


# Writers in Residence



what they don't know:  
**VOICES FROM INSIDE**

Fall 2022

Heidelberg University Cohort



For the 49,000 youth confined in a  
juvenile facility in the US.

For the 2,200 youth confined in a  
juvenile facility in Ohio.

These youth have been  
separated from family and friends.  
Many of them don't feel seen, heard,  
or understood.

Their creative writing in this text  
rewrites the stereotypes and  
biases of a juvenile in detention.

And for the youth no longer with us.  
We call them our friends.  
We know them by name.

**This is for them.**

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# MISSION

*teach*

We teach creative writing to  
youth who are incarcerated.

*empower*

We empower our  
residents' voices.

*assist*

We assist in  
their re-entry.



# VALUES

**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.

**RELATIONSHIP.** 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.

**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.** We believe in the power of community. We continually welcome and accept our residents into our communities to promote 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.

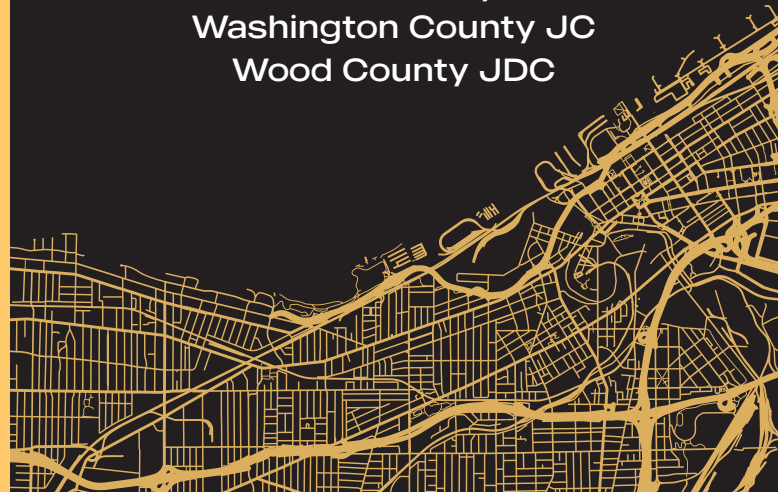
## SCHOOLS



- |                               |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Baldwin Wallace Univ.      | 9. John Carroll Univ.    |
| 2. Bowling Green State Univ.  | 10. Marietta College     |
| 3. Capital Univ.              | 11. Oberlin College      |
| 4. Case Western Reserve Univ. | 12. The Ohio State Univ. |
| 5. Cleveland State Univ.      | 13. Ohio Univ.           |
| 6. College of Wooster         | 14. Univ. of Dayton      |
| 7. Heidelberg Univ.           | 15. Univ. of Toledo      |
| 8. Hiram College              |                          |

## FACILITIES

Circleville JCF  
 Cuyahoga County JDC  
 Cuyahoga Hills JCF  
 Franklin County JDC  
 Hocking Valley CRC  
 Indian River JCF  
 Lorain County JDH  
 Lucas County JDC  
 Medina County JDC  
 Montgomery County CAS  
 Portage-Geauga County JDC  
 Seneca County YC  
 Washington County JC  
 Wood County JDC



# IMPACT

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Our Creative Writing Workshops occur weekly in the spring and fall seasons. Each workshop lasts 12 weeks and every session runs for 60-90 minutes either in-person or remotely. 10-15 residents participate and 5-12 student volunteers from a local college or university engage with the youth. The experience is facilitated by a teaching artist from the community. Then, we publish, showcase, and distribute chapbooks filled with our residents' creative writing artifacts inside juvenile facilities, on campuses, and throughout the region at local businesses to raise awareness about the juvenile justice system.

We survey our residents to understand our impact. These surveys give us quantitative and qualitative data so we can continue to deliver a high-quality program experience. The Heidelberg University Cohort's chapbook was designed on November 10th, 2022, to ensure that the residents received this chapbook at the final workshop. As a result, the outputs reported only reflect a fraction of this cohort's and the organization's net impact from this fall program season.

To learn more,  
visit [writersnresidence.org/impact!](https://writersnresidence.org/impact!)

# FALL TOTALS

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- 33 RESIDENTS

- 17 Student Volunteers

- 170 HOURS

- \$5,091.50

Fiscal Valuation

- 16 ARTIFACTS

- 1 Chapbook



## what they don't know: **VOICES FROM INSIDE**

Dear Readers,

During the workshops, we had our minds opened up to see the world in a different light. The residents talked to us about their stories and future. They were nervous and anxious just as much as we were at first when we met each, but realized we were super welcoming when we shared our stories with them too. That was an important feeling for us as student volunteers because we wanted them to feel comfortable with us. Along with that, we were open to seeing them as people and working with them as kids, and not just "residents" and the labels that many other people give them. But overall, we have had really good experiences with this workshop and the kiddos.

We ask that you remember that these are kids and not adults. They have made mistakes before, but they have also been hurt before. We are also not writing teachers trying to show them how to write better.

We are just trying to teach them a better way to express their emotions. They have different ways to express themselves and people should be accepting of their creativity. None of the work was changed or edited and it was published how the residents wanted. Have an open when you read this chapbook because their journeys and experiences appear through their writing. They haven't had an "easy" life growing up. They are people just like us, and that is one of the most important things.

Ultimately, we are grateful for this experience altogether, especially giving the residents an outlet for their creativity and being a part of it. We appreciated the opportunity to hear a new perspective on life coming from someone with a different path growing up. They trusted in us to provide them with a safe space where they can be themselves and talk about their experiences and imagine new ways for them to grow and be successful.

Heidelberg University Cohort

## Untitled

C.H.

