

THIS MOMENT

BOLD VOICES FROM WRITEGIRL

PREVIEW COPY

Now it matters

Foreword by
**LAUREN
GRAHAM**

This village of blue

Use this power wisely

Root deeply

Capable of anything

My essence

Read it out loud

I have all the power

Get inspired!
Writing from 180 teen girls

— & —

**A CREATIVITY
STARTER KIT**

writegirl
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THIS MOMENT

BOLD VOICES FROM WRITEGIRL



WriteGirl Publications ♦ Los Angeles

This Moment

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Acclaim for WriteGirl Publications

“The written words of these young women represent small acts of courage. They are not only proclaiming they have something to say but owning their voices, and thereby reminding us all that they matter.”

– Erica Shelton Kodish, television writer of *The Good Wife*, *Being Mary Jane* and *Cold Case*

“Every WriteGirl anthology is as unique as the voices and lives of the young women and girls whose writings fill these pages. For anyone taking the brave leap of sharing a view through the windows of what it’s like to be a person in the world, with both the love and pain of it all, gives a blessing to both the writers and readers.”

– Louise Goffin, singer-songwriter, GRAMMY®-nominated producer and co-host of *The Great Song Adventure* podcast

“There has never been a more important moment to amplify the voices of young women and allow them an arena to speak their truth, own their story and express their creativity.”

– Rory Green, author, workshop leader and creator of Write to Be You Reflective Writing Circles

“[*This Moment*] is an absolute must-read that bursts at the seams with unique and talented voices showing us what it means to be a young woman today. Passion shimmers on every page, with a very real sense of craft woven throughout. The collective words of all these young women will change you ... for the better.”

– Marissa Kennerson, YA author of *Tarot* and *The Family*

“Stepping out from the shadows are voices that must be heard, starting with these girls who are taking over the world.”

– Lisa Freeman, YA author of the *Honey Girl* series

WriteGirl Publications . Los Angeles

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Acknowledgements

All of us at WriteGirl wish to extend our heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you who helped make this anthology possible.

Two years have passed since the publication of our last anthology, and it is with great pride and excitement that we bring you *This Moment: Bold Voices from WriteGirl*. The book team dove into a sea of submissions from our teens (and a few of our alums) that included poetry, prose, songs, and excerpts from novels and screenplays. It has been both a labor of love and an honor to read through the hundreds of pages of submissions sent to us via email, snail mail, text, hand delivery and even snapshots of handwritten pieces. Some pieces were quickly scribbled down at one of our monthly workshops while others were labored over during weekly mentor-mentee writing sessions.

Thank you to all our WriteGirl volunteers for your passion and dedication. You provide the safe and inspiring space in which our girls can explore their voices and share their words freely both on the page and out loud. Your enormous contribution of time and expertise is the foundation for the growth of WriteGirl, and the impact of your efforts will ripple out into the community for many decades to come.

We would like to thank our WriteGirl parents. We are grateful for your support in encouraging your daughters to participate in our workshops and mentoring sessions, and driving them to special events all over Los Angeles County.

To our board members, friends and supporters, thank you for helping sustain WriteGirl year after year. You make it possible for us to expand and enhance our programming and our reach. To all our partners in the community and our in-kind donors, we thank you for your outstanding generosity.

Thank you to our book manager Annlee Ellingson and the entire book team of editors, proofreaders and production assistants. Your long hours, late nights, intensive focus and patience made this book possible.

Thank you to Sara Apelkvist for designing the cover of this book and for your infinite care for all the details, and to Juliana Sankaran-Felix for showcasing the writing in a way that honors and celebrates our girls' words and the spirit of WriteGirl.

Finally, a big thank you to every WriteGirl teen writer. Your creativity and profound courage bring this anthology to life!



Share your
story!

Your voice.

The world NEEDS that -
for us to share and hear
each other's stories.
Don't be afraid.

Share!

Foreword

Author and actor Lauren Graham is best known for her roles as Lorelai Gilmore on *Gilmore Girls* and Sarah Braverman on *Parenthood*. She is also a producer and a three-time *New York Times* best seller. Lauren is a WriteGirl mentor and hosted our *Lights, Camera, WriteGirl!* benefit. We're grateful to have Lauren as part of our WriteGirl community!

One day in early 2019, I turned off the news. It wasn't that it was particularly bad — although it wasn't particularly good either — but for the moment I'd had enough. I felt restless. I wanted to stop watching things and instead start to do more ... things. But what? Something helpful. Something hopeful. I thought back, as I often do, to what my father would inevitably say whenever I had a question, or a new interest, or was at a crossroads and needed guidance. "The answer to everything you want to know," he'd say, "is in a book." When I was younger, this statement seemed thrilling yet improbable. Really? The answer to everything? Could that be true? Over the years, I had mostly found the answer to be yes. The written word has been a profound presence in my life, a source of comfort and hope and joy, not to mention an essential aspect of my livelihood as both an actor and a writer. I wished there was a way to share this discovery with a younger generation, I wished there existed some magical place that embodied the values my dad had shown me years ago.

And then I found out about WriteGirl.

With kindness and passion and clarity, Keren Taylor and her team conveyed their mission: to help young girls on their creative journey, to encourage their confidence and to foster their unique voices. How? Through prompts and exercises, and by gathering one-on-one or in larger workshops, writing and sharing and cheering each other on.

Thanks to WriteGirl, I got to work with a mentee who dreams of someday becoming a singer/dancer. She shared her songs and stories with me shyly: she worried they weren't finished or polished or good enough. So many teen girls (so many people!) never get past that first stage, don't ever have a chance to overcome the voice that lurks inside that tells us we aren't good enough and shouldn't dare to express ourselves. At a WriteGirl event, that same mentee had a song of hers put to music by a professional singer. WriteGirl doesn't just tell its girls their dreams are worth having — it shows them what it looks like when they come true.

At the Lights, Camera, WriteGirl! benefit this year, mentees had an opportunity to have their scenes and monologues performed by professional actors, and to get feedback from professional writers. But the true stars were the girls themselves, who laughed and clapped and cheered for their fellow writers. Their pieces were complex and imaginative, and just plain enjoyable. WriteGirl creates opportunities that illustrate to its girls, in word and deed, that their ideas matter, that their songs and poems and stories matter, that they matter.

In these pages you'll find an impressive variety of voices, in a collection united by the shared experience of girls who've thrived in a supportive community of mentors and peers. And this is just the beginning of all these girls will do. With the power of all the words they'll read and write in the future, they just might find the answer to everything.

– Lauren Graham

Introduction

In this moment, these are the voices we should be listening to. The creative words of 180 teen girls burst through the pages of this new anthology — they share their ideas, their emotions and their view of things as they see them right now. And they don't hold back! They offer wisdom, humor, warnings and rallying cries, and there is a fresh vitality here that is worthy of a book, in print, in a volume of 350 pages.

