



LIGHTHOUSE
WRITERS WORKSHOP



2017 ANNUAL REPORT

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Our Mission and Values

The mission of Lighthouse Writers Workshop is to provide the highest caliber of artistic education, support, and community for writers and readers in the Rocky Mountain Region and beyond. We strive to ensure that literature maintains its proper prominence in the culture, and that individuals achieve their fullest potential as artists and human beings.

OUR ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

Accessibility: Lighthouse welcomes all people who want to learn more about writing, no matter their age, experience, or education. It's important to our vision and mission that we keep our offerings affordable and our facilities convenient for all community members.

Collaboration: Writing is often seen as a solitary art; however, all writers need the inspiration and support of others. Our workshops engage students, teachers, and peers in deeply collaborative relationships. We seek opportunities to explore other arts and media with regional and national partners.

Creativity: We explore emerging genres, foster innovation, and encourage experimentation.

Community: Writing and reading are primarily solitary pursuits. Lighthouse provides space and spirit for fellowship among working and aspiring writers. We offer readers unique ways to discover the writer's way. We invite everyone who values arts and culture to explore the written word. And we support the vibrancy and diversity of the Colorado artistic culture.

Discovery: We believe that writing empowers greater understanding of self and others and thereby encourages compassion and empathy in our society.

Excellence: Lighthouse is dedicated to the supporting the highest potential of each writer, whatever his or her goals and talents. We are committed to increasing awareness of local and national authors producing high quality work.



Executive Director's Letter

I'm not a big fan of anniversaries.

—Sam Shepard

Dear Lighthouse Supporter,

If for no other reason, 2017 was a big year at Lighthouse because it marked our 20th year in existence. It's hard to believe it's been that long; there are still a good number of folks from our inaugural workshops still hanging around, writing, teaching, caring about literature.

And yes, 2017 was a very good year for the organization. Continued growth and maturation, continued striving for excellence in our workshops, and continued exploration of the alchemic, restorative power that writing can have on the human spirit.

This year saw Lighthouse grow fully into the house at 1515 Race, and our concerted (and slightly bittersweet) discussions on how we might be outgrowing the space. This was also the year in which our community engagement programs like the Hard Times workshops at the Denver Public Library—for folks experiencing homelessness and/or financial hardship—celebrated substantial success. In fact, the good folks at DPL recently mentioned that Hard Times is by far their most ambitious and popular community program. Also, this is the year one of our recent Writer's Studio guests, Kazuo Ishiguro, won the Nobel Prize in literature. (We like to think that the Nobel committee was impressed with Mr. Ishiguro only because he'd visited Lighthouse, but that's just hearsay, and not exactly provable.)

It feels strange to say this: Lighthouse is now 20 years old. I'm still a little stunned at the dazzle of it all. When Andrea Dupree and I started Lighthouse in 1997, we really had no idea that it would become a cornerstone of the literary arts in Colorado, nor did we think that the Lighthouse community would be so engaged, so smart, so wonderfully kind, and so deeply dedicated to writing and to Lighthouse.

For that, I can't thank you enough. Here's to the next 20 years.

Sincerely,



Michael Henry
Executive Director
Cofounder



Letter from the Program Director

2017 saw our largest, most robust Lit Fest ever, with 10 master workshops, participants from all over the country, and 4,414 attendees overall. We had applicants for master classes from Spokane to London, and awarded our first annual Lit Fest fellowships for each genre: poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and dramatic writing.

We hosted visits from Geoff Dyer, Elif Batuman (later short-listed for the Pulitzer), Aleksandar Hemon, Etgar Keret, Claudia Rankine, Akhil Sharma, Elizabeth McCracken, Sarah Manguso, and many more. Throughout the year and Lit Fest, we saw a growth in revenue for in-house programming of about 10%.

By the end of the year, four of our regular members had contracts for books, including Rachel Maizes, who signed a two-book deal for a novel and her story collection, *We Love Anderson Cooper*. Lit Fest regular Elle Nash signed a deal to publish the recent *Animals Eat Each Other*, and former students Cynthia Swanson and Tiffany Q. Tyson both had second novels in the publication pipeline, to arrive in early 2018.

Meanwhile, the Book Project has continued to blossom, with two of our grads signing with prestigious New York agencies (Janklow & Nesbitt and Sterling Lord Literistic). Several of our authors are preparing to go out with their books in the coming year.

