



Meet our staff! This month, we are profiling Alicia Gathers, Advertising Sales Representative in Baker & Taylor's Merchandising Department in Bridgewater, NJ. Alicia was born and raised in The Bronx, New York (she reminds us it's "minutes away from Yankees Stadium, Go Yankees!"), attended Lehman College in The Bronx and has two wonderful children. She has been with Baker & Taylor for seven years. Get to know her!

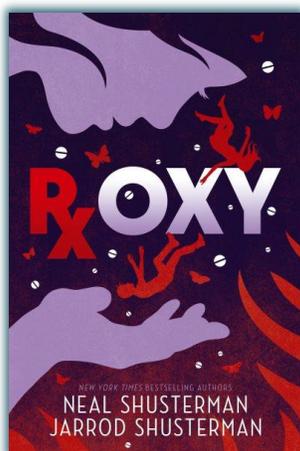
Q. Alicia, first off, tell us a little bit about what your role entails at Baker & Taylor.

In my role here as an Ad Sales Rep, I am responsible for helping our publishing partners bring attention to and heighten the awareness for their new and forthcoming titles to our public library customers. One of the great ways I'm able to do this is through our Advanced Reading Copy (ARC) program. This is a monthly mailing program that allows publishers to submit physical copies of key forthcoming titles for our customers to review in advance of the actual street dates. We've been very fortunate to find a great partner in Midland Adult Services to make this all possible.



Q. We'd love to hear more about working with Midland for the Advanced Reader Copy mailings. Can you delve a bit more into our partnership with them?

Midland Adult Services is a non-profit organization and school that supports the educational, social, emotional, residential and career training needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Through our partnership, job opportunities have been made available to many residents of their program as these are the wonderful people who pack and ship out our ARC mailings every month. I feel especially fortunate to have the opportunity to work with an organization such as Midland. As a parent of a child with developmental disabilities, I am often concerned about my son's ability to independently support himself when he's older. Working closely with Midland for these past several years has given me hope that there will be wonderful people and programs available to assist him when the time comes.



Q. Since you are seeing titles before publication, is there a title publishing in the last quarter of 2021 you are excited about?

I think I was most excited to read *Roxy* from Neal and Jarrod Shusterman. It hasn't released yet but should be available once this interview runs. I became a huge fan of this father and son team with their co-written novel *Dry*. I can't recall another novel that in addition to completely transporting me into the story, literally made me thirsty for water. I found it necessary to have a full water bottle on hand every time I sat down to read this book. *Roxy*, does not disappoint in that very much like *Dry*, it is quite a ride!

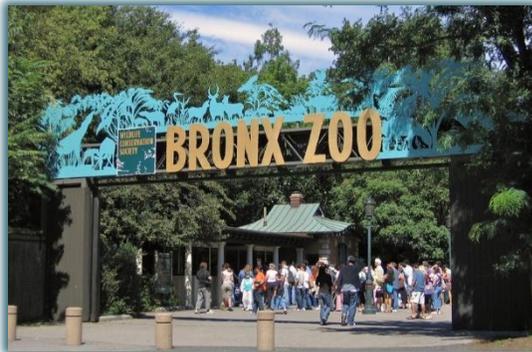
Q. Is there a favorite moment you'd like to share from your time at Baker & Taylor?

I have a lot favorite moments from my time working with Baker & Taylor but if I must reflect on one, and honestly this is mostly due to the current state of things today, it would have to be my first attendance at Book Expo. I miss pre-Covid luxuries like gathering in convention centers, scoring cool swag and taking photos with reality star turned authors. It was always an exciting time and I particularly enjoyed having the opportunity to meet with and thank our publishing partners, librarians and educators for their continued support.

Q. Speaking of pre-Covid luxuries, are there any others you're looking forward to resuming?

I'm most looking forward to travelling more. I was able to take a brief jaunt to Puerto Rico this past Spring before it got too bad. It's always been one of my favorite places to visit. The culture, art, and food are amazing. I'm hoping to visit again when there are less restrictions.

Q. And finally, if you were to choose an adventure for our favorite furry mascots, Baker and Taylor, what might that be?



Hmm...good question, I think I'd like to see them take the #4 train uptown to my old hometown, The Bronx. There are so many wonderful and amazing historic sights. They could start on the north end and visit the New York Botanical Garden and get lost in there for a while, then follow that up with a trip to the nearby Bronx Zoo, which is incredible and massive. Finally, when they got hungry, they could grab something delicious to eat on Arthur Avenue in Little Italy.

Stay tuned for future Meet the Staff introductions, and if there's anyone you'd like to see gracing the pages of the *CATS Meow*, let us know at CATS@baker-taylor.com.