2022 National Association of State Boards of Education "Policy Leader of the Year Winner."

A staunch advocate for school libraries, she is widely known and respected for her work with educating parents, teachers, and district officials on promoting leisure reading for children and teens. Additionally, she is a sought-after and popular keynote speaker and conference presenter at the national level. It is Boyd's belief that all children, despite economic circumstance, have the right to read and should have access to books that reflect themselves and encourage inquiry.



LINDA DUGGINS

Publishing Industry Consultant

Linda A. Duggins is an accomplished and resourceful leader with over twenty-five years of experience in the publishing industry. As a former twenty-year veteran and senior director of publicity at a major publishing company, and co-founder of the Harlem Book Fair, Linda has helped authors navigate the complexities of marketing, publicity, and the industry; ensuring that their books receive as much love and attention as womanly possible.



At Edelweiss+Above the Treeline, Duggins collaborated cross-functionally to help amplify voices and stories for a diverse range of authors. Linda's work has contributed to the visibility and recognition of talented writers from a wide spectrum of backgrounds. She actively encouraged her Edelweiss colleagues and partners to reach up and step beyond their everyday non-people of color existence.

As a current Board member of the National Book Club Conference, the Portland State University Book Publishing Master's Program and the Greater Bluffton Book Festival, Duggins has been instrumental in advancing the careers of authors, promoting diverse voices, and shaping the literary landscape. Linda has continuously been involved in mentoring and advocating for underrepresented people throughout the publishing industry for what seems like an eternity.

Duggins is currently a book publishing consultant.

DANNY FLUKER

Founder, Black Boys OM

Danny Fluker is a conscious creative, wellness consultant, community healing advocate, author-speaker, and instructor specializing in meditation, yoga, and mind-body wholeness. He is also the founder of Black Boys OM, an international non-profit organization. Black Boys OM provides spaces for Black Boys and Black Men to engage with various mind-body health practices. The organization boasts a network of over 400 trained Black Male Wellness practitioners who lead these spaces.

Since its inception in 2018, Black Boys OM has held over 2,100 such spaces, fostering well-being and empowerment within the Black community. In addition to his work with Black Boys OM, Danny has also shared his expertise in mind-body wholeness by conducting workshops and talks in schools, universities, private celebrity events, and corporate spaces and conferences.

Danny promotes holistic wellness and creates transformative experiences for individuals and communities.





MAKIAH SHIPP

Author, Makiah's Show and Tell

"Makiah Shipp is an award winning civic engagement activist and the author of the children's book Makiah's Show and Tell. After publishing her first book, she hosted a book tour for elementary schools in the Ann Arbor area. As a recent graduate of the University of Michigan with a degree in Afroamerican and African Studies, she plans to pursue a career in education with hopes of empowering the generations to come. "