On this paper can be mythical things
Treasured kings
This world is built
From the tip of a pen
The wings of a crow
The falling snow
This shining place
This fantastical love
Means that we are connected
To the world within the lines
On this paper can be echoing caves
Cascading waves
This world flies
From the ink within
The towering spires of castles
The small huts and homes
The comforting apple pie
On this paper are our lives
The poolside dives
This paper is the heart of my home

The way to go
A crisp smell, my ten-steps ahead mind,
planning out the plot
The paper persuades me to sketch down my
sadness
My anger, my joy
On this paper can be my friend’s tree swing
Where I feel alive
Just behind the pages of this poem
Are my experiences
Laid out to read
Laid out to love
Laid out to be inside of
Laid out to exist
On this paper can be relatable characters
On this paper can be our best friends
On this paper can be poems
This paper can be dotted with tears
Or flooded with sunny smiles

-Zach, Words With Wings Summer Camp, 2021
Dear friends,

The pandemic was an unprecedented year for everyone, including the Missoula Writing Collaborative. What was safe? Could we teach at all? Could we even have writing residencies? Throughout fall 2020, we did what we could: program director Nick Littman started a new residency in Drummond; he later taught in St. Ignatius. With MT Department of Commerce funding, our writers offered free extracurricular outdoor and online classes for kids in topics including outdoor writing, flash fiction, movement and poetry. We had a one-day and four-week online Writers’ Room classes for adults in November and March with record enrollment.

By January, we began to get into schools for 12-week residencies via Google classroom or Zoom. Our writers taught in rural and tribal classrooms, reaching students hungry to communicate their feelings about the turmoil, loneliness, and fear of the past year. Paisley from Pablo wrote, “Dear 2020…You were like a crashing airplane/None of us knew/what was going to happen next.” Alonny from Arlee found timeless words about her identity: “The scent of a teepee/the fresh skinned deer/the sound of the drum beating/the sound of the singing/when I see/when I feel/the beautiful/handmade dresses/when I taste the delicious food/I feel so safe when I hear/the drum beat/the warm breeze of the wind/I love being who I am.”

MCPS Missoula Online Academy asked us to teach 5 classes, which was terrific, as we had Montana Arts Council funding and our writers had worked with many of these Missoula teachers. They taught one-hour classes in a format pioneered by Caroline Keys in Arlee—writers made poetry videos, students uploaded new poems to Google Drive and gave online readings—which worked well with shortened school days. We had online readings in Lolo, Missoula Online Academy, Pablo, and Dixon—testimony to the skill, creativity, and technical wizardry of our writers and classroom teachers.

Seeing kids in person in spring 2021, after all of these Zoom meetings, was an immense joy. Our first in-person reading was with Tim Krantz’s fourth-graders at St. Ignatius. It seemed like a miracle to hear these students step up to the mic and read, as the principal recorded them for the parents listening at home. Hearing young poets in Drummond, Potomac, Ronan… it all seemed so fabulous. The fourth-graders in Arlee were so excited to meet up with Caroline Keys in-person that some read as many as 5 poems! At the Words with Wings Summer Camp, it was inspiring to see young writers scamper down the Clark Fork Trail, draw haikus in sidewalk chalk, read on Montana Public Radio's "Pea Green Boat," perform poems in the peony garden.

Fear, innovation, courage, frustration: these were all part of this year, but it was our connection with one another that got us through this year. It made us realize how important and precious writing is for everyone: the young kids, the writers, the classroom teachers, and the parents. Thank you for all you do to support it. As Sheryl Noethe, our artistic director says, “Poetry saves lives.”

Caroline Patterson
Executive Director
# Mission

The board, staff, and writers of the Missoula Writing Collaborative believe that through creative writing, students of all ages can express the worlds inside and outside of themselves. We partner with schools and communities to teach the imaginative power of language. We embrace four core values: creativity, empowerment, inclusion, and excellence. We believe in the power of power to stir imaginations and awaken creativity. We believe in building communities of hope and compassion through writing. In our work, we seek to build communities focused on equity, openness, and trust. We deliver the highest quality services with integrity and accountability.

## Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caroline Patterson</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sheryl Noethe</td>
<td>Artistic Director</td>
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<td>Nick Littman &amp; Jane</td>
<td>Programs Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alex Moore</td>
<td>VISTA 2020–2021</td>
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<td>Alyx Chandler</td>
<td>VISTA 2021–2022</td>
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## Writers

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<tr>
<td>Emily Freeman</td>
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<td>Dana Fitz Gale</td>
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<td>Mark Gibbons</td>
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<td>Caroline E. Keys</td>
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<td>Chris La Tray</td>
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<td>Robert E. Lee</td>
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<td>Nick Littman</td>
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<td>Megan McInerney</td>
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<td>Sheryl Noethe</td>
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<td>Hannah Page</td>
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<td>Julie Stevenson</td>
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<td>Emily Withnall</td>
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## Board

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<tr>
<td>Cynthia Manning</td>
<td>President</td>
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<td>Rose Dickson</td>
<td>Vice President</td>
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<td>Barbara Sims</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
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<td>Carole Addis</td>
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<td>Barbie Beaton</td>
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<td>David Cates</td>
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<td>Melissa Kwasny</td>
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<td>Dr. JoDean Nicolette</td>
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<td>Lois Welch</td>
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<td>Isabella Dixon</td>
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25 Schools Served
This year our writers taught in 25 partner schools across western Montana

Arlee Elementary
Big Sky High School
Bonner Elementary
Chief Charlo Elementary
C.S. Porter Middle
Darby Elementary
Desmet Elementary
Dixon Elementary
Florence-Carleton Elementary
Lolo Elementary
Lowell Elementary
Loyola High School
Missoula Online Academy
Ovando School
Pablo Elementary
Potomac Elementary
Ronan Middle School
Russell Elementary
Seeley-Swan High School
Stevensville Elementary
St. Ignatius Elementary
Target Range Elementary
Woodman School
K. Harvey Wilson Elementary
Missoula Residencies

MWC teacher Nick Littman stands with a young poet reading his work during the Chief Charlo Elementary end-of-residency reading.

