

WRITEGIRL PRESS KIT



About WriteGirl

Founded in 2001, WriteGirl is a nationally-recognized creative writing and mentoring organization serving more than 500 teens annually, mainly from LA's high-density neighborhoods. WriteGirl envisions a world where all teens live, write, and speak boldly as they become inspiring, transformative leaders, driven to effect positive change in their communities. Now in its 23rd season, WriteGirl has maintained a 100 percent success rate in helping its seniors not only graduate from high school, but also enroll in college. WriteGirl received national attention in 2021 when WriteGirl alum Amanda Gorman performed her poetry at the Biden-Harris Inauguration. In 2013, WriteGirl was honored by First Lady Michelle Obama with the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award – an initiative of the President's Committee on the Arts & the Humanities and the highest national honor awarded to exemplary out-of-school time programs.

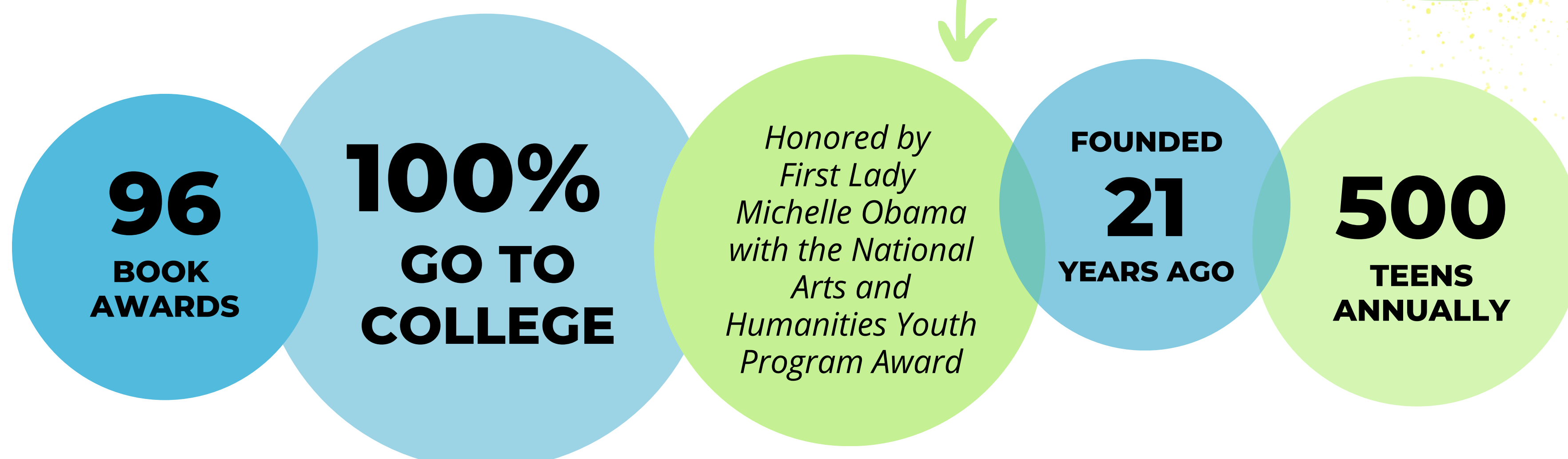
WriteGirl also works with boys and co-ed groups under the name "Bold Ink Writers." As a founding member of the Arts for Healing and Justice Network (AHJN), Bold Ink Writers brings creative writing workshops and mentors to youth who are incarcerated or systems-involved.

Primary Press Contact:

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WriteGirl Media Room:

<https://www.writegirl.org/press>





MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES & KEY LINKS



Media Opportunities:

- Coverage of WriteGirl events, including workshops, public readings and special events (Advanced notice required, as some events are not open to media.)
 - See calendar of events at <https://www.writegirl.org/calendar>
- Profiles of WriteGirl leadership, WriteGirl alums and special guests (pending availability)
- Press copies of WriteGirl publications
- Expert sources on topics including girls education, creative writing, curriculum development, arts education and girls' empowerment.