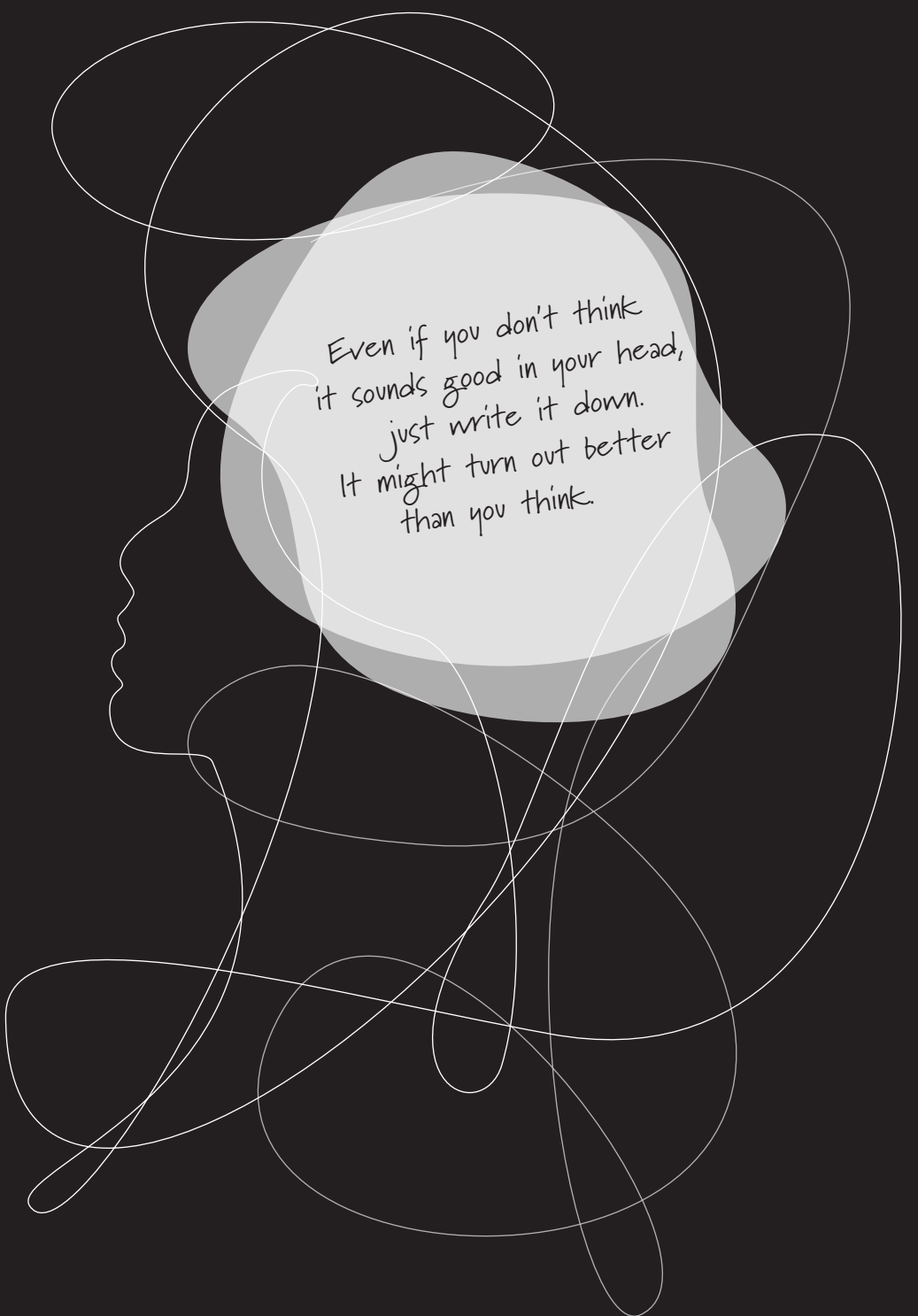
I often think about what the WriteGirl magic is. Did we create a space where women and girls support each other unconditionally, or did teen girls inspire an entire community to be built around their enthusiasm, curiosity and openness? I'm certain it is both things, in simultaneous harmony. Sometimes there is a synchronicity at work — an invisible force that brings people and new ideas together, effortlessly. That is WriteGirl.

The energy and vibe of the WriteGirl community is always sparkling, with hundreds of women and girls trading stories and exploring their creativity in spectacular civic settings such as The Huntington, in the velvet seats of a screening room, or in front of a Rauschenberg multimedia art installation. But this moment, when so many things are truly changing and being illuminated in terms of equity for women — this moment feels different, heightened, even momentous.

We need writers, artists and filmmakers now more than ever to help us reflect on the past, make sense of the present and envision what the future might look like for women, and for all of us. And we need new perspectives from unheard voices to help us get there.

In this moment, these young women share their powerful voices on the page, and give us exactly the inspiration we need.


– Keren Taylor, Executive Director



Even if you don't think
it sounds good in your head,
just write it down.
It might turn out better
than you think.

Nia Johnson age 15

I wrote this piece to express my feelings toward school and how it is tough to get through. I got the idea to use the stagecoach at a WriteGirl workshop at the Autry Museum of the American West.



I Hear Coyotes

The road to our destination is tough travel.

As the coach jolts across the rocky plain, I collide with other passengers.
The coach is far too crowded and my fellow travelers reek with sweat.

I hear coyotes far and near, howling. The driver cracks the whip at our heads.

Getting through this school year is going to be a bumpy ride.

Zoe Frohna age 17

I wrote this monologue at the WriteGirl Character and Dialogue Workshop. The character is me (played by an actor), and the setting is the Linwood Dunn Theater where the workshop is held (very meta). I am using an actor to tell a story of mine.

Different Body, Same Mind

ZOE

I just switched bodies. My original body is somewhere in this audience. My original body has blonde hair, glasses and a wheelchair. And it's this last thing I switched bodies to talk to you about.

This is a monologue. I am this monologue.

(stretches)

This body is pretty cool. I like it. I like my original too, but ... I can't drive. My mom and I think I need a special car. And because I can't drive and because I have a huge (HUGE!) homework-related procrastination problem and require reminders to do things, I have a babysitter at age 16! Sure, she calls herself my "personal assistant," but what does that even mean? She assists me! And now you all think I need that! Guess what else I need? I'm in line to get a service dog in 2019. Which is great! It's mostly for companionship, and I LOVE dogs! But what you don't know is, my mom won't let me take a walk with my chair or walker, or go anywhere on the Metro by myself. There always has to be a friend or a parent or a dog. I can't exist for myself until I'm an adult. I want to have my cinematic "teen" moment while I'm a teen!

(pauses, sighs)

Do you think that if I actually had the body of
(gestures to self)
[actual actor's name] I'd be better? No?
Stronger? No. Freer? Maybe?


(bitter)
Do you think I'd be less awkward, and bold?
Do you think I'd stop wishing people would
NOTICE ME? Do you think I'd stop being
loud? Do you think I'd stop FORCING YOU
TO NOTICE ME?

I am what I am. I've gotten used to whatever
the heck this is.

(angry)
I know my power. DO YOU?

Emmett Thompson age 17

I wrote this poem about literally changing my name from my birth name to Emmett, and dealing with my depression and my place in this world.



no Name

my Name is not fear
not depression
or self doubt

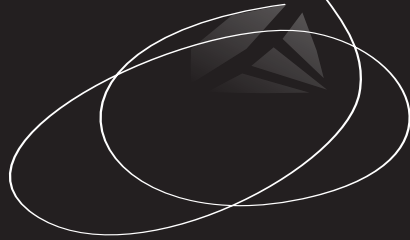
i think of reasons to keep existing
breathing in and out
remembering each stutter
i have to count my fingers and toes
to make sure they haven't left me while I slept

i'm not scared
but i like to hide in dark corners
i look out of eyes of someone that isn't me
creating universes in everyone
i'm not small
in size
or in mindset
i go stargazing in the specks in my eyes
i see planets in my pupils

my Name is not misplaced
not random
or a waste

my Name is what I'm trying to find in the universe

Whenever an idea pops up,
write it down!
Don't let that
nugget go!



