

Edgar Allan Poe Young Writers' Conference

Richmond, Virginia

June 18 – June 24, 2006

The Edgar Allan Poe Young Writers' Conference provides a weeklong residential program designed to encourage and stimulate the writing skills of high school students. Students will have a variety of experiences including small group instruction with a writing instructor, lectures by practicing writers in several different fields, personal writing time with critical response from instructors, and special events designed to enhance the writing experience.

This conference is sponsored by the Edgar Allan Poe Museum of Richmond, Virginia, to continue the legacy of Edgar Allan Poe. One of Poe's greatest concerns was the development of a truly American literature. As editor of many of the nation's leading journals, Poe inspired many young writers. In keeping with that concern, the Poe Museum hopes to encourage the development of the next generation of writers.

Poe called Richmond his home, having spent the greater part of his life here. During his teenage years in Richmond, he was encouraged to write by Mrs. Jane Stith Stanard. In Richmond he began his career in journalism when he took over the editorship of *The Southern Literary Messenger*.

LECTURES

Each morning the participants will hear from practicing writers in a variety of fields, including fiction, poetry, journalism, and non-fiction. Since participants will have already studied the mechanics of grammar in school, the lecturers will address the practice of writing from their own experience. Lectures will combine theory and practice to give the participants an understanding of what is involved in moving to the next level as a writer.

SEMINAR

Each participant will take part in a daily seminar that includes an experienced writing instructor and 9 – 12 students. Seminars are working groups in which participants read from their own work, receive critique and encouragement from the instructor and their peers, and gain instruction in how to improve as a writer. Participants will be introduced to exercises and prompts that enhance writing skills.

PRACTICING THE CRAFT

Every afternoon the participants will devote time to developing the craft of writing by immediately putting into practice what they have gained from lectures and seminars. Seminar leaders will help students craft the piece they work on during the week.

FOCUS ON POE

A critical element that contributes to good writing is a strong appreciation of good writing. Every afternoon, a presentation will be given that deals with an aspect of the writing of Edgar Allan Poe and what makes his writing so effective. Poe is known and appreciated around the world as America's contribution to world literature. We will explore why his poetry and tales are read avidly in France, Russia, Japan, and around the world.

SALON

Writing emerges from the experiences of life. During Poe's day, the artists and writers of the time gathered regularly in the evenings. Music or drama may have been the focus of their attention as much as writing. Cross-fertilization of artistic and intellectual experiences stimulates creativity. In short, all work and no play makes Jack and Jill painfully dull. Evening activities are meant to be fun while contributing to a frame of reference that will give writers something to say.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who may apply?

High school students who have completed the ninth grade may apply.

What is a residential program?

A residential program involves living together as a community of writers. A residential approach allows for the creation of an environment that encourages the development of an attitude of writing. Colleagues stimulate one another through conversation, sharing of ideas, reading one another's work, and sharing a routine designed to gain the maximum benefit from a weeklong experience.

Where will the participants stay?

Participants will live together in the Gladding Residence Center of Virginia Commonwealth University. All lectures, small groups, and most special events will take place across the street in the University Commons. Participants will take meals together in the University dining hall across from the Commons.

Are students on their own after class?

Because this is a residential program in which all the pieces are carefully designed to complement one another, there is no free time after class until the entire week is over. Resident assistants who are college students live in the dorms with the conference participants to ensure that everyone respects the purpose of the conference and to be available in case of emergencies. We will have one resident assistant for every ten students.

What are the security provisions in the dorm?

Security guards are on duty twenty-four hours a day at the entrance to the dormitory and make regular inspections of the facility.

What is the cost of the program?

The cost per person is \$655.00. This fee includes lodging for six nights, double occupancy, and three meals per day, Monday through Friday. The Sunday meal will only be supper following afternoon arrival, and the Saturday meal will only be breakfast followed by departure.

Who is the director of the conference?

The director of the conference is Dr. Harry Lee Poe, a cousin of Edgar Allan Poe and the current president of the Edgar Allan Poe Museum. Dr. Poe has had a distinguished academic career as scholar and administrator. He has written seven books and contributed chapters to over twenty others. He is a published poet and popular speaker.

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

- 7:30 – 8:00 Breakfast
- 8:00 – 8:30 Personal time
- 8:30 – 9:30 Morning Plenary (lecture)
- 9:30 – 9:45 Break
- 9:45 – 10:45 Seminar
- 10:45 – 11:00 Break
- 11:00 – 12:00 Seminar (cont.)
- 12:00 – 1:00 Lunch
- 1:00 – 4:00 Personal Writing Time
- 4:00 – 5:00 Focus on Poe
- 5:00 – 6:00 Free time
- 6:00 – 7:00 Supper
- 7:00 – 9:00 Salon (special events)

9:00 – 11:00 Community

RULES

We assume that those who apply to the program are serious about writing and want to use their time to develop their skill and make a contribution as a member of a writing community. Failure to comply with the rules will result in expulsion from the program.

