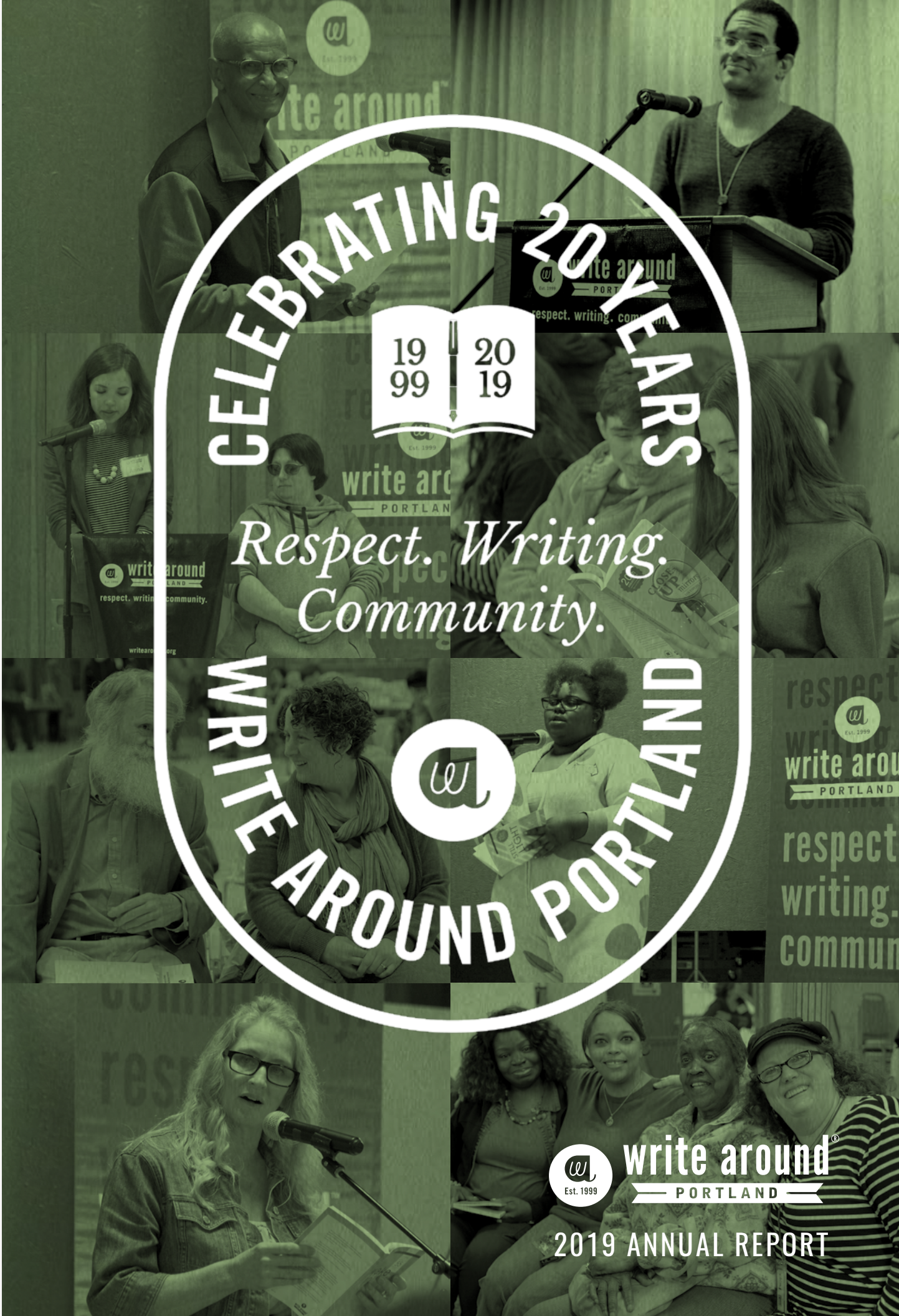
CELEBRATING 20 YEARS
1999 2019
Respect. Writing. Community.
WRITE AROUND PORTLAND
write around
PORTLAND
Est. 1999
2019 ANNUAL REPORT

COVER PHOTO CREDITS: STUART GASTON AND RON KIRSCH

dear friends,

In any life—especially one lived in poverty, trauma or isolation—there is a vital need for art, community and joy.