Sophie Rosenblum age 16

When I read Lori Alhadeff's letter, written one year after her daughter was lost in the Parkland shooting, I was inspired to write. As a student and a girl who is very close with her mother, this letter impacted me deeply. While her daughter can't send a response, mine is below.

From Another Daughter

I read your letter in my bed, with a clay mask hardening on my face. A one-sided conversation between a mother and her daughter that I got to listen in on. I stumbled upon it after scrolling through Instagram mindlessly — a habit that your daughter Alyssa may have experienced but now can't. Your words overwhelmed me with gratitude. I'm not the recipient of the letter — I'm a girl reading it from the comfort of her own bed.

You talk about how things have changed since that Valentine's Day, a day that started off with red fuzzy animals and pink bows, and quickly drained of color. One year later, color is seeping into your life, but Alyssa's sparkle won't return.

"I wish I could take all the bullets for you." When I read that line, I crumbled like the clay on my face, disrupted by streaming tears. From the kitchen, I heard my mom making dinner and imagined her taking all the bullets for me. She would do it an instant.

The next morning I begged her to read your letter. She was busy; I read it out loud. Your words were the background noise to her bustling morning, but they slowly weighed her down until I found our eyes locked, her body held up by one rigid arm leaning over the countertop. By the time I reached the bullet line, we found ourselves crying over cereal.

Mrs. Alhadeff, as poignant and meaningful as your letter is, I never want to read one similar again. I have no interest in living in a world where parents live with trepidation when they drop their children off at school. I'm tired of planning escape routes and hiding places. Let's live for a future where school and fear aren't so deeply interwoven. Until that day, I will remember your letter and appreciate every breakfast with my mom.

Bibiana Mashamba age 19

*This piece was inspired by a beautiful place
I lived growing up near Lake Victoria.*

Kastamu

The yellow pipe stretched from one village to another,
water from Lake Victoria streaming down from it like a storm.

People washed and dried their clothes
and children like me bathed right there in public like it was one of our games.
Fishermen stretched the nets off their boats
and sang lullabies for the fish to sleep dead in them.

Sometimes when the water was as clear as a crystal,
big ferries would come and children would climb on them.
You could see the fish swimming down on the sand bottom chasing each other,
the sand so orange as if reflecting the sunset.

Introduction:

CREATIVITY STARTER KIT

How can you find your creative voice? How can you develop your creative writing skills? There are many different approaches you can take, from reading books, to taking classes, to finding a partner to write with every week. But we want to get you started, right now.

We have put together a collection of writing experiments, tips and writing samples to offer you what we are calling a “Creativity Starter Kit.”

But before you even start writing, here are some ideas for building an inspiring environment where creativity can soar:

- Kick your shoes off and find a comfortable place to sit and write.
- Free yourself from distractions — no ringing, no dinging!
- Put on some calm music in the background.
- Take a few deep breaths and let go of any stress, worries or expectations.

As you try any of the writing experiments in this chapter, keep the idea of “experimenting” in mind — play with your words and ideas on the page, let go of trying to write something great, and just see what happens. So grab a pen and paper and dive in!

Songs of Freedom

WriteGirl is proud of our collaboration with artist Renée Fox and curator Elizabeta Betinski of bardoLA to create "Songs of Freedom," a mural lining the halls of Terminal 7 at Los Angeles International Airport in 2019 and 2020. The 218-foot mural features 34 haikus written by WriteGirl teens on the themes of freedom and flight. Thank you to the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs for their support of this project.



Bright lights shine at night.
Grids and lines stretching for miles.
This city has bones.

– **Zoe Frohna** age 17

I hear lullabies
of soaring queen and king bees
all searching for home

– **Tiffany Shin** age 19

They fly far from me —
I need to catch my dreams. Can't
let them go again.

– **Daniella Josephy** age 17

Photo by Panic Studio L.A., courtesy Los Angeles World Airports [LAWA]
and City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs [DCA]

I wrote this scene at the WriteGirl Character and Dialogue Workshop with the help of my mentor. I then decided to convert the scene into a story.

Banehag

I squeeze myself up to the light at the end of the tunnel, tapping the pipe with my wand to make it expand. My fur is matted, tangled on my claws. I shimmy my way up until finally, with a loud pop, I emerge from the drain of the sink.

“Ha!” I exclaim, heart pounding after that excursion.

The girl I am to be serving today, Jane, stands before me, brushing her teeth and completely ignoring my presence. I clear my throat. She looks down at me and nods. “Oh, hey,” she says, as if monsters popped out of her sink every day.

“You’re not scared?” I ask, incredulous.

“Nope.” She continues brushing her teeth.

I twiddle with my wand. “You won’t scream? Call your mom?” She shakes her head. “Do you want to know why I’m here?”

Jane shrugs. “Sure.”

“OK!” I rub my hands together, sure that this will surprise her. “Be prepared to meet the extraordinary ... Banehag!” I thrust my wand in the air, specks of light bursting from the end like fireworks.

Alyssa Ho age 14

I wrote this piece in the eighth grade and reworked it at a WriteGirl editing workshop this year where I learned that I was telling the story, not showing it. My dream is to make it into an animated short.

Her Shadow

Left foot. Against my will I follow her footsteps.

Right foot. I copy.

Left foot. Again. Right. Again.

We continue through the streets of downtown. Synchronized. Every move I must follow. Every. Single. One. I'm chained to her feet, forced to follow all her moves. Featureless, noseless, eyeless, jealous. ... Jealous of the face I must stare up at. The face of my torturer, the face I do not have.

My torturer walks underneath an awning over a cafe window. Darkness surrounds me, but something feels different. My limbs flop around freely. ... Freely?! My torturer stretches her arms. I do not copy. Shivers run up and down my body, not of fear but excitement. No longer chained, I jump, twirl and wiggle my fingers. I run around in the darkness, freedom washing over me like a winter breeze.

Thunk.

There it is: The end of the awning's shadow my boundary. My hands feel the walls of the cell I'm stuck in. Darkness remains all around me. No. This must be freedom. The sun rises higher in the sky. My cell shortens and closes in on me. I try to press the closing walls away from me. My torturer's phone rings: We have to get home before sundown. She heads out of the awning's shadow without me. I wiggle my fingers. This isn't freedom.

I squeeze my way toward her, reaching out. She's a balloon and I must catch her before she leaves the ground and sees the world without me. Just as she steps out of the awning's shadow, I catch her foot and chain myself back up. My torturer looks down and smiles.

Yousra Kawsar age 16

*I wanted to use code to write about the
code I see in the world.*

- ●● - ●-●● ●

The world is complex.
A pattern inside a pattern,
a story inside a word,
a song behind a sound.
Most are overlooked,
simplified,
forgotten.

In a world where we strive to simplify everything,
where we look for “quick and easy,”
we blur its true nature.

Only when a wanderer decides to stop and smell the flowers,
stop and watch the birds,
stop and think,

solve,

understand.

Will we truly unlock its -●●● ● ●- ●●- -●--

Denielle Mancera age 17

This was inspired by hearing my dad's stories about him and his cousins living in Colombia with my great-great-grandmother during the summer when they were younger.