Important Information for Reporters:

- WriteGirl is one word, with a capital "W" and a capital "G"
- WriteGirl prefers to omit the last name of our teens under the age of 18 when they are interviewed by the press. Any exceptions require advance approval by WriteGirl management.
- Photos and other materials available upon request.

Social Media:

Twitter: @WriteGirlLA

Instagram: @WriteGirlGlobal

Facebook: [Facebook.com/WriteGirlOrganization](https://www.facebook.com/WriteGirlOrganization)

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/writegirl/>

Website Pages:

WriteGirl website: www.writegirl.org

Donate page: www.writegirl.org/donate

Past Media Coverage: www.writegirl.org/media-coverage

Past Press Releases: www.writegirl.org/press

Awards: www.writegirl.org/awards-for-writegirl

Books: www.writegirl.org/publications

[Link to WriteGirl Logos for download](#)



OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS



Core Mentoring Program

Monthly Writing Workshops

Two hundred women and girls gather one Saturday a month online for creative writing workshops focusing on specific genres including poetry, screenwriting, journalism, songwriting and more. Workshops include special guests, interactive activities and one-on-one mentoring.

Public Readings

WriteGirl teens read their creative writing at public readings, book festivals, writing conferences and an end-of-season event for members, parents and guests.

Publications

WriteGirl has published 15 award-winning anthologies that showcase the work of WriteGirl members.

Mentoring/Membership

WriteGirl matches and supports more than 100 mentee/mentor pairs each season, providing intensive guidance for weekly mentors through periodic mentoring roundtables and regular communication. WriteGirl mentors are writing professionals working in a wide range of careers, who complete in-depth screening and training in order to be highly effective mentors to our teens.

Bold Futures

The WriteGirl Bold Futures Program provides intensive, individualized college entrance guidance for participants and prepares girls for life beyond high school through internships, career awareness activities and a growing alumnae support network. WriteGirl has maintained a 100% college enrollment rate for all Core Mentoring Program participants.

Bold Ink Writers Program

The WriteGirl Bold Ink Writers Program provides creative writing workshops to approximately 200 co-ed youth, including pregnant or parenting teens, and teens who are incarcerated and/or system-impacted at alternative schools, juvenile detention facilities and community centers.

Teacher Training

WriteGirl offers professional development workshops for teachers and youth leaders to provide creative writing, art and self-care activities that spark creativity and cultivate wellness for teens.

All WriteGirl programming is currently being held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



WRITEGIRL IMPACT



WriteGirl Mission & Vision

WriteGirl spotlights the power of a girl and her pen. Our mission is to promote creativity and self-expression to empower girls, within a community of women writers. WriteGirl is a nationally-recognized creative writing and mentoring organization serving more than 500 underserved teen girls annually, mainly from LA's high-density, low-income neighborhoods. WriteGirl envisions a world where girls live, write and speak boldly as they become inspiring, transformative leaders, driven to effect positive change in their communities.

Population Served

WriteGirl serves 500 youth annually (ages 13 - 18), primarily underserved, low-income teens who identify as BIPOC and/or part of the LGBTQIA+ community. WriteGirl members are anyone who identifies as woman, girl, non-binary or femme. No matter where they are on their journey and exploration of personal identity, all are welcome.

Impact

The challenges facing young girls are enormous. WriteGirl participants come from primarily high-density schools and low-income neighborhoods with limited resources in Los Angeles and beyond. Many face intense challenges, such as unstable home environments, violence, clinical depression, suicide attempts and homelessness. 1 in 4 teen girls in California will become pregnant, and 1 in 6 teens in the LA Unified School District will never graduate. WriteGirl is a counterbalance in the lives of its mentees, providing a sanctuary for these girls to work one-on-one with professional women writers and share their experiences, ideas and dreams through creative writing.

