

**SARABANDE
WRITING LABS
2014-2016**

I WAS WAITING FOR SOMEONE TO COME ALONG—
A WRITER WHO COULD WRITE DOWN MY LIFE STORIES.
**BUT TODAY I REALIZED
I'M THE PERSON
I WAS WAITING FOR.**

Paula H.
Sarabande Writing Labs Alumna



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Americana Community Center, Wellspring, Hotel
 Louisville, Young Poets of Louisville, Hound Dog Press,
 Project Uncaged, Scarlet Hope, Ariel Magazine, Arthur
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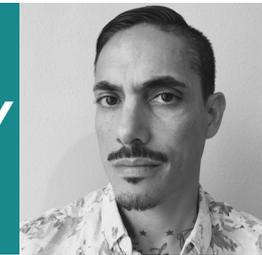


2014-2015 AT A GLANCE

108 SARABANDE WRITING LABS ALUMNAE



ONE CELEBRITY GUEST



THREE FREE PUBLIC READINGS



THREE POETRY ANTHOLOGIES

LOCAL & NATIONAL MEDIA COVERAGE



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear friends, I'd like to tell you a story.

In April, 2014, I was teaching a poetry writing workshop at Hotel Louisville, a homeless shelter for women recovering from drug and alcohol addiction. The women seated in a circle of chairs around me were a cheerful, if skeptical, group. They were already doing some of the most difficult work imaginable, recovering from years of substance abuse and addiction. Now, on top of all that, I wanted them to write a poem, too?

We wrote for a handful of minutes, then shared in turn. When her turn came, Paula, a woman in her sixties, was quietly crying. She explained, "All my life, I was waiting for someone to come along—a writer who could write down my life stories. But today I realized *I'm the person I was waiting for.*"

Since that day, Sarabande Writing Labs has grown from a casual writing circle to a thriving arts education program, serving over one-hundred women in its first year, engaging volunteers from every corner of the Louisville community, and garnering praise from local and national media.

In the following pages you'll find stats and charts with which we attempt to capture a sense of the program's impact so far. But at the very heart of our work is this small yet profound moment with Paula: a woman discovering the value of her own voice for the first time.

With gratitude,

Kristen Miller

Sarabande Writing Labs Director

OUR MISSION

Sarabande Writing Labs is an arts education initiative created by Louisville-based nonprofit publisher, Sarabande Books. The program reinforces Sarabande's mission to connect new audiences with literature by reaching out to under-resourced communities through free writing workshops and literary events. The Sarabande Writing Labs mission is four-part.

REACH Kentucky communities with traditionally fewer arts education resources.

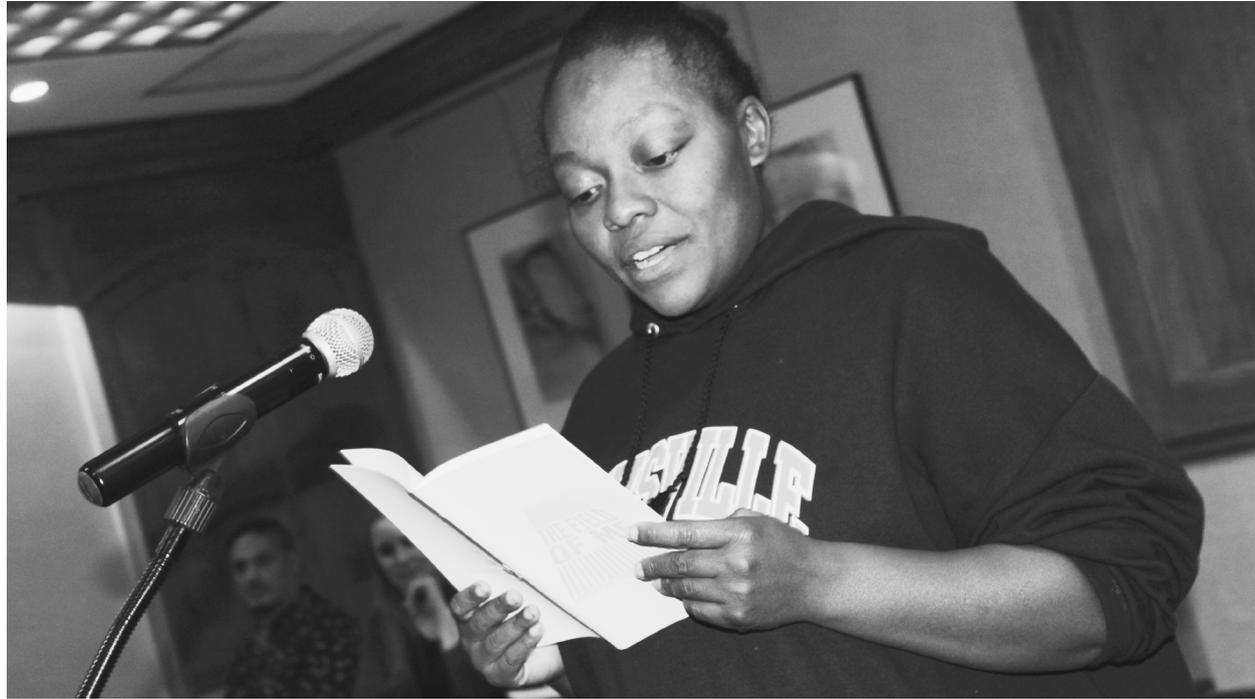
TEACH creative writing workshops characterized by enthusiasm and excellence.

