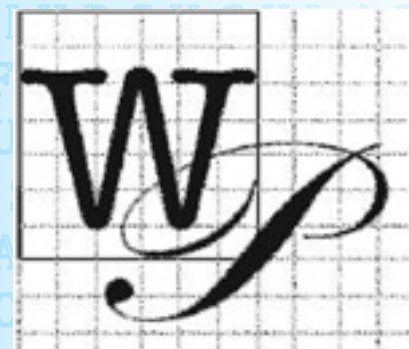


THE WRITERS PLACE

MIDWEST CENTER FOR THE LITERARY ARTS, INC.

2012 Annual Report

A NON-PROFIT LITERARY ARTS ORGANIZATION SERVING
THE MIDWEST COMMUNITY SINCE 1992



Mission

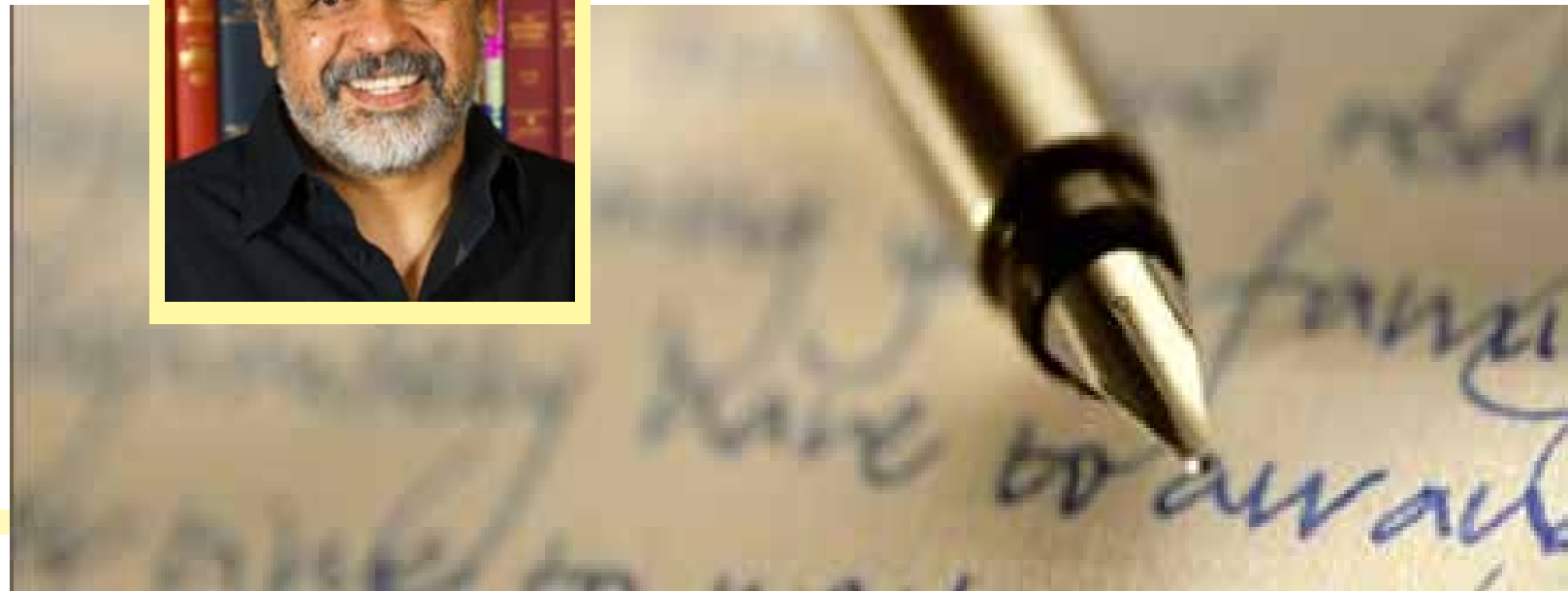
The mission of The Writers Place is to promote writers and their work; to nurture an interest in writing and literature in a wide, diverse audience; to reach out to the next generation of writers, poets, novelists and storytellers; and to contribute to the quality of cultural life in Kansas City and throughout the Midwest.



