

Andrea Davis Pinkney '85

George Arents Pioneer Award for excellence in the field of publishing

Publishing executive Pinkney's diverse professional background and experience come from being well versed in the many aspects of the publishing process.

As vice president and editor-at-large for Scholastic Trade, Pinkney has acquired and edited a robust mix of titles, including the Newbery Honor Book "Elijah of Buxton" (2007) by Christopher Paul Curtis; "Sunrise Over Fallujah" (2008) by Newbery Honor author and National Book Award finalist Walter Dean Myers; "March On! The Day My Brother Martin Changed the World" (2008) by Christine King Farris (the sister of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.); and the upcoming "Sassy" series by New York Times best-selling author Sharon Draper. Additionally, Pinkney will soon publish "Crow Call," the first picture book by two-time Newbery Medalist Lois Lowry.

Pinkney began her editorial career at Essence Magazine as senior editor for Contemporary Living, where she headed up one of the most vibrant profit centers at the magazine. She then went on to pursue a career in children's book publishing, serving as an acquisitions editor at Simon & Schuster and then as editorial director at Disney Publishing's Hyperion Books for Children. During her tenure at Disney, she was the founding editor of "Jump at the Sun," the first African American children's book imprint at a major publishing house. Under "Jump at the Sun," Pinkney launched the popular best-selling series "The Cheetah Girls," which has now become a Disney media franchise. Pinkney also created the "Shanna Show" book series, now a Disney Channel animated selection.

After Disney, Pinkney joined the Children's Division of Houghton Mifflin as vice president and publisher. While there, she served as the strategic visionary and chief architect of the children's trade editorial program and oversaw the successful expansion of the company's key franchises, including the Curious George publishing program and the media tie-in program for the bestselling children's classic "The Polar Express."

This year, Pinkney was named one of the "25 Most Influential Black Women in Business" by The Network Journal, a publication for black professionals.

Pinkney is also a writer and has authored more than 20 books for children, including the Caldecott Honor Book and Coretta Scott King Honor Book "Duke Ellington" (Hyperion, 1999), illustrated by her husband Brian Pinkney; "Let it Shine: Stories of Black Women Freedom Fighters" (Gulliver Books, 2000), a Coretta Scott King Honor Book and winner

of the Carter G. Woodson Award; and "Alvin Ailey" (Hyperion, 1993), a Parenting Publication Gold Medal winner. Pinkney's newest book, to be published this fall, is "Boycott Blues: How Rosa Parks Inspired a Nation" (Amistad), the story of the Montgomery bus boycotts of 1952, as told from the point of view of a blues-guitar-playing hound dog.

Pinkney lives in Brooklyn with her husband and two children.

Reference:

Miller, Sara. "Four distinguished alumni to be honored with Arents Awards at Reunion Gala Luncheon." 15 September 2008. Syracuse University News. 24 September 2008 <http://sunews.syr.edu/story_details.cfm?id=5265>.