CREATE opportunities for positive, experiential learning in a supportive and respectful environment.

PROMOTE diverse voices through free community readings.

"Sarabande Writing Labs is not just a way to tutor developing writers who have encountered long-term negligence in our society, our city. These resilient women bring powerful urgency to their writing, reminding me that the process of finding the right words can be another kind of hunger."

Miles Fuller
Sarabande Writing Labs volunteer



THE PROGRAM MODEL

Sarabande Writing Labs partners with Louisville-area social service providers to pair enthusiastic teachers with groups of eager writers for weekly small-group writing workshops. Each workshop series culminates in a published anthology of writing and a free community reading.

PARTNERING ORGANIZATIONS

We seek partnerships with organizations specifically serving women. Current and upcoming partners include homeless shelters, drug and alcohol recovery programs, mental health organizations, and adult disabilities centers.

WORKSHOP TEACHERS

Teachers working with Sarabande Writing Labs are experienced leaders and educators with a passion for serving a specific under-resourced community. Teachers receive orientation, training, and ongoing support from Sarabande Writing Labs throughout their workshop series.

WEEKLY WORKSHOPS

Workshop teachers create a curriculum tailored to the particular needs of the group they will teach, taking into account any special needs or circumstances this population entails. Workshops include writing prompts, group sharing and discussion, and revision activities.

“Never have I been more affected by an event than when I read at Hotel Louisville with the beautiful women participating in Sarabande Writing Labs. Every poem struck me down. Every woman splashed a smile across the podium to an audience full of peers, comrades, and compatriots in a common struggle, humanity.”

David Tomas Martinez, Author of *Hustle*
Sarabande Writing Labs Guest Speaker

EVALUATING SARABANDE WRITING LABS

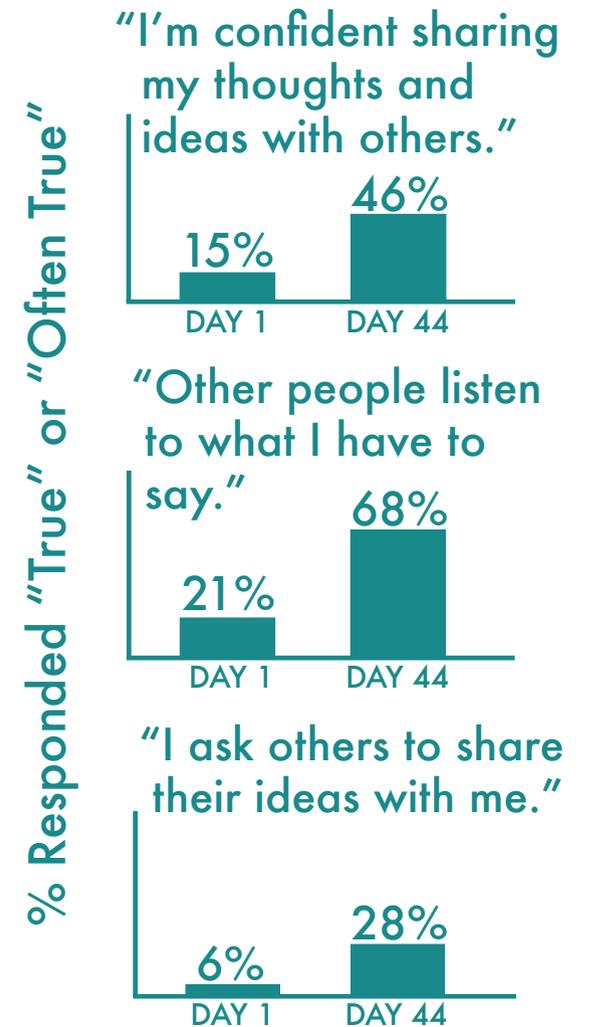
The impact of our writing workshops extends beyond the creation of a single poem or story. While our workshops are not traditional classes, they are educational, focusing on writing, reading, listening, and communication skills. Skills practiced during workshops infuse participants’ daily lives, because **engaging in creative writing is engaging in creative thinking.**

Although our workshops are not group therapy sessions, participants report **increased self-confidence, sense of value in the community, and curiosity about the ideas of their peers.**

Several Sarabande Writing Labs alumnae have since enrolled in degree programs at local colleges and many others now hold leadership roles in their communities.

“Now enrolled in Simmons College of Kentucky, Pamela Gadson is an example of how someone really can write her own happy ending.”

Sarah Ivens for The Courier-Journal



OUR VOLUNTEERS



Sarabande Writing Labs is a true community effort. Our volunteers are college students and professors, writers and editors for area publications, local businesspeople, social service providers, and enthusiastic book lovers who commit to enriching the lives of others through writing.

“It was hearing the writers read their work and seeing how proud they were that made this experience truly wonderful. I left the tutoring session feeling like I had put a smile on someone else’s face and an equally big smile on my own.”

Molly Melia, Sarabande Writing Labs volunteer

“I met women who were genuine, humorous, and talented and who wanted to share their writing with me. It was inspiring to help them tell their stories.”

Mary Kate Baker, Sarabande Writing Labs volunteer



PARTNER WITH US

BRING US TO YOUR COMMUNITY

We are seeking new partnerships with Louisville organizations serving women. If community- and confidence-building writing workshops are a good fit for your clients or residents, please get in touch!

TEACH WITH US

If you have teaching or leadership experience and a passion for a special community, reach out! We’d love to get to know you better.

VOLUNTEER WITH US

Volunteer activities include tutoring, bookmaking, photo/