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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Del Sandeen Wins Speculative Literature Foundation's 2019 Diverse Writers and Diverse Worlds Grants

January 2020—The Speculative Literature Foundation is pleased to announce that Del Sandeen is the winner of the 2019 Diverse Writers and Diverse Worlds Grants.

The grants were awarded for Sandeen's novel-in-progress. Her fiction has previously appeared in FIYAH Literary Magazine and Magnolia, and she is also the author of three nonfiction books for young adults. Sandeen said that the grants "provide me the opportunity to purchase any research materials I might need to make my novel more authentic, as well as a few craft books that I believe would help me improve my writing. As a working parent, it's difficult for me to attend out-of-town conferences and workshops, but with this award, I can now at least attend an online class/workshop that will benefit me."

Awarded since 2014, the Diverse Writers grant is "intended to support new and emerging writers from underrepresented and underprivileged groups, such as writers of color, women, queer writers, disabled writers, working-class writers, etc. — those whose marginalized identities may present additional obstacles in the writing/publishing process." The Diverse Worlds Grant is "intended for work that best presents a diverse world, regardless of the writer's background." The \$500 awards support any purpose the recipients choose to benefit their work.

Honorable Mentions for the 2019 Diverse Writers Grant go to Jazmyn Taylor, Nigel Stone, and Angela M. Sanchez; for the Diverse Worlds Grant, to Amanda Wenger, Angela M. Sanchez, and Sibylla Nash.

Sandeen believes strongly in the principles behind the grants. She said, "Once I found Alice Walker, Octavia Butler, and Morrison, I discovered the type of writing I aspired to do, featuring black characters, particularly women, who are just as complex, human, and flawed as anyone else. It's my aim to give a voice to people who, traditionally, have too often been featured in the margins. And I want to do it in a literary space that would greatly benefit from increased diversity. As a young voracious reader, I would have loved to have read more speculative fiction with main characters who looked like me, and the same is true today, whether it's horror, sci-fi, fabulist, or just plain weird. I can't begin to imagine what my childhood would have been like if I'd had writers like Tananarive Due and N.K. Jemisin to look up to. Today's readers have that, but I believe there's room for more at the table."

Previous winners of the Diverse Writers and Diverse Worlds Grants include Carmen Maria Machado, Madhvi Ramani, and Gabriel Thibodeau; last year's winners were Nibedita Sen and LaTanya Lane.

Founded in January 2004 to promote literary quality in speculative fiction, the all-volunteer Speculative Literature Foundation is led by Mary Anne Mohanraj and 30 other committed volunteers. The Foundation maintains a comprehensive website offering information for readers, writers, editors and publishers of speculative fiction, develops book lists and outreach materials for schools and libraries, and raises funds for redistribution to other organizations in the field, as well as five awards made annually to writers, including the Diverse Worlds and Diverse Writers Grants. For more information, visit speculativeliterature.org.

The SLF is a 501(c)3 non-profit, entirely supported by community donations. If you'd like to be involved with our efforts, please consider joining us as a member for \$2/month, at speculativeliterature.org/membership.

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