Our History

Helicon Nine: The Journal of Women's Arts & Letters was founded in 1977 in Kansas City, Missouri, by editor/publisher/poet Gloria Vando Hickok to provide a quality literary publication by and about women. In 1990, when women's contributions to the arts and letters became more widely acknowledged, Helicon Nine directed its attention to the publication and nurturing of books of fine literature under the imprint Helicon Nine Editions. In 1992 Helicon Nine changed its name to the Midwest Center for the Literary Arts, Inc., in order to expand its mission to include (1) continuing the publication of fine books of literature through Helicon Nine Editions, and (2) the founding of The Writers Place (TWP), a regional literary community center, library, and gallery offering public and educational programs for all ages.

A Message *from our* President



After hosting over 300 readings, writing workshops and community meetings and events at The Writers Place, we can report that the literary arts are thriving in Kansas City. Your support has helped us bring a wide range of quality literary programs to the community.

- Our partnerships with organizations such as the American Jazz Museum, Kacico Dance, Literacy Kansas City, Latino Writers Collective, the University of St. Mary, Park University, UMKC's Creative Writing Program, the Kansas City and Johnson County Libraries, and others—helped bring creative writing to a broad, diverse audience.
- Our *Celebrating Voices* series, highlighting Kansas City's Latino, African American, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender and Native American communities, is expanding in 2013 to include a celebration of the Italian American community and a celebration of Diverse Publishers.
- Building on our successful *In Our Own Words* writing program for urban at-risk students, we will offer weekly after- school writing program options and an annual young writers' summer camp program for youth 12 –18.
- We continue to expand and refine our workshop offerings to give all segments of our community the chance to learn from experienced, professional writers.

We count on your continued support of our mission to make TWP an institution committed to nurturing and fostering an interest and audience in the literary arts for our next generation of writers.

Sincerely,

Jose Faus, President

Programs

“Our programs are of high quality, well planned, sponsored with a wide variety of collaborators and fill the calendar. There is truly something for everyone who is interested in writing.”

– Carol Kariotis, Executive Director

Reading Series and Special Events

Unifying writers from different communities, *Celebrating Voices* is a program that strives to establish and nourish a diverse community of writers as well as relationships with organizations from these communities. A collaboration of events, this program is a series of readings by writers of diverse backgrounds and neighborhoods that are all part of Kansas City’s cultural community. Each reading, which revolves around one of the featured communities, is accompanied by an educational program to showcase the reader’s talent as well as deepen the experience for audience members through exposure to other art forms such as music, visual art dance and theater. Those who participate, an ever increasing number, leave with a valuable eclectic experience.



A flyer advertising a *Celebrating Voices* event featuring Idris Goodwin.

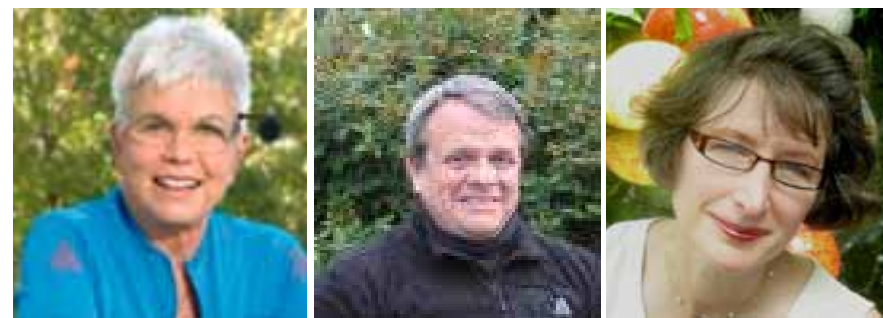
Creative Writing Workshops

In 2012 TWP offered 33 workshops for beginning through experienced writers. This was a 10% increase in earned income (for both the writer/instructors and TWP) over workshops presented in 2011. Workshop instructors were published and celebrated writers of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, memoir-writing and other genres and topics about professional writing. For the first time, workshops were offered in screenplay

writing and poetry writing for youths, with plans to continue offering these workshops because of their popularity. Six of the youth poets attended workshops on scholarships paid by individual donors.