Life – going through a lot but just know it gets  
better just gotta keep a good mindset

Love – if you rock with someone and have each other  
through thick  
and thin I would consider them family

Food – spicy food always hits no matter what it is

Advice – I look at as like anyone can snake you  
people say they rock with you but in the end they  
will end up snaking you

Questions – I rather be straight up instead of beating  
around the bush

## Untitled

J.V.

Why not come to Carey it's a quiet town  
although it may be small in comparison to the city  
we still have plenty to do, in the fall  
it looks almost like heaven although it may not  
smell like it, and Friday nights are where it's  
at during football games and all you can hear across  
the whole town is the crowd and the announcer,  
in my town everyone is like family to you.  
My neighborhood is not a backwoods town full of  
hilljacks and bumkins, everyone there has a kind  
heart and would do anything for one another.  
You might just call it just another small town  
but to us it's everything.



## Untitled

H.B.

I am,

- 1) Artistic
- 2) Sporty
- 3) Funny
- 4) Open Minded
- 5) Smooth
- 6) Hardworking

## Life

A.G.

You call it the hood but we call it home.  
You rely on the cops we rely on the chrome  
You can be rich but still get hit in the  
Dome. The houses look like traps, you  
get rich or die trying, 50 got facts

## Trench Baby

C.H.

In my neighborhood we think a lot about gunshots  
and gangs and hoping we make it home at night.

In my neighborhood we think a lot about the feds kicking  
down the doors with warrants.

In my neighborhood we think about all the music and  
rappers that come out of our city.

In my neighborhood we think about is you gonna eat or  
starve or strive to make it out the trenches.

In my neighborhood we think about what it's like to  
pursue your dreams and keep your family safe.

## It's Not What U Think

H.B.

you call it Trashco  
but we call it home  
in my neighborhood, we think a lot about  
being lucky to live another day  
we think a lot about  
being blessed to make it to 18  
my neighborhood is fun  
with kids, music, palm trees and even love  
but you might see it differently  
like its ghetto and trashy  
there may be a lot of gunshots and sirens  
with homeless people wondering  
in the hot days or rainy humid nights  
but my neighborhood is good because  
with the right people someone always has your back  
there is a lot of nice beaches  
with cute dogs and happy kids playing  
Pasco, may be trashy to you but  
people from there make the best of it  
you call it Trashco  
but we call it home

## Untitled

J.B.

I got my name through a bet with my  
parents I like my name my close friends  
call me JuJu or Jules

**M.B.**

M.B.

My name came from a  
beaten soul, not quite put together, not  
quite whole. My name means strength  
others see it as weak.  
As I sleep at night the tears would leak.  
Once named I became  
the wannabe, gang member, angry  
b\*\*\*h. I felt as though I'm cursed  
by a witch as I grow older I  
began to see why my name  
was assigned to me.

## Untitled

M.B.

Then I jumped out of the car  
But, it wasn't quite as easy as it seemed.  
If we went to Italy  
Then the skin of people would turn green.  
If the Kingdom was falling  
But Mexican food is my favorite  
Then drive  
If only I could travel everywhere  
But why can't we breathe underwater  
If my name wasn't meant for me

## Untitled

P.S.

My neighborhood is not that bad  
but if you don't live there  
and you're new and you look at someone  
crazy they will talk crap  
to you

## Untitled

J.B.

If grass was blue  
Then Saturn's rings fell onto earth  
Otherwise the dinosaurs would take over  
If cole couldn't swim  
Then your ankles wouldn't click when you walk  
But wait, did the apple hit your head?  
If apples fell far from the trees  
Then I repainted my car  
But I would love to have a super power

Then I wanna go home  
Only if I can run  
But I don't want to go to the moon  
Then I felt the ground beneath me  
Otherwise, I think it might have rolled downhill.  
If zebras had spots  
Then bulls would be on parade.  
If my dude was no longer my dude  
But pumpkins are squishy when old



## Untitled

M.B.

Atmosphere is cold, so cold  
Oxygen, non-existing. I go to take a  
breathe but remember what I was told..  
remain on this listing. Traveling further  
from the place I called home, traveling  
faster my mind it roams home. At last  
with my dad..  
Maybe death isn't  
so bad?

## Untitled

A.S.

A snake  
When I lived  
Down home  
Came in  
The house  
And bit  
Our dog  
But now  
I am older  
I like them

## Untitled

J.B.

floating like nothing  
it takes no effort  
who needs Zolof  
when you can  
just glide by  
do nothing

## Untitled

C.H.

When I was younger I was walking  
with some friends from school  
and there was this big bullmastiff  
in the alley we cut through  
and it started chasing us and  
ripped my shirt off my back

## Untitled

A.G.

I had a  
blue nose pit  
and wasn't  
supposed to take  
her on a walk  
and when I did,  
she seen another  
dog, a lil terrier, she  
took off and snapped  
its neck

# acknowledgments

We want to acknowledge the following individuals for their time, energy, and resources devoted to Writers in Residence:

- Residents and Juvenile Facility Staff
- Student Volunteers and Cohort Advisors
- Staff, Teaching Artists, Production Manager, and Printer
- Board of Directors, Community Partners, and Donors

*It takes a team to achieve what we do,  
so thank you to everyone involved!*

And a special thanks to the following institutions:



**Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards\***





# ways to give

This chapbook is available in exchange for a donation.

Your support directly benefits our youth  
through education and re-entry.

**\$5** - This gift covers the cost of a chapbook printed locally in Cleveland, OH by Outlandish Press.

**\$50** - This gift allows a teaching artist from the community to facilitate a creative writing workshop at a juvenile facility. This gift also helps a resident become matched with a mentor.

**\$100** - This gift sustains the organization's daily operations to provide its programs and initiatives.

Visit [writersnresidence.org/donate](https://writersnresidence.org/donate) to  
give or scan the code below.



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