Paper Planes

We stumbled into the backyard to be met with thick moist and hot air. I've spent most summers in humid and sticky Colombia with my cousins and grandmother, so I've grown accustomed to this weather. The layer of sweat almost feels like home. Small, thin and quick mosquitos swarmed us as we climbed up onto the roof. The sun was going down within a couple minutes, so if we were going to do this, we had to do it fast.

Andres wasted no time. He sparked the lighter and held the flame against the nose of one of the paper planes. He gracefully pulled his arm back and swiftly jerked it forward, and the paper airplane began to glide. We all watched in awe as the flaming page took flight across the concrete backyard.

I could see into other people's yards. The plane glided above big busy parties where people were dancing and laughing. It danced with the smell of *platano maduro* and *pollo asada* coming from crowded barbecues. It began to descend after passing over an older lady gardening alone as she listened to her radio beside her.

My grandmother came out from under the patio and saw all eight of us standing up there. "*iQuítate de ahí! La cena está lista.*"*

*"Get out of there! Dinner is ready!"

You Strike Me

Violet-hot lightning
falls at my feet. Electricity in my veins, scorch
marks on my sleeve, Grand Canyon-breathless precipice.

You yank me back into your orbit.
You yank me into your ellipse, imperfect.
Limitless lexicon wider than humanity's interstellar
empire, intense as the Battle of Thermopylae,
tug me back like Luna manipulates tides —
they rise and they rise and they rise, then ...

Crash! Just to begin another ascent.

You are an adolescent Library of Alexandria,
pre-catastrophe; dispenser of fun facts for a fee.
I am a compass. Leafy green, magnetized eyes
wreck my trajectory; loose-cannon
You look good tonights
ignite Innocence's
final defeat.

Danielle del Castillo age 18

My mother has always been my hero and my inspiration. I adore her strength and selflessness. This work is in an ode to her, specifically to the subtle ways she shows her love to her family. We have spent more than two years living in different countries.

My Mother's Love Language

My mother's hands were rough and soft. Her eyes were cold and warm, face stern and calm.

She was always strong, never weak — even when she cried. And I've seen her cry. Multiple times.

November 2010: My little brother was being silly and couldn't wait to be born. She cried while on bed rest. She said she hated not doing anything.

When Dad was hospitalized, she didn't cry. She only stayed by his side. He was scared. I was too. She kissed his forehead and smiled at him gently. "You're not going to die. The good ones die first," she joked. She had bad comedic timing.

Mom had surgery multiple times due to her work as a nurse. "Too much work, too little pay," she often complained. Still, she stayed as a nurse, saying she had too much love to give and we were already teens.

The effects of her last surgery also brought her to tears. Pain visited her every time she used the bathroom, though she laughed whenever she came out. I said, "I love you, but you look like a crazy person."

Mom didn't cry on the last day I saw her, when I left to continue my studies in America. Unable to drop me off, she hugged me tight hours before the flight and said, "*Mahal na mahal kita. Mag-ingat ka ha.*" I love you. Take care. Then she left for work.

I video-called her as soon I landed. I remember her eyes were red and puffy. Her nose was too. She said she just woke up.

It's been more than two years since. I'll be seeing her soon. I hope when she cries next time, it will be from happiness at seeing me, her graduate.



No matter what type of writing you do, let your voice shine through.



Never underestimate the power of a girl and her pen!

THIS IS
WriteGirl





WriteGirl is a creative writing and mentoring organization that helps teens discover and express their creative voices. Each season, WriteGirl pairs teen girls with professional women writers for one-on-one mentoring, group creative writing workshops, public readings, publications and college entrance guidance. Girls develop vital writing, public speaking, leadership and critical thinking skills, and the confidence to pursue success.

Founded in Los Angeles by Keren Taylor in 2001, with 30 girls and 30 women writers, WriteGirl now serves more than 500 teens annually through all of its programs. More than 400 journalists, novelists, poets, TV and film writers, songwriters, and more, volunteer their time to mentor teens and lead workshops.

WriteGirl volunteers are employed by prestigious organizations that include HBO, the *Los Angeles Times*, NBCUniversal, Netflix, The Walt Disney Company and Warner Bros. WriteGirl volunteers complete a rigorous training program and collectively contribute a total of 4,000 hours each month.



WRITEGIRL WORKS

WriteGirl provides individual college and financial-aid guidance to every participant through the Bold Futures program. For 18 consecutive years, WriteGirl has maintained a 100% success rate of guiding its Core Mentoring Program seniors to graduate from high school and enroll in college. Many WriteGirl graduates receive scholarships and are the first in their families to attend college.

WriteGirl consistently pursues new ways to serve youth. In 2004, WriteGirl began working with critically at-risk pregnant, parenting and incarcerated teen girls at Los Angeles County Office of Education alternative school sites, including two juvenile detention facilities. Since 2015, WriteGirl has trained dozens of men volunteers as part of the Bold Ink Writers Program to provide programming for incarcerated and systems-impacted boys and co-ed groups. WriteGirl / Bold Ink Writers is a founding member of the Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network, which partners with the Los Angeles County Probation Department and Los Angeles County Arts Commission.

The impact of WriteGirl is long-term. Our mentees and alumnae are inspired to use their voices to create positive change through their published writing and through community performances of their creative work. WriteGirl alums continue to succeed long past college graduation, earning prestigious internships and admittance to graduate programs. They choose professions that will enable them to confidently lead, serve and make a difference in their communities and throughout the world.

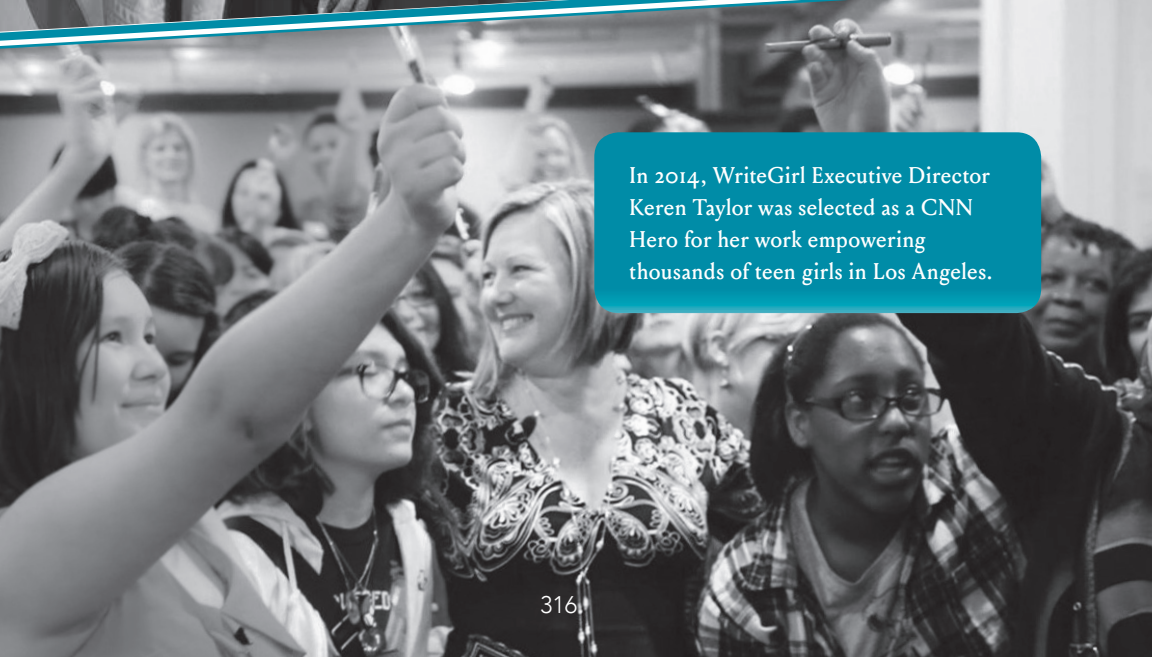
WriteGirl is a project of nonprofit organization Community Partners.