TWP makes these classes available to all who wish to participate, for we believe everyone deserves the opportunity to experience the craft and enjoyment

of creative writing. Among the instructors were popular workshop leaders such as Barbara Bartocci, Robert Chrisman and Loring Leifer (from left to right).



In Our Own Words:

Writing Workshops for At-Risk Middle and High School Students

Targeting urban secondary students who are at-risk academically and socially, TWP sent instructors to selected urban schools to teach poetry writing from real experiences to students who are from home environments dealing with addictions, absent parents, low socio-economic living circumstances and lack of educational opportunities. With the aid of school administrators and teachers, writers from TWP taught students how to tap into their life experiences and feelings, and express them poetically. Besides the academic importance of writing poetry, writing becomes an important tool for students’

They have **Feelings** locked up inside of them but this **Gives** them a voice. People **Listen** to them and **Respect** them.”

– Judy Roberts, Program Coordinator

personal empowerment, and can help them develop lifelong self-expression skills. The writing has addressed

deeply moving and emotional experiences in their lives. In 2012 the program increased the number of schools where workshops were provided from two to six, and by the end of 2012 had already made arrangements to add two more schools in 2013. TWP also successfully proposed offering weekly after-school writing groups at four of the schools in 2013.



Three students write about their experiences in one of the *In Our Own Words* workshops at The Writers Place.

Events & Highlights

Throughout 2012, TWP hosted a variety of workshops, readings, outreach and special events. Not only were events hosted on-site at TWP, but its multiple collaborations with area individuals, organizations and venues allowed TWP to extend its reach into previously unfrequented areas of Kansas City and Missouri. Some of these were:

- Two events at the American Jazz Museum
- A monthly open mic at the Uptown Arts Bar
- A weekend writers retreat at Arrow Rock, Missouri
- Exploration of ekphrastic poetry at the Nelson Atkins Museum
- Quarterly multi-disciplinary collaborations with Neon Gallery
- Riverfront Reading Series
- Monthly poetry readings at the Johnson County Public Library

In May 2012, TWP celebrated its 20th anniversary by hosting its first annual Muse of the Year event which honors a member of the writing community who has excelled in his/her contributions to TWP. Gloria Vando Hickok was selected as the first honoree of a new TWP tradition, which will be held annually. Gloria, the founder of Helicon Nine Editions, the Midwest Center for the Literary Arts, and writer and philanthropist, gave a reading at TWP, and appeared at a special reception at a member's private home to receive her award.

In September, TWP hosted its fourth annual Power of Reading event with Literacy Kansas City and the Kansas City Public Library. A private *Book Tasting/Wine Tasting* was held at a member's private residence. Prominent Kansas City writers shared their favorite books during a wine tasting fundraiser with TWP friends and members.

To celebrate the joy of literacy and individuals who have learned to read as adults, TWP, Literacy Kansas City, the Kansas City Public Library and the University of St. Mary continued the celebration with *The Power of Reading: A Celebration of the Written Word* at the Plaza Library. KCPT's Nick Haines emceed this meaningful event. Adult students from Literacy Kansas City shared their heartfelt personal stories of how learning to read has transformed their lives. Local writers Miguel Morales, Kay Saunders, Lisa Harkrader and Yael T. Abouhalkah also read personal stories and original work that revealed the power of reading in their lives.

The Neon Gallery, near the 18th and Vine area of Kansas City, was the site of quarterly collaborative events by TWP, the Neon Gallery, River Cow Orchestra, the Kacico Dance Company and a host of local and regional writers and artists.

