


# Writers in Residence



Fall 2022

CWRU & JCU 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.

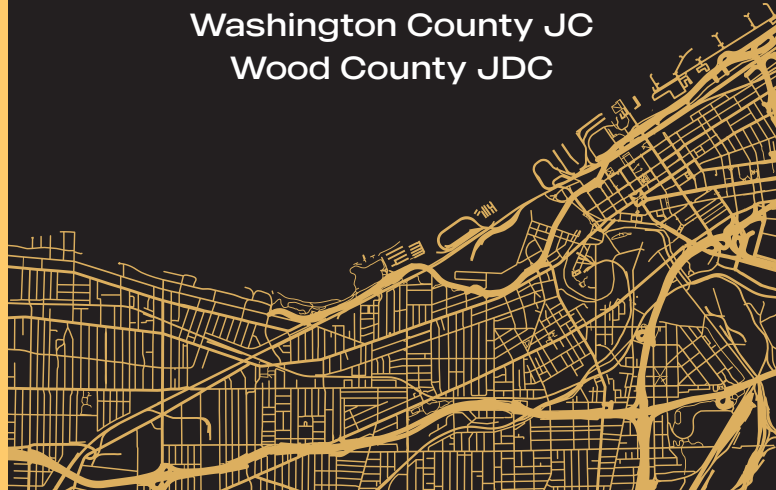
## SCHOOLS



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

## 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 Case Western Reserve University and John Carroll University's chapbook was designed on November 1, 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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- 37 RESIDENTS

- 8 Student Volunteers

- 64 HOURS

- \$1,916.80

Fiscal Valuation

- 23 ARTIFACTS

- 1 Chapbook

*I come from my people*

*and my people  
come from me*

Dear Readers,

Every week we heard and enjoyed different stories from every resident. When we think about this semester's creative writing workshops, each week presented a new story to be told. And within those stories, we learned something new about the young men and ourselves.

Initially, they were quiet but after a couple of weeks, the residents began openly talking about their creative works, thoughts and feelings, and how much the sessions made their days better. A lot of what we discussed within the workshops focused on our families, where we come from, and how those moments built us up and defined us, which inspired the title of this chapbook. They appreciated having the time and space to share their experiences with us because we would listen. We loved reading our artifacts aloud to one another and snapping in celebration at the end. These moments evoked a sort of cohesiveness and a sense of camaraderie between the residents and the student volunteers that was unmatched.

You should know that these are amazing guys who speak through their hearts. There is more to them than meets the eye. We know that most of them do not share the same experiences as us, but this difference makes their work all the more powerful and worth your attention. Each resident took careful consideration and took the time to create works that were meaningful and completely "them." They also took their personal experiences and expressed them within these works, and each one is inspirational and unique to each resident.

We are entirely grateful for these new connections with the residents and a stronger understanding of how creative writing can become an outlet and an expressive means. The fact that we see them each week at the same time, and they know our names as we know theirs makes us feel like we had at least a small impact on their life. Be prepared to think deeply and deeper into the meanings of the residents' work. Take time to become involved and immersed in their creations. Reflect after every piece. We promise it will be worth it.

CWRU & JCU Cohort

## Untitled

T.J.

The way I'm feeling you prolly won't imaging taking  
my actions and putting them past tense I hope Father God  
forgive me for the stuff I did last year thankful for my baby  
girl she better than any girl I'm working on  
being a better person is the only thing that matters

## Untitled

S.W.

100% Rap, I like hearing Youngboy  
100% laid back, a lot of people like  
how I act, 70% curious, 100% shoes,  
I mostly wear Jordans, 30% gaming,  
I play a little Warzone, 100% Cleveland,  
100% my hair, sometimes people like  
to stare, 70% athletic, I love playing  
sports

## Untitled

S.W.

I'm from east 55th where you hear  
loud music and people running in and out.  
The aroma of Thanksgiving food being  
cooked and served around the table.  
Kids playing basketball in the grass using  
trees as bases or playing dinoman on the  
daily bases. Families coming together for  
birthday celebrations or siblings  
graduations. One day you might see  
friends fighting or arguing the next day  
you will see laughing and playing. A family  
getting together watching the browns play  
or maybe a different team.



## Untitled

T.J.

100% strong when it comes to my family,  
1000% Akron but I'm only there when I can be  
100% Gemini, 100% smart  
100% creative because this poem is art  
40% nice, 45% mature, 79% hip hop  
If you like this I can give you more  
50% open minded, 100% over thinker should  
be going to college soon because this year I'm  
a senior

## Untitled

T.J.

I'm from a loud home where I  
feel my safest, I'm from my grandmother's  
dining room table where she makes her famous  
sweet potato cheesecake and where we say our  
grates before we begin our feast. I'm from a  
woman who works hard to feed and love her children  
and do anything to protect them

## Untitled

T.J.

