

THE 2023 DELL MAGAZINES AWARDS

We were delighted that once again circumstances allowed us to present the Dell Magazines Award for Undergraduate Excellence in Science Fiction and Fantasy Writing in Orlando, Florida, at the annual International Conference for the Fantastic in the Arts (ICFA). The award, which is co-sponsored by Dell Magazines and the International Association for Fantastic in the Arts, and supported by Western Colorado University's Graduate Program in Creative Writing, was bestowed on March 18, 2023. The winner received a plaque and five hundred dollars.

This year's winner was Sam Wilson, a junior at Chapman University in Orange, California. Sam is majoring in creative writing with a minor in anthropology. His favorite authors include N.K. Jemisin, China Miéville, and former Dell Award winner Marie Brennan. Sam received this year's award for his insightful tale about gardening and space travel with "blooming beating hearts." Sam's story will appear on our website next year.

Olivia Garcia, our first runner-up, is a senior who is also enrolled at Chapman University. She is a creative writing major whose favorite authors include Emily St. John Mandel and Sarah Pinsker. Olivia plays the flute and the piano and participates in orchestras and wind symphonies. She received her award for a musical story about "The Known Universe."

My award cofounder Rick Wilber and I select our finalists via a blind read. That meant that we were surprised and pleased to discover that our second runner-up was Rona Wang of MIT. Rona was also our 2020 winner. Although she wasn't able to attend this year's award ceremony, we were fortunate that we finally got to meet her in person at last year's conference.

This year's third runner-up, Simon Hertz, is senior studying English at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania. K.M. Szpara and Ted Chiang are among Simon's favorite writers, and he was thrilled to meet both of them at ICFA. Simon received his award for his transformative tale of "The River People." Simon also won an honorable mention for the evocative "Gone Up in Fog."

We were happy to meet Jadyn Straigis, another honorable mention. Jadyn is a second-year student majoring in creative writing at Goucher College in Baltimore, Maryland. Jadyn's professor, Sarah Pinsker, was on hand to see him receive a certificate for a humorous spooky tale about "The Ivory Peak Hotel."

Sadly, we had some missing honorable mentions. Jazmin Collins of Arcadia University, and our 2021 winner, received a certificate for "A Practical Guide to Housitting for North American Witches." William Romero of Vanderbilt University received a certificate for "The Great Blue Heron of the Mississippi." Finally, Emely Menjivar of Chapman University received an honorable mention for "Blind Faith."

Astute readers may have noticed the three references to Chapman University. All three students studied with the extraordinary Ben Loory. We certainly missed his presence at the conference.

Last year's award-winning story, "The Hellish Takeout," has just gone up on our website. This devilish tale is by Jack Hawkins of Vanderbilt University. You can read it at <https://www.asimovs.com/>.

The students dined with returning Dell Award finalists Rich Larson, Eleanor Griggs, Rebecca McNulty Goodman, and Seth Dickinson as well as Joe and Gay Haldeman,



Left to right: Olivia Garcia, Simon Hertz, Jaydn Straigis, and Sam Wilson

Alan and Karen Smale, Stephen R. Donaldson; Suzanne Palmer; Walter Jon Williams; Nick DiChario; Tachyon Publications editor/publisher Jacob Weisman and his wife Rina, along with his colleague Bernie Goodman; and Neil Clarke, the editor/publisher of *Clarkesworld*. Sam J. Miller also spent time with the finalists after the banquet.

The Dell Magazines Award for Undergraduate Excellence in Science Fiction and Fantasy Writing was established by *Asimov's Science Fiction* magazine and the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts in 1993 to promote the writing of science fiction and fantasy by college undergraduates. The contest is open to all full-time undergraduates at accredited colleges and universities. Our first award was bestowed in 1994. This means that next year we'll be celebrating our thirtieth award-winner!

The award is not limited to unpublished authors, but all submissions must be previously unpublished and unsold, and they should be from 1,000 to 10,000 words long. Writers may submit an unlimited number of stories, but each manuscript must include a cover sheet with the writer's name, address, phone number, and the university the writer attends. Manuscripts should be double-spaced, with adequate margins and numbered pages. Names should not appear on the manuscript itself after the cover sheet.

The judges reserve the right to double-check your university status. For this year's contest, you must have been a full-time undergraduate during the fall 2022; or spring, summer; or fall 2023 semesters (or quarters) of your university or college.

Story submissions should have been written during your time as a student. However, if you attended college full-time during a qualifying semester and then graduated or went to part-time status, you are still eligible.

Find out more about the award at <http://www.dellaward.com/> or on Facebook at

Month 2020

<https://www.facebook.com/Dell-Magazines-Award-177319923776/>. We want to take this opportunity to thank Adam Kehoe for his tireless volunteer work on our website.

The deadline for next year's submissions is Tuesday, January 9, 2024, at 11:59 P.M.