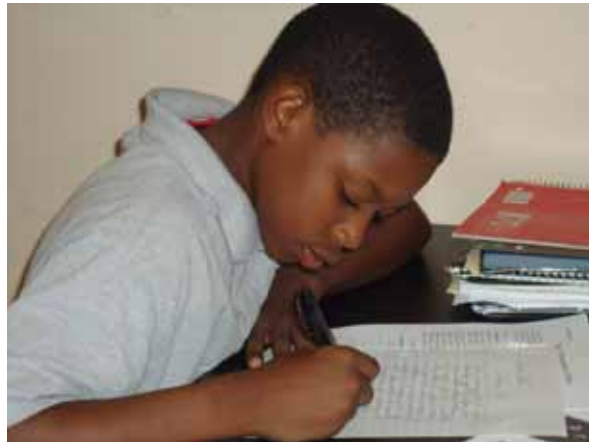


A night at the *Riverfront Reading Series*.



In 2012 more than 4,000 people attended TWP events, workshops, meetings, and open mic performances. Few days passed without an event or meeting being held at TWP or another venue in Kansas City. In the coming years TWP is well-positioned to continue offering Kansas City and surrounding areas a full calendar year of coordinated programs to spark new interest in the written word and in the art of writing and those who practice it.

Images of 2012



Students from Kansas City's urban schools participated in *In Our Own Words*. In 2013 *In Our Own Words* will expand the number of students served, and participate in the *Verses and Voices* poet laureate celebration, which will be held at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. Plans for an after-school writing program at six of the schools are underway, as well.

Writers Michelle Pond, Jose Faus and Sharon Eiker are instructors for TWP community outreach workshops. Between them, they serve on several committees, work with on-and off-site events and continually strive to bring diversity to TWP by expanding its programs to appeal to audiences seeking a variety of genres, ages, ethnic groups and experiences.



Audiences gather after readings, special events and community gatherings at TWP. It is a favorite place to socialize, network with other writers, and rent for book signings, retirements, neighborhood meetings and non-TWP literary events. TWP is truly a literary community center.



The *Celebrating Voices* series not only features readings, but often is a celebration of music, dance, visual art and theatrics. River Cow Orchestra plays annually at the *Celebrating Poetry, Music and Dance* event every fall at TWP.



TWP hosts two fundraising events each year: *The Muse of the Year* event and the Power of Reading.

In 2012, TWP celebrated its 20th Anniversary. Gloria Vando Hickok was chosen as the first *Muse of the Year* for her great contributions to the literary arts in Kansas City.

In September the *Power of Reading* was co-hosted with Literacy Kansas City and the Kansas City Public Library. Participants listened to Kansas City writers share about their favorite books in the garden of Patricia Cleary Miller.