Alum Highlights



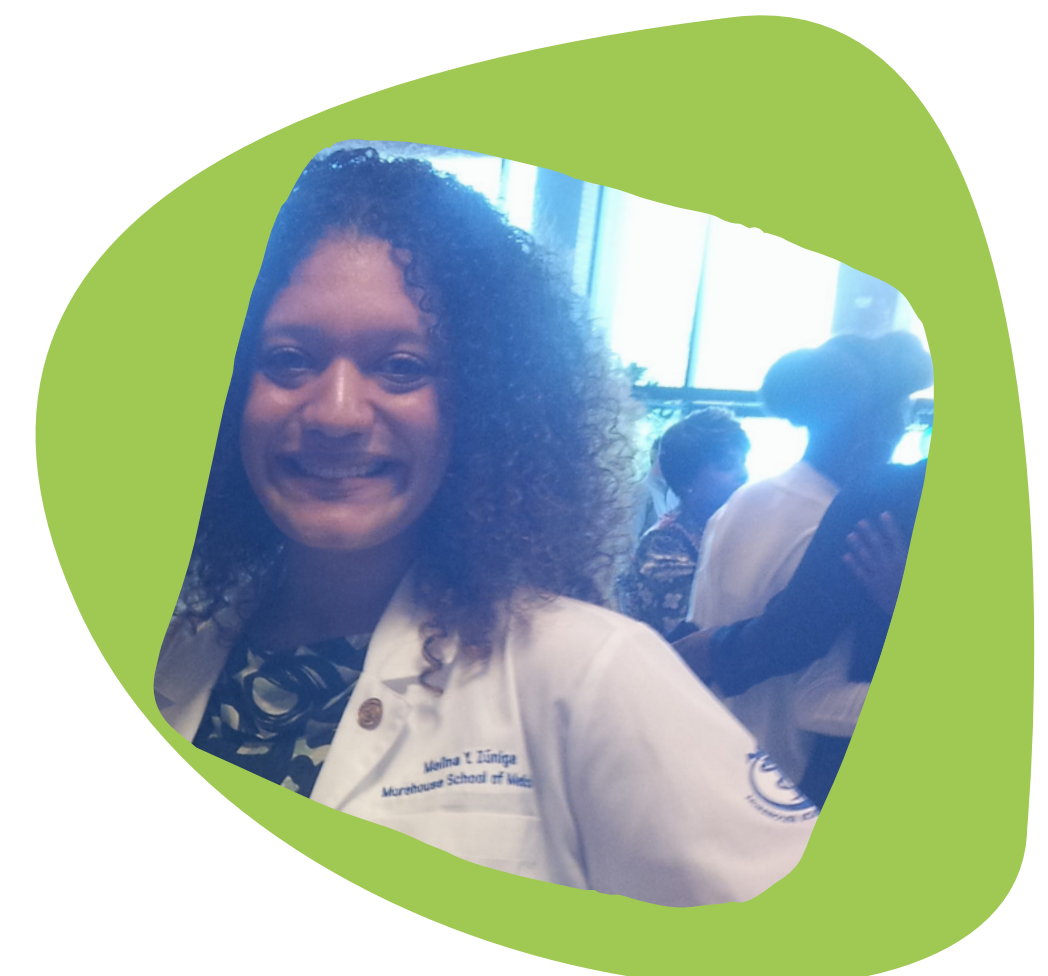
Dartmouth graduate Jamilah Mena is working as a staff attorney for Kids in Need of Defense, in Seattle, WA.



Award-winning poet Janel Pineda is the founding editor of *La Piscucha Magazine* and received a Master's in Creative Writing and Education at Goldsmiths, University of London as a Marshall Scholar.



Filmmaker Jeanine Daniels recently launched her own production company and received the 2019-2020 Humanitas New Voices prize.



Melina Zuniga, MD, graduated from Spelman College-Atlanta and the Morehouse School of Medicine. She recently completed her residency in Psych/Med at Tulane University and is a doctor in New Orleans.



Amanda Gorman at a WriteGirl workshop as a teen



WriteGirl alum and Harvard graduate, Amanda Gorman, performed her poem “The Hill We Climb” at the 2021 US Presidential Inauguration. She is the youngest inaugural poet in U.S. history and is the author of three books.

