#### **Writers in Residence**

Fall 2021 University of Dayton Cohort In the US, over 48,000 youth are confined in juvenile or criminal justice facilities. In Ohio, about 2,200 youth are held in juvenile or criminal justice facilities.

They have been separated and isolated from family, friends, and members of the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Many of them feel forgotten, alone, & scared.

This is for them.

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We teach creative writing to youth who are incarcerated.



We empower our residents' voices.

power

We assist in their re-entry



JUSTICE. We believe in creating an environment where justice becomes visible, where restoration from wrong is possible, where people are seen as more than their worst moments, where people can create a future not doomed to repeat the past.

EMPOWERMENT. We believe that our residents can build their self-esteem, resilience, and power through working on their writing, their reflection, their communication, through the creative writing workshop experience.

DIGNITY. We believe that our residents deserve to discover and recognize their own dignity and self-worth through our creative writing workshops. We also believe that if we respect ourselves, our residents, and our student volunteers then we successfully lead by example.

COMMUNITY. Wo believe in the power of community. This means that continually we welcome accept and our residents into our communities because they belong to an environment that promotes individuality and empowerment, especially upon re-entry. We also believe in the creation of a collaborative atmosphere that amplifies all voices together in a spirit of mutuality and kindness.

RELATIONSHIPS. We believe in fostering genuine, strong, and long-lasting relationships as well as walking with our residents as they navigate the path to re-entry.

# "One writes out of one thing only

— James A. Baldwin

We strive to reduce the recidivism rates of our residents.

and participate in the transformation of the juvenile justice system.

## one's own experience."

#### **SCHOOLS**



- 1. Capital University
- 2. College of Wooster
- 3. Heidelberg University
- 4. Hiram College
- 5. John Carroll University

- 6. Marietta College
- 7. Oberlin College
- 8. University of Dayton
- 9. Cleveland State University
- 10. Case Western Reserve Univ.

Circleville .ICF Montgomery County CAS Seneca County YC Portage Ceauga County JDC Cuyahoga Hills JCF Washington County JC Medina County JDC Cuyahoga County JDC **Lorain County JDH** Indian River JCF Franklin County JDC

#### JUVENILE FACILITIES

# To clarify how we track our outputs, we take attendance at every session because our

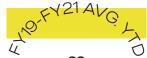
service population remains to be extremely transient, generating the total number of residents. However, some of the residents participate in our program more than once, so we averaged the total number of residents from every cohort to produce an approximate number that represents how many residents we engage weekly. We replicated the same calculations for our student volunteers too. The Independent Sector valuates volunteer time at \$27.20/hour: we multiplied this dollar amount by the total number of service hours for every student volunteer.

This information was last updated on 11/29/21 before our creative writing workshops concluded for the fall season.

Read more about our outputs, outcomes, and impact at www.writersnresidence.org/impact

### JT

### PACT



26 residents

**7** student volunteers

**87** hours

**\$2,242** fiscal valuation

**39** artifacts

82 chapter books 782

residents

159 student volunteers

**1,908** hours

**\$50,336** fiscal valuation

**826** artifacts

2,096 chapter books



residents

5 student volunteers

**48.3** hours

**\$1,378** fiscal valuation

29 artifacts

**50** chapter books

FY21 70, P

residents

20 student volunteers

227 hours

**\$6,892** fiscal valuation

116 artifacts

**50** chapter books



residents

student volunteers

74 hours

\$1,890 fiscal valuation

39 artifacts

**30** chapter books

109

residents

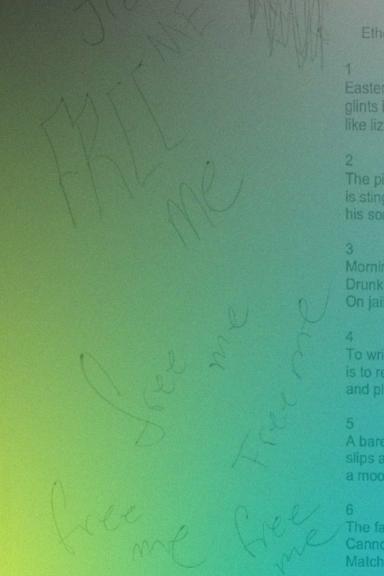
18 student volunteers

> 223 hours

**\$5,671** fiscal valuation

39 artifacts

90 chapter books





reconstruction of the soul



Dear reader,

This chapbook marks our second program season in a single year engaging the residents of the Montgomery County Center for Adolescent Services. Unit by unit, we are facilitating a 90-minute, weekly environment for the youth to creatively express themselves as well as critically reflect on their life's journey – the past, present, and future.

We feel honored and humbled to witness each resident change and grow from the first week with sixword memoirs to the very last week with affirmations. We built connections with the youth and wrote alongside them during every session. which always included moments of laughter, learning, and longing for more time together. We are grateful for the residents allowing us to work with them to empower their voice and feel heard by their peers.

We hope that you read our residents' creative writing with an open mind because they put forth a lot of time and energy into their poetry and prose even when they didn't recognize themselves as storytellers. Hence the title of this chapbook, "Reconstruction of the Soul," each youth wrote to repair something either visible or invisible for you to also heal with them.

University of Dayton Cohort

#### CM

- 1. I am tax free. I like fast cars
- 2. Choose the best route for yourself
- 3. I love the treasures, police don't
- I will be great without a doubt
- 5. It's a high speed sports mode, go!!!
- 6. I keep my circle small 100%
- 7. Six words six hellcats six million with me
- 8. Blender action blow the motor tax!
- 9. Dang 223's really do go through houses
- 10. Brickfair tax long lived ex bro.

