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.

This is for them.
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.

**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. This means that we continually welcome and accept our residents into our communities because they belong to an environment that promotes 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.

**RELATIONSHIPS.** 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.
1. Capital University
2. College of Wooster
3. Heidelberg University
4. Hiram College
5. John Carroll University
6. Marietta College
7. Oberlin College
8. University of Dayton
9. Baldwin Wallace University
10. Bowling Green State Univ.
11. Case Western Reserve Univ.
12. Cleveland State University

Circleville JCF
Montgomery County CAS
Seneca County YC
Portage Geauga County JDC
Cuyahoga Hills JCF
Cuyahoga County JDC
Washington County JC
Medina County JDC
Cuyahoga County JDC
Lorain County JDH
Indian River JCF
Wood County JDC
Franklin County JDC
Impact

To understand our impact on our residents, we survey them at every creative writing workshop. These surveys give us quantitative and qualitative data so we can provide our residents with a high-quality program experience.

Our Creative Writing Workshop occurs in spring and fall seasons for 12-16 weeks. Each session runs for 60-90 minutes either in-person or remotely via Zoom or Teams and consists of 10-15 residents, 5-7 student volunteers, and 1 teaching artist. Then, we publish, showcase, and distribute chapbooks filled with our residents’ creative writing inside juvenile facilities, on campuses, and throughout the local communities to raise awareness about the juvenile justice system.

Visit writersnresidence.org to learn more!
Dear reader,

Even though we spent only four weeks at the Wood County Juvenile Detention Center piloting our Creative Writing Workshop, we were thoroughly impressed with every youth's thoughtfulness, generosity, and eagerness to participate.

The residents always came to our sessions ready to put their best foot forward and give the activity their best effort. We think their writing is excellent regardless, but it's even more impressive knowing that they were able to jump in with both feet and produce this chapbook in what only amounted to a few hours of meeting time! To hear the youth read their work aloud was always a gratifying experience. For example, the first session involved writing six-word memoirs and the residents generated so much detail and wisdom in such brevity. This is the inspiration behind the title of this chapbook, "Blue Scrubs, Orange Crocs, Infinite Wisdom."

We are not only filled with gratitude when we think about our experience but also excitement because the residents demonstrated a willingness to try something new and become vulnerable, which we hope they continue to do outside of our program.

Bowling Green State University Cohort
Questions

What keeps you up at night?
Oatmeal could be a soup, you tell me.
Be the best or the richest?
Why do you wake up every day?
What drives you through hard times?
What can you do for yourself?
What makes you turn at night?
Did the French invent French Fries?
What is the best football team?

Music

Rio Da Yung OG goes hard period.
Music speaks to me like humans.
Avenged Sevenfold is the greatest.
Music makes me feel really free.

Untitled

Anonymous

She found herself, suddenly behind
The dark wall

Untitled

G

I wonder was nobody listening?
She tried to curtsey. No, I hope they
Remember...Alice

Untitled

D

Tired of sitting
Having nothing
Feel stupid
When suddenly
Very remarkable
Occurred
Then hurried to feet
Burning with curiosity
Fortunately in time
Again
Went straight on
Falling down a deep well
Funny please- this New Zealand or Australia
Do you think you could manage
Miss very like answer

She labeled disappointment
Alice tumbling fallen somewhere
That several schoolroom’s knowledge
Practice but got thought

She was dark white lamps long
Hall roof Alice she again
On the second time round little
She small
Longed to out of that

I could shut up, if I only knew how to begin,
To think, half hoping, a book of rules for
Shutting people up, remember the simple rules,
A red-hot poker will burn you, she had
Never forgotten that

Alice was very tired of sitting by her sister and of having nothing to do.
She had peeped through the book but it had no pictures.

She fell down
Then she looked at Alice
I said aloud several things
though this was not a very good opportunity
but thought they were nice grand words to say
**Untitled**
Anonymous

Alice jumped up to her feet, she looked up it was dark overhead the white Rabbit in sight

---

**MLK**
B

It was a good day
On the court
The basketball kept going through the net.
I was breaking them ankles.
Bang bang bang,
I thought them ankles were just broken.
I didn't know why everyone ran
Till I saw him lying on the floor
His white shirt stained and colored violets
Gunshot to the chest

---

**Blue Collar**

We are the people who wake up early
Go out in fields or out to sites

The people who work hard all day
Come home and work hard all night

We are the people who raise livestock
And the people who raise houses

We are the people who work like a dog.
For the people that they love most
Cause we know you gotta work
For the things you want and need
Most in our lives
But we also know, after a hard day's work
After we clean our hands and change our Dirty clothes
The best thing for us is to sit by a fire
And be with friends and family.
Blue Collar Community

For my people who work 40 hours plus every week
Who don’t complain when times get tough,
The people that do the back breaking labor that
Nobody else would consider doing.