As we finalize this annual report, we are in the middle of a global pandemic. While frontline workers respond to the physical demands of this crisis, it is art and community caring for our mental and emotional states. In this time of increased isolation, we need writing and connection more than ever. Write Around Portland is adapting our organization and program model to operate remotely and continue to meet this vital need. When it is safe to gather in person, Write Around Portland will again offer the acclaimed programming model that we've successfully implemented for 20 years.

In this 2019 annual report—despite and perhaps because of the current challenges—we acknowledge and celebrate the past 20 years. We know the challenges of 2020 cannot erase the mission, values, need or history of Write Around Portland. We persist because we must.

In 2019, we celebrated 20 years of respect, writing and community in the following ways:

- partnered with 44 social service agencies, prisons and schools to hold creative writing workshops for 679 participants—in 20 years, that amounts to 765 partnerships and 8,497 people writing in community;
- published our 56th and 57th anthologies, *Still Light* and *Close-up Mirrors/Los espejos de cerca*;
- amplified the stories of our writers at community readings with 672 attendees;
- welcomed 47 new members to Inkwell, our sustaining donors program, bringing us closer to our goal of 200 Inkwell donors by the end of 2020;
- finalized our Racial Equity Plan, shared it with our community and began work toward our racial equity goals for our volunteer program and partnerships;
- recognized the 2,000 volunteers who have contributed 79,000 hours of service in the last 20 years during our annual volunteer celebration where 77 volunteers and friends gathered and wrote together; and
- hosted our annual event, Raise Your Pen, where 164 attendees celebrated the stories of Write Around Portland writers from the past 20 years and helped us raise almost $88,000 to support our mission and work.

In 20 years, Write Around Portland has impacted 31,524 people with the full breadth of our programming. We are shifting societal notions of what it means to be a writer, how people can write and who can have access to the cultural machinery of publishing. By doing this work, we continue to amplify voices, build respectful writing communities and bring people together across difference.

Partners, workshop participants, donors and volunteers all make our workshops, anthologies and readings possible. Thank you for helping us build a more humane, respectful and inclusive world. This report is the result of our collective efforts.

Together, we continue to change lives through the power of writing.

With much gratitude,

Elizebett (Liz) Eslinger
Executive Director

featured writer

As the Wind Blew

It started with *hello*. On a warm Thursday afternoon in the summer. That deep, sweet and beautiful *hello*. Usually I'm not the type to have a full conversation about anything with a stranger, but something about him was hard to walk away from. As the conversation continued I realized he only lived down the street. That summer I was happy I had a new friend. We had so much in common. The season changed and so did the conversations, and just as that hot summer wind blew away so did the talks, the feelings and the care. And just like the beginning he was back to being someone who just lived down the street.

© 2019 Lily Sunset and Write Around Portland

Lily Sunset, pictured to the right, participated in our workshop at Home Forward's Fairview Oaks for adults and teens living in affordable housing in Fairview. Lily's piece, *As the Wind Blew*, was published in our spring 2019 anthology, *Still Light*.

Lily shared "I'm glad Write Around Portland is around. I'm really glad it's around. It's amazing. The past ten years, my life has been super crazy. There's been more bad outweighing the good. Then this workshop just coming in—I could take that spot and not worry about anything else. Definitely a really amazing outlet to get a lot of emotions and feelings out."

Each month, we feature a workshop participant on our website including their writing, a photo and a quote or interview about their experience.

2019 snapshot

Write Around Portland changes lives through the power of writing.

