



## 2018 DPA Communicator of Achievement

### Billie Elizabeth Travalini

Billie Travalini is an internationally recognized writer who has read her work to audiences worldwide – most recently at East China University, in Shanghai; the University of Vienna, in Austria; York University, in Canada; the University of Alcalá, in Spain; and The University of Cork, in Ireland. In June 2018, she will be reading at the University of Lisbon in Portugal.

A recipient of a 2014 Governor's Award for the Arts, Billie also is a winner of professional fellowships from Delaware Division of the Arts in fiction, nonfiction, and poetry.

Billie is the author of several books, including her memoir, *Blood Sisters*, which was a finalist for the Bakeless Publication Prize and the James Jones Award and won the Lewis and Clark Discovery Prize. The book became required reading for freshman classes at Wesley College.

Her short story, "Never Again," recently was nominated by the Lakeview International Journal of Literature and Arts, for the VEstal Review Award for short fiction.

Her most recent work has been published in *The Lakeview International Journal of Literature and Arts*; *The Moth*; *Influence and Confluence: East and West*; *A Global Anthology on the Short Story in English*; *Another Chicago Magazine*; *Writers on Writing*; and *Selected Stories* from the 14th International Conference of the Short Story in English (conducted in English and Chinese).

Billie's editing work includes:

- *No Place Like Here: Anthology of Southern Delaware Poetry and Prose.*
- *Teaching Troubled Youth: a Practical Pedagogical Approach.*
- *On the Mason Dixon Line: an Anthology of Contemporary Delaware Writers*, 2008 (co-edited with Fleda Brown).
- *Wilmington Senior Center: Fifty Years of Community.*
- and fiction editor of *The Journal of Caribbean Literature.*

Billie has co-founded and coordinated writing workshops and conferences throughout Delaware, including the Lewes Creative Writers Conference, now in its 11th year. The conference was the first of its kind in the state and functions not only as a source of information and inspiration, but also as a place for writers to connect with each other and feel part of the wider community.

A Phi Beta Kappa / magna cum laude graduate of the University of Delaware, and a scholarship graduate of Temple University, Billie has taught at Temple University and Lincoln University as well as at The Boys and Girls Clubs of Delaware.

Also a longtime advocate for at-risk children and the mentally ill, Billie has taught in the education unit of the Delaware Department of Social Services for Children, Youth, and their Families. There, in detention centers throughout the First State, she created lesson plans to encourage critical thinking. The plans and the students' responses resulted in *Teaching Troubled Youth: a Practical Pedagogical Approach*, a book that highlighted the students' art and writing and gave voice to their hopes and fears.

She has been a keynote speaker at Wesley College, at Wilmington University, and at the Lancaster YMCA's interactive "Take Back the Night" event, and at the Family Violence Resource Network Conference. As a board member of the Southern New Castle Communities Coalition, she helped organize and lead workshops at the organization's 2015 SNCC Youth Summit.

Billie has served on the State Planning Council for Child and Adolescent Mental Health for eleven years. And while actively serving the children of today and tomorrow, she currently is a member of the Fort DuPont Historic Preservation Committee, where she is putting together a Respite Committee to remember the thousands of unwanted and often abused children who lived in at the Governor Bacon Health Center from 1948 to 1984. *She* was one of those children. She also is working with the Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council to record the history of treatment for persons with disabilities within the First State.

When this remarkable woman – who helps give a voice to those whose voices often are not heard – finds a spare minute, she is busy writing and editing two more books. The first is a work of non-fiction: *Rules to Survive Childhood*, a sequel to *Blood Sisters*, and the second is a collection of short stories: *Rush Limbaugh and the French Apple Pie and Other Stories*.