For the people who come home with grit and dirt under their nails
Who just can’t give up the hard hands-on work,
The ones who work in the trades by choice,
Who are told you need a college degree to be successful?
Even though that’s not always true.
For the people who will retire by the age of 65,
And the ones who will be able to spend the rest of their lives fulfilled
To the ones who put in the hard work but can relax
For the second half of their lives

There’s a lot that can be learned from the blue-collar community

A Choice

Anonymous

Music; like passion in my veins,
Like fuel for my heart
An escape from the pain;
A new place to start

For those who are hurt
For those who are lost
Embrace your pain
Let your light shine bright
Let your pain guide others
Through their most cold, dark nights

1, 2, and 3
Who do you wanna be?
You’re more than your past or where you came
We can all reach the stars
Now where will you aim?
Advice
Always think before you say something.
Helpful, listen, key to success, kind.
The best is over the worst.
I lost a lot but when
I went to state I was
Happy with the losses.
It gets worse before it gets better.
Progress is the key to life.
Be the best version of you.
Be someone’s safe place forever.
Îmi, place, să, ajut, pecor, cine /
I like to help anybody.
Keep your head up through everything.
You gotta be comfortable with yourself.
Îmi place sõ dau spaturi bune cuiva cand fare gresâli /
I like to give good advice to someone when he’s made a mistake.
Pushing yourself takes skill and persistence
Keep my head up all times.

Life
Hard, easy, fulfilling, real, personality.
Violence is never the key.
Winning is not always the key.
I am bigger mentally than physically
Îmi, place, sã, calotâresc, sã, Îmi, fãl pret /
I like to ride horses and…
You might be small, but mighty.
Do what you love, have fun.
Familia pentru mine În seomnã tot momã tatã frati bunici /
Family means everything to me: siblings, parents, uncles, and grand-parents.
Mistakes can be erased, they’re not permanent.
Try my best to stay happy.
Football because I’m good at running.
I like to stay up late.
Love

Healthy, fun, joyful, complicated, respect, hard
Love never really worked out for real.
I wanted it to work but life goes on Fam.
I’m cool where I’m heading fam.
I wanna girl just ain’t trippin’ over it.
Being loved is all we need.
My heart is a sacred thing.
Always trying but not succeeding.
Love yourself, before you love another.
Îmi iubesc pǒrinti frati bunici - prietenidor care /
I love my parents, siblings, grandparents, the friends who….
Îmi dǎ un drum bun - spre-viitor /
Love it gives me a path towards the future.
I was shattered, now I’m healed.

Food

Good, filling, hunt it, eat, digest.
I love Lee’s chicken and pizza.
I love chicken bacon ranch everything.
Grilling lobster on hot summer days.
Îmi, place, or, ce, fel, de, mancare /
I like every food!
Eat what makes you want more.
Îmi place foarte mult mǎncarea gǒtitǎ /
I like warm home cooked meals very much.
Eating tacos while binging Stranger Things.
Pineapple belongs on the best pizzas
I hate eating ham and turkey.
Eating cookies while watching Longest Yard.
People go, but food is forever.
For My People Who Lost Themselves

For my people who lost themselves in loneliness, I
Assure you you're not alone. It seems not long ago
That we walked down the same road. In the
Distance those red and blue grow, you
Know what it means but you're scared to go home. As
You're in the cell alone I know you have no hope
But it doesn't end like this another community
Grows

Acknowledgements

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

It takes a team to achieve what Writers in Residence does, so thank you to everyone involved!
When you donate to Writers in Residence

Your contribution sustains our Creative Writing Workshop with teaching artists, writing materials, snacks, and chapbooks.

Your support assists our residents who are reentering into their communities with limited access to social services including housing, employment, food, health care, and education.

Your generosity educates our local communities and government officials about the juvenile justice system's traumatic effect on our youth.

Visit writersnresidence.org to donate or scan the code below.

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