Just in 2019:

48 Free Writing Workshops

679 Workshop Participants

44 Agency Partners

2 Published Anthologies

785 Copies of Books Printed

13 Community Readings

672 Reading Attendees

261 Volunteers and Interns

5147 Volunteer Hours

615 Individual Donors

programs

WRITING WORKSHOPS

We held 44 free creative writing workshops for 657 adults and youth. Workshops met for up to ten weeks, were held in partnership with the agencies listed below and adapted to meet the needs of the populations served by the agency partners. We also held five workshops for 22 returning writers. Overall we wrote with 679 participants.

We offered fee-based writing workshops to those who wanted to experience our acclaimed generative workshop model and support participants who might not otherwise have access to writing in community: three ten-week *Prompt* workshops and our inaugural *Prompt* Alumni workshop at Powell's City of Books and 20 drop-in workshops hosted by HOTLIPS Pizza. 361 people participated in at least one of these workshops.

We also held writing workshops at Bonneville Power Administration and College Possible for staff team-building and honing creative thinking skills in the workplace. We continue to offer workshops in workplaces to meet the needs and goals of employers including team-building, creative brainstorming, staff self-care and using writing in leadership and management. The fees from these workshops also support our workshops for participants who might not otherwise have access to writing in community.

COMMUNITY READINGS

We held three large public readings and ten smaller readings with more than 670 people in attendance.

VOLUNTEERS

251 volunteers and 10 interns volunteered 5,147 hours. 59 volunteers facilitated writing workshops throughout the Portland Metro and 12 completed our 27-hour workshop facilitator training.

AGENCY PARTNERS

Writing workshops were held in partnership with the following agencies and organizations (below). **Bold*** indicates a new agency partner or population in 2019.

Albertina Kerr, East Portland
Albertina Kerr, Hillsboro
APANO (Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon)*
Boys & Girls Aid, Safe Place for Youth
Catholic Charities, St. Francis Park Apartments*
Chemawa Indian School
City of Beaverton, Community Services*
Harsch Investment Properties, 1200 Building
Home Forward, Fairview Oaks*
Home Forward, Gallagher Plaza
Home Forward, Holgate House
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Home Forward, Williams Plaza
Human Solutions, East Burnside Apartments*
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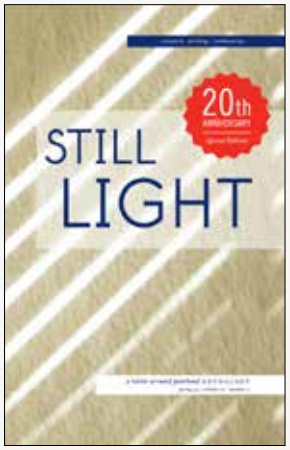
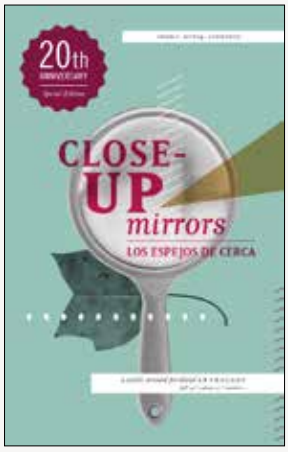
LifeWorks NW, Adolescent Day Treatment Program
MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility
Maybelle Center for Community
Morrison Child & Family Services, SAGE
Multnomah County HIV Health Services Center*
New Avenues for Youth
OHSU Family Medicine at Richmond*
Portland Art Museum
REACH Community Development, Station Place Tower
Reed College, SEEDS*
Serendipity Center
Springdale Job Corps Center
The Alano Club of Portland
Unity Center for Behavioral Health
Whitewood Gardens Residential Care Facility
YWCA Clark County

BOOKS

We published two books of participants' writing and printed 785 copies. Designed by Bryan Zentz. Printed by VSR Printing.