#### HB

- 1. I am a cool white dude
- 2. I am a 14-year-old
- 3. I was about 13 last year
- 4. I was a quiet person then
- 5. I need to work in school
- 6. I used to not play chess
- 7. This has to be six words
- 8. Words six be to has this
- 9. I need to get out now
- 10. I liked to eat food today

#### Dooda

#### VJ

- 1. I am small but very strong
- 2. I am lazy but finish things
- 3. I am short but I got nice hops
- 4. I was bad but very good
- 5. I did fail but never quit
- 6. I did hoop but I stopped

#### **LKE**

#### KR

- 1. I am a lowkey person
- 2. I am always hungry when I'm full
- 3. I am capable of anything
- 4. I have different vibes in situations
- 5. I enjoy listening to music
- 6. I like to workout

#### Six-word Memoir

#### MB

- 1. I am black, intelligent, and smart.
- Sometimes I was failing to succeed.
- 3. Setbacks motivate me to go harder.
- 4. Greatness takes patience, practice makes perfect.
- 5. I play basketball on a daily basis.
- 6. Is tomato a fruit or vegetable?
- 7. I am a very smart person.
- 8. I'll be winning in the future.
- 9. Destination doesn't matter, journey does.

#### SB

- 1. I like playing music and games.
- 2. I am confident in basketball.
- 3. I like driving on the highway.
- 4. I was playing football for the flames.
- 5. I like when girls act toxic
- 6. I like going to my auntie's house
- 7. I like playing spades with my mom

#### Two Truths and a Lie

MB

I wake up every day, brush my teeth, wash my face, eat breakfast, then call my best friend. We talk about what we get into for the day and what time they tryna link up. When we link up we go get some food, chill, and conversate for a little bit. (true)

Every day I drag race with my friends on side streets and run from the police when they try to stop us from drag racing. (lie)

#### Two Truths and a Lie

KR

I got tipp
The police can't catch me
I'm gone stop cheating

#### **Big Lung**

KR

It's big lung I'ma big boss yah ah Big bum my clothes cost ah boss I'm lowkey come in see sum

 $\bigvee$ J

Stop talking to me You on some weird s\*\*t What you on On my son Put it on yo hood

#### No Bicker

#### MW

Outside, shots fired
If they make moves gotta talk to me
No bicker
Alone again everybody left,
So many people gone it's nobody left
They try to talk to me but all I say
Is no bicker

#### **Life Problems**

JG

The knife cuts my throat
I lost my breathe cause the gash
I cause my own death
I can save my last breath
With a better past

#### Late Night, I Can't Sleep

MB

Waking up outta dreams

Cops chasing me

Tryna focus because of my dreams

#### **Road Runner**

SB

I was on the run Tryna make away for the green Car hoppin can't do it again

#### Again, Again

MW

As past blood sheds thin The wind blows far from present time We still wake again, again.

#### **Steps to Success**

#### MW

Set goals
Get money
Be the king, not the peasant
I will achieve my goals
I will be a CEO
Do what needs to be done
Be successful

ΗВ

Gotta be successful Gotta get a job

SB

I wish somebody told me to do right in school. Stay out of jail, follow your dreams, stay outta the way, get money the legal way, dress right. My goal is to get my own business, apartment, and when I turn 18 get my own car. I want a wife and a son that plays sports and gets good grades.

#### **Unspoken Street Codes**

 $\bigvee$ J

Hey, you don't have to rob to get what you want
You don't have to kill to get a name
You don't have to be a class clown to get some smiles
You can go to college instead of jail
You can sell clothes, not drugs
You don't have to be black or white to get respect
You don't have to be a savage to fit in

MB

Keep doing your best and you are heading for success.

Complete my education by maintaining motivation. Stay out the system and I ain't tryna be the next victim. Ima do good, Ima do right. It ain't over, I'm still in this fight.

#### **Positive Vibes**

JG

Get my master's degree
Engineering, full ride for free
I'm gonna catch a bfree
And I got the key for the Mercedes Benz

#### KR

Your locks are nice one of the real if I say I got you that's 100. Plus, if I consider you my brother I'll never switch up, you don' have to be a crazy person. Love yourself, believe in yourself more than what anybody else thinks

We want to acknowledge the following individuals below for their time, energy, and resources devoted to fulfilling Writers in Residence's mission and vision because without them nothing would be possible:

- Residents
- · Community Partners and Juvenile Facilities
- Student Volunteers
- · Cohort Advisors and Academic Institutions
- · Special Guest Authors and Artists
- Staff and Contractors
- · Board of Directors
- · Donors and Community Members

We want to thank another integral member of our team, Morgan K., who transcribed almost every resident's handwritten artifact into a digital document so we can publish their poetry and prose.

We also want to express our gratitude for our Graphic Designer, Jordan Mondell, who produced this contemporary, high-quality chapbook that elevates our residents' creative writing.

Finally, we want to recognize the support from the following grantmaking institutions:

- The Cleveland Foundation Anisfield-Wolf Book Award, Cleveland Black Futures Fund
- $\cdot$  The Sisters of Charity Foundation Ministry Leadership Program
- · The Fowler Family Foundation
- · The Ohio Arts Council

#### By donating to Writers in Residence, you allow us to...

Provide writing materials, technology, personal protective equipment (PPE), snacks, chapbooks, and teaching artists for our creative writing workshops.

Support our residents who are re-entering society with very little or zero access to social services and resources to prevent them from recidivating.

Educate our local communities and government officials about the juvenile justice system's traumatic effect on our youth to enact reforms and alternatives.

To donate, please visit: writersnresidence.org/donate or scan the code below



Writers in Residence is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization incorporated in Ohio.