

Writers in Residence

An aerial photograph of a lush green agricultural field, likely corn, with a network of dark, winding tracks or furrows. A light-colored dirt road or path runs diagonally across the lower right portion of the image. The text "monday night laughter" is overlaid in white on the right side of the image.

monday
night
laughter

Fall 2022

Oberlin College 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.

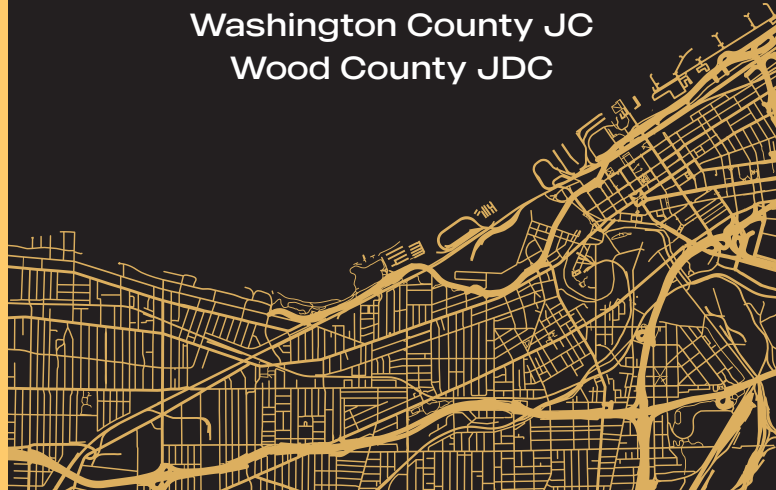
SCHOOLS



- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 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

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 Oberlin College Cohort's chapbook was designed on November 7th, 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!

FALL TOTALS

- 40 RESIDENTS

- 5 Student Volunteers

- 30 HOURS

- \$898.50

Fiscal Valuation

- 28 ARTIFACTS

- 1 Chapbook

monday night laughter

Dear Readers,

This was Oberlin's first semester back at the Lorain County JDH with brand new volunteers. We were all excited to jump in but weren't really sure what to expect. Within minutes of our first workshop, the residents had us laughing. We feel lucky to have been able to connect with the residents in all sorts of ways—whether sitting and processing our feelings together through writing, debating the categorization of avocados, or bonding over our fear of scary movies. Thinking about our brief times together so far fills our hearts with warmth and admiration.

We feel so grateful to have been able to share in the vulnerable creative writing process with the residents. For many of them, this is their first time writing creatively and they are able to produce beautiful work that is truly touching. Our residents have been able to tap into their own life experiences (good or bad) and use them as fuel for their writing. One of our favorite parts of the workshops is seeing how all of our work influences each other—often one resident or volunteer will share a thought or idea and it will inspire something in someone else's writing.

As Nelson Mandela stated, "There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children." A lot of these residents have gone through immense, immeasurable hardship in their short lives but are still kind and respectful people with goals and dreams just like anyone else. They deserve to be seen for more than their current residential status and recognized for their growth and maturity.

We hope you take this work in with the utmost care and gentleness, but we also hope you laugh and smile and feel the times our residents said they felt "like a 10" at check-in some days. We acknowledge not every day of life can be perfect, but reading these pieces hopefully brightens yours! Monday nights always start our week off right with our visits to the residents, and we are so happy to share some small part of that experience with you.

Oberlin College Cohort

Untitled

M.Y.

Live life to the fullest extent
Take it day by day slowly
Is what you're doing worth it
Why love even when it hurts
Why is the good feed bad

Untitled

D.P.

Live life the way you want.
Don't put 100% of love into something you don't trust
Eat to stay healthy not entertained
Don't let time that you don't have escape
Why does one problem have so many outcomes?

Untitled

J.J.

I've been in the detention home thrice

I overthink stuff

My love so all the way
Just as loyal but don't take it
For granted

I eat when I'm just
Bored sometimes

You gotta fail in life
To success and when you
Fail learn from it like mistakes

Do are soul really room around the earth
What do we really do when we die

How is it in heaven

Untitled

T.B.

My name is T.B. I'm very (quiet) sometimes
when I don't know you.

There could be times where I get (angry)
but I'm always (respectful) towards other,
I'm a (genuine) person, I'm (focused) on what I need
to succeed in life,
I'm also a very (outgoing),
I'm very (wise) in different ways.

The decisions that I make in my
Life right now has a
Major impact on my future

The Love that I have for people
Could sometimes hurt me

Food is something that gives
Me energy that helps me
Get through my day

The best advice my father
Gave me is to set goals to
Get to where you want to be
Or need to be

What is the purpose of life?
Why can't everybody be happy?

Untitled

N.M.

Thoughtful, Caring, Positive, Helpful, Athletic, Hardworking

Life:

1. Always be the best you can be
2. Always lead toward success
3. Be great

Love:

1. Why is it hard to love?

Food:

1. Pizza or chicken?

Advice:

1. Watch who you hang around
2. Don't put your trust in everybody

Questions:

1. Why do people have hate in their heart?

Untitled

C.H.

Caring, Kind, Hardworking, Respectful, Funny, Helpful

Life: Don't ever quit keep going kiddo.
Love: LOL Loyalty over love.
Food: Hot food is better than cold.
Advice: Life is hard if you don't try.
Questions: Why do we live to die.

Untitled

R.C.