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INKWELL

SUSTAINING DONORS

Through ongoing monthly or quarterly gifts, our 147 Inkwell members contributed $23,585 to support our writing workshops. In 2020 we continue our goal to reach 200 Inkwell members by the end of the year! All new Inkwell gifts will be matched dollar for dollar by the Miller Foundation. Show your support of respect, writing and community by joining Inkwell today. Please call 503-796-9224 or visit writearound.org and click "Donate Now." Many thanks to our Inkwell members who have * by their names on the donor list in this report.

RAISE YOUR PEN

TO THE POWER OF WRITING

PHOTO BY: RON KIRSCH

ANNUAL EVENT

164 guests raised their pen to the power of writing and contributed $87,567 to support our writing workshops. Noah, one of the featured writers at Raise Your Pen shared, "Write Around Portland turned us onto writing as a tool of healing. It was finding that safe space between those pages that we were inspired to bring that same kind of thing to young people who are in similar circumstances." Noah reminded us that writing in community really does change lives. Mark your calendars for our next Raise Your Pen on October 2, 2020 at Vitalidad Movement Arts & Events Center!

PHOTO BY: STUART GASTON

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Thanks to the individual donors who made our workshops, books and readings possible!

** denotes Inkwell members (monthly or quarterly sustaining donors). Find more information about Inkwell on page 5.*

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If you made a donation in 2019, and your name is not on the list, please accept our sincere apology and let us know. We want to recognize and thank all of our supporters.

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Happy Birthday to Lisa Pearlstein
In honor of 20 years of Write Around Portland
In honor of Mark Leary (one of your facilitators) and his astounding generosity
In honor of my grandson August who writes every day
In honor of Sharon Neis
In memory of Elizabeth Dunham
In memory of Loren Eiseley
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Our friends and community members who are imprisoned.
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The 20th anniversary! CONGRATULATIONS!
The staff at Write Around Portland - Keep up the good work each of you do day in and day out
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The wonderful people at Write Around Portland!
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Write Around Portland amazing team
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Echo Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation
Emily's Fund
Great Escape Publishing
Greenberg & Associates Insurance
Hillsboro Arts & Culture Council
HOTLIPS Pizza
H.W. Irwin & D.C.H. Irwin Foundation
Intapp, Inc.
James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation
Kaiser Permanente
Kroger
Mark & Tracie Monroe Family Foundation
Multnomah County Cultural Coalition
Oregon Arts Commission
Oregon Community Foundation
Oregon Health Authority
Perkins Coie
PGE Foundation
¿Por Que No?
Regional Arts & Culture Council
Ronald W. Naito MD Foundation
Rose E. Tucker Charitable Trust
The Autzen Foundation
The Commerce Bank of Oregon
The Herbert A. Templeton Foundation
The Institute for Poetic Medicine
The Jackson Family Foundation
The Johnson Family Foundation
The Lyceum Agency
Thread Creative
Tom Dwyer Automative Service, Inc.
Weinstein Family Charitable Foundation
Willamette Week Give!Guide

BUSINESS AND ORGANIZATION IN-KIND

Ace Hotel Portland
Back Fence PDX
BeeLine Coaching
BodyVox
Box Lunch Design
Brian Zentz Design
Caravan
Cargo Inc.
Cathedral Ridge Winery
Clary Sage Herbarium
Creo Chocolate
Crimson Wine Group
DocuMart
Ecliptic Brewing
Egg Press
Elena Rose Photography
Float On
Frame Central Pearl District
Grand Central Baking Company
Ground Kontrol Classic Arcade
Head to Wind Publishing
Holdfast Dining
Hollywood Theatre
Hood River Distillers
HOTLIPS Pizza
Il Solito
Inn At The Gorge
Jackson Family Wines
Lagunitas Brewing
Laurelhurst Theater and Pub
Literary Arts
Maybelle Center for Community
Multnomah Whiskey Library
NICU Families Northwest
NW Film Center
Om Base Yoga
Oregon Symphony
Orox Leather Co.
Pacific Office Automation
Painted Hills Vacation Rentals
Pastini Pastaria
Petite Provence on Division
Phelps Creek Vineyards
Pips and Bounce
Ponzi Vineyards
Portland Center Stage
Portland Leather Goods
Portland Rafting Company
Portland Youth Philharmonic Association
Pt Pope Properties LLC
Roosevelt's Terrariums
Tamale Boy
The Box Social
The Children's Book Bank
The Float Shoppe
The Mystery Box Show
Third Wave Coffee Tours
Toro Bravo
Vista Balloon Adventures
Willamette Valley Vineyards

