



PRESS RELEASE

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CLARION FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES LARGE DONATION TO LAUNCH ENDOWMENT FUND FOR CLARION SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY WRITERS' WORKSHOP AT UCSD

The Clarion Foundation announced today that it has received a \$100,000 donation from a benefactor who wishes to remain anonymous. This donation will be used to launch an endowment fund designed to secure a permanent future for the Clarion Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers' Workshop, held annually at the University of California, San Diego. Clarion Workshop alumni and instructors include many of the most well-known writers in the field of speculative fiction. Octavia Butler, Kim Stanley Robinson, Orson Scott Card, Karen Joy Fowler, Samuel R. Delany, Gordon Dickson, Thomas Disch, Harlan Ellison, Joe Haldeman, Frederick Pohl, Joanna Russ, Kate Wilhelm, Gene Wolfe, Maureen McHugh, Tim Powers, Joan Vinge, Neil Gaiman, Holly Black, George R.R. Martin, and many others have been connected with the workshop.

Karen Joy Fowler, president of the Clarion Foundation, expressed profound appreciation for this generous gift. "This is tremendously important to all of us who have worked with, for, and on behalf of Clarion over the years. For us, the workshop is a labor of love. Having these funds in hand allows us to plan for the future in a way we've never been able to before. This gift provides a solid foundation on which we can build."

The donor described the gift as intended to secure the future of the workshop. "The Clarion Workshop has been one of the best incubators of talent in science fiction and fantasy for almost fifty years. It's my hope that this donation will help the workshop last for another fifty years and continue changing the lives of writers and readers."

The Clarion Foundation has long planned for an endowment that will ensure its long-term success. The terms of the donation were that it be used to start that endowment.

Science fiction and fantasy are widely considered to be among the best methods of educating the public and fostering debate about many major issues of our time, including the practical ramifications of climate change, population growth, environmental degradation, natural disasters, and space exploration. Mainstream writers such as Cormac McCarthy, Margaret Atwood, Adam Johnson, Richard Powers, Kazuo Ishiguro, and Colson Whitehead have recently used it to formulate thought experiments impossible in realistic fiction.

"Our global civilization is now embarked on an unconstrained experiment in long-term sustainability, which we have to get right for the sake of the generations to come," says Clarion Foundation Vice President Kim Stanley Robinson. "Science fiction stories, ranging from utopian to dystopian, are what we do now to imagine outcomes that help us evaluate our present practices. The Clarion workshop nurtures and trains writers to change the ways we think about the future, and it helps to connect the sciences and the arts at UC San Diego and around the world. We're thrilled with this gift, which enables us to continue that crucial work."

The Clarion Workshop was founded by Robin Scott Wilson, Damon Knight, and Kate Wilhelm in 1968 and was for many years housed at Michigan State University. In 2005, when MSU withdrew financial support for the program, it was almost lost. The Clarion Foundation was formed shortly after by Wilhelm, Fowler, and other Clarion supporters

in the science fiction and fantasy community. With the foundation's help, the workshop was successfully moved to its current home at UC San Diego in 2006. More recently, the workshop became an affiliate program within UCSD's Arthur C. Clarke Center for Human Imagination, an integrated research center where engineering, medicine, and the arts, sciences, and humanities explore the basis of imagination.

The Clarion Foundation partners with UCSD in the delivery of the workshop, with the foundation managing faculty selection and the admissions process and UCSD managing the six-week summer workshop. The foundation has annually conducted fundraising campaigns that allow it to provide about \$12,000 in scholarships each year and to cover expenses.

"The ability to have an endowment that ensures Clarion will be on a sound footing in the decades to come is incredibly important to us," Fowler continued. "It's an endorsement of the work of all of us who make up the Clarion community and work so hard to ensure that it thrives. We are deeply grateful."

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Web sites: <http://clarion.ucsd.edu> and <http://www.theclarionfoundation.org>