

AARON DEVINE

EDUCATOR. AUTHOR. COMMUNITY ADVOCATE.

aajamde@yahoo.com | 952-693-8889

I am a Creative who has built a career fostering community. I'm a storyteller who activates safe, joyful spaces for diverse individuals and groups to connect, reimagine, and grow. Relationships and language are at the core of my work. Like my son's favorite animal, the octopus, I innovate through constant curiosity and motion.

Specialties include writing, editing, teaching, innovation, partnerships, community outreach, cross-cultural communication, Spanish language, Spanish-English translation, public speaking, customer service, teamwork, and humor.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Literacy Coordinator

Waltham Public Library

Fall 2019 – present

- Manage and teach in-person and virtual English language learning programs for learners of varying ages and educational backgrounds at Waltham Public Library (near 50 weekly participants from 22 countries in 2021).
- Create and maintain the Library's Literacy Classroom, an interactive, multilingual, and welcoming space dedicated to English language learners to access materials, build community, and inspire new language.
- Supervise intern and volunteers, including 15-20 undergraduates from Brandeis University's Language Empowering Action Project and one summer intern from Waltham High School/Waltham Partnership for Youth.
- Lead Waltham ELL Forum to cohere and inspire local partnerships in support of English language learners.
- Founded Equity Subcommittee of regional Literacy Coordinators to promote action toward building more equitable, accessible programs and libraries for English language learners.

ESL Instructor (College of Advancement and Professional Studies)

University of Massachusetts Boston

2013 – 2019

- Designed and implemented university prep curriculum in grammar, composition, conversation, and reading comprehension courses for international students seeking undergraduate and graduate admission.
- Taught three classes per semester of approximately 12-20 students per class from wide range of countries (Colombia, Saudi Arabia, and China having the largest enrollment) and educational backgrounds.
- Regularly published student writing in new media and print resources to foster pride in their work and community.
- Choreographed, filmed, and produced annual "Fun > Fear" Halloween music videos to give international students a playful way to connect and be creative outside the classroom.

Writer in Residence

The Creative Arts Program at Boston Children's Hospital

2011 – 2017

- Led creative writing projects for patients (ages three to mid-20s), families, and staff at Boston Children's Hospital to provide outlets for expression, authorship, and joy.
- Collected patient writing for publication in *The View from Here: Volume 2*.
- Originated playful storytelling encounters, including weekly "Word Nerd" program on the hospital's internal TV channel and the Seriously Silly Superhero Stories workshop.

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

2022	Freelance Copywriter, Homes by Emerald, LLC and the XD Agency (remote)
2009-11	Server, Orinoco Kitchen (Brookline and Boston locations)
2008	Community Director, Invested Citizens (Boston)
2008	Children's Literature Anthologies Team, SABIS Educational Systems (Eden Prairie, MN)
2006-07	English teacher, translator, and temp worker (Nicaragua, Venezuela, Perú, Argentina)
2006	Build Second Coordinator, KaBoom!: Play Matters for All Kids (various locations, U.S.)

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2006 Server, Tryg's restaurant (Minneapolis, MN)
2004-05 Behrend Builders Coordinator/AVODAH fellow, Jewish Community Center (Washington D.C.)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Co-founder, Program Advisor, and Series Emcee

Write on the DOT

2011 – present

- Launched neighborhood-based reading series and literary platform in Dorchester (Boston) to bring writers and neighbors together to joyfully share creative work and build community.
- Led all steps of publication (promotion, selection, editing, layout/design, publication) for five (of six) books of local writing, featuring multi-genre and multi-generational authors, catalogued with Boston Public Library.
- Built and managed Write on the DOT website and social media platforms including #DotWrite21 campaign to foster community and inspire writing virtually during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Writing workshop instructor

826 Boston: writing, tutoring, and publishing non-profit; Roxbury, MA

2010-2011

- Created and taught free writing workshops to school-aged children, including “Homerun Sports Stories” (anthologized in *Don't Forget to Write*) and “Found in Translation.”

Memoir Project intern

Grub Street Creative Writing Center and City of Boston; Jamaica Plain, MA

2009

- Helped collect, edit, and translate memoir writing by Spanish-speaking, senior citizen residents of Jamaica Plain.

Tennis instructor and Play Tennis Day Coordinator

Raymond Recreation tennis courts in Georgia-Petworth, Washington D.C.

Feb-July 2005

- Initiated and taught free tennis program for kids (ages 5-15) at the Raymond Recreation tennis courts in Georgia-Petworth neighborhood of D.C.
- Conceived and coordinated “Play Tennis Day” event to repair court damage, construct a tennis wall, paint a community mural, host an exhibition match, and celebrate community.
- Forged partnerships with the Washington Tennis and Education Foundation, District of Columbia Parks and Recreation, Howard University Tennis Team, D.C. Jewish Community Center, and Shiloh Baptist Church.
- Wrote successful grants to Coca Cola Foundation and local Advisory Neighborhood Commission.

