2019 – **David Mura**, author, critic, teacher, mentor, and performance artist

2018 – **Kathryn Haddad**, writer, teacher, community organizer, and founder of Mizna

2017 – **Lou Bellamy**, champion of African American literature, professor, and founder of Penumbra Theatre

2016 – **Jim Sitter**, advocate for literary nonprofit organizations and Founding Executive Director of the Minnesota Center for Book Arts

2015 – **Mary François Rockcastle**, Director of The Creative Writing Programs at Hamline University, and Executive Director, *Water~Stone Review*

2014 – **Mark Vinz**, Poet; Author; and Minnesota State University-Moorhead, Creative Writing MFA Program Professor and Tom McGrath Visiting Writers Series Director, retired

2013 – **Robert Hedin**, poet, translator, editor, and founding director of the Anderson Center for Interdisciplinary Studies.

2012 – **Allan Kornblum**, founder and senior editor of Minneapolis-based Coffee House Press

2011 – **Carol Connolly**, mentor, advisor, literary program coordinator, community activist and Saint Paul’s first poet laureate

2010 – **Carolyn Holbrook**, founder of SASE: The Write Place, community leader, teacher, advocate, mentor and innovator, former Program Director at The Loft Literary Center

2009 – **Patrick Coleman**, blogger, literary activist and acquisitions librarian, Minnesota Historical Society

2008 – **Don Leeper**, founder and president of BookMobile, a pioneer in Print On Demand. Instrumental in the founding of Minnesota Bookbuilders, a nonprofit association promoting bookmaking and publishing

2007 – **Emilie Buchwald**, publisher, Milkweed Editions and Gryphon Press, former board member and chair of The Loft Literary Center

2006 – **Richard Robbins**, director of the creative writing program at Minnesota State University (MSU), Mankato and the Good Thunder Reading Series

2005 – **Marly Rusoff**, founder of The Loft Literary Center
2004 – Dr. Julian Plante, founding director, Hill Monastic Manuscript Library

2003 – John “Jack” Parker, curator, James Ford Bell Library at the University of Minnesota

2003 – Karen Nelson Hoyle, curator, Children’s Literature Research Collections, including the Kerlan Collection and the Hess Collection, at the University of Minnesota

2002 – Harry Lerner, publisher, Lerner Publishing Group

2001 – Jolie Lynne Sasseville & James Drey Alzheimer, co-founders of Stone House Press and organizers of literary arts programs in Otter Tail County (presented posthumously)

2000 – Jeanne Fischer, book reviewer, book discussion leader, library volunteer

1999 – Gail See, Bookcase bookstore and literary organization boards


1997 – Gov. Elmer L. Andersen, book collector and bibliophilanthropist

1996 – Harold Kittleson, bibliophile and library benefactor

1995 – Norton Stillman, book wholesaler, bookstore owner and publisher

1994 – Glenda Martin & Mollie Hoben, founders, Minnesota Women’s Press

1993 – David Unowsky, owner, Ruminator Bookstore

1992 – Doris Pagel, editor, Authors and Illustrators as Program Resources

1991 – The Charles and Gertie Geck Family, promoters of children’s books and authors

1989 – Mary Ann Grossmann, books editor, St. Paul Pioneer Press

1988 – Kay Sexton, book buyer and promoter of books and reading, B. Dalton