



VALORENA ONLINE & COCOA KIDS COLLECTION SCHOLARSHIP

MEET THE JUDGING COHORT

(listed alphabetically)



Sharon Ching is a vibrant presence in the world of publishing, known for her dedication and innovation. With a background in working as a young professional in publishing, Ching brings fresh insights and a dynamic approach to her work. Her passion for storytelling and commitment to uplifting diverse voices make her a valuable asset to the Valorena Publishing & Cocoa Kids Collection Scholarship and Awards. As a judge, Ching's keen eye for talent and her drive to promote inclusivity will help identify and celebrate emerging talents in children's literature, ensuring that new voices are heard and appreciated.



Leslie Fields Cruz is a prominent advocate for diversity and inclusion in media and entertainment. With a background in television production and a commitment to amplifying underrepresented voices, Cruz has been a driving force in bringing diverse stories to the forefront. Her experience as the CEO of Black Public Media (formerly known as the National Black Programming Consortium) has positioned her as a leader in promoting equitable representation. As a judge for the scholarship, Cruz leverages her expertise to identify and celebrate storytellers who bring fresh perspectives to children's literature.



Lorena Jones is a distinguished literary figure known for her exceptional contributions to the world of publishing. With a wealth of experience spanning several decades, Jones has served in various influential roles, including editor, publisher, and advocate for diverse voices in literature. Her keen eye for talent and commitment to fostering inclusivity have made her a respected force in the industry. As a judge for the Valorena Publishing & Cocoa Kids Collection Scholarship and Awards, Jones brings her extensive knowledge and passion for storytelling to support and recognize emerging talents in children's literature.



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Dr. Sandra Montanez-Diodonet is an accomplished professional with a deep-rooted passion for education and children's literature. Her extensive background in curriculum development and educational leadership reflects her dedication to nurturing young minds. Montanez-Diodonet's commitment to promoting cultural understanding and literacy aligns seamlessly with the goals of the Valorena Publishing & Cocoa Kids Collection Scholarship and Awards. In her role as a judge, she plays a crucial part in recognizing and supporting emerging talents who contribute to the richness of diverse children's literature.



Dr. Valerie Williams-Sanchez is a seasoned leader dedicated to fostering literacy through creative empowerment. With expertise in project management and community engagement, she champions diversity and inclusivity. As the driving force behind the Valorena Publishing & Cocoa Kids Collection Scholarship and Awards and book series, her visionary leadership ensures emerging talents in children's literature receive recognition and support. Williams-Sanchez's strategic guidance creates opportunities for storytellers to thrive, inspiring future generations.