INDIVIDUAL IN-KIND

Harriet Anani
Linda Apperson
Gina Beck
Brian Benson
Mare Biddle
Lara Bjork
Chris Bodamer
April Brenneman
Janet Burroway
Mary Byrnes
Anna David
Albert Flynn DeSilver
Laura Dodson
Kristin Dorsey
Pamela Dunham
Elizebett and Justin Eslinger
Joy Fanning
Pamela Fiehn
Elisabeth Geier
C. T. Griswold
Mimi Herman
Claudia Hollander-Lucas
Tonya Jones
Joyce Kessel
Anna S. King
Ed Kline
Nicola Koh
Robin LaCount
Linda Lambert
Alexandra Larralde
Lori Le Cheminant
Kathy Les
Felicia Lopez
Saxar Lower
Julie Mancini
Peter Mangano
Nevin Mays
Moira McAuliffe
Kathleen McDevitt
Kirsten Myers
Molly Newgard
Nellie Papsdorf
Faye Penny
Celeste Perez
Chenoa Philabaum
Anne Pinkerton
Luna Prado
Heather Ransom
Jeremy Resnick
Bruce Richards
Michele Sabatier
Jane Salisbury
Paulina Salvador
Robin Schauffler
Deborah Sposito
Carol Stone
Daniel Tam-Claiborne
Marisol Tawadros
Linda Gibson
Terry Tierney
Jake Vermaas
David Welper
Reggie Wideman
Lauren Wirth-Short
Faith Yang
Jessica Yanhs
Bryan Zentz

financial report

Write Around Portland continues to be strong programmatically and financially. Contributions from individuals—directly and through our annual fundraising event—continued to be our largest source of revenue. At the end of 2019, Write Around Portland had a planned deficit of $5,125, as part of strategic investments in organizational infrastructure and growth. We ended the year with approximately 6 months in operating reserves. Reserves are available to support "rainy day" (i.e. emergency or unexpected) financial needs, support cash flow throughout the year and invest in initiatives to support organizational growth. We work to maintain an operating reserve of 3-6 months, which is generally recommended for nonprofit organizations.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION 12.31.2019

ASSETS

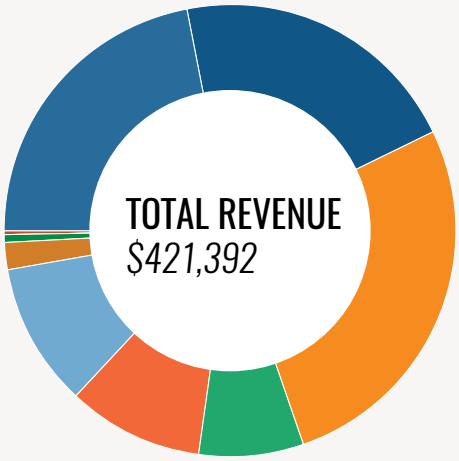
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Commerce Bank Accounts	$226,233
Petty Cash	$82
Total Checking/Savings	**$226,316**
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable	$1,084
Grants Receivable	$17,725
Total Accounts Receivable	**$18,809**
Other Current Assets	
Prepaid Lease Deposit	$1,430
Event Deposit	($260)
Grocery Store Gift Cards	$187
Bulk Mail	$150
Bus Tickets	$7,668
Prepaid Insurance	$944
Total Other Current Assets	**$10,119**
Total Current Assets	**$255,244**
Fixed Assets	
Furniture & Fixtures	
Accumulated Depreciation	($3,247)
Computer Server	$3,247
Total Fixed Assets	**$0**
TOTAL ASSETS	**$255,244**