Kind respectful and smart
Good kid, athletic fun hardworking
Love my family love twice once
Returned
Full time watching life

Untitled

I.V.

(Respectful, fun, confident, cool, smart, hardworking, athletic)
Life: is a struggle it's how you create the outcome
Love: is genuine take care of it
Food: Food is life produce energy
Advice: always important and helps strive for greatness
Questions: Help you learn new things

Untitled

T.J.

I am a good listener
I'm a curious
I'm a fun person
I'm a responsible
I am smart
I am kind

Untitled

A.N.

I'm a good kid
I love my dad
I like play games
I like work
I like to sleep
I like dog
I like tattoos

Life. I want to be somebody in life

Love. I can't love you if you don't love me!

Food. Pizza

Advice. Be someone who makes you happy?

Questions. Do you love yourself?

Untitled

J.D.

Brother, Creative, Negative, Tattoos, Middle child, Love cars

Life

Life gets hard before it gets better

L O V E

O U A V

Y T L E

A U R

L E Y

T T

Y H

I

N

G

Jail food is not good

Life is not easy

Am I gonna get out on my mom's bday?

Untitled

J.D.

1. Funny
2. Smart
3. Nice
4. Curious
5. Creative
6. Respectful

Be a (leader) not a (follower)

Love a person

For being themselves

Marcos is always

Better than pizza hut

Today's bad

Tomorrow can

Be better.

Does my honesty

Hurt people sometimes

Untitled

J.B.

Comfortable lies make baby jesus cry

Untitled

T.W.

1. Tall
2. Funny
3. Strong
4. Handsome
5. Happy
6. Athletic

Toco Cat

E.A.

I saw a cat in a
House eating toco
Bell and it was
Dancing in space

Untitled

D.P.

Talking to someone, then watching the camera
and not seeing them

Feeling someone watching you but not seeing them
at all

Having a bad dream but waking up with the
marks

Untitled

M.G.

Voy de camino y mi abuelo se esta
muriendo y de repente se me explota
la coma

Voy de camino para jardin
y estoy recogiendo flores
y de repente me asista
un es panta pajaros y se me
caen las flores y me voy
corriendo

I'm on my way and my grandma is
dying and all of a sudden I explode
into a coma

I'm on my way to the garden
and I'm picking flowers
and all of a sudden it gives me
a birds feather and I drop
the flowers and start
running

Untitled

H.S.

My phone is on one l, no signal, and I'm going down
a dark road and I'm on E where is the nearest
gas station then I seen one and when
I went in nobody was there and a nun with
a mask on asks you weird questions

Untitled

Anonymous

You're in jail, they ask you to
work on your worst subject...English

Untitled

A.R.

Spongebob. Rick and Morty. The Walking Dead. Sandyshack.
They are funny looking everything about them in the show
Is funny to watch loney zoomey and are we there yet
Barbershop.

Untitled

J.J.

I went to go check up on my niece
I opened her door I see her in the closet with two tea cups
when I opened it fully one tea cup dropped and she stood
there in the closet with her tea cup in her hand
she said to me you scared away Stacy. I ran.

Untitled

D.G.

Yo estaba en mi carro y despues me llamaron a mi celular y hera mi mama llamandome y sele es pluto la goma del carro y me dijo que necesita la auyda yo voy con my carro y despues se me explota la goma a mi tambien y despues yo no le puedo ayudar porque my goma se en ploto.

Estaba en el cine viendo una pelicula y de repente me tocan por las pierras debajo de mi a siento y sali corriendo.

I was in my car and then I got a call
on my cell phone and it was my mom calling me
and her car tire blew and she told me that she needs
help and I go with my car and then my tire blew and then
I can't help her because my tire blew too and then
I can't help her
because my tire blew

I was at the cinema watching a movie and all of a sudden
they touched me by the legs underneath me and I felt it
and I ran out.

Untitled

M.G.

Me gusta mucho las peliculas
de Vin Diesel por que hace unas
pelicular buena y cuando tu
lo ves te entretiene y te
sientes bien y cada pelicula
que el hace cada pelicula
es mejor y todas las
peliculas que el hace
son brutales y a mi
me gusta y si me
ponen a en legir
en dos o tres peliculas
elijo las de el todos
sus peliculas me gustan

I really like Vin Diesel movies
because he makes
good movies
and when you see him he entertains you
and you feel good and every movie
that he makes is better and they are
all brutal and I like that and
if they put me to work
in two or three movies
I choose all of them
I like his movies

Untitled

H.A.

I been talking to this girl since August after I got out.
I saw her. I thought about her a lot. I meet her girlfriends.
We talked
a lot which warmed my heart. I asked her to drive over she
said yeah I was ecstatic. She came over we talked for
hours until the night and it didn't bother me until she had to
go
that night she left I felt my heart or whatever is
in my chest was hurting a lot so much and I knew why

Untitled

R.A.

Dear Paul Walker I respect you as a person you're
good at what you do, you're always there when somebody
needs you

My Cousin

J.J.

I look up to my cousin because he
never led me to the wrong path or never told me nothing
wrong. I also look up to him because he showed me
only things possible for example we all stayed at my
grandma house not my uncle's or my grandmother kid's
could move her out her old house and get her a better
one but my cousin her grandson did what he had to
do on his first thing first was to move her into another
house then he took care of each and every one of
his family so I look up to him and look at him as a role
model or big brotha that not too many people that's still
young can do a lot for his family.

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 to
give or scan the code below.



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