

## YOUNG WRITERS WORKSHOP

Dear Applicant:

Thanks for your interest in the Young Writers Workshop. We look forward to receiving your application. Once your application is complete, we will inform you of our decision within two weeks.

We would encourage you to fill out the application form yourself rather than leave it to your parents. This may seem like a curious request, but it is based on many years of reading applications and reflects our interest in enrolling students who are genuinely interested in participating in the workshop. We also ask that you type the personal narrative described on page two of the application. Feel free to attach your printed pages to the form.

When giving the recommendation form to your teacher, be sure to emphasize the importance of returning it as soon as possible. Providing your teacher with a stamped and addressed envelope can often help the recommendation get to us in a timely manner.

If you are applying for the Dorothy West Scholarship for minority students (see the PDF for further information), the deadline for completed applications is April 18. ***All other applications, including requests for standard financial aid, will be reviewed as they become complete.*** Early application is recommended.

As you may know, Simon's Rock is a college for younger scholars. Students enter Simon's Rock after tenth or eleventh grade to begin an accredited program of studies leading to both the A.A. and B.A. degrees. In 1983 we established the Young Writers Workshop, modeling it after the three-week workshop required of all entering students at Bard College, our affiliated institution. It has served as a model for summer writing workshops (**The National Writing and Thinking Network**) at other colleges around the country.

The Young Writers Workshop is not a traditional creative writing workshop. That is, we are not directly concerned with teaching students how to write poems or short stories or essays. Instead, National Writing and Thinking Network programs such as ours provide students the opportunity to explore various kinds of writing while focusing on the relationship between language and thinking. In addition, we believe that the best way to grow as a writer is by writing rather than by listening to teachers give lectures, no matter how inspirational. What this means is that we spend a lot of time each day doing various kinds of informal writing activities together (the prompts may range from creative and exploratory responses to assigned readings, to observations of nature, to various kinds of fiction and poetry play). In doing these activities, our goal is to help you strengthen your writing and thinking skills.

In fact, we see the workshop as an opportunity for you to work on yourself as a writer as much as on your writing. We believe this will be of more use to you in the long run than

simply learning how to write a technically correct and polished piece of prose or poetry. Out of the daily informal writing activities that we do, however, you will also have the opportunity to develop more polished pieces, from poems and stories to exploratory and personal essays. By the end of the three weeks, you will have created a rich portfolio of works in progress. In fact, students who have attended other summer writing programs and then come to Simon's Rock often tell us that they feel much more productive here in terms of generating new and worthwhile writing.

Although we will ask you to do a lot of writing, reading, discussing, and thinking in the three weeks, the atmosphere is relaxed and playful. We try to create the feeling of working together in a supportive writing and learning community, a welcome change for many students compared to their normal classroom experience.

Please don't hesitate to call me if you have any questions about the workshop or about how to apply. I look forward to receiving your application.

Sincerely,

Jamie Hutchinson  
Director, Young Writers Workshop  
Phone: (413) 528-7231(work); (413) 274-6957(home)  
E-mail: [jamieh@simons-rock.edu](mailto:jamieh@simons-rock.edu)

P.S. If you would like to e-mail or speak to former students and their families, please send me an e-mail and I will provide you with contact information.

**SIMON'S ROCK WEBSITE:**  
**[www.simons-rock.edu/young\\_writers](http://www.simons-rock.edu/young_writers)**

**NATIONAL WRITING AND THINKING NETWORK WEBSITE:**  
**[www.bard.edu/iwt/students/](http://www.bard.edu/iwt/students/)**