THE RAGDALE FOUNDATION

Ragdale is a non-profit artists’ community located on architect Howard Van Doren Shaw’s country estate in Lake Forest, 30 miles north of Chicago. In 1976, Shaw’s granddaughter, Alice Judson Hayes, transformed her family’s summer home into an artists’ retreat to provide time and space for artists to create important new work.

More than 150 residencies and fellowships are now offered annually to creative professionals of all types, making Ragdale one of the largest interdisciplinary artists’ communities in the country. Ragdale offers a retreat setting where at any given time, 13 artists-in-residence experience uninterrupted time for dedicated work, a supportive environment, dynamic artist exchanges, 50 acres of idyllic prairie, and a family-style dinner each evening.

For further information, visit the website at ragdale.org, call 847.234.1063 or email: info@ragdale.org.
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Ragdale is pleased to host the seventh annual High School Writing Intensive Workshop, a free week-long creative writing program for motivated and promising students from the Greater Chicago area. Students are encouraged to apply and, if accepted, attend a workshop at Ragdale, the artists’ residency in Lake Forest which hosts over 150 professional authors and artists each year.

During the week, participants will work with writing instructors Margaret Hawkins and Quraysh Ali Lansana in workshops, tutorials, group talks, and readings. Students will focus on journals, poetry, non-fiction, flash fiction and a one-act play. They will also participate in a book-making workshop.

Ragdale’s Writing Intensive will culminate in a reading of the participants’ work for families and friends on Friday, July 24.

“Before Ragdale, I would often question whether or not I truly wanted to pursue creative writing. Now I know how empowering it would be to write a screenplay or a short story. Maybe even a novel. Thank you very much for this wonderful experience.”

Tyler Madeley
High School Writing Intensive

APPLICATION PROCESS

English and creative writing teachers in the area are invited to identify sophomores, juniors, and seniors in the current year’s classes who demonstrate strong writing potential and an interest in exploring their creative energy through participation in a program that will challenge their thinking while providing small group instruction and individual feedback.

Highly motivated students who value writing should be encouraged to submit an application with two one-page writing samples of existing work and references.

PROGRAM FEES

This program has been funded in part by a grant from the Heizer Foundation. The program is completely underwritten and participants who are accepted will not pay any fees.

LOGISTICS

Students commute to Ragdale, located at 1260 North Green Bay Road in Lake Forest and are expected to be in attendance daily from 10 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday, July 20-24. The Ragdale campus will be open to the students during the week. Lunch and snacks will be provided.

Students can apply to Ragdale for ticket reimbursement for train fare on the Metra Union Pacific North line. Arrangements can be made for pick up and drop off at the Lake Forest station.

MARGARET HAWKINS

Margaret Hawkins is an author, curator, critic, and Ragdale alum whose long-running column ran weekly in the Chicago Sun-Times and whose work has appeared regularly in ARTnews and on NPR. Hawkins has taught workshops at Ragdale, creative writing at Lake Forest College, and currently teaches writing and arts journalism at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She has published three novels and a memoir, most recently Lydia’s Party in 2014.

QURAYSH ALI LANSANA

Quryash Ali Lansana is the author of eight poetry books, three textbooks, a children’s book, editor of eight anthologies and a co-author of a book of pedagogy. He is a faculty member of the Creative Writing Program of the School of the Art Institute and the Red Earth MFA Creative Writing Program at Oklahoma City University. Lansana served as Director of the Gwendolyn Brooks Center for Black Literature and Creative Writing at Chicago State University from 2002-2011, where he was also Associate Professor of English/Creative Writing.