



Kwame Dawes was born in Ghana on July 28, 1962 and shortly thereafter moved to Jamaica. Dawes earned a BA in English from the University of the West Indies in Jamaica in 1983. In 1992, he earned a Ph. D. in English from the University of New Brunswick in Canada.

From 1992 to 1996, Dawes worked as an assistant professor of English at the University of South Carolina in Sumter. In 1994, he began his long association with USC-Columbia, where he rose to the rank of associate professor and managed the M.F.A program in creative writing.

Dawes' first book of poetry, *Progeny of Air* (1994), won the Forward Poetry Prize for best first collection, and since then Dawes has been a very prolific writer who has had nearly one book published every year in both poetry and prose genres. *Jacko Jacobus* (1996), Dawes first novel, tells the story of a young Jamaican man who is forced away from his home and resorts to selling narcotics for his uncle in South Carolina. *Duppy Conqueror* (2013), Dawes' nineteenth book of poetry, is filled with inspirations from Dawes' past lives in Jamaica and South Carolina, among other places. Dawes has even dabbled in editing. *Twenty South Carolina Poetry Fellows* (2005), edited by Dawes, is a collection of twenty of the state's finest poets – who have received some of the state's highest honors in creative writing – discussing the relationships between their careers and the poems which inspired those careers.

Kwame Dawes is currently at the University of Nebraska where he is a Chancellor's Professor of English. He is also an instructor in Pacific University's M.F.A. program in writing.

- Blake Bolen

2009 Inductee
to the
South Carolina
Academy of Authors



Image Courtesy www.sc.edu

Kwame Dawes