John Parras, a professor of English at William Paterson University in Wayne, has been awarded a 2016 New Jersey State Council on the Arts Individual Artist Fellowship for Prose. He is one of three New Jersey writers selected for fellowships.

These highly competitive fellowships are awarded to New Jersey artists in 12 different arts disciplines on a rotating basis. Honorees are selected through an independent peer panel assessment of work samples that are submitted. The anonymous process is focused solely on artistic quality, and awards may be used to help artists produce new work and advance their careers. The program is carried out in partnership with the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation.

Parras is the author of Fire on Mount Maggiore (University of Tennessee Press, 2005), which won the Peter Taylor Prize for the novel. His creative work has appeared in Conjunctions, Salmagundi, Painted Bride Quarterly, Xconnect, Oasis and other literary journals, and his chapbook Dangerous Limbs: Prose Poems and Flash Fictions (2013) is published by Kattywompus Press. He has been named a National Endowment for the Arts Literature Fellow in Prose.

A member of the William Paterson University faculty since 1997, Parras is coordinator of the MFA program in creative and professional writing, and also directs William Paterson’s annual Spring Writer’s Conference. He is the editor of Map Literary: A Journal of Contemporary Writing and Art (www.mapliterary.org), which is housed in the University’s Department of English. A graduate of Carnegie Mellon University with a bachelor’s degree in creative writing, he holds a PhD in English and comparative literature from Columbia University.