

2025 SAMPLE PROGRAM AGENDA

FRIDAY

1:00 – 2:00 Welcome and Lunch / Career Authors Introductions

2:00 – 3:00 Paula Munier, literary agent and USA Today bestselling author

Think Like An Agent: How you can land an agent, interest an editor, and sell your book by adopting an agent's mindset.

3:00 - 3:15 BREAK

3:15 - 4:30 All About YOUR Book: The Foundation of the CA Retreat Experience

***What Are *You* Writing and How Can We Help?**

4:30-4:45 BREAK

4:45 PM – 5:30 PM First Page Critiques. **PART 1**

The Career Authors Discuss and Critique YOUR First Page

BREAK

6:00 PM – 6:30 PM Cocktail Party with Faculty

6:30 -- 8:00 DINNER With the Career Authors

8:00 PM Writers Circles

Informal gathering of attendees to find critique/practice partners and writers in your genre

SATURDAY

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM Breakfast

9:00 AM – 10:15 AM Everything you need to know to write your book!

Hank Phillippi Ryan, USA Today and Amazon #1 bestselling author and Emmy-winning reporter

Yes. It's true. We'll reveal everything you need to know. Of course, you can't sell your book until you *write* your book. But what's more, you can't sell your book unless it's a terrific book. Some of it is talent, but some pathways to success can be learned. From beginning to end, we will lay out, with practical suggestions and a step-by-step process, exactly how to make sure your book is solidly structured, appropriately paced, and an example of polished, professional and commercial writing.

BREAK

2025 SAMPLE PROGRAM AGENDA (CONT.)

SATURDAY (CONT.)

10:30--11:45 Workshop Your Point of View

Dana Isaacson, Big 5 publishing executive and editor

Different POVs—first person, omniscient, etc.—tell different stories. Crafting a novel means strategically choosing your story's POV and understanding how it influences the way your story is told. Using your WIP, we'll explore the various options to help you determine how best to tell your story.

BREAK

12:00--12:45 First Page Critiques – PART 2

12 :45 PM – 1:30 PM Lunch

1:30 PM – 2:30 PM

10 Questions for Your Revision: How to Know When You're Ready to Submit

Jessica Strawser, USA Today bestselling author and Writer's Digest Editor-at-Large

Does your premise check the right boxes? Can you get by with feedback from beta readers, or might it be wise to hire an editor to help? Are you struggling with your query so much that you're worried the manuscript is missing something? If you keep revising, are you just going to mess it up? Determining when your project is ready to submit can be tricky. An editor-turned-USA-Today-bestselling novelist shares the 10 most important things to ask yourself before you hit send, with key lessons learned from both sides of the desk.

BREAK

2:45 PM – 3:45 PM A Crash Course on the Business of Writing

Brian Andrews, Wall Street Journal and Amazon #1 bestselling author

Believe it or not every published author is also a small business owner and entrepreneur. In this session, we'll trade our MFA hats for MBA caps to touch on brand building, sales and marketing, finance, accounting, and other common business elements associated with being a career author.

BREAK

4:00 PM -4:30 PM The Ins & Outs of Publishing Today: Your Questions Answered

Career Authors Panel

BREAK

2025 SAMPLE PROGRAM AGENDA (CONT.)

SATURDAY (CONT.)

4:45--5:30 First Page Critiques -- Part 3

5:30 – 6:30 PM YOUR Personal Manuscript Consultation

Assigned time slots: One-on-one critique/consults with a Career Author mentor.

Each attendee will have their first five pages read and critiqued by one of the Career Authors, and get specific success-oriented book advice and career guidance!

6:45 -9:00 PM Celebratory cocktails and Banquet Dinner (separate ticket)

9:00 PM Practice Your Pitch

Informal gathering of attendees wishing to practice their loglines before the morning logline slam.
(Attendees only; peer review opportunity.)

SUNDAY MORNING

8:00 AM Breakfast

8:30 AM – 9:30 AM Logline Slam

The Career Authors will listen, critique, and help take your logline to the next level

9:30 AM – 10:30 AM Ask Us Anything

The Career Authors tackle everything you wanted to know but didn't know who to ask. We'll have inside scoop, straight answers, and experienced guidance

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM Closing Remarks

Book Signing