WRITEGIRL RECOGNITION



In November 2013, WriteGirl received the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award, presented by First Lady Michelle Obama. It is the highest national honor awarded to exemplary after-school and out-of-school-time programs from across the country. We were thrilled to visit the White House to meet Michelle Obama and hear about her own personal passion for writing.



In 2014, WriteGirl Executive Director Keren Taylor was selected as a CNN Hero for her work empowering thousands of teen girls in Los Angeles.

Awards for WriteGirl

- 2017 HALO Award presented to WriteGirl and volunteer Clare Sera by The Carl & Roberta Deutsch Foundation
- 2017 Arts & Sciences Cities of Distinction Award, The Phi Beta Kappa Society
- 2016 The Creative Economy innOVATION Grant Award
- 2016 Women of Influence, L.A. Biz
- 2014 Keren Taylor named CNN Hero
- 2013 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award, presented by Michelle Obama
- 2013 Women Making a Difference Award, Los Angeles Business Journal, Finalist
- 2013 SHero Award presented to Allison Deegan, WriteGirl Associate Director
- 2012 Albert R. Rodriguez Civic Legacy Award presented to Keren Taylor
- 2011 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Awards, Finalist
- 2011 Women Making a Difference Award, Los Angeles Business Journal, Finalist
- 2010-11 California Nonprofit of the Year and Medal for Service, presented by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and Maria Shriver
- 2010 Humanitas Prize Philanthropic Partner
- 2010 Annenberg Alchemy Leadership Community Champion, Keren Taylor
- 2010 Ruby Award: Women Helping Women, Soroptimist International
- 2009 California Governor and First Lady's Medal for Service, Nonprofit Leader, Finalist
- 2009 Springfield College School of Human Services Community Hero Award
- 2008 President's Volunteer Call to Service Award
- 2008 Community Woman of Achievement, Hollywood Business and Professional Women
- 2008 Women Making a Difference Award, Los Angeles Business Journal, Finalist
- 2007 Certificate of Appreciation, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa
- 2006 Making a Difference for Women Award, Soroptimist International
- 2006 Certificate of Achievement, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa
- 2006 Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger Commendation Letter
- 2006 Senator Gilbert Cedillo, 2nd District of California, Commendation
- 2006 Gloria Molina, Supervisor, 1st District of California, Commendation
- 2006 Fabian Núñez, Speaker of the Assembly, Certificate of Recognition
- 2006 Congressman Ed Reyes, 1st District of Los Angeles, Commendation
- 2005 Certificate of Appreciation, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa
- 2004 President's Volunteer Call to Service Award

ALUMNAE HIGHLIGHTS



- **Amanda Gorman** attends Harvard on a full scholarship and is a contributor to the *New York Times* student publication *The Edit*. In 2017, she became the inaugural National Youth Poet Laureate and performs her poetry about feminism, race and social activism throughout the country.
- **Jamilah Mena** earned a BA from Dartmouth College and studied Chinese Law at Peking University. She received her JD from UC Hastings College of the Law and is a law clerk at Nixon Peabody, a Global 100 law firm, in San Francisco.
- **Fahiya Rashid** is a UC Irvine graduate pursuing a master's in International Relations at the University of Heidelberg. Prior to entering graduate school, she worked as a policy analyst with the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute in Dhaka.
- **Janel Pineda** attended Dickinson College on a full Posse Foundation scholarship and graduated with a BA in English. She studied literature at the University of Oxford and will pursue a master's in Creative Writing and Education at Goldsmiths, University of London as a 2019 Marshall Scholar. She is an editor and translator for *La Piscucha Magazine* and a WriteGirl mentor.
- **Jeanine Daniels** attended Pitzer College on a full scholarship and graduated with a BA in Media Studies. She is a writer/producer/director, who recently launched her own production company and completed her first feature film. In 2015, she received the African American Women in Cinema Rising Star Award.
- **Glenda Garcia** graduated from Dickinson College on a full Posse Foundation scholarship and taught English as a Fulbright Scholar and AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer. She recently received her JD from Indiana University Maurer School of Law.
- **Lovely Umayam** graduated from Reed College on a full scholarship and earned a master's in Nonproliferation and Terrorism at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies. She is a nuclear security research analyst in Washington, D.C., and the founder of an award-winning web community focused on nuclear policy and popular culture.



- **Gabrielle Gorman** attends UCLA and plans to make films that will create authentic roles for underrepresented people. She has received the Aaron Sorkin Writing Award, and she was a National YoungArts Foundation Finalist for Cinematic Arts and a U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts nominee.
- **Ariel Edwards-Levy** graduated from USC with degrees in Journalism and Political Science. She is a political reporter and director of online polling for *HuffPost*.
- **Jessica Frierson** completed a BA in Radio-TV-Film, magna cum laude from Cal State University, Fullerton and is an emerging filmmaker. She recently completed a short film and has served as a production assistant with several major production companies.
- **Melanie Gonzalez** graduated from San Francisco State with a degree in Latin American Literature, completed a study abroad program in Chile and earned a master's in Journalism from USC. She is a journalist in Los Angeles.
- **Melina Zuniga** is a graduate of Spelman College and earned a medical degree from the Morehouse School of Medicine. She is a psych/med resident at Tulane University.
- **Lily Larsen** attends Santa Monica College and is a Mid City Neighborhood Council Youth Representative. She founded adolescentactivist.com to inform Los Angeles teens about opportunities for community involvement and civic leadership, and plans to run for L.A. City Council in 2020.
- **Miranda Rector** is an undergraduate student at Yale University. Last summer she studied abroad in Singapore, and she works as a health advocate for Planned Parenthood New England.
- **Pamela Avila** graduated from UC Santa Cruz with a BA in English Language and Literature and spent a semester abroad at Trinity College in Dublin. She is a social media manager at *Los Angeles* magazine.
- **Adre Yusi** graduated from Kalamazoo College with a BA in English with Writing Emphasis and a Media Studies Concentration. She studied in Madrid, Spain, and is a copywriter working in Los Angeles.

MENTORING



WriteGirl matches professional women writers with teen girls for one-on-one mentoring in creative writing. Each year, WriteGirl recruits and trains accomplished journalists, novelists, poets, editors, TV and film writers, songwriters, marketing professionals, bloggers, business writers and teachers to be mentors to teens.

Every week, mentoring pairs write at coffee shops, libraries, museums and other creative locations. Pairs write, talk and inspire each other to share their stories and invent new worlds. Mentoring relationships last throughout the duration of a girl's participation in the program (often four to five years), and many mentoring bonds continue long after the girl has gone on to college.

WriteGirl continues to expand its In-Schools / Bold Ink Writers Program to offer mentoring and creative writing workshops for incarcerated and systems-impacted boys and co-ed groups, giving them the tools and support they need to complete an educational foundation and set out on a path to personal and professional success.





