



Write the Future 2019 Update

Because of your commitment to artistic education for all, writers of all ages and backgrounds are finding more support and community here.

Thank you for your generous support.

ACCESS • EXCELLENCE • YOUTH

ACCESS

Write Down the Street - a sense of belonging.

GrubStreet continues to provide free community-based creative writing classes for adults in Roxbury, East Boston, and Mattapan in partnership with the Boston Public Library. In 2018, 432 adults participated in these classes. As instructor Candace McDuffie says, "The most rewarding thing about being an instructor for Write Down the Street is not just hearing students share their brave and heart-wrenching stories, but watching them dig deeper into who they are. They range in age



GrubStreet supports writers of color who may not have access to the expertise of professional writers nor the psychic and physical space to write and receive feedback. This includes their free outreach classes to Boston neighborhoods through public libraries, its writers of color group, and the support of a caring and skilled staff.

–**Cynthia Yee**, donor, student, writer



and ethnicity and gender, but are united in the power of the human experience. We don't just talk about craft and plot development and structure, we talk about encounters that shaped the people we have become. I've had a student write a love letter to a childhood friend she never planned to send. I had one share a story about the moment she found out her father died. Another student wrote about her uphill battle with multiple sclerosis.

Write Down the Street is not just about cultivating a writing community, it's about having a sense of belonging. A place where you can feel vulnerable and empowered at the same time."

Boston Writers of Color Group.

The Boston Writers of Color Group, supported by GrubStreet, now has over 1,000 members. The group hosts monthly activities to promote the work of writers of color and provide mentorship. In the past year, BWOC hosted two Submit-a-Thons (in which writers submit pieces for publication and get custom advice), author visits, a day-long writing retreat, an informational session on MFA programs, a public open mic, and social gatherings. Members actively share new fellowships, contests, author events, jobs, articles, and publication news with one another.



PROFILE

Josie Figueroa

"I have to get back to my passion, what I'm meant to do"

Eight years ago, Josie Figueroa was working at a job she felt had no future when she found herself wanting more support for her writing. That spring, she took her first GrubStreet class, Jumpstart Your Writing - Creative Nonfiction with Jennifer De Leon. She credits this experience with changing her life and kindling her desire to keep writing.

Over time, Josie took more classes, attended the Muse Conference at her instructor's encouragement, as well as the free Wednesday lunch series and Write Down the Street workshops and readings in her neighborhood. She



Brookview House homeless program partnership.

GrubStreet deepened our programming with the teens at Brookview House over the past year. We held 34 writing classes for homeless teens, up from 12 classes in 2017. Our instructors report on the healing and increase in confidence that many of the youth experienced through sharing and owning their own stories. Steady engagement also helps the teens to bond more closely with each other and to develop a supportive community that can aid with their next steps in life. Last year, this program reached 260 women and teens.

Scholarships break down barriers.

In 2018, with your support, we offered 327 scholarships to teens and adults, for a total of \$125,000, to attend classes and the Muse and the Marketplace Conference. In 2019, we plan to provide at least \$150,000 in scholarships to ensure that students with economic need are able to participate in GrubStreet's programming.

remembers thinking, "This is it. I have to get back to my passion and what I'm supposed to do, what I am meant to do. I love writing, talking about writing, and being vibrant with this work. This experience with GrubStreet kickstarted a whole life change for me. It's like GrubStreet kind of pushed and I just went... Poof! Forward!"

Josie will enter Lesley University this fall to complete her undergraduate degree in English and pursue a master's degree in Education. She plans to teach creative writing and return to GrubStreet as an instructor. She says, **"I want the opportunity to teach creative writing to people from all walks of life, and to say to them 'This is not hard. You can tell your story.'"**

YOUTH

Young Adult Writers Program reaching more low-income teens and youth of color.

