

RAINEY, CALEB. “The Negro Artist” is an author, performer, and producer. He hails from Columbia, Missouri, and holds a B.A. in English (Creative Writing) from the University of Iowa. His debut book, *Look, Black Boy*, became Amazon’s #1 new release in African American poetry, and was awarded first prize in the North Street Book Prize. His second book, *Heart Notes* was published in 2019 and featured on Iowa Public Radio. He released two spoken word albums, a studio version of *Look, Black Boy*, and a performance album titled, *Heart Notes Live!* He co-founded the literary magazine *Black Art; Real Stories*, was published in Iowa's Best Emerging Poets - 2019, the *Little Village Magazine*, and wrote a monthly column for *The Real Mainstream*. For three years in a row he was named Best Poet/Spoken Word Performer in Cedar Rapids & Iowa City.

ROOD, LEE has been the Reader’s Watchdog at *The Des Moines Register* since 2012. A longtime investigative reporter and editor, she created the unique column to help readers find answers and accountability from government, businesses, and nonprofits. After nearly a decade in that post, she’s known across Iowa as a voice for Iowans, writing about the serious problems that affect their lives. She’s exposed individuals who have preyed on vulnerable populations or wronged consumers and uncovered wasted tax dollars and excessive government spending. Her work has led to changes in state and federal law, triggered court action and arrests, and prompted good deeds and community action by readers moved by her columns. Rood’s work as a problem-solver and whistleblower has been so successful in achieving results and building loyal readership, her column has been replicated at other Gannett sites across the country.

ROSS, ANDY opened his literary agency in 2008. Prior to that, he was the owner of the legendary Cody’s Books in Berkeley for 30 years. His agency represents books in a wide range of non-fiction genres including narrative non-fiction, science, journalism, history, popular culture, memoir, and current events. He also represents literary, commercial, historical, and upmarket women’s fiction as well as young adult and middle-grade fiction.

***RUSHING, TY** has experienced living in urban and extremely rural settings and his career experiences range from small-town papers to a statewide social first outlet. Ty is the senior editor for Iowa Starting Line. Ty is skilled at using social media to gather information and promote stories. He wrote, produced and directed his first documentary film, “Telling Our Own Story: Ending Racism”. <https://iowastartingline.com/about-us/>

*Member Iowa Writers’ Collaborative

SCHABEL, CLAUDIA, president of Schabel Solutions, combines over a decade of experience as a Diversity and Inclusion practitioner with a multicultural background to offer consulting, training, and coaching services in the areas of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to businesses, educational, governmental and not-for-profit organizations.