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PRESS RELEASE

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Members of the Written by Veterans group at the 2025 Los Angeles Times Festival of Books

Written by Veterans and CSUSB Veterans Success Center to exhibit at 29 Palms Book Festival

PALM DESERT, Calif. – Written by Veterans, in partnership with the California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB) Veterans Success Center, will be an exhibitor at this year's [29 Palms Book Festival](#), taking place Nov. 7–9 at the Twentynine Palms Community Center (Freedom Plaza).

Founded in 2014 by former CSUSB screenwriting professor and West German Army veteran Andreas Kossak of Palm Desert, and Marci Daniels, former director of the CSUSB Veterans Success Center, Written by Veterans is a creative writing program dedicated to empowering members of the military community through storytelling. The group extends beyond the Inland Empire, with participants joining remotely from across the country — including Arkansas, New York, Oregon, Nevada, Fresno, San Diego and Los Angeles — and even internationally from Ireland. Agustin Ramirez, current director of the CSUSB Veterans Success Center, has been involved with the program since its inception and continues to champion its mission.

Written by Veterans is a free, all-volunteer writing program open to veterans, their family members and supporters. The group meets regularly on Zoom and occasionally in person at the Veterans Success Center on the CSUSB campus. The center provides resources, publicity materials and logistical support for the program's participation in veterans' fairs and book festivals. In return, Written by Veterans supports the center through outreach, scholarship committee service and proceeds from anthology sales benefiting student veterans. It also serves as a VA community partner, maintaining a connection with the Loma Linda VA Behavioral Health unit.

One of the hallmarks of Written by Veterans is its commitment to publishing veterans' works. For many writers, producing a book represents both an accomplishment and a therapeutic act of closure — particularly for those writing about trauma.

To date, members have published more than 100 titles across genres including fiction, poetry, memoir, non-fiction and children's literature. The group has released five anthologies, with several titles achieving Amazon Bestseller status and one novel named a semi-finalist for the Dr. Tony Ryan Book Award.

Unlike a publishing company, Written by Veterans has no financial interest in members' works. It serves purely as an emblem representing the creativity and resilience of military-affiliated authors. Using Amazon's Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) platform, members publish independently, retaining full control of their rights, royalties and creative expression. This streamlined approach enables writers to see their books available globally — often within a week of finalization.

Since 2015, Written by Veterans has been an exhibitor at the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books, and this year marks its first appearance at the 29 Palms Book Festival.

Public engagement is central to the program's mission. Meeting readers and sharing their work helps veterans embrace their roles as authors — an empowering transformation that brings purpose and healing. Fostering that sense of purpose remains the most important goal of Written by Veterans.

Guest authors representing Written by Veterans at this year's 29 Palms Book Festival include:

- Will Torres – A combat-decorated Marine, member of the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indian tribe and CSUSB alumnus, Torres is an award-winning screenwriter and poet whose works, including “Freelance: A POG Story” and “Poems for Menyl,” explore the intersections of culture, trauma and myth.
- John R. Cole – U.S. Marine Corps veteran and Kentucky native, Cole writes to honor American combat veterans. His works include “A Teller’s Tales” series and “Giants and Friends.” He also edited the fifth Written by Veterans Anthology.
- John J. McBrearty – A retired Lt. Colonel with 32 years of service, McBrearty is an award-winning author recognized by President Barack Obama. His books span history, memoir, leadership and children’s literature.
- Jeff McCarley – A Marine Corps veteran known for his sharp humor, McCarley is the author of “People Suck” and editor of “Messages from the Backroom.” He also leads writing workshops at the CSUSB Veterans Success Center.
- Cindy Rinne – A poet and visual artist from San Bernardino, Rinne heads the Written by Veterans Poetry Department and has authored several collections, including “Dancing Through the Fire Door” and “Today on Two Planets.”
- Tracy Wise – A lifelong reader and writer, Wise works in higher education communications and recently published her debut literary novel, “Madame Sorel’s Lodger” (2025).
- Andreas Kossak – Co-founder of Written by Veterans and a veteran filmmaker, Kossak has taught screenwriting at CSUSB and received numerous commendations from state and county officials for his community leadership and dedication to veterans’ creative expression.

For more information about Written by Veterans, visit the program’s [website](#).

The CSUSB Veterans Success Center operates at Cal State San Bernardino and the Palm Desert Campus. Visit the [CSUSB Veterans Success Center website](#) for more information about its many programs and support services for student veterans, active-duty service members, reservists and their dependents.

About the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus: The [CSUSB Palm Desert Campus](#) is dedicated to providing a transformative educational experience in the Coachella Valley. With a focus on academic excellence and community engagement, the campus offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs designed to meet the diverse needs of its students and the region.

For more information about the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus, contact Mike Singer in the Office of Marketing and Communications at msinger@csusb.edu or (760) 341-2883, ext. 78107, or visit the PDC website at www.csusb.edu/pdc.