

# The MacDowell Colony

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## WRITER EVA TALMADGE NAMED FIRST RECIPIENT OF THE RONA JAFFE FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIP

*MacDowell and The Rona Jaffe Foundation join together  
to advance opportunities for women writers.*

*For immediate release... June 30, 2009...* The MacDowell Colony, the nation's leading artist residency program, has announced the award of its first Rona Jaffe Foundation Fellowship to writer Eva Talmadge. Talmadge will spend three weeks at the Colony in August and use the Fellowship to work on her first novel, *All of This Story Is Lost*, about the 1932 Ukrainian famine.

"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."

Since its founding in 1907, the Colony has supported such leading women writers as Willa Cather, Louise Erdrich, Doris Kearns Goodwin, Susan Minot, Suzan-Lori Parks, Alice Sebold, Jean Valentine, Paula Vogel, and Alice Walker. While there is no cost to a MacDowell residency, the Colony is seeking to open the residency experience to a wider, more diverse community by providing additional financial assistance to artists. Thanks to the generosity of The Rona Jaffe Foundation and other benefactors, MacDowell now offers several financial assistance programs for artists; these awards can be used to cover travel expenses, rent, childcare, equipment costs, or to replace lost income. The Rona Jaffe Foundation Fellowship, in addition to covering the costs associated with a MacDowell studio as well as room and board at the Colony, will also provide a \$2,500 stipend to recipients. In order to receive the Rona Jaffe Foundation Fellowship, the artist must first be

accepted as a MacDowell Fellow; once accepted, and should she meet the criteria of the Rona Jaffe Foundation, she will be considered for the Fellowship. The next application date for a MacDowell Fellowship is September 15, 2009.

Upon receiving word of her award, Talmadge said, “I’m completely thrilled. In a word, this fellowship means freedom — freedom to write, to take time away from work, to let go of my day-to-day financial anxieties for a while and concentrate on my fiction. I’m hugely grateful to The MacDowell Colony and The Rona Jaffe Foundation for making this possible.”

Endowed in perpetuity at MacDowell, The Rona Jaffe Foundation Fellowship was established in memory of Rona Jaffe, the best-selling author of 16 books, including *Class Reunion* and *The Best of Everything*. Since 1995, The Rona Jaffe Foundation Writers’ Awards program has offered vital support 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.

Talmadge was selected as the first recipient of MacDowell’s Rona Jaffe Foundation Fellowship based on her promising talent. A Phi Beta Kappa and cum laude graduate of the University of Florida, Talmadge is also a graduate of the MFA program at CUNY Hunter College, where she studied with such writers as Peter Carey, Nathan Englander, and Colum McCann. Her work has appeared in several literary journals and been recognized with the 2008 Miriam Weinberg Richter Award and the 2008 Bernard Cohen Short Story Prize. She currently works as a literary agent with the Emma Sweeney Agency in New York.

Situated on 450 acres of fields and woodland in New Hampshire, The MacDowell Colony welcomes more than 250 composers, writers, visual artists, theatre artists, architects, filmmakers, 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. In 1997, The MacDowell Colony was awarded the National Medal of Arts for “nurturing and inspiring many of this century’s finest artists.”

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