AMANDA GORMAN

WRITEGIRL ALUM

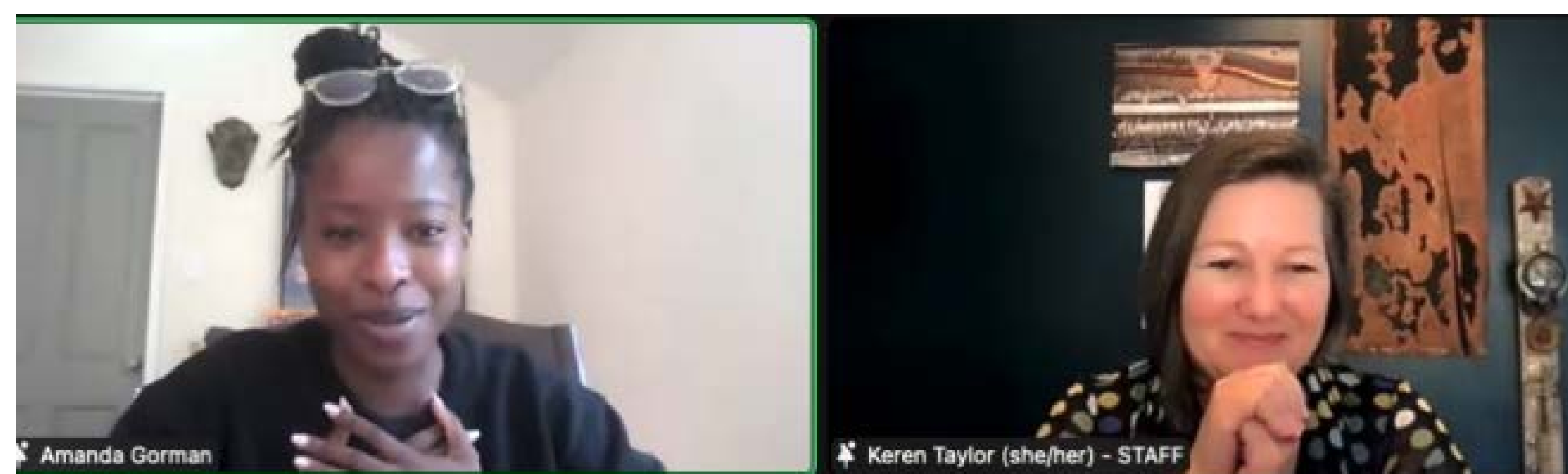
Even before Amanda Gorman graced the steps of the Capitol in January 2021, she always had a passion for writing. Born and raised in Los Angeles, she first joined WriteGirl at age 14 and, with the help of WriteGirl workshops and one-on-one mentoring from several WriteGirl mentors, she gained the confidence she needed to share her words with the world.

"My hands clammed up as I took the stage, my purple flower headband wrapped around my teeny weeny afro. The first time I read my writing at a WriteGirl workshop was also the first time I'd ever read my work in front of a large audience. Ever. And per usual, my fourteen-year-old self was nervous to recite my poetry due to my speech impediment. My words could look elegant on a page but seemed to lose their eloquence in my mouth. Nevertheless I grabbed the mic, heartened by the unconditional, supportive applause you'll always find at WriteGirl ... After that I was officially hooked on performing my poetry aloud as much as I was drawn to seeing it in print." – **Amanda Gorman in WriteGirl's 2017 anthology *Sound Generation***

[View the press release about Amanda Gorman's participation in WriteGirl here.](#)

“WriteGirl has been pivotal in my life. It’s been thanks to their support that I’ve been able to chase my dreams as a writer.”

