



“It is one thing to chat with people but when you hear their writing, you have to be silent and listen and hear their voices. It is a wonderful, wonderful experience.”

—from Brooklyn Public Library Central Branch.



OUR TEAM

consists of 3 full-time and 1 part-time staff, plus 1 NYC Civic Corps member. Our 40+ volunteers are a dedicated group of writers and activists from diverse backgrounds, united in their dedication to the power of creating a safe space for writing.



GETTING OUR PARTICIPANTS HEARD

In 2015 we published seven anthologies. The books featured writers from the following workshop sites: **Rikers Island** (incarcerated women), **Serendipity** (women in recovery), **Brooklyn Public Library Kensington & Cortelyou Branches** (young writers), **Benjamin Banneker Academy** (high school students), **New Alternatives** (LGBTQ homeless youth), **Andrew Heiskell/VISIONS** (visually impaired writers), and **Port Morris Wellness Center** (people undergoing treatment for opiate dependency).

Additionally, we expanded our Writing Aloud Reading Series, making it again a monthly event. The series also moved to a permanent home at the venerable BookCourt in Cobble Hill. Through this series and numerous other readings NYWC produced an astounding 16 readings in just 12 months! With a focus of bringing the talented voices of our workshop participants to a broader audience, NYWC also partnered with other organizations to create even more opportunities to be heard. A few examples from the year include:

- **These are Hard Times for Dreamers Book Launch** – NYWC published a book of writing by women on Rikers Island Jail and celebrated with a unique book launch inside the jail.
- **NYWC & BRIC Poetry Month Screening** – Brooklyn Public Library Central Branch workshop participants were trained how to present their writing in digital media formats in this collaboration with BRIC.
- **City Stories, City Spirit** – NYWC’s Green-Wood Cemetery workshop culminated with a reading by workshop participants in the cemetery chapel.
- **Black ArtStory Month** – Members of NYWC workshops participated in a Brooklyn-themed reading as part of a month-long series of free art exhibits, performances, and film screenings to celebrate the enduring influences and contributions made by Black people within the visual and performing arts worlds.



2015 ANNUAL REPORT

“For me this workshop has turned what was once a seed into a tree... It has become and will always be my sun in the darkest of clouds...”

—a young writer from Benjamin Banneker Academy.



Participants at our biggest fundraiser, the Write-A-Thon, enraptured by the lunch time speakers, NYWC’s own Sophie McManus.

OUR SUPPORTERS

Allianz GI • Amazon Literary Partnership • The Bay & Paul Foundations • Con Edison • Emmanuel Baptist Church Benevolence Fund • The Hyde & Watson Foundation • Kalliopeia Foundation • National Endowment for the Arts • Nicholas B. Ottaway Foundation • New York City Department of Cultural Affairs • The Offices of New York City Council Members Laurie Cumbo and Corey Johnson • New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature • NYC Service • The Pinkerton Foundation • Tiger Baron Foundation • Two West • our individual donors, members, and Write-A-Thonners.

“For me the workshop is a dream come true... it’s an opportunity to bring what I love to do to life.”

—from the Workshop Participant Retreat, a day-long event for writers from across our programs.

NYWC workshop leader Angela Lockhart-Arnoff introduces a reader at our *AfroFuturism & Magical Realism* reading at Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts.



“The writing groups...
[are] my injection of hope,
happiness, understanding,
love and just joy.”

—from *Serendipity*, a workshop for women seeking substance abuse treatment.



Young writers seeing their words published for the first time at NYWC's book launch for *Everything I Couldn't Say: Poetry & Prose from GUMBO*.

photo by Rose Gorman

NYWC Programs

2015 NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

Total participants: 1,590
Total # of sessions: 1,243
Unique Groups: 51

BY PROGRAM*

YOUTH

Total participants: 522
Total # of sessions: 394
Unique Groups: 19

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Total participants: 236
Total # of sessions: 112
Unique groups: 4

WELLNESS

Total participants: 644
Total # of sessions: 572
Unique groups: 16

Writing is a lifelong process and our approach is designed to mirror this.

51% of our current workshops have been ongoing for four or more years, and 27% have been ongoing for seven or more years.

*Note that some workshops may be included in one, more than one, or none of the above subcategories.

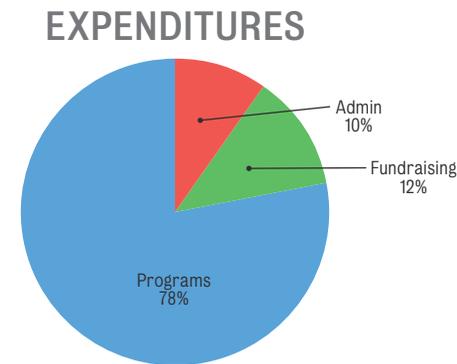
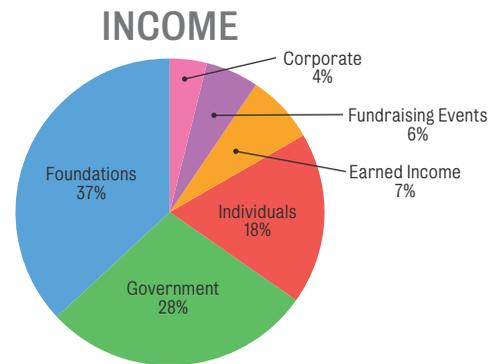
A writer takes the stage at *The Midnight Sun* book launch party, a collection of writing by blind and visually impaired writers at Andrew Heiskell Braille & Talking Book Library.



photo by Daisy Flores

OUR FINANCIALS

Our 2015 revenue was approximately \$302,000 and expenses were approximately \$349,000. Funds raised in 2014 but earmarked to be spent in 2015 were used to cover our 2015 deficit. *All figures unaudited; estimated audit completion date 7/1/2016.



OUR EVALUATIONS

We conducted Program Evaluations at 11 workshop sites in 2015. 6 of these sites served youth and 5 of these sites served adults. A total of 48 young people and 44 adults participated in the evaluations. The results confirm that our workshops provide significant measurable results:

ADULTS	YOUTH
91% improved their creative writing skills	74% improved their writing skills
96% expanded their love of writing	83% enjoy writing more
91% improved their communication skills	72% improved their listening skills
87% improved overall confidence and self-esteem	87% improved their confidence in their writing
100% feel like they belong to a community of writers	68% enjoy reading more



Readers gather together at the NYWC Writing Aloud Reading Series at BookCourt.

photo by Rose Gorman

2015 WAS MARKED BY SIGNIFICANT GROWTH IN BOTH THE REACH AND THE DEPTH OF OUR PROGRAMS.

- We increased the total number of people served by 20% and the total number of sessions provided by 21%. We also increased the number of publications we produced by 40%.

- NYWC formally launched our **Next Level Workshops**, which served 54 participants through in-depth, genre specific workshops over the course of the year. These included a day-long writing retreat for participants, writing and collaging workshops, and the return of the Novel Writing Workshop for Kids workshop, among others.

- Additionally, throughout 2015 we engaged in a **strategic planning process**. We emerged from this period of reflection and assessment with a revised mission statement and 5-year strategic plan, which will be unveiled later this year.