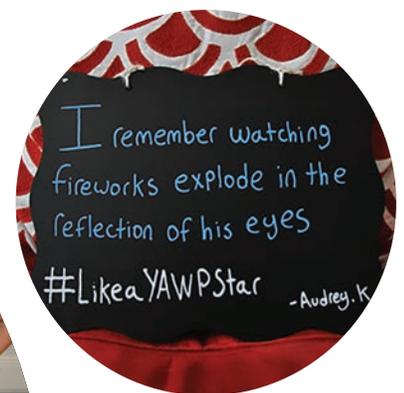
Your generous support allowed GrubStreet to provide mentorship and support to 675 individual teen writers in 2018. Total enrollment in all teen classes reached a record 1,325. Over 80% of students were served through scholarships and fully subsidized programming. We continued classes at multiple Boston Public Library sites and began a new pilot to reach homeless youth through Y2Y, a shelter dedicated to young people aged 18 to 25. We also held classes for teens at Boston International Newcomers Academy, a school comprised of 100% immigrant and refugee teens who are often dealing with trauma and hardship. English is not the primary language for any of these students, and they often feel insecure in expressing themselves. **Our instructors worked to help the students embrace English as their second language, while not losing their past, culture, or home they left behind.** Overall, 60% of teens in our programs are of color and about 60% are low-income.

GrubStreet has provided me with an incredible foundation for the advancement of my writing at such a young age, and such incredible opportunities and vast networks to expand on my craft and help me learn to improve my own skills and find myself in the process. -**Matt Capone**, teen student, summer 2017 teen fellow, writer



Free teen novel writing launches.

When teens in our free Saturday classes told us they were ready to work on longer fiction, we launched a new series for young novelists. From August through December of 2018, teens met monthly for half a day to work on full-length novels and novels in verse. For many of the students, this was a powerful experience of creating sustained community with other writers. Every session filled beyond capacity; we made extra seats available to accommodate the average of 17 teens who attended each Saturday.



EXCELLENCE

Banner year for publishing.

Over the past year, more books have come out from our students, instructors, and staff than ever before. The [running list](#) is available on GrubStreet's website.

Memoir Incubator graduate Michelle Bowdler just shared her story with us. She said before she took the advanced class, she "had written - like many do - on evenings and weekends [while working full-time] and had not published. Since the Incubator, I have been published in the *New York Times*, *Brevity*, *the Rumpus*... and nominated for two Pushcart Prizes, the Best of the Net, and received the Barbara Deming Memorial Award for non-fiction. I now have a book deal after an auction. NONE of this would have been possible without the generosity and teaching of my GrubStreet instructors, the support and enthusiasm of my fellow writers and the space Grub has made for so many."

Writing in a Time of Upheaval.

In early April, GrubStreet's Muse and the Marketplace Conference will focus on the theme of upheaval. Upheaval in our lives - whether personal, political, artistic, or all of the above - can spur new risk, boldness, and artistic transformation.

Authors will examine this question: How do we write when writing seems impossible? Keynote speakers include Luis Alberto Urrea, author of *The House of Broken Angels* and a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize; and Morgan Jerkins, author of *This Will Be My Undoing: Living at the Intersection of Black, Female, and Feminist in (White) America*.



A Narrative Arts Center in the Seaport.

As many of you know, the City of Boston has awarded GrubStreet a 13,000 square foot space to build a lasting home for literary arts in Boston! **GrubStreet's new Narrative Arts Center will be a place for artistic collaboration, creation, and performance for writers and readers from every zip code, community, and background.** The new space will include more classrooms, a stage, a bookstore, café, and a spacious, comfy community lounge - all right on the water. Our capital campaign is underway, our architect is at work, and we plan to begin construction this summer. We thank all of our generous community members who supported this bid and everyone who is coming forward to help make this dream come true.

Thank you for helping us all imagine and write a better future.

Thank you for reducing barriers so that all aspiring writers can find a home at GrubStreet and share their stories with the world.