OTHER VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

2016, 2017 Team Walk Coordinator, Eversource Walk for Children; Boston, MA

2015 Mentor, Presentense Institute; Boston, MA

2010-12 Muse and the Marketplace Conference volunteer, Grub Street; Boston, MA

2008 The Dance Complex Volunteer; Cambridge, MA

WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES

2022 Presenter: “Beyond Books: Sharing ELL resources” for Waltham Public Schools

2020 Instructor: “With Dedication: Writing Poems To and For Other People” 5-week online writing workshop

2019 Instructor: “A Home is a Poem” community writing workshop with Write on the DOT at Frugal

Bookstore as part of the Boston Book Festival's BBF Unbound in Nubian Square

2018 Instructor: “A Home is a Poem” community writing workshop with Write on the DOT at Boston Public

Library-Copley as part of the Boston Book Festival's BBF Unbound in Copley Square

2018 Instructor: “Memoir and Personal Essay” 6-week writing workshop at Eggleston Branch Library

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- 2018 Presenter: Conference on Teaching, Learning, and Technology at UMass Boston, “3D Printing: Language as Key”
- 2017 Instructor: Staff Creative Writing Sessions at Boston Children’s Hospital
- 2017 Presenter: Brazilian Teachers Summit at UMass Boston, “On using New Media and Creative Writing to teach ESL”
- 2015 Instructor: SONAD Glen Brook Youth Writers Workshop; Harrisville, NH
- 2015 Presenter: “Words of Healing” Concurrent Session, Association of Pediatric Hematologic and Oncology Nurses National Conference in Providence, RI
- 2013 Panelist: “Writing Outside the Classroom,” Assoc. of Writers and Writing Programs Conference, Boston
- 2012 Instructor: “Writing for Children” 6-week workshop Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at UMass Boston
- 2011 Writer in Residence workshops at Pearl Street Yoga Studio; Dorchester, MA
- 2008-09 Instructor: Youth Creative Writing Workshops at 826Boston; Roxbury, MA
- 2008 Facilitator: Story of Stuff community workshops with Invested Citizens; Boston, MA and New York, NY

PUBLICATIONS

Author

- “Blizzard Poem,” Window Cat Press, 2018 and *Welcome to the Neighborhood: An Anthology of American Coexistence*, Ohio University Press, 2019
- “After the Minneapolis Miracle: Have Vikings Fans Truly Won?” The Good Men Project, 2018
- “Witness,” Story Showcase: Live at the Podcast Garage, 2017
- “Are You My Uber?” McSweeney’s Internet Tendency, 2016
- “Hank vs. Henry: Howard Bryant’s The Last Hero,” The Good Men Project, 2014
- Dakota Falls and Other Stories*, UMass Boston MFA Thesis, 2013
- “Interview with Adam Haslett,” *The Breakwater Review*, 2011
- “Homerun Sports Stories,” *Don’t Forget to Write: A Collection of Creative Writing from 826National*, 2011
- “In Webster’s,” Flashquake.com and *The Inman Review*, 2010
- Wonder/Wander: 522 Days in Latin America* (book), Self-published, 2009

Translator

- “Cuerpo Público” (Public Body) by Mariela Cordero; *Origins Journal*, 2018
- “Fragment 31” by Sappho; *Write on the DOT: Volume II*, 2013
- “Samsara” by Alfredo Alegría; *Write on the DOT: Volume I*, 2012
- Qhapaq Ñan: The Inka Path of Wisdom* (book) by Javier Lajo Lazo; Amaro Runa Press (Perú), 2007

Editor

- Write on the DOT: Volume VI* (November 2021)
- Windows to Our World: Volumes I and II, Fall 2020 and Spring 2021*
- With Dedication: New Poems*, workshop chapbook, 2020
- Write on the DOT: Volume V*, 2019
- In the Direction of Truth & Love: Memoir and Personal Essay*, workshop chapbook, 2018
- The Language of Illness* (Volumes 1-3); UMass Boston, 2015, 2016, 2018
- Write on the DOT: Volume IV*, 2018
- Chapbooks (various) of creative writing and translation by ESL students at UMass Boston, 2013-2018
- Escribir Es Una Fiesta*, Anthology of Student Writing from Hispanic Writers Week, 2010-2011
- Write on the DOT: Volume II*, 2012
- The View From Here: Volume 2*, Boston Children’s Hospital internal publication, 2011
- Write on the DOT: Volume 1*, 2011

GRANTS/AWARDS

- 2020 Fellowes Athenaeum Trust grant (to teach 5-week online poetry workshop)
- 2018 Fellowes Athenaeum Trust grant (to teach 6-week memoir workshop at Egleston branch library)