On the instructor front, we added several new core instructors in 2017, focusing as always on keeping our faculty robust. The Beacon Award went to Rachel Weaver, the long-time instructor who will be heading up Lighthouse North in 2018. She and our other instructors continue to enjoy overwhelming appreciation and high ratings from our students. In 2017, our instructors were awarded with fellowships from the NEA, MacDowell, Yaddo, and elsewhere, and publications from places as diverse as *One Story*, *Harper's*, *Best American Essays*, and *Glimmer Train*. This shows our good fortune at having such excellent writers at the helm of our programs, which is why we're still growing.

All best,



Andrea Dupree
Program Director
Cofounder



Letter from Fellowship recipient

As you saw on Tuesday night, my mom has picked me up and dropped me off a couple times from Lighthouse this week. Every time, she looks at the tents and everything and says, "This is so cool, you look so in your element. You seem to be having so much fun."

When I came home the other night, she had left a handmade card on my bed. Mostly it was talking about how great it is that I'm writing and how cool it is that I'm here on a fellowship, and then somewhere toward the end she wrote, "I'm so proud that you're my son."

My mom watched me get expelled from high school at 16, try to kill myself at 18, get expelled from college at 21, and go to prison at 23. She hasn't had much to be proud of in quite a while. And for her to be so proud of what I'm doing, not only as a writer in general but as a part of Lit Fest this week, means more to me than anything else ever could.

I wanted to tell you that, because it's the best thanks I have to give.

Gratefully,
M.F.

He ended up publishing his fellowship-winning essay in The Sun.

Young Writers Program Update

“They didn’t just teach me writing, they taught me a way of life.”

—Student evaluation

In outreach, we served 2,008 students and continued to reach students from a variety of backgrounds and opportunities, including Title I schools (who receive federal funding for a majority of students qualifying for Free or Reduced Lunch); alternative or adaptive programs; charter schools; residential treatment centers; a shelter for teens experiencing homelessness; and public, private, and parochial schools.

Lighthouse received a 2A Healthy Lifestyles BOOST grant from the Denver Office of Children’s Affairs to run summer and fall workshops at various Bridge Project sites. The mission of the Bridge Project is to provide a path for youth in Denver’s public housing neighborhoods to graduate from high school and go on to attend college or choose a vocation by engaging them in educational opportunities and facilitating the development of life skills and self-sufficiency. We offered summer creative writing labs and college essay workshops at all four Bridge sites during summer and 14-week fall sessions for 4th and 5th grades at the Quigg Newton and Westwood sites. Programming for elementary and high school students continued into 2018.

321 children and teens attended **in-house workshops** at Lighthouse, including our regular Saturday and school closure workshops, homeschool co-op and public school field trips, and summer camps. **In-house summer programs** included two Lit Fest workshops for each age group, Elementary Summer Writing Camp for grades 3-5, Middle School Summer Writing Camp for grades 6-8, High School Summer Writing Camp, and For the Girls for grades 6-8.

Community and library 2017 programs included *Citizen*-based College Essay workshops at three Denver Public Libraries, Broomfield Library, and East High as part of Write Denver and a brand new summer camp in Douglas County at Mountain Vista High School.

An intensive **2017 faculty training** series included 15 instructors throughout summer and fall. Topics included classroom management skills and practice, engaging English Language Learners in creative writing, why creative writing matters and creating a personal philosophy of teaching, a lesson plan and sharing successful strategy symposium, and teaching through a framework of social justice.

Poetry Out Loud continued with nearly 1,000 students participating across Colorado. Will Edelson from Fountain Valley School was the 2017 Poetry Out Loud State Champion.

Voices from the Young Writers Program: As part of our Colorado Gives campaign, we collected stories from students and instructors.

2017 total youth served: 3,101



Community Programs Update

2017 was a phenomenal year for Lighthouse's community programs. The Denver Talks project in partnership with the NEA Big Read, the Mayor's Office of Denver, and many other community partners was a tremendous success, reaching new audiences and creating a community-wide discussion centered around Claudia Rankine's book, *Citizen* and its subject matter: institutionalized and cultural racism.

Community programs saw continued success in the following events: Drop-In Writing at the Denver Art Museum, Writing the West at the American Museum of Western Art, Willfully Submit, and Friday 500. All enjoyed banner numbers in 2017.

