

## THE 2020 DELL MAGAZINES AWARDS

Our historic 2020 presentation of the annual Dell Magazines Award for Undergraduate Excellence in Science Fiction and Fantasy Writing was conducted virtually via Zoom. The award is cosponsored by Dell Magazines and the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts. We are also supported by Western Colorado University's Graduate Program in Creative Writing, Low-Residency MA and MFA, Genre Fiction Concentration. Although we were deeply saddened that we could not announce the awards during a lovely banquet at the Conference on the Fantastic in Orlando, Florida, we were deeply grateful to Western Colorado University for making the Zoom meeting and presentation possible.

As I named each of the finalists from my apartment in New York City, Rick Wilber, my co-judge, held up a certificate from his own home in Florida. We gave each student an opportunity to say a few words. Although I didn't get the chance to meet or talk with our wonderful winners in person, I was able to get to know each of them through one-on-one Skype and telephone critiques sessions.

Rona Wang was the winner of the 2020 Dell Magazines Award. Rona is a third-year student majoring in mathematics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Rona tells me she's been writing her whole life. Her favorite authors include Alyssa Wong and former Dell Finalist Alice Sola Kim. A course at MIT with Junot Díaz on critical world building led Rona to her multi-layered award-winning "Imitation Game." We were delighted to bestow the award along with a check for \$500 on this talented emerging author. Rona's tale should be available on our website next year. In the meantime, please check out last year's winner, "Military Sunset" by Ana Maria Curts, at [www.asimovs.com](http://www.asimovs.com).

This year's first runner-up was Cyrus Lloyd. Cyrus is a junior at Vanderbilt University studying sociology. Isaac Asimov is one of his favorite authors. He received his award for a poignant and thoughtful story about "The Death of F209-5."

Although the finalists are determined via a blind read, it seems that every year we are delighted to discover that some of our award recipients are returning finalists from previous years. Wenmimareba Klobah Collins was a second runner-up in 2019. This year she tied for second runner-up as well. Wenmi is a senior at the University of Puerto Rico—Rio Piedras Campus who will be graduating with a double major in literature and visual arts. Due to Hurricane Maria, Wenmi spent much of her freshman year at Brown University. The Covid-19 pandemic meant that she had to forego her college graduation, but she is enthusiastically looking forward to graduate school. Wenmi received her award for the evocative "Journey from Middle to Nowhere." Kaley Mamo also tied for second runner-up. The author of an unsettling coming of age story set in "The Bendix Diner" is a sophomore at Columbia University majoring in film studies. Kaley loves writing magical realism and SF. Favorite films include *Children of Men*, *Annihilation*, and *Arrival*. Kelly Link and Ted Chiang are among her favorite authors.

Our third runner-up award went to Grace Yang. Grace is a junior at Indiana University—Bloomington studying accounting and finance along with creative writing. Tracey Townsend, a high school teacher at Illinois Math and Science Academy, was a major influence on her, as was her experience at the Alpha Workshop for Young Writers. Grace's favorite authors include Ken Liu and Alyssa Wong. She received her award for her deeply moving tale about a "Dragon Fall."

Two of our honorable mentions were returning honorees. Claire Spaulding was a

first runner up in 2017 and 2018 as well as one of 2019's honorable mentions. Claire has since graduated from Columbia University. Through a Springboard Fellowship from Hillel International she now works at Princeton University. She received this year's award for "Halfies." C.E. McGill of North Carolina State University also received an honorable mention in 2018. At NC State, Charlie majored in Interdisciplinary Studies: Self Designed: Narratives of Science in Fiction and History. She is currently working on her first novel. She received her award for "Things to Bring, Things to Burn, Things Best Left Behind."

Honorable mentions that were new to the award included Alexandra Rose Nagele. Rose majored in creative writing and biology at the University of Pennsylvania. She wrote her entry in a class taught by Carmen Machado. Her experience working in a cancer lab is strongly evident in "Cell Culture." Moe Kirkpatrick is the author of "Ode to Andromeda" and a third-year student at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. He's working on a BFA in creative writing. Some favorite authors are: N.K. Jemisin, Ursula K. Le Guin, Ann Leckie, and Kij Johnson. M.H. Chau is the author of "The Last Deer in Heaven" and a junior at Brown University majoring in environmental studies and focusing on environmental inequity and justice.

Although we pulled our ceremony together quickly, we were delighted that additional guests were able to attend. These included SF critics Gary Wolfe and Dale Hanes and authors Fran Wilde, Gregory Norman Bossert, Sarah Pinsker, Jason Sanford, John Chu, and Steven H. Silver. We hope to fete all our promising 2020 finalists beside our 2021 finalists at next year's ICFA.

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/>. The deadline for next year's submissions is Tuesday, January 5, 2021, 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. Contact Rick Wilber at [rickwilber@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:rickwilber@tampabay.rr.com) for more information and manuscript guidelines.