WORKSHOPS

WriteGirl strives to deliver an innovative and unique experience. Genre-specific workshops cover songwriting, poetry, screenwriting, fiction, creative nonfiction, memoir, advocacy, journalism and more. Special guests provide insight, writing advice and individual feedback, introducing teens to a variety of writing techniques and writing-related careers.

New curriculum and writing activities are developed for each workshop by a team of writers, teachers, artists, business leaders, youth and alumnae to ensure a completely fresh experience for each mentee throughout her four-to-five-year participation in the program.

Workshops take place with the help of our community partners at some of the most inspiring locations in Los Angeles, including The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, The Autry, The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Writers Guild Theater, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' Linwood Dunn Theater and many others.

WriteGirl workshops provide a creatively enhanced experience for girls to learn about their community and the world beyond through an exploration of history, art and culture, with their pens in hand.



WriteGirl teens read their work at public events all over Los Angeles and discover that telling their stories in front of a live audience is fun and empowering.

Each year, WriteGirl produces several readings at a wide variety of civic events and local venues, including Skylight Books, Los Angeles Public Library and the Writers Guild Theater.

WriteGirl is bringing the magic of a WriteGirl workshop to the public with its first-ever WriteGirl webcast, beginning with a Performance Techniques Workshop in 2019. The webcasts allow for girls and women outside of Los Angeles to learn a variety of writing and performance techniques, and get inspired to explore their creative voices.

Thank you to more than 150 schools and dozens of organizations and individuals in the Los Angeles region who promote WriteGirl to teen girls and refer them to WriteGirl. WriteGirl aims to work with girls who need the mentoring support and intercultural exchange that we offer, and we are grateful for all of the teachers, counselors, principals and community leaders who support WriteGirl.

“ EVERY TIME A GIRL
STANDS UP TO READ,
I AM IN AWE OF
WHAT SHE SAYS. ”

- A WRITEGIRL MENTOR

WRITEGIRL IN THE
COMMUNITY

BOLD FUTURES

WriteGirl develops leaders. The WriteGirl Bold Futures program prepares girls for life beyond high school, weaving together a full slate of college and job-preparedness skill-building, as well as leadership development, to truly give young women the tools, community, confidence and tenacious communication skills they need to thrive in college, the workplace and in life.

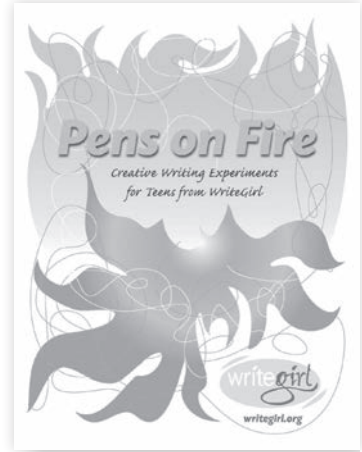
Volunteer members of WriteGirl's Education Support Team guide teens and their parents through the entire college application process, including understanding and pursuing scholarships and financial aid. This unusually intensive coaching is offered in both group as well as one-on-one sessions, giving girls the full support they need to successfully gain access to higher education.

Beyond college, many WriteGirl alumnae are also moving on to advanced studies and professional training, including national and international fellowships such as the Fulbright, and law school, medical school and graduate programs in fields that include creative writing, journalism, international relations, psychology and women's studies.

Bold Futures also offers intensive opportunities for high school seniors and college students. Interns in the WriteGirl office participate in activities designed to build marketable office and communications skills. Interns work alongside WriteGirl staff and volunteers, taking ownership of projects, and receive coaching in accountability, communications, time management, teamwork, goal setting, project planning and implementation, self-care and work/life balance, resume writing and networking.

The WriteGirl chant is "Never underestimate the power of a girl and her pen!" We know that the ability to express oneself can empower a young woman throughout her life.

Since 2001, WriteGirl Publications has been producing award-winning anthologies that showcase the bold voices and imaginative insights of women and girls. Unique in both design and content, WriteGirl anthologies present a wide range of personal stories, poetry, essays, scenes and lyrics. WriteGirl inspires readers to find their own creative voices through innovative writing experiments and writing tips from both teens and their mentors.



Fifteen anthologies from WriteGirl showcase the work of more than 1,000 women and girls. Selections range from serious to whimsical, personal to political, and heartrending to uplifting. WriteGirl anthologies have collectively won 91 national and international book awards!

Pens on Fire, WriteGirl's educator's guide, offers more than 200 inspiring writing experiments for teens and adults. Through the innovative use of props, movement, art, music, textures, scents and even flavors, Pens on Fire offers step-by-step creative writing curricula for teachers and youth leaders.

ForeWord Reviews, School Library Journal, Kirkus, Los Angeles Times Book Review, The Writer Magazine, Ms. Magazine and VOYA have all raved about WriteGirl books.

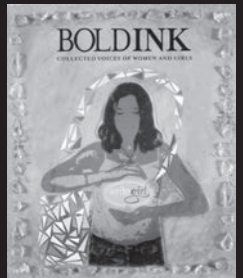
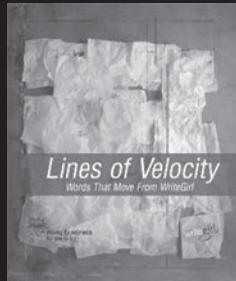
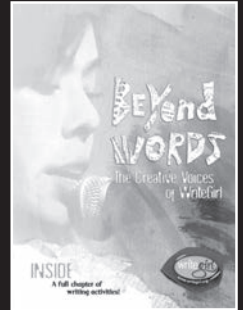
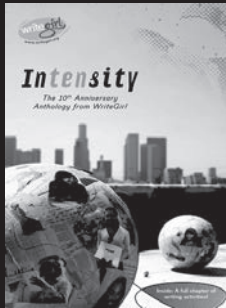
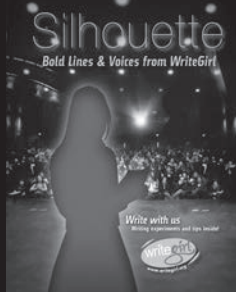
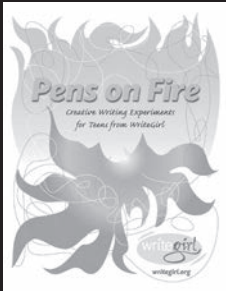
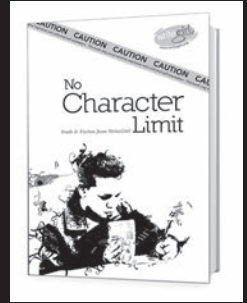
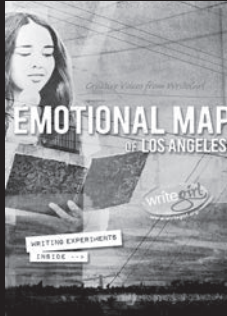
“Captivating and emotional from the first entry to the last . . .”

– *School Library Journal* review for *You Are Here*

“For these girls (and their mentors) writing is a lens, a filter, a way to cut through the nonsense and see the possibilities . . . [*Nothing Held Back*] suggests that reports of literacy's death have been greatly exaggerated, that language remains a transformative force . . .”

– David Ulin, *Los Angeles Times Sunday Book Review* for *Nothing Held Back*

Support WriteGirl. Buy Our Anthologies!



ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT WRITEGIRL PROGRAMS
Order WriteGirl books from WriteGirl.org, Amazon.com or bookstores nationwide.

LIGHTS, CAMERA, WRITEGIRL SPECIAL EVENT



Lights, Camera, WriteGirl! is the annual WriteGirl red carpet benefit where celebrity actors perform monologues and scenes written by WriteGirl teens at our Character & Dialogue Workshop. The workshop is a thrilling chance for teen girls to write, guided by Hollywood screenwriters and playwrights.

The fundraiser includes a silent auction, reception and red carpet interviews. Acclaimed actors bring the girls' writing to life onstage, and a special guest panel of television writers, screenwriters and playwrights offer commentary.

At the 2019 event, hosted by Lauren Graham (*Gilmore Girls*), scenes and monologues written by the girls were performed by Seth Rogen (*Superbad*), Wayne Brady (*Whose Line Is It Anyway?*), Keiko Agena (*Gilmore Girls*), Wendi McLendon-Covey (*The Goldbergs*), Kirby Howell-Baptiste (*Barry*) and Stephanie Katherine Grant (*The Goldbergs*).

A panel of accomplished women screenwriters provided commentary on the scenes. Screenwriters included Clare Sera (*Smallfoot*, *Blended*), Josann McGibbon (*Descendants*), Liz Kruger (*Salvation*), Heather Hach Hearne (*Freaky Friday*), Nkechi Okoro Carroll (*Bones*), Lisa Cholodenko (*The Kids Are All Right*) and Lauren Miller Rogen (*Like Father*).

WriteGirl is grateful to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for hosting Lights, Camera, WriteGirl! at the Linwood Dunn Theater in Hollywood.

2019 Lights, Camera, WriteGirl! Host Committee: Clare Sera, Jane Anderson, Barbara Benedek, Allison Deegan, Grainne Godfree, Lauren Graham, Heather Hach Hearne, Jennifer Hoppe, Erica Shelton Kodish, Jenji Kohan, Liz Kruger, Lauren Levine, Josann McGibbon, Lisa McQuillan, Nancy Meyers, Melissa Rosenberg and Robin Swicord.

Thank you to our sponsors: The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, ICM Partners, HBO, CAA, Sony Pictures WAVE, Sprinkles, Dream Team Directors, Alligator Pear Catering and Hansen, Jacobson, Teller, Hoberman, Newman, Warren, Richman, Rush and Kaller & Gellman, LLP.



“ LOOK OUT, MALE-DOMINATED HOLLYWOOD. GIRL SCREENWRITERS ARE COMING FOR YOUR JOBS! ”

– A WRITEGIRL MENTOR





**“ WRITEGIRL CHANGED
MY LIFE. I HAVE GROWN
IN MY CONFIDENCE,
WRITING ABILITY
AND MY PASSION
FOR STORYTELLING. ”**

– A WRITEGIRL ALUM

**“ I LIKE HOW YOU TRULY
HAVE NO LIMITS. YOU
HAVE THE ABILITY
TO THINK WHAT YOU
WANT, WRITE WHAT
YOU WANT AND JUST
BE WHO YOU WANT. ”**

– A WRITEGIRL TEEN



WRITEGIRL LEADERSHIP

ops together



THE WRITEGIRL "ENGINE"

Executive Director

Keren Taylor

Associate Director

Allison Deegan

Managing Director

Katie Geyer

Curriculum Director

Kirsten Giles

Development Associate

Cindy Collins

College Program Manager

Leslie Awender

Administrative Manager

Megan Bennett

Bold Ink Program Specialist

Hazel Rose

In-Schools Program Associate

Stevie Taylor

Bold Ink Writers Workshop Leaders

Natalie Meadors

Kerry McPherson

Nancy Murphy

Jaquita Ta'le

Book Manager

Annlee Ellingson

Event Assistants

Beka Badila

Andrea Esparza

Alex McCale

Lindsay Mendoza

Sally Mercedes

Tech Support

Sable Cantus

Event Support

Pete Hiatt / Deluxe Plants

Website, Branding, Book Design, Graphics

Sara Apelkvist, Isabelle Carasso, Nathalie Gallmeier, Juliana Sankaran-Felix

Photography/Videography

Sarah Anderson, Bayou Bennett, Patrick Burton, Stacy Conner, Saliha Crespo, Vanessa Crocini, Dream Team Directors, Erin Dorothy Photos, Luke Grigg at Circle3Productions, Thomas Hargis, Katherine Leon, Morgan Lieberman, Daniel Lir, Mitch Maher, Daniela Mayock, Molly Stinchfield Photography, Nicole Ortega, Morgan Pirkle, Jackie Rodman, Sarah Rosemann, Miranda Suess, Sophie Webb

WRITEGIRL BOARD

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County Office of Education

Marc Hernandez: Realtor, Compass Real Estate

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Keren Taylor: Founder and Executive Director, WriteGirl

Sydney Zhang: Senior Portfolio Control Analyst, Capital Group

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Diane Siegel: Curator of Exhibits and Special Programs, Sierra Madre Playhouse

“ I WAS TOLD TO WRITE
FROM MY HEART BECAUSE
NO ONE ELSE SEES
THE WORLD LIKE I DO. ”

– A WRITEGIRL TEEN

PARTNERSHIPS



We are grateful for inspiring event locations for our creative writing workshops and special events: The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, The Armory Center for the Arts, The Autry Museum of the American West, The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA, GenHERation Discovery Days, Glendale Downtown Central Library, The GRAMMY Recording Academy, The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, The Japanese American National Museum, LA84 Foundation, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The National Center for the Preservation of Democracy, The Secret Society of the Sisterhood, USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, Warner Bros., Whitmore Rare Books and the Writers Guild Theater.

Special thanks to The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens for their generous support of workshops and events. Our girls and volunteers gain tremendous inspiration from the art, gardens, staff and special events. The Huntington is an oasis in the city, and we are grateful to bring our members to write in this unique environment.

Our girls, volunteers and alumnae have benefited greatly from special events and opportunities in the community. Thank you to ABC7, Amazon Studios, Association of Writers & Writing Programs Conference & Bookfair, Elizabeta Betinski and bardola, City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, Exposition Review, Renée Fox, Fox Gives, Louise Goffin, Catherine Hardwicke and Sony Pictures, Inner Voice Artists and YouthMundus, Invest in Youth Coalition, Kung Fu Monkey Productions, L.A. Youth Creativity Summit, Michelle Lewis, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, Mattel, Meltdown Comics, Neptunian Woman's Club, Obama Foundation, Pasadena Festival of Women Authors, Pollen Pictures, Kim Purcell, Russia Mentor Network, Sony Pictures WAVE, Soroptimist International of Glendale, State Farm Neighborhood Sessions with iHeartRadio featuring Lindsey Stirling, TEDxPasadena, Tupperware Party Improv, Urban Word's Los Angeles Youth Poet Laureate program, Warner Bros., Women of Warner and Women's March Los Angeles.

In August 2018, **the Obama Foundation's Community Leadership Corps** invited WriteGirl / Bold Ink Writers to work with 300 teens and young adults in Phoenix, Chicago and Columbia, S.C. WriteGirl staff and two alumnae helped corps members prepare and present community action plans and proposals to benefit their home communities. WriteGirl hosted a musical showcase at the end of each three-day event, featuring local musicians and songs written by WriteGirl team members using words and phrases from program participants. WriteGirl also participated in the 2018 Obama Foundation Summit in Chicago, helping coach program finalists to persist in their projects.