Write Denver added an installation in the Curtis Park neighborhood—motion sensors in a grouping of trees that when tripped by pedestrians play recordings of poems written and recited by elementary and middle school students from the neighborhood.

Write Denver also continues to “publish” fake parking signs and installing them along Colfax Avenue between the East High School and the capitol. forty signs are currently hanging below the real Colfax parking signs.

2017 was also a transition year for community events and programs. The focus went from in-house events to adult outreach workshops. Making the Mountain and Art + Lit were both retired to make room for the expansion of the outreach programs Hard Times Writing Workshop, The Gathering Place Writers' Group, Writing to Be Free, The Write Age, and Picture Me Here, as well as one-off partnerships with Opera Colorado, Alzheimer's Association, Veterans Affairs, Warm Cookies of the Revolution, Colorado Preservation, Baroque Chamber Orchestra of Colorado, Denver Architectural Foundation, CherryArts, TedxMileHigh, Downtown Denver Partnership, Colfax BID, Lit Crawl Denver, and History Colorado.

Another partnership formed in 2017 between Lighthouse and the National Poetry Slam. Lighthouse provided a moderator for a panel as well as multiple instructors for drop-in writing workshops that took place at the Clyfford Still Museum and the Denver Art Museum.

Lighthouse couldn't run the events, both in-house and offsite, without the dedication of its volunteers. In 2017, 87 individual volunteers lent a hand at events clocking almost 1,200 hours of service.

2017 Lighthouse Adult Outreach Totals

Hard Times Writing Workshop

@Central Branch Library

Meets every Tuesday

Attendance: **1,143**

Serves anyone having a hard time, but mostly people who are experiencing homelessness or who have a history of it.

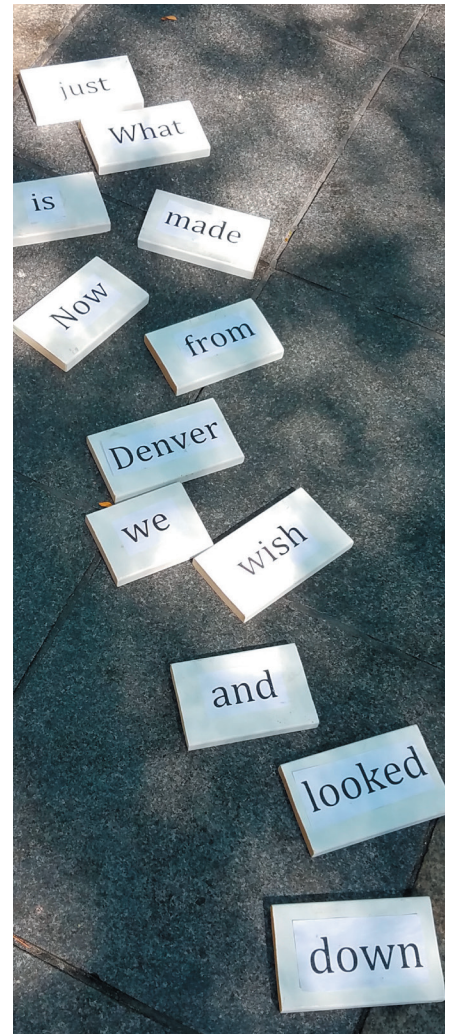
The Gathering Place Writing Group

@The Gathering Place

Meets every Thursday

Attendance: **320**

Serves TGP members—women and transgender individuals experiencing homelessness or poverty.



The Write Age

@Decker Library & Eisenhower Rec Center
Meets on Fridays for 4- or 8-week sessions
Attendance: **679**
Serves adults over 60 years of age.

Collaboration with Picture Me Here

@Emily Griffith Technology College
Meets for 12-week sessions
Attendance: **368**
Serves refugees and new Americans.

Collaboration with Veterans Affairs

@Lighthouse
Meets for 6-week sessions
Attendance: **147**
Serves veterans.

Writing to Be Free

@ICCS-West
Meets every 1st and 3rd Thursday
Attendance: **123**
Serves women residence at a halfway house in Lakewood.

Write Denver

@Multiple Locations
Attendance: **1,677**
Serves people in different neighborhoods across the city who don't necessarily identify as writers, and publishes their work in the form of literary-visual art.