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities	
Credit Card	$615
Staff Vacation Accrual	$7,849
Total Current Liabilities	**$8,464**
Net Assets	
Unrestricted Net Assets	$198,629
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	$48,750
Total Net Assets	**$246,780**
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	**$255,244**

REVENUE

- INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS – *22%* – $92,004
- ANNUAL EVENT (RAISE YOUR PEN) – *21%* – $87,567
- FOUNDATION GRANTS – *27%* – $112,500
- GOVERNMENT GRANTS – *7%* – $30,925
- FEE FOR SERVICE – *10%* – $40,926
- IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS – *10%* – $42,596
- BUSINESS CONTRIBUTIONS – *3%* – $12,494
- BOOK SALES – *0.5%* – $1,913
- INTEREST – *0%* – $206
- MUG SALES – *0%* – $260



EXPENSES

Volunteer training and support, workshop snacks and journals, workshop and office supplies	$13,752
Anthology printing and design	$9,714
Community readings, annual and other events	$35,182
Bookkeeping, technology and professional services	$21,826
Office and workshop room, equipment	$27,165
Internet, postage, printing, telephone	$12,517
Credit card fees, government filings, insurance, uncollectible bills	$8,395
Trainings and professional development, public relations, transportation	$6,126
Staff compensation, health insurance, retirement benefit, payroll taxes, accrued vacation	$291,838

TOTAL EXPENSES *$426,517*

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

We celebrated 20 years of respect, writing and community in 2019 with celebrations at our readings, volunteer celebration and annual event, Raise Your Pen. We released 20th anniversary retrospectives in two anthologies, where we highlighted one piece of writing from each year's workshops from the past 20 years.

Reflecting back over Write Around Portland's impact over 20 years, we've:

- Written with 8,497 participants in 765 creative writing workshops in partnership with 216 social service and other agencies;
- Published 6,367 writers (an average of over 300 writers a year for 20 years!) in 62 professional designed anthologies, chapbooks and special publications;
- Welcomed 15,966 community members at our readings to celebrate and hear the stories of our writers;
- Received 79,000 hours of volunteer support by 2,000 dedicated volunteers;
- Maintained our commitment to providing free programming through the generous support of 4,030 donors.

Thank you for the last 20 years.

Here's to 20 more!

Changing lives through the power of writing.

2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Outgoing Chair **Lisa Pearlstein**, Housecall Providers
Incoming Chair **Chris Bodamer**, Kaiser Permanente
Secretary **Kate Rood**, Beneficial State Foundation
Treasurer **Alex Larralde**, Intapp
Pamela Fiehn, HP
Lauren Isaac, Portland General Electric
Molly Newgard, Blue Sky Gallery
Chenoa Philabaum, New Seasons Market
Shari Staten, Zevez Corporation
Marisol Tawadros, Nike
Reggie Wideman, Salesforce
Jessica Yanhs, Finastra

2019 RESOURCE COUNCIL

Jennifer Allen, James F. & Marion L. Miller Foundation
Jeana Edelman, HOTLIPS Pizza + Soda
Dave Eggers, Author and 826 Valencia
Liza Halley, Write Around Portland Co-founder
Paul Lipscomb, Options Consulting
Holly MacArthur, Tin House
Julie Mancini, College Possible
Ben Moorad, Write Around Portland Co-founder
Miriam Sontz, former CEO at Powell's Books
Robyn Steely, Write Around Portland Executive Director 2005-2015

STAFF

Jenny Chu, Community Engagement Manager
Elizebett (Liz) Eslinger, Executive Director
Emily Garcia, Program Assistant
Allison Specter, Development Director
Sarah Weller, Program Manager

A special thank you to **Allie Molen** and **Monika Kawiak** who helped fill in when staff were out on family leave.

CONTACT

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