– Amanda Gorman,
WriteGirl Alum



Amanda Gorman made a surprise appearance at the WriteGirl Poetry Workshop in January 2022





WRITEGIRL PUBLICATIONS

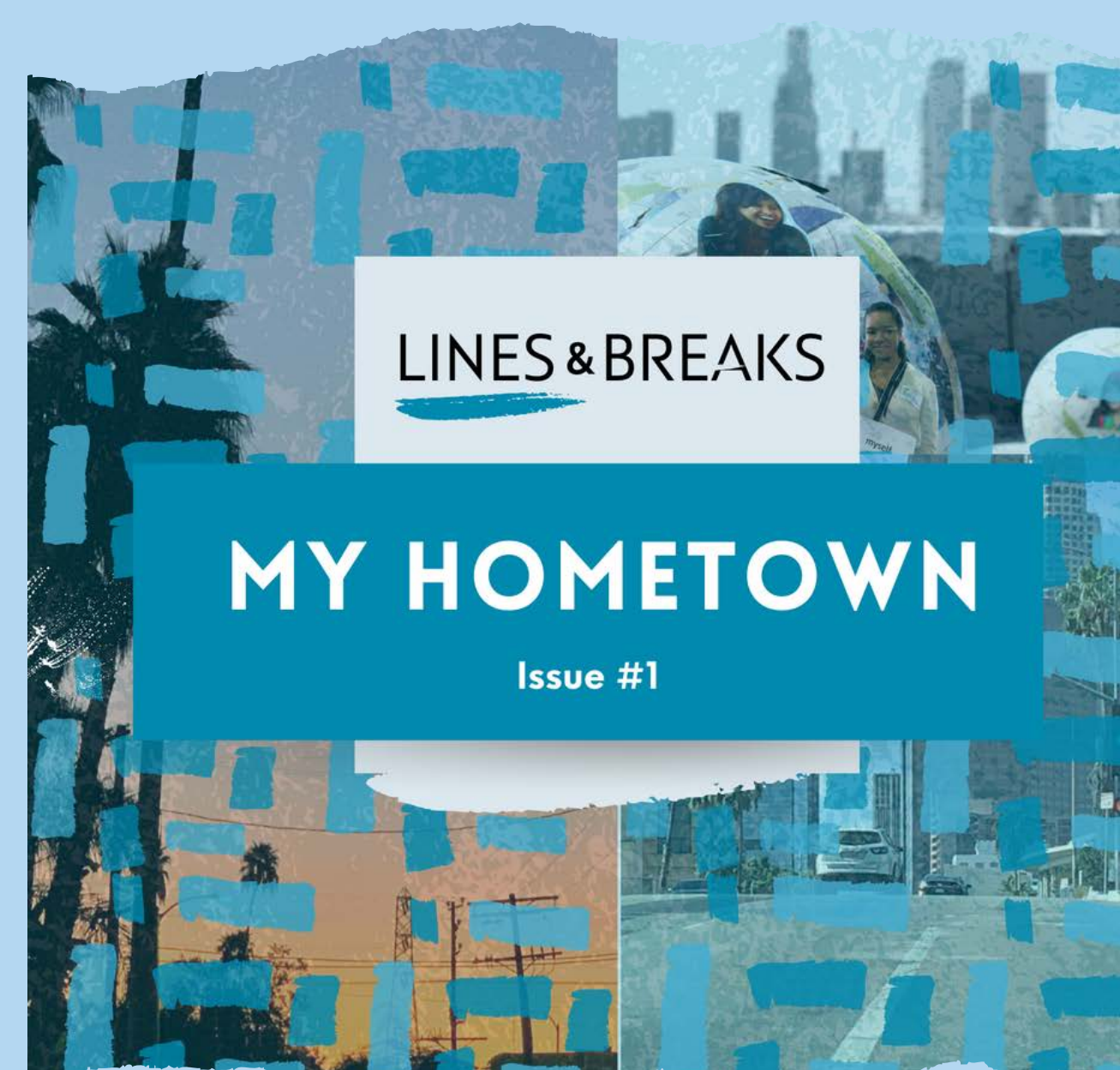


Since 2001, WriteGirl Publications has produced 35 anthologies that showcase the bold voices and imaginative insights of women, girls and nonbinary youth. Unique in both design and content, WriteGirl anthologies present a wide range of personal stories, poetry, essays, scenes and lyrics.