Denver Talks

@Multiple Locations
Attendance: **4,281**
A project of Lighthouse Writers Workshop, NEA Big Read, and the City & County of Denver, Denver Talks hosted six weeks of arts events, book talks, and community discussions, culminating in a free on-stage conversation with Rankine and Mayor Michael B. Hancock at Boettcher Concert Hall. More than 6,000 people attended a Denver Talks event this fall, with roughly 1,800 in the audience for author Claudia Rankine's on-stage talk with Mayor Michael B. Hancock. We handed out more than 1,600 free copies of *Citizen*, and the book was checked out 1,900 times through Denver Public Libraries.

Total served: 8,738



2016-2017 Financial Report

Statement of Financial Position

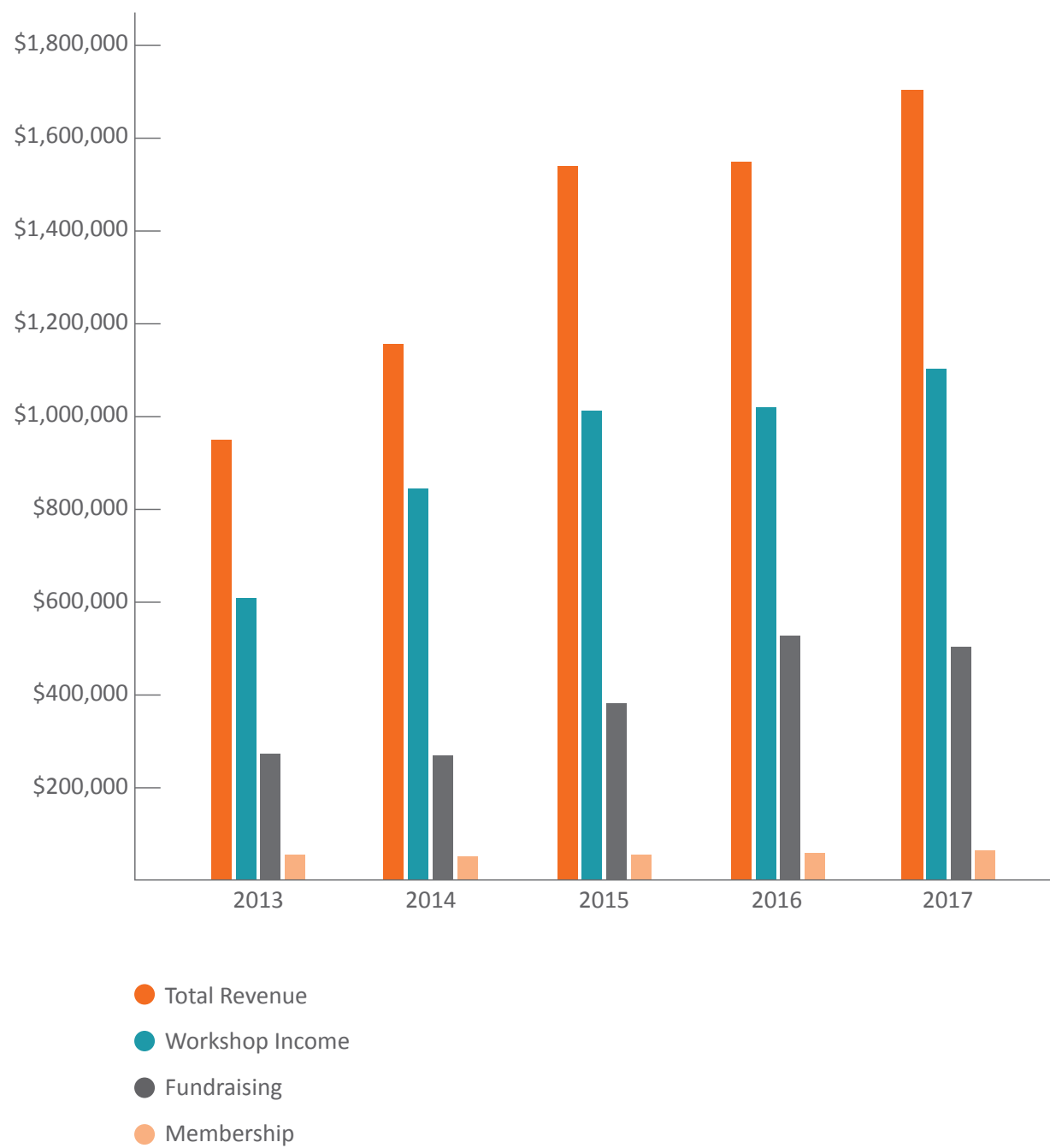
ASSETS	2016	2017
Current Assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$98,067	\$112,234
Accounts receivable	213,183	207,790
Promises to give, current	25,000	-
Prepaid expenses	11,791	6,513
Total current assets	348,041	326,537
Property and equipment	159,777	40,323
Less accumulated depreciation	46,559	25,843
	113,218	14,480
Other assets:		
Website costs under development	-	70,189
Deposit	6,250	6,250
Total other assets	6,250	76,439
Noncurrent assets:		
Rose Community endowment	29,089	26,048
Promises to give, noncurrent	25,000	-
Total noncurrent assets	54,089	26,048
TOTAL ASSETS	\$521,598	\$443,504
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable	\$43,137	\$19,652
Payroll liabilities	32,104	13,154
Deferred revenue	243,904	221,370
Class deposits	8,850	4,260
Total current liabilities	327,995	258,436
Commitments and contingencies		
Net Assets:		
Unrestricted	4,475	8,057
Board designated	7,000	7,000
Total unrestricted	11,475	15,057
Temporary restricted	160,039	150,963
Permanently restricted	22,089	19,048
Total net assets	193,603	185,068
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$521,598	\$443,504

