Tonya Bolden writes richly documented narratives about the contributions of African Americans, both famous and little-known, that shed new light on US history for young readers. Her 2017 Orbis Pictus honor book, How To Build a Museum, tells the fascinating back story of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture. Other recent titles include Pathfinders: The Journeys of 16 Extraordinary Black Souls; and Facing Frederick: The Life of Frederick Douglass. Tonya received the 2016 Children’s Book Guild Nonfiction Award for the body of her work. For more information visit www.tonyaboldenbooks.com.

Mary Ann Cappiello (panel moderator) is a professor of language and literacy at Lesley University. A former public school language arts and humanities teacher, she is a passionate advocate for and commentator on children’s books. Mary Ann contributes regularly to The Classroom Bookshelf, a School Library Journal blog, and chairs the NCTE’s Orbis Pictus Award for Outstanding Nonfiction Committee through 2018. She is also the co-author, with Erika Thulin Dawes, of Teaching with Text Sets and Teaching to Complexity. For more information visit https://lesley.edu/about/faculty-staff-directory/maryann-cappiello.


Steve Sheinkin is a reformed textbook writer whose narrative nonfiction books read like thrillers. Three of his titles have been National Book Award finalists, including Bomb: The Race to Build—and Steal—the World’s Most Dangerous Weapon; and The Port Chicago 50: Disaster, Mutiny, and the Fight for Civil Rights. His newest book is Undefeated: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team. Steve also writes and draws the “Walking and Talking” cartoon series in School Library Journal, based on his conversations with other YA and children’s authors. For more information visit http://stevesheinkin.com.

Tanya Lee Stone was an editor of children’s nonfiction before launching her own career as an author. With more than 100 books to her credit, she is noted for writing “stories that are missing from our histories or little-told.” Her titles include Courage Has No Color, winner of the NAACP Image Award, and Almost Astronauts: 13 Women Who Dared to Dream, which received the ALA’s Sibert Medal for most distinguished informational book. Tanya’s newest titles are Girl Rising: Changing the World One Girl at a Time and Who Says Women Can’t Be Computer Programmers?: The Story of Ada Lovelace. For more information visit www.tanyastone.com.

Melissa Sweet is an illustrator and author who brings a sense of playfulness combined with in-depth research to her distinctive mixed-media collages and her writing. Two of her picture book biographies have won the NCTE Orbis Pictus Award: Some Writer!: The Story of E.B. White; and Balloons Over Broadway: The True Story of the Puppeteer of Macy’s Parade. Melissa has also garnered Caldecott honors for A River of Words: The Story of William Carlos Williams; and The Right Word: Roget and His Thesaurus (both written by Jen Bryant). For more information visit http://melissasweet.net.
Dina Zoleo (workshop presenter) is Senior Faculty member with The Writing Revolution. She was previously the Assistant Principal of Social Studies at New Dorp High School in Staten Island, NY, where she co-led the effort to bring the Hochman Writing Method to New Dorp by seeding and developing it in her department, and then supporting its adoption school-wide. Dina has developed content for textbooks and materials for The Writing Revolution, and has presented at The Aspen Institute, The College Board Foundation, and many other venues on the topic of writing. For more information visit www.thewritingrevolution.org.