All of our individual donors who have so generously contributed to help WriteGirl grow and help more teen girls each year.

All of WriteGirl's mentors and volunteers for mentoring teen girls as well as contributing professional services, including strategic planning, public relations, event coordination, mentoring management, training and curriculum development, catering, financial management and administrative assistance.

The growing WriteGirl alumnae network for volunteering, speaking at events and continuing to inspire our young members.

Board Members for their support and guidance on strategy, fundraising, communications and development of community partnerships.

Civic Leaders: The Honorable Mayor Eric Garcetti, Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey, Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, California State Senator Holly J. Mitchell and Los Angeles City Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson for their support and acknowledgement of WriteGirl's contributions to the community.

Sara Apelkvist for design and branding strategy, including development of WriteGirl's logo, website, press kit, stationery, book design, promotional materials and ongoing support.

Writing Journals:

Amazon Studios, Baron Fig, Brush Dance, Cardtorial, Crane & Co., Compendium Inc., Field Notes, Girl of All Work, Hammerpress, International Arrivals, Knock Knock, Leuchtturm1917, May Designs, Public Supply, Rag & Bone, Rhodia, Rifle Paper Co., Snowfall Productions, Studio C

Gift Books for our Members:

Adaptive Studios, *The Busy Woman's Guide to Writing a World-Changing Book* by Cynthia Morris, *Dawn of Spies* by Andrew Lane, *The Female Lead* by Edwina Dunn, Inner Flower Child Books, *Inspired* by Susan Schaefer Bernardo, *Tarot* by Marissa Kennerson

Food, Snacks and Beverages at WriteGirl Workshops and Special Events:

18 Rabbits, 85°C Bakery Cafe, Alcove Cafe & Bakery, Arcade Coffee Roasters, Bai, Baby Bea's Bakeshop, Bagel Broker, Big Sugar Bakeshop, BoBo's, Border Grill, Boxed Water, Cafe Dulce, Cake Girl, Califia Farms, Cocomels, Cucina & Amore, DeLuscious Cookies & Milk, Drink Simple, Equal Exchange, Good Heart Catering, Heath & Lejeune, Hint Water, Hippeas, Kettle Glazed Doughnuts, KIND, Lagunitas Brewing Company, Lucky Boy, Madkins Catering, McCue Communications, Milk Jar Cookies, Nairn's, Natierra, Nothing Bundt Cakes, Oatmega, Purgatory Pizza, Rhythm Superfoods, Saffron Road, Shakey's Pizza, Spindrift, Spitz, Stash Tea, Stella Barra Pizzeria, St. Felix Hollywood, Three Weavers Brewing Company, True Food Kitchen, Uncle Paulie's Deli, Vegan Rob's, Verve Coffee Roasters, Vinovore, VOCO, Waiakea, Weird Wave Coffee Brewers

Alligator Pear Catering and Sprinkles for delectable food for our annual Lights, Camera, WriteGirl! benefit.

Panda Cares/Panda Express for their longtime support of our annual Character & Dialogue Workshop by providing volunteers and delicious food for our members.

Sharky's Woodfired Mexican Grill for amazing food for our annual Season-End Celebration.

Gifts for Girls, Members & Special Events:

Algenist, Ample Hills Creamery, Ariel Cannon Photography, ban.do, *Big Mouth* (Netflix), Blue Q, Credo Beauty, The Duchess Yacht Charter Service, Esqueleto, FACE Stockholm, Fourth & Heart, Greenbar Distillery, Hurray! Balm, Kikkerland, Nick Kroll, LA Opera, Kimpton La Peer Hotel, *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*, Los Angeles Film Critics Association, Lululemon, Lush, Mad Hippie, NYX Professional Makeup, OOLY, Phyto USA, Playtone/Tom Hanks, Ping Identity, Poketa, PopSockets, Puracy, Roclord Studio, Sakura Color Products of America, SmartyPants Vitamins, Soko Glam, Solmate Socks, Taupe Coat, Toca Madera, UCLA Extension, Warner Bros., Whitmore Rare Books, Yes To, Yogi Tea, Youth To The People

Printing and Copy Services: Chromatic Inc. Lithographers, FedEx Office, LSC Communications

Special thanks to the dozens of generous companies and individuals who donated items for our silent auctions and raffles!



**“ THANK YOU FOR ALL OF THE
HARD WORK YOU PUT INTO
THESE YOUNG GIRLS. I HAVE
WATCHED MY DAUGHTER
BLOSSOM INTO A MATURE,
RESPONSIBLE, SMART AND
INDEPENDENT YOUNG LADY.
YOU SHOWED MY DAUGHTER
THE WAY. FOR THAT, I WILL
FOREVER BE GRATEFUL. ”**

- A WRITEGIRL PARENT



ABOUT THE EDITORS

Keren Taylor, WriteGirl Executive Director, has been a community leader for two decades. In 2001, she founded WriteGirl with the idea of leveraging the skills of women writers to inspire teen girls. Keren has overseen WriteGirl's expansion into a thriving community of women and teen writers and an organization that helps hundreds of Los Angeles girls annually. In November 2013, WriteGirl was honored by First Lady Michelle Obama with the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award, the highest national honor awarded to exemplary after-school and out-of-school-time programs from across the country. Keren served as a Community Champion and facilitator for the Annenberg Foundation's Alchemy Program, helping guide nonprofit leaders to organizational success. In 2014, Keren was selected as a CNN Hero, recognizing her efforts to leverage the professional skills of women writers to help youth. In 2018, Keren was invited to serve as a member of the Barbie Global Advisory Council to help shape Mattel Inc.'s "Evolution of Barbie." Keren serves on the board of the Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network (AIYN) and leads WriteGirl's work with incarcerated and systems-impacted teens as a founding member organization of AIYN. Working with a team of editors and designers, Keren has directed the production of more than two dozen anthologies of writing by teen girls and their mentors. To date, WriteGirl publications have been awarded 91 national and international book awards. Passionate about helping women and girls, Keren is a frequent speaker at conferences and book festivals nationwide. Keren is an assemblage artist and mosaicist. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in International Relations from the University of British Columbia, a Piano Performance Degree from the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto, and a Diploma from the American Music and Dramatic Academy, New York City.



Allison Deegan, EdD, is a screenwriter who serves as WriteGirl’s Associate Director and as a member of the Advisory Board. In addition, she has served as an Associate Editor on all of WriteGirl’s award-winning anthologies. She has extensive expertise in supporting incoming and current college and graduate school students, managing youth and writing programs, and supporting creativity and public policy. She is a fiscal and policy administrator with the Los Angeles County Office of Education and an adjunct professor in graduate programs at Cal State Long Beach and Trident University, as well as a private admissions consultant. She holds a BS from Syracuse University, an MFA from the Institute of American Indian Arts, an MPA in Public Policy from California State University, Long Beach, and an EdD in Educational Leadership, also from CSULB.

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Never underestimate the power of a girl and her pen.



Learning in the studio
A I don't know what to write
B I don't know any lyrics to tell you what
~~the future is like~~
~~the future is like~~
A My future in love is a bright
B I hope you're ready for the changes
I don't know what to write
The world's changing
I hope you're willing
to get together
I'm not putting on
my steps for
use and I have
compromised
for I have
and to be happy

*Always be
bold and
believe in
yourself.*