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2013	Creative writing award for outstanding achievement (UMass Boston MFA program)
2013	Program of the Year award for Write on the DOT, UMass Boston Beacon Awards
2005	Georgia/Petworth Neighborhood Advisory Neighborhood Commission grant for Play Tennis Day
2005	Coca-Cola Foundation community grant for Play Tennis Day
2004	Polytropos Award from the Core Curriculum at Boston University

EDUCATION

2010-2013	MFA in Fiction, University of Massachusetts-Boston
2011-2012	Certificate in Spanish-English Translation, University of Massachusetts-Boston
2000-2004	BA in English, minor in Spanish; magna cum laude, Boston University

LANGUAGES

Spanish—can read, write, and speak fluently; *Portuguese*—can understand in print and conversation. Some familiarity with basic words, phrases, and pronunciation in *Chinese*, *Haitian Creole*, and *Hebrew*.

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COURSES TAUGHT

Course Title: Beginner English Activities

Location: Waltham Public Library (hybrid: online and in-person)

Dates: October 2019 through present

Description: Practice basic words and phrases. Learn library skills and how to use free online resources to study. Enjoy a supportive class.

Course Title: English Writing and Conversation

Location: Waltham Public Library (online, in-person)

Dates: January 2020 through present

Description: Improve communication skills in English through guided writing and conversation activities. Topics include art, music, and storytelling. Recommended for intermediate levels or higher, but all are welcome to participate as they can.

Course Title: The Language of Illness

Location: UMass Boston Honors College and College of Advancement and Professional Studies (CAPS)

Dates: Fall 2015, Summer 2016, Fall 2017, Fall 2018

Description: From recent YA-sensation *The Fault in Our Stars* to the many hit TV medical dramas, there is something about illness that connects deeply and innately in our experience. Perhaps it is when we are most vulnerable that language becomes most vital. And at the same time: most difficult to express. In this course, we ask: What is the language of illness? What “undiscovered countries” can we explore from our encounters with illness: personal, professional, or intellectual?

Course Title: The Art of Storytelling

Location: UMass Boston Honors College

Dates: Fall 2016, Fall 2018

Description: Whether seated around ancestral fires or streaming podcasts through earbuds, humankind has an innate thirst for stories that can express who we are and imagine who we might become. This course explores the craft and function of storytelling as a tool for individual and social empowerment. Students study cultural perspectives on storytelling while writing, adapting, and performing their own stories focused around identity and community. At the semester’s culmination, students produce a live storytelling event at UMass Boston aimed at fostering conversation and community on campus.

Course Title: English Sounds and Storytelling

Location: CAPS English as a Second Language (ESL) at UMass Boston

Dates: Fall 2017 – 2018

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Description: In this class, we build fluency and confidence in our speaking and listening skills. Students learn about story structure and practice telling stories throughout the semester. We will listen to, read, write, record, and perform our stories in class every week. Lessons teach pronunciation, intonation, presentation, and listening strategies. Exercises give students fun, thought-provoking ways to share language.

Course Title: City of Boston: Language and Identity

Location: CAPS ESL at UMass Boston

Dates: Fall 2016 – Fall 2018

Description: What is the relationship between language and identity? Which words do we use to define ourselves as individuals or communities? In this course, we read contemporary essays by Bostonians and international authors reflecting on the city and their place in it. Students compose essays during the semester to explore place and their relationship to it.

Course Title: An American Road Trip

Location: CAPS ESL at UMass Boston

Dates: Fall 2016 – Spring 2017

Description: Since its inception, America has built mythology around the road as a pathway to expansion, discovery, individualism, and conquest. From the first pilgrims to explorers Lewis and Clark; from Henry Ford's Model-T automobile to the modern American road trip inspired by Beat poets (or Brittany Spears); the open road has deep connections to how Americans view themselves. In this class, we seek to understand how American culture has been shaped—for better and for worse—by its great roads.

Course Title: Learning Language through New Media

Location: CAPS ESL at UMass Boston

Dates: Fall 2014 – Spring 2016

Description: In this course, we collaborate as student journalists to design, write, edit, and share a blog for international students in Boston. Students practice language skills while learning new media technology and its terminology in English. Students also learn basic principles of journalism and debate media ethics.

Course Title: Beginner ESL through Art and Music

Location: CAPS ESL at UMass Boston

Dates: Summer 2015, Summer 2018

Description: In this class, we use the five senses to discover vocabulary while enjoying cross-cultural encounters with art and music. Students visit local museums and engage in their own art- or music-making while building vocabulary and camaraderie in the classroom.

Course Title: Intro to Creative Writing

Location: UMass Boston English Department

Dates: Fall 2012

Description: What makes a story or a poem meaningful to you? This question is at the heart of our course, and we'll plot our course in search of its answer. In this course, we seek to understand our own unique ways of looking at the world, and how to give them artistic expression.