An end-of-residency anthology features a student's artwork on the cover.

Students of the Missoula Online Academy share their work on Zoom for a virtual, end-of-residency reading.

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Pantoum Poem
By Kenzie

1 The rain is falling
2 The birds are singing
3 The raccoons are eating
4 The trees are screaming
5 The birds are singing
6 A storm has come
7 The trees are screaming
8 The wind is howling
9 A storm has come
10 The sky is a monster
11 The wind is howling
12 The grass is swaying
13 The sky is a monster
14 The place is a mess
15 The grass is swaying
16 The clouds are angry.
Tribal Residencies

One St. Ignatius student’s ledger art drawing about how the fox got its orange color.

Emily Freeman instructs a class at Dixon over Zoom.

Caroline Keys leads Ronan's fifth-grade poetry reading.

Chris La Tray assists poetry students from K. William Harvey in Ronan during the school's first poetry residency.
**Rural Residencies**

Class picture of a Google classroom meeting during a fourth grade writing residency at Lolo Elementary.

**Pandas**
I hope pandas
Stay here
They are a black
And white mystery
So so beautiful
-Addison, 4th Grade, Lolo

**Untitled**
Once in the ocean
There was a commotion
When the sea horse
Got a divorce
The seahorse's marriage was broken.
-Matilda, 2nd Grade, Ovando

A Words With Wings summer camper at work. Photo by Launi Haygood.
**Untitled**

Stomp, stomp, stomp. A brown bear stomps into the yard. He tries to get the apples from the apple tree. He stands up like a wobbly plate of jelly. He reaches for an apple and misses. He shakes the tree. All the apples fall on his head. Thonk, thud, bash! The bear zooms off in a trail of dust.

~Maddie, *Words With Wings*

**Extracurricular Classes**

A young poet works on her poem in MWC’s outdoor writing class.

Socially-distanced fun in the snow.
Smiles on a trio of Words With Wings summer campers, top; a camper bravely shares her work in front of an audience alongside teacher Emily Walter at the final Words With Wings reading, bottom left; a camper shares work with her family, bottom right. Photos by Launi Haygood.
During Words With Wings 2021, more than 40 campers attended both of MWC's week-long summer camps to learn all about poetry and write their own creative masterpieces. Each morning, students wrote poetry, shared their work, and played word games in classrooms and on campus at the University of Montana. Writing instructors guided them through personal and collaborative exercises in their notebooks.

In the afternoons, students found inspiration for their writing by embarking on field trips to the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula, the Philip L. Wright Zoology Museum, the Clark Fork River, and Big Dipper Ice Cream.

The Rattlesnake Writing Workshop gave high schoolers the chance to do more intensive writing with outings to Montana Museum of Art and Culture and Fact and Fiction bookstore. The whirlwind of a week concluded with a poetry reading and pizza party on Friday.
It's my favorite part of the week! Poetry puts everyone in a good mood and we have so much fun. Students on their own write poetry in their spare time (this wouldn’t happen without the program and Caroline!), it’s great to see them want to do their best.”

-Anonymous Arlee Teacher

According to a 2021 survey of 15 teachers who had a MWC residency in their classroom...

73.3% Of respondents said the residency was “outstanding” in contributing to students' knowledge and skills about writing.

93.3% Of respondents reported they would want a writer-in-residence in their classroom again in the future.
Finances

FY Expenses 2021
- Continuing Education (1%)
- Printing & Publication (3%)
- Advertising (3%)
- Mileage (3%)
- Keeping on the Lights (7%)
- Writers & Staff (83%)

FY Income 2021
- Miscellaneous (3%)
- Fundraising (8%)
- Programming (16%)
- Grants (73%)

Writers & Staff 83%
Programming 16%
Fundraising 8%
Misc. 3%
Office Operations 7%
Printing & Publications 3%
Donors

James Lee and Pearl Burke
Nancy Cook and Tom Berninghousen
D.A. Davidson
The Drollinger Foundation
The Charles Engelhard Foundation
The Gallagher Western Montana Charitable Foundation
First Security Bank
The Jane S. Heman Foundation
The High Stakes Foundation
Julie Gardner Real Estate
The Judy Family Foundation
The Literary Arts Emergency Fund
The Zalec Familian and Lilian Levinson Foundation
The Lewellyn Foundation
Missoula County Public Schools PTAs
Mountain Press
The Montana Arts Council
NEA Art Works
NorthWestern Energy
PayneWest Insurance
Patsy O’Keefe
The Pleiades Foundation
Robert Rajala
The Steele-Reese Foundation
Stockman Bank
Submittable
The Wallace Foundation
The Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation
Lois Welch
The Hawkins Project
Words With Wings summer campers, this page; pencil and paper, next page.
Photos by Launi Haygood. Contact her at earthonupphotography@gmail.com.
We teach kids to love to write!