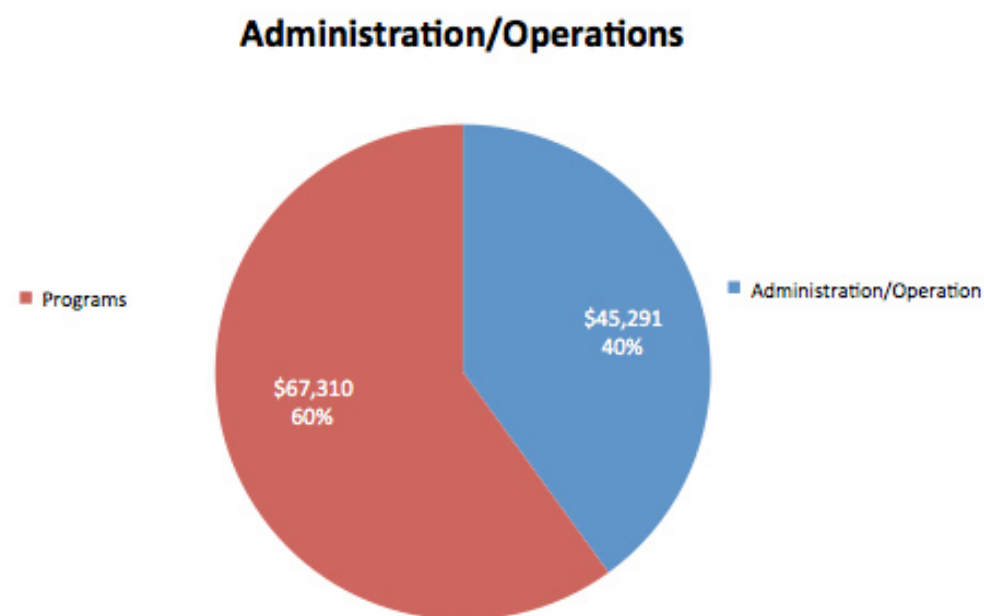
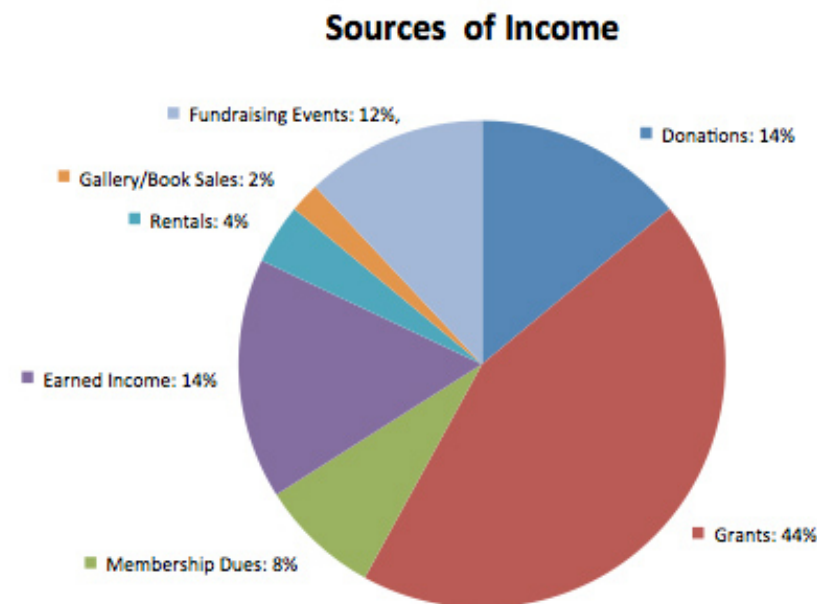
When TWP facilitates immersive writing experiences at Arrow Rock, Mo., in the summer, some of the writers have taken immersion to a new and deeper level.

The three-day retreats combine solitude, workshop learning, sharing, critique of each other's writing and camaraderie with plenty of natural beauty. Writers have quality alone time, but also share in the cooking and learning experiences.



Financials

TWP continued to maintain a variety of income sources to keep its operations and programs sustainable as it moves ahead. It also sought to increase its “Programs versus Administrative” expenses at a 3:2 ratio so that more of its income goes toward program expenses as the income sources increase. The charts below indicate the percentages in each category.



Thanks to You...

Thanks to our diverse staff and volunteers, and generous donors and collaborators, TWP is able to share the joy and experience of the literary arts with the Kansas City area and beyond.

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- JOHNSON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
- UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-KANSAS CITY
- UNIVERSITY OF ST. MARY
- NEW LETTERS
- THE LATINO WRITERS COLLECTIVE
- THE AMERICAN JAZZ MUSEUM
- KANSAS CITY, KANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
- BOOKMARK PRESS
- HELICON NINE EDITIONS
- LITERACY KANSAS CITY
- NEWEAR CONTEMPORARY MUSIC ENSEMBLE
- NEON GALLERY
- UPTOWN ARTS BAR
- RIVERFRONT READINGS
- LITERACY KC

Major Donors

- MISSOURI ARTS COUNCIL
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