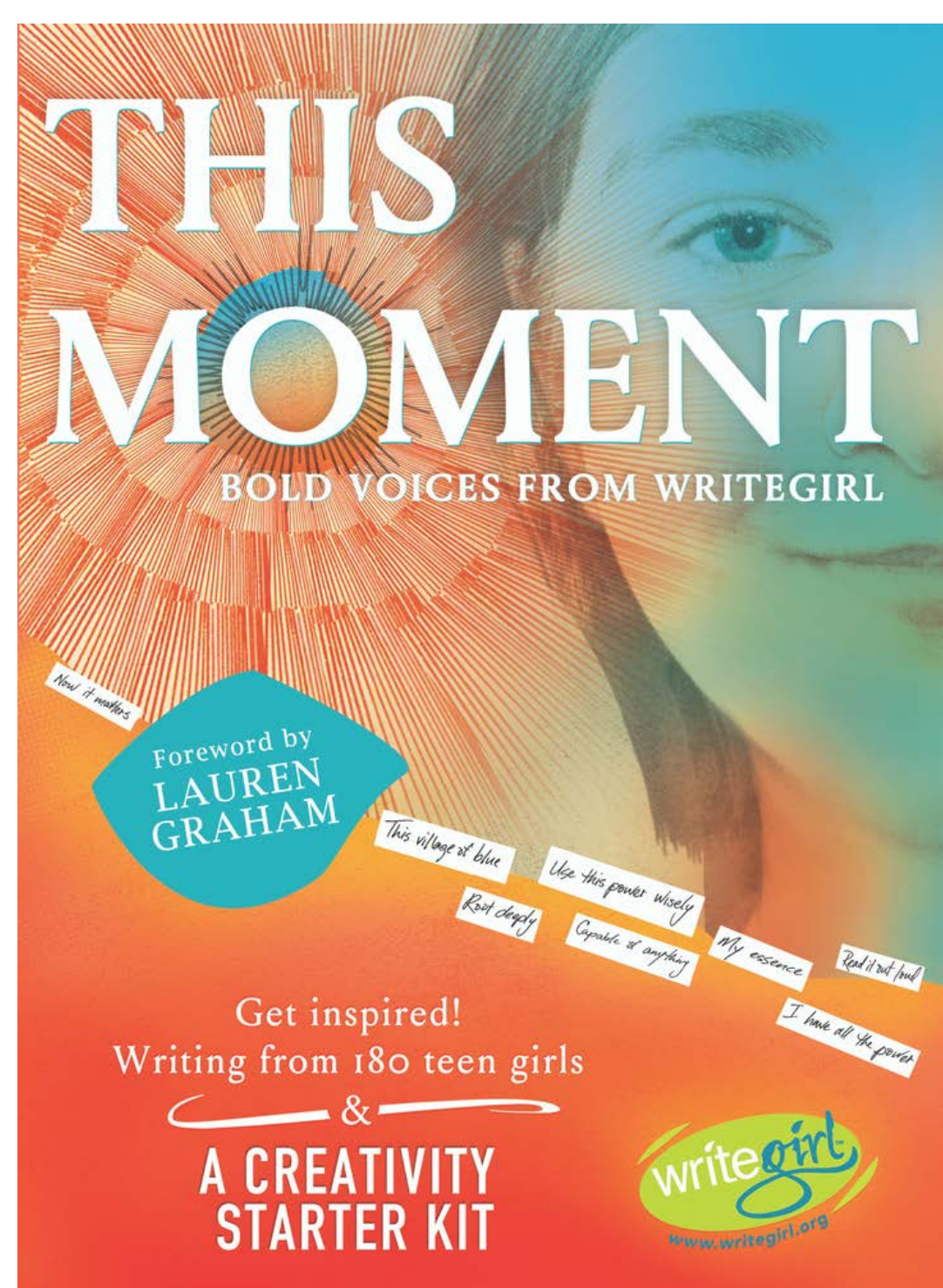
WriteGirl's critically-acclaimed anthologies have received 96 national and international book awards.

