A Note from the Executive Director

Dear friend,

In 2021, Write Around Portland offered writing experiences to decrease isolation, amplify voices, and build connections. We:

- partnered with social service agencies to hold remote writing workshops to reach those without internet access or experiencing isolation;
- continued to offer online sliding-scale workshops open to everyone and free BIPOC workshops to offer a supportive space for Black, Indigenous and People of Color to write and share;
- shared the voices and stories of Write Around Portland writers on social media, through our e-news, and by mail;
- completed our Racial Equity Framework, which we will use to evaluate our policies and programs going forward; and
- implemented transition and continuity plans to return to our office and prepare to welcome our community to Write Around spaces again.

Now, as we prepare to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, this essential work continues. We will resume and restore our core in-person programming and hold spaces to unravel, process, and reflect on our individual and shared experiences from the past two years. While the pandemic created opportunities for Write Around Portland to expand our remote engagements now and in the long-term, it also illuminated our collective need for shared physical spaces to increase access, deepen connections, and build authentic community.

In 2022, I am stepping down from my role as Executive Director after 10 rewarding years with Write Around Portland. I feel incredibly grateful to have been part of this amazing organization. I look forward to continuing to be a supporter, welcoming a new Executive Director and staff members, and seeing what’s next.

As we look to the future, I find comfort in Write Around Portland’s mission, values, and impact. This work has never been about one single individual—it has always been about people seeing the humanity in each other. Since 1999, community has been central, and it has been even more essential since this pandemic began. Our strong foundation, programs, and community persist, and these will carry Write Around Portland forward. Together, we continue to change lives through the power of writing.

With gratitude,

Elizebett (Liz) Eslinger
Executive Director
I am happy to say the workshop has really uplifted me from my bouts with depression and anxiety...I really appreciate the ability to share my writing with others.

---Lisa, Fall 2021 workshop participant

2021 Highlights

- 88 Writing Workshops
- 910 Workshop Enrollments
- 861 Volunteer Hours
- 175 Journals for Writers
- 126 Inkwell Members

We are grateful to all our writers, agency partners, volunteers, funders, donors, and supporters who helped make our work possible in 2021. Thank you for changing lives and building community through the power of writing!
Our Writers' Words

In 2021, we shared dozens of pieces of writing by Write Around Portland workshop participants with 6,250 community members.

...You are the one person, one woman, one friend that inspires me every day to push myself to get out of bed and to keep living, to never give up...

I feel like you have been with me my whole life. I feel like in some way that I’m following in your granulated footprints in the sands, on the cloudy wet beach. You keep showing up for me.

Excerpt from “Surviving Another Year ’2020’ Pandemic-Epidemic” by Joyce Holland
Written in a Fall 2020 Write Around at Home workshop

I grind because there’s no option
I shine when there’s no lights on
I dream bigger than pictures
I dream past horizons
I dream into existence
I dream reality

Excerpt from “I Grind” written by Jovani F. and published in Write Around Portland’s spring 2018 anthology A Wonder I Can Hold

Color outside the lines, wear mismatch socks, do something outside your comfort zone.
You’re the best music artist and hit those notes, dance and sing around the house. Do something that will make you happy, bring you joy, and remember no one is normal. We are all different and unique.

Excerpt from “Pretending to be Normal is Exhausting” by Brandi V.
Written in a Fall 2020 Write Around Portland by-mail writing workshop with Multnomah County Health Services Center
In 2021, Write Around Portland continued to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, prepared to resume in-person programming, and navigated staff transitions. A positive net income from 2020 was identified to help offset projected deficits in 2021 and 2022. The deficit for 2021 was less than originally projected, and at the end of 2021, our organizational reserves could cover approximately 8 months of operating expenses. Reserves are available to support "rainy day" financial needs, support cash flow throughout the year, and invest in initiatives to support organizational growth. We work to maintain an operating reserve of at least 3-6 months, which is generally recommended for nonprofit organizations.

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION - 12/31/2021

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<td>Current Assets</td>
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<td>Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</td>
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### TOTAL REVENUE $352,098

- Business Contributions $7,282
- Individual contributions $93,232
- Foundation grants $81,500
- Annual event $48,146
- Government grants $61,733
- Fee-for-service $55,142

### TOTAL EXPENSES $359,323

- Workshop and office supplies, volunteer support, writing journals $4,426
- Community readings, annual and other events $3,968
- Bookkeeping, technology, and professional services $13,056
- Office and workshop room, equipment $18,373
- Internet, postage, printing, telephone $12,847
- Credit card fees, government filings, insurance, uncollectible bills $10,034
- Professional development, community engagement, transportation $5,213
- Staff compensation, insurance, retirement, payroll taxes $291,406
thank you to our staff, board, and resource council!

Current Staff
Lilly Do, Operations Coordinator
Elizbett (Liz) Eslinger, Executive Director
Elisabeth Geier, Interim Program Coordinator
Leah Middleton-Aviles, Development & Engagement Coordinator
Will Preston, Development Manager
Sarah Weller, Interim Program Director

A special thank you to Allie Molen who has provided our staff team with temporary support throughout transitions in 2021 and 2022.

Board of Directors
Alex Larralde, Co-Chair, Betterworks
Kate Rood, Co-Chair and Treasurer, Beneficial State Foundation
Chenoa Philabaum, Secretary, City of Portland
Chris Bodamer, Outgoing Chair, Kaiser
Molly Newgard, Blue Sky Gallery
Marisol Tawadros, Nike
Reggie Wideman, Lytics

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, former Executive Director of College Possible
Ben Moord, Write Around Portland Co-founder
Miriam Sontz, former CEO of Powell’s Books
Robyn Steely, Write Around Portland Executive Director 2005-2015

Thank you to our Staff, Board, and Resource Council.

Contact
133 SW 2nd Ave #304
Portland OR 97204
503-796-9224
writearound.org

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