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Acclaimed Queensbury author, educator to read from timely novel 'Hack Ware'

QUEENSBURY, New York (Jan. 27, 2026) — Inspiration struck Johannah Spero when she walked into her husband's home office one Friday afternoon to ask if he was ready to close out the work week and crack into a bottle of wine and she found him, ashen and in shock.

"The look on his face," she recalled, explaining how the health care company he runs fell victim to a ransomware attack. "It was insane to see what he had to do — bring in people around the clock — it was a monumental effort that lasted days."

"While in the midst of this, he made a comment, 'I can't believe how similar this computer virus is to the pandemic,' and that's what gave me the idea for the whole book," Spero said.

The Queensbury author and SUNY Adirondack adjunct instructor of English will read from "Hack Ware," her latest book, at 12:40 p.m. Monday, Feb. 9, in the first Writers Project event of the Spring 2026 semester, in the Visual Arts Gallery in Dearlove Hall.

"Hack Ware" tells the story of Chevy, a young adult living in a dystopian New York City. Among the dismal, gray setting is light: Chevy's boyfriend, the perfect companion.

"You get a sense everyone she has loved has passed, she's all alone except with this boyfriend," Spero said. "Then she finds him collapsed and, it turns out, he is a droid, a robot, and actually has a computer virus."

Spero's husband's real-life misfortune gave her the idea for "Hack Ware," but reading increasingly often about people developing connections with artificial intelligence inspired the story.

“I hear all this talk about people falling in love with ChatGPT and romantic relationships with chatbots,” she said. “I thought, ‘How do you make that believable? Are people going to believe she’s in love with a droid?’ But this is a real thing.”

“This is so timely,” she said of “Hack Ware,” her eighth book.

The Writers Project series is free and open to the public. The event is also screened live via Zoom at

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/7977212478?pwd=ZXU5WlpJRXZ1YmZoNFnJak1yYVpSUT09>

The series continues with the following:

12:40 p.m. Monday, Feb. 23: Carol Graser, the longtime host of Caffe Lena’s Poetry Night and author of the recently published “Prayer for the Sorrowful Brain,” will discuss poetry and the art life.

12:40 p.m. Monday, April 13: Casey Walsh, author of “The Full Catastrophe,” will discuss this thought-provoking read on grief, trauma and ultimately recovery.

12:40 p.m. Monday, April 27: SUNY Adirondack Distinguished Professor of English and founder of The Writer’s Project K. Lale Davidson, Ph.D., will read from and discuss her short-form fiction.

About the author

Johannah Davies (JD) Spero's writing career took off when her first release, “Catcher's Keeper,” was a finalist in the Amazon Breakthrough Novel Award contest in 2013. Her small-town mystery series, “Boy on Hold,” has won similar acclaim: IPPY Gold for Best Mystery/Thriller. Her eight published novels cover a range of genres, such as her bestselling romantic suspense, “The Secret Cure,” her cyber thriller, “Hack Ware,” her cozy romance, “The Muse Next Door,” and her YA fantasy series “Spike!” Born and raised in Lake George, Spero lived in the Boston area until a decade ago when she returned to her hometown to raise her three kids.