Lines & Breaks: An Online Literary Journal from WriteGirl

In 2021, WriteGirl launched its first online literary journal, *Lines & Breaks*, an online showcase of WriteGirl teens' writing from workshops and mentorships. *Lines & Breaks* features writing from a diverse range of ages, genres and styles on themes of hopes and fears, loves and losses, snacks and boy bands. Inside the pages of every issue, you will also find the creative work of alums of the WriteGirl program and special guest writers.



Read *Lines & Breaks* at <https://linesandbreaks.org>



This Moment: Bold Voices from WriteGirl

LATEST ANTHOLOGY FROM WRITEGIRL
FOREWORD BY ACTOR AND BESTSELLING AUTHOR LAUREN GRAHAM (GILMORE GIRLS)

In *This Moment*, 180 teens share stories, poems, memoirs, scripts and songs that inspire reflection and ignite action. They write about their hopes and fears, loves and losses, *amigas* and *pan dulce*, as they navigate a challenging present and uncertain future with determination and grace. Published in November 2019.

Learn more at <https://www.writegirl.org/publications>



IN THEIR WORDS



**Excerpt of the poem "Classic Koreatown"
by Jane, age 16**

From Lines & Breaks: An Online Literary Journal From WriteGirl

Koreatown, Los Angeles,
Commonwealth Ave.
Where I stand with my neighbors
shoulder-to-shoulder.
"You've grown so much,"
a smile here.
"Have a good day,"
a nod there.
Koreatown.
The gift
of keeping my mother language alive,
of walking through the perfume of 김치 (kimchi),
every day,
without fail.
A town filled with golden memories.
City of Angels,
my Koreatown.



ABOUT KEREN TAYLOR



Meet Keren Taylor WriteGirl Founder & Executive Director

WriteGirl Executive Director, Keren Taylor, founded WriteGirl in 2001. An afterschool program director and trainer for more than 25 years, Keren has led WriteGirl's expansion into a thriving community that helps hundreds of youth annually.

In 2013, WriteGirl received the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award, the highest national honor awarded to exemplary after-school programs. Under Keren's direction, WriteGirl has published 35 anthologies of youth writing, and in 2020, Keren received the **Los Angeles Times Innovator's Award**, "spotlighting efforts to bring books, publishing and storytelling into the future."

Keren is a 2014 **CNN Hero** and has received the Humanitas Prize, the President's Volunteer Call to Service Award and commendations from the Los Angeles mayor's office. WriteGirl is a founding member organization of the Arts for Healing and Justice Network (formerly Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network) for which Keren has served as a board member.

Keren 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, NYC.





WRITEGIRL IN THE NEWS



Media Highlights

The Kelly Clarkson Show

WriteGirl Empowers Young Women To Find Their Voice Through Professional Writing Mentorships

CNN

"Finding magic in mentorship: How one CNN Hero inspired thousands of young women to write their own success stories"

USA Today

"Amanda Gorman's debut poetry collection 'Call Us What We Carry' inspires fellow WriteGirls"

National Geographic

"'Tell Your Story': The Power of Poetry to Help Kids Cope"

Fox 11

Amanda Gorman and WriteGirl coverage

Good Morning America

Lauren Graham's advice to young female writers at WriteGirl fundraiser

Hollywood Reporter

"Never Underestimate the Power of a Girl and Her Pen"

Los Angeles Times

"Meet Amanda Gorman's mentors: The teachers who nurtured the inauguration poet"

Variety

"Fox Teams Up With Creative Mentoring Organization WriteGirl to Celebrate Women's History Month"

KCET

"Mentoring the Next Generation of L.A. Writers"

89.3 KPCC

"Lights, Camera, WriteGirl! event brings stories of at-risk teens to life on stage"

Los Angeles Review of Books

"WriteGirl Has My Heart: A Conversation with Keren Taylor"