

Dillard University professor Mona Lisa Saloy named poet laureate in Louisiana  
by [Dawn Araujo-Hawkins](#) in the [October 10, 2021](#) issue



Mona Lisa Saloy, an English professor at the historically Black, United Methodist and United Church of Christ affiliated Dillard University, has been named poet laureate for the state of Louisiana.

Saloy, whose poetry is about contemporary Creole culture in New Orleans, is also a folklorist who studies the importance

of play through sidewalk songs, jump rope rhymes, and hand-clapping games. Her work has been published in academic and literary journals, including *Africology: The Journal of Pan African Studies*, *African American Review*, and *Haight-Ashbury Literary Journal*.

Her first book, *Red Beans and Ricely Yours*, won the T. S. Eliot Prize in 2005.

In an interview at Dillard, Saloy said she began writing as a way of remembering the poets who had introduced her to Black literature.

“My newly beautiful Black voice, so full of family and the Deep South, in particular from New Orleans, was missing,” she said. “I just wanted to talk back, and I never stopped studying or writing.”