

FY2027 Howard County Youth Poet Laureate Review Panelist Bios

Naomi Ayala is the author of *Wild Animals on the Moon* (Curbstone Press); *This Side of Early* (Curbstone/Northwestern University Press); and *Calling Home: Praise Songs and Incantations* (Bilingual Press, University of Arizona). She's the translator of *La sombra de la muerte/Death's Shadow*, a novel by His Excellency José Tomás Pérez, and of Luis Alberto Ambroggio's poetry collection *La arqueología del viento/The Wind's Archeology*. Naomi's essays have appeared in *The Massachusetts Review* and *Tricycle: The Buddhist Review*. She is a recipient of artist fellowships from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities and co-editor of *The Skinny Poetry Journal*.

Linda Dove holds a Ph.D. in Renaissance literature and teaches college writing. She is also an award-winning poet of five books: *In Defense of Objects* (2009), *O Dear Deer*, (2011), *This Too* (2017; reprint 2026), *Fearn* (2019), and *Switchfish* (2023), as well as the scholarly collection of essays, *Women, Writing, and the Reproduction of Culture in Tudor and Stuart Britain* (2000). Poems have been nominated for a Pushcart Prize, the Robert H. Winner Award from the Poetry Society of America, Best of the Net, and Best Microfiction. While in southern California, she served as the Altadena Poet Laureate from 2012-2014, as well as the founding editor of *MORIA Literary Magazine*. She recently relocated to her hometown of Columbia, Maryland.

Mallory Smith is a high school English teacher at Reservoir High School, where she teaches AP Literature and Composition to seniors and English for Multilingual Learners in 10th grade. She holds a degree in English and Creative Writing from Washington College and earned her MFA from the University of Florida, where she taught poetry as a graduate assistant for three years and published her thesis with honors. She later earned her master's in teaching from UMBC, graduating summa cum laude. In 2021, she was named UMBC Teacher of the Year. Mallory currently advises the National English Honor Society and is passionate about helping young people find their voices and see themselves as leaders, storytellers, and changemakers.