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**CONTACT:**

HAILEY BARRON  
734.619.6226 EXT 1014  
HAILEY.BARRON@  
SLEEPINGBEARPRESS.COM

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## CHERRY LAKE PUBLISHING GROUP ANNOUNCES 2022 OWN VOICES, OWN STORIES AWARD SEASON

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Ann Arbor, Mich.: Cherry Lake Publishing Group is pleased to announce the second season of its annual Own Voices, Own Stories Award. Launched by Cherry Lake Publishing Group's imprint, Sleeping Bear Press, the Award recognizes new authors from BIPOC and/or LGBTQ+ communities with a mission to highlight the universal experience of our shared humanity through diverse and multifaceted experiences.

**Manuscripts will be accepted from Jan. 1, 2022, through March 31, 2022, and must be submitted through the form at <https://cherrylakepublishing.com/ovos>.** Grand Prize winners will receive a \$2,000 cash prize, in addition to a publishing contract with advance and royalties standard for new Sleeping Bear Press authors. Honor Award winners will receive a \$500 cash prize as well as one consulting session with a Sleeping Bear Press editor.

**To supplement the award program and to highlight more stories by first-time BIPOC and/or LGBTQ+ authors, an Own Voices, Own Stories Collection has been added to the Sleeping Bear Press imprint.** This annual Collection will feature stories selected from Own Voices, Own Stories Award submissions. If chosen for the Collection, a publishing contract will be offered.

At least one Honor Award will be offered each year, but a Grand Prize winner and selection for the Own Voices, Own Stories Collection will be offered at the discretion of the judging committee. All judgments are final.

In keeping with the spirit of the Award, interested writers must be unagented and unpublished at time of submission. Manuscripts that have been previously submitted to Sleeping Bear Press and/or the Own Voices, Own Stories Award will not be considered. Authors who have self-published books will be considered, but the submitted story must be original (i.e. not the self-published title). **For further submission criteria, visit <https://cherrylakepublishing.com/ovos>.**

### 2021 Grand Prize Winners

2021 Grand Prize manuscripts will be published as part of Sleeping Bear Press' 2023 season.

**Julie Hopper** (Michigan) is a proud member of the Bay Mills Tribe of Chippewa Indians and currently works as the academic assessment specialist for Lake Superior State University's Charter Schools Office. In her winning manuscript, Hopper reflects on the values of Native American culture through a tender and poetic conversation between mother and daughter.

"I am humbled to have such a highly respected group of professionals and quality publishing company recognize my story and am looking forward to collaborating with the entire Sleeping Bear Team," said Hopper.

**Lesley Younge** (Silver Spring, Md.) is a writer and middle school teacher who draws inspiration from her son, her students, and the many hiking trails in her neighborhood. Her winning manuscript brings the afternoon of a young boy in the city to life as he races through his neighborhood to meet his grandmother's train on time.

"I am extremely honored that [my story] was selected as an Own Voices, Own Stories Grand Prize winner," said Younge. "As a teacher and a mother, I know how critical it is for children to see themselves reflected in literature and for writers to share stories that might mirror their lives."

Learn more about Younge at [www.teacherlesley.com](http://www.teacherlesley.com).

### 2021 Honor Award Winners

**Meghana Narayan** (Silver Spring, Md.) is an educator and has taught in early childhood classrooms for over a decade. She began a career in visual arts in 2015 and has carved out time from teaching kindergarten to pursue this work. She remains connected to education through her blog and social media platforms, [Teach for the Change](#), where she shares resources for raising racially and socially conscious children.

**C. Quintana (CQ)** is a queer writer with Cuban and Louisiana roots based on Canarsie-Lenape land in Cypress Hills, Brooklyn. The author of the full-length play *Scissoring* (Dramatists Play Service) and *The Heart Wants*, a chapbook of poetry (Finishing Line Press), CQ is the recipient of fellowships and residencies from Tin House, MacDowell, Queer/Art, Van Lier New Voices at the Lark, Lambda Literary, and beyond. Learn more about CQ at [www.cquintana.com](http://www.cquintana.com).

The Own Voices, Own Stories Award is sponsored by Cherry Lake Publishing Group. To arrange for an interview or feature regarding this award, email [hailey.barron@sleepingbearpress.com](mailto:hailey.barron@sleepingbearpress.com).

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