Smoking and/or the use of alcohol or other illegal substances is not allowed.

Students are not allowed to have a car with them during the conference.

Students may not leave the campus.

Students may not visit the dorm rooms of members of the opposite sex. Residence life is not a co-ed experience.

Students may not engage in sexual relations.

In order to attend the conference, applicants must sign a statement that they have read the rules and agree to abide by them.

MAKING APPLICATION

The Edgar Allan Poe Young Writers' Conference is open to high school students who demonstrate a serious interest in writing and have the maturity to live in an academic community for a week. You will be notified by **May 1** of the decision about your application. Those who are accepted into the program will be expected to pay a **deposit of \$100 by May 30, 2006** to secure their place in the conference. A complete application includes the following:

1. A completed application form.
2. A writing sample of fiction, poetry, journalism, or non-fiction essay of not more than five pages, double-spaced.
3. A completed recommendation form from a teacher familiar with your ability and interest in writing (sent directly to the Poe Museum).
4. A completed recommendation from a teacher or other adult who can attest to your maturity and ability to work within a close-knit community (sent directly to the Poe Museum).

Mail your application by **April 1, 2006** to:
Edgar Allan Poe Young Writers' Conference
Poe Museum
1914 East Main Street
Richmond, Virginia 23223

Edgar Allan Poe Young Writers' Conference – Application Form
(to be completed and returned by April 1, 2006)

Please print or type

Name of applicant _____
Last First Middle

Home address _____

Telephone _____ e-mail _____

Date of birth _____ Sex: M ___ F ___ Grade level completed this spring _____

School name _____

School address _____

How did you learn of the Edgar Allan Poe Young Writers' Conference?

I hereby affirm that the information in this application is correct. I further affirm that I have read the rules of behavior and agree to abide by them if accepted.

Signature of applicant: _____ Date: _____

As the parent/guardian of the student above, I hereby grant them permission to participate in the Edgar Allan Poe Young Writers' Conference.

Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

Edgar Allan Poe Young Writers' Conference – Teacher Recommendation Form
(to be sent directly to the Poe Museum by April 1, 2006)

The student applicant and the applicant's parent or guardian must complete this status of confidentiality statement. Please print or type.

Name of applicant _____
Last First Middle

Under the provisions of the Family Education and Privacy Act of 1974, the parents of students under the age of eighteen may decide whether letters of reference written at the request of the student are to be held confidential or made available for personal inspection by the applicant and their parent/guardian. If the student is eighteen years of age or over, then the decision is the student's decision.

Check one of the following statements and sign both applicant and parent/guardian spaces so that the recommender will know of your choice:

Confidential file. I grant permission for this letter of recommendation to be held confidential by the Poe Museum.

Open file. I retain the choice of having this letter of reference available to me.

(signature of parent/guardian)

(signature of applicant)

This portion to be completed by the recommender. Please print or type.

The applicant named above has applied for admission to the Edgar Allan Poe Young Writers' Conference sponsored by the Edgar Allan Poe Museum of Richmond, Virginia. The conference is designed for high school students to develop their writing skills and gain insight into the discipline of writing. We will accept students of varying ability who are seriously interested in the craft of writing. This conference is not a remedial writing program, but is designed to encourage students to move to their own next level.

Please comment on the applicant's writing ability and their potential to benefit from the conference.

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Because the Edgar Allan Poe Young Writers' Conference involves an intensive learning experience with students from many different settings who will be living together in a college dorm for six days, it is important that our participants have both maturity and social skills that express a respect and regard for others.

Please comment on the applicant's maturity and social skills and the likelihood of the applicant's positive contribution to the community.

Name of recommender _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Position _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

_____ E-mail _____

Please return by April 1, 2006 to:
Edgar Allan Poe Young Writers' Conference
Poe Museum
1914 East Main Street
Richmond, Virginia 23223
www.poemuseum.org
info@poemuseum.org

Edgar Allan Poe Young Writers' Conference – Adult Recommendation Form
(to be sent directly to the Poe Museum by April 1, 2006)

The student applicant and the applicant's parent or guardian must complete this status of confidentiality statement. Please print or type.

Name of applicant _____
Last First Middle

Under the provisions of the Family Education and Privacy Act of 1974, the parents of students under the age of eighteen may decide whether letters of reference written at the request of the student are to be held confidential or made available for personal inspection by the applicant and their parent/guardian. If the student is eighteen years of age or over, then the decision is the student's decision.

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Open file. I retain the choice of having this letter of reference available to me.

(signature of parent/guardian)

(signature of applicant)

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Please comment on the applicant's maturity and social skills and the likelihood of the applicant's positive contribution to the community.

(continue to next page)

Name of recommender _____

Signature _____ Date _____

How do you know the applicant?

Position _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

_____ E-mail _____

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