I'm from banging speakers and barking dogs  
I'm from, a line of cooks that never had  
a Restaurant I'm from, the top of the hill on  
The wild wild west I'm from, 88 you want  
something done you gotta do it yourself  
I'm from, where everybody goes to the mall  
After Christmas I'm from, the state of Rappers  
so just sit down and listen.

## Untitled

I.D.

I'm from a city with four seasons where the killing never  
stops, while the talent keeps rising.

I'm from hooping at Zelma. George right by a pool off buckeye

I'm from a city where you hear music bumping from cars  
and gun shots and sirens at night.

## Untitled

D.M.

I'm from my mom food cooking  
on the stove for Thanksgiving.

## Untitled

S.W.

I was born out of my grandfather  
chilling with my grandmother playing  
cards with their kids. I was born  
out of family get togethers and  
People get to knowing each other better.  
I was born out of playing basketball  
At nearby parks playing against new  
people. I was born out of celebrating  
holidays and having fun.

## Origin Story

D.J.

I was born out of  
a century that do every  
thing the dumb way n  
some weak minded ppl  
I was born out of the  
Muscle of my mother  
N the hussle of my brothers  
and the trust of my peers  
without those things I  
wouldn't be here  
we are all related through  
each other keepin up with  
one another

## Untitled

T.J.

I was born out of the smell of thanksgiving  
dinners  
I was born out of my mother baking banana  
pudding,  
I was born out of my grandmothers great  
Smell of cornbread,  
I was born out of my great-grandmothers  
delicious cake,  
I was born out of a family that can cook  
but no one is a chef

## Untitled

C.P.

He's in the clouds, like a plane but  
in the deep end like a shark. Diamonds  
shine bright like the Sun is out but only  
at night like an owl. She's as delicate as a  
flower but as hot as a volcano.

## Untitled

T.J.

In order to find me you'll have to look through  
a telescope I'm a star, but a tree might be  
in the way so you might not see that far,  
can hear me coming so don't snooze me. I'm not  
a clock, I flow like a (IDK) the rhymes will leave  
you shooked.

## Untitled

C.P.

Dear Batman,

Growing up I always wanted to be like you  
because of how even though you didn't have any  
parents you were still the leader of the Justice  
League. I always liked how you handled your own  
even though you were the only one who didn't  
have any superpowers



## Untitled

L.B.

Ace boa wassup, How you feelin  
I'm glad you pulled through when they tried  
to rob you. I would've never trusted rico  
I knew he was fishy from the jump you  
Should've never set him up to the police  
you should've handled him yourself mitch  
should've never trusted him either he was  
to flashy and bring to much attention to  
the gang I can't believe mitch let em get  
that close be BTW mitch boa. It was  
a smart idea leaving the game tho that  
was real big for you. Ima hit you up later  
tho keep yo head up gangsta.

## Dear Superman

S.W.

I grew up wanting to be big and strong  
like you. Wearing a super suit with a S  
on my chest while I'm wearing blue. While I was  
watching the TV show I would imagine  
me flying with a blanket as a cape. I would  
shoot lasers out my eyes and throw criminals  
in the sky. If I could fight criminals like  
you I would beat them till they were  
black and blue. Seeing you in action  
fighting criminals is funny and Superwoman  
like how you are.

## Untitled

L.B.

I got vision and I got solutions. I can see situations before they happen and I can prevent them from happening an example would be me on the football field. I can see the hole before it opens and run through it and get a touchdown I hate getting tackled so I juke or use my speed to prevent it from happening.

## Untitled

J.W.

Invisibility no one can see me I could go anywhere or escape anything without being detected super strength I could pick up anything and everything telekinesis I could control the things out of my control Avatar I would use the natural elements against the evil forces of life foresight I win

## Here's What My Powers Would Be

T.J.

Here's what my powers would be. I would have super speed, so I could save people very quickly and so I can run in a bank and take the money without anyone knowing. Here's what my powers would be I would have the power of all knowing so I can know what's on everyone's mind, Here's what my powers would be, I would have invisibility so I can disappear whenever I'm not in the mood. Here's what my powers would be I would take that money and spend it on my family.

## Untitled

D.M.

I like yo movie Batman vs. Superman how you beat Superman with using kryptonite. Because you knew that was his weakness. A living to Be a man to be a god.

## Untitled

S.W.

I can disappear into thin air anywhere  
I'm at. When I use my superpowers  
I would use them for good. Using  
my invisibility I can appear when I am  
least expected. Me being me I would pop  
out when people think I'm long gone.  
If I could choose two powers my  
other superpower would be prediction.  
I would use this superpower to tell  
the future. I would know when and  
how people would operate or do things.  
Well I might not have some of those  
superpowers but I can use the stuff  
I have now to help out the world.

## Untitled

L.B.

Lil Lz he ain't your average teen  
he see the opps and gone bang it out

Zero tolerance for bull crap  
so don't say nothing dumb out the mouth

## Untitled

C.P.

If I had a superpower my power would  
be foresight and time travel. I would probably  
use my powers to prevent world tragedies and  
invent a couple of things.



# 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.