Combined Statement of Activities

2017

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
Support, revenue, and gains:				
Earned income	\$1,094,997	-	-	\$1,094,997
Memberships	62,105	-	-	62,105
Donations	344,834	183,083	-	527,917
In-kind donations	25,623	-	-	25,623
Investment income	271	-	3,041	3,312
	1,527,830	183,083	3,041	1,713,954
Satisfaction of program restrictions	174,007	(174,007)	-	-
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	1,701,837	9,076	3,041	1,713,954
Expenses:				
Program services	1,456,655	-	-	1,456,655
General and administrative	101,147	-	-	101,147
Fundraising	147,617	-	-	147,617
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,705,419	-	-	1,705,419
Change in net assets	(3,582)	9,076	3,041	8,535
Net assets, beginning of year	15,057	150,963	19,048	185,068
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	\$11,475	\$160,039	\$22,089	\$193,603

Revenue Growth



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\$15,000 and above

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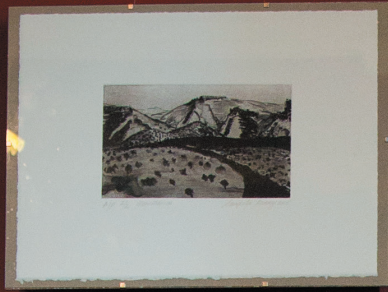
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CherryArts
Clyfford Still Museum
Colfax BID
Colorado Preservation
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Denver Art Museum
DCPA
Denver Architectural Foundation
Denver Public Library
Denver Mayor's Office
Downtown Denver Partnership
History Colorado
Lit Crawl Denver
Metro State University
Opera Colorado
Tattered Cover Bookstore
TedxMileHigh
Office of Veterans Affairs
Warm Cookies of the Revolution
Words Beyond Bars





I didn't think I would ever be able to share any of my writing in front of these people. I was completely unaware that some of my greatest friends lay within this group. Of course, I was somewhat comforted by the array of snacks laid out before me, although I was too scared to try any, but this welcoming sight would greet me every day at Lighthouse, from weekend classes, to summer camps, to the Young Authors Collective.

It's been eight years, and now I think I probably talk a little too much and I definitely eat way more snacks than I should. The people I've met are all insanely different, except for their love of writing, and that's all that is required for us to create a community.

— **Cassidy Nicks**, a Young Authors Collective member who's been taking Lighthouse workshops since 4th grade





About Lighthouse

Lighthouse Writers Workshop is Denver's nonprofit literary arts center, offering award-winning instruction, author events, and community engagement to people in Colorado and beyond. For over 20 years, Lighthouse has nurtured the careers of thousands of writers through its year-round programming, The Book Project, and annual Lit Fest. In addition, engagement programs designed for children, teens, veterans, the incarcerated, individuals experiencing homelessness, and other populations, as well as broader collective efforts like Write Denver, encourage people to connect to each other and experience the transformative power of storytelling.



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WRITERS WORKSHOP

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