

## THE 2019 DELL MAGAZINES AWARD

2019 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of our first Dell Magazines Award for Undergraduate Excellence in Science Fiction and Fantasy Writing. To celebrate this momentous occasion, our first winner, Eric Choi was invited to the International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts in March. Eric, who has published a number of stories and coedited two anthologies in the intervening years, gave an elegant speech at the Awards banquet. He thanked the International Association for Fantastic in the Arts and Dell Magazines for their cosponsorship of the award. The Dell Award is also supported by Western Colorado University's Graduate Program in Creative Writing. This year's winner, Ana Maria Curtis, got a plaque as well as a check for five hundred dollars.

Ana Maria is a senior at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, where she has studied with Gregory Frost and Rachel Pastan. Ana has a double major in English literature and economics. She is also a graduate of the Alpha Workshop for young writers. She says her teacher at West Central Illinois High School, the author Tracy Townsend, helped set her on the road to writing. Ana Maria will soon be starting an economics position in Washington, DC. She won the Dell Award for a tale about a future where war is a thing of the past. Our armed services have long since faded, and her characters are coping with a "Military Sunset."

Ana Maria's award-winning tale should be available on our website next year. In the meantime, please check out last year's winner, "Happy? Sad?" by Arthur Davis, at [www.asimovs.com](http://www.asimovs.com).

Alas, our first runner-up, Cody D. Campbell, could not attend the conference. Cody is a student at Oregon State University. He received his award for "Crossing Over"—a harrowing story set sometime in the future that was about a family attempting to emigrate to Canada.

Our second runner-up was Wenmimareba Klobah Collins. Wenmii is in her third year at the University of Puerto Rico—Rio Piedras Campus. She is a double major in literature and art, and a graduate of the Alpha Workshop. Wenmii, who has already sold a story to *The Dark*, was born in Iowa City, Iowa, and moved to PR when she was eleven months old. Her favorite authors include N.K. Jemisin and Seth Dickinson. She received her award for a very funny and bittersweet tale about "Unexplained Phenomena."

The award is decided by a blind read, which means the results always include a few surprises. I was not aware that our third runner-up, Joseph O'Conner, was a student of my co-judge Rick Wilber at Florida Gulf Coast University. Joseph received his award for "Music in the Other Room." Sadly, Joseph passed away before learning of this award.

We were delighted to discover that we knew two of our honorable mentions. Claire Spaulding, who had been our first runner-up for the last two years, received her HM for "Baucis," an intriguing tale about marriage, life-extension, and euthanasia. Claire is a senior studying sociology at Columbia University and a graduate of the Alpha Workshop. Last year's winner, Arthur Davis, received his award for a very new take on the story of "Gawain." Like Ana Maria, Art is a senior at Swarthmore. He is about to embark on a graduate degree in video game design at Southern Methodist University.

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Photo credit: Francesca Myman

Left to right: Eric Choi, Arthur Davis, Ana Maria Curtis,  
Wenmimareba Klobah Collins, Claire Spaulding

Josephine Su is a student at the University of Alberta. She received her award for “The Gilding of the Stray.” Our other honorable mention, Emmalee Gagnon of Arcadia University, was abroad in Rome. She received her award for “Say Her Name.”

The finalists dined with returning Dell Award finalists Alex Barr and Rich Larson, as well as Kathleen Ann Goonan, Nick Wolven, Nick DiChario, Micah Dean Hicks, Brenda Peynado, Walter Jon Williams, Mimi Mondal, Joe and Gay Haldeman, Eric Choi and Gillian Clinton, and editors/publishers Neil Clarke, John Joseph Adams, Scott H. Andrews, and Jacob Weisman.

Other attendees at the conference included three other previous Dell finalists: Marie Brennan, Rebecca McNulty, and Brittney Hubley, plus G. Wilow Wilson, John Kessel, Sandra McDonald, Sarah Pinsker, Ted Chiang, Eugene Fischer, Nisi Shawl, Joan Slonczewski, Alec Nevala-Lee, Siobhan Carroll, Joyce Chng, Usman Malik, Theodora Goss, Mary Anne Mohanraj, Daryl Gregory, Andrea Hairston, Geoffrey A. Landis, Ellen Klages, John Chu, Mary Turzillo, David D. Levine, Fran Wilde, Eileen Gunn, Andy Duncan, James Patrick Kelly, Stephen R. Donaldson, and others. Many of these people spent time visiting with our finalists.

You can visit with previous finalists and current writers at our Facebook page. Find out more about the award at [www.dellaward.com](http://www.dellaward.com) or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/Dell-Magazines-Award-177319923776/>.

We are actively looking for next year's winner. The deadline for submissions is Tuesday, January 7, 2020, at 11:59 P.M. Stories must be unpublished and unsold and should be between a thousand and ten thousand words. All full-time undergraduate students at any accredited university or college are eligible.

Before entering the contest, contact Rick Wilber for more information, rules, and

## July 2016

manuscript guidelines. Reach him by email at [rickwilber@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:rickwilber@tampabay.rr.com). Next year's winner will be announced at the 2020 Conference on the Fantastic, in the pages of *Asimov's Science Fiction magazine*, and on our website.