

The MacDowell Colony

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THE MACDOWELL COLONY ANNOUNCES NEW SUPPORT FOR WOMEN WRITERS

Endowed gift from The Rona Jaffe Foundation establishes new Fellowship

The MacDowell Colony and The Rona Jaffe Foundation are pleased to announce a new Fellowship to support emergent women writers.

The Rona Jaffe Foundation Fellowship will be awarded annually to women writers who will be first-time residents at The MacDowell Colony, America's first and leading multidisciplinary artist residency program. A generous gift from The Rona Jaffe Foundation has endowed this Fellowship in perpetuity in memory of its founder Rona Jaffe, who was the best-selling author 16 books, including *Class Reunion* and *The Best of Everything*.

"Establishing this Fellowship at MacDowell in honor of Rona Jaffe has been a wonderful way to continue her legacy of supporting emergent women writers," said Beth McCabe, Foundation trustee and writers' awards director. "We are very pleased to be working with The MacDowell Colony to provide more opportunities for gifted women writers."

Emergent writers may be described as those who are as yet unpublished or who are just completing their first book. A Fellowship at MacDowell provides writers with the exclusive use of a private studio, living accommodations, three meals a day, and the benefits of participating in a dynamic multidisciplinary community of fellow artists. Most importantly, artists-in-residence receive uninterrupted time in which to pursue creative work for up to two months. The Rona Jaffe Foundation Fellowship also carries with it a stipend to defray travel expenses and replace lost income during the residency.

"We hope that other endowed fellowships in the future will be enhanced in the same way," McCabe added.

The shared hope of The MacDowell Colony and The Rona Jaffe Foundation is to encourage applications from women writers who have not applied for residencies in the past for financial reasons. Through this and other needs-based support, MacDowell is striving to open the residency experience to a wider, more diverse community of artists.

“Nurturing artists from all walks of life by removing financial barriers ensures that a spectrum of voices can be heard. That spectrum enriches and enlivens our collective culture,” said Cheryl A. Young, MacDowell’s executive director.

Situated on 450 acres of woodland in Peterborough, New Hampshire, The MacDowell Colony welcomes more than 250 composers, writers, visual artists, architects, filmmakers, playwrights, and interdisciplinary artists from the United States and abroad each year. The sole criterion for acceptance is talent; a panel in each discipline selects Fellows. Leading women writers that MacDowell has supported since its founding in 1907 include Willa Cather, Louise Erdrich, Doris Kearns Goodwin, Susan Minot, Suzan-Lori Parks, Alice Sebold, Jean Valentine, Paula Vogel, and Alice Walker.

Since 1995, The Rona Jaffe Foundation has offered vital support through The Rona Jaffe Foundation Writers’ Awards to women in the early stages of their writing careers. It is the only national literary awards program of its kind dedicated to supporting women writers exclusively. In the past year, the Foundation has also established fellowships for women writers in Ms. Jaffe’s honor at five other distinguished institutions.

The first Rona Jaffe Foundation Fellowship will be awarded to a qualified writer of fiction, poetry, or creative nonfiction who applies for MacDowell’s Summer, 2009 residency period, at which time the first Fellowship recipient will be announced. The application deadline is January 15, 2009. In the future, the Fellowship will be open to eligible writers who apply for one of the Colony’s three residency periods. For an application form and admissions information, please visit <http://www.macdowellcolony.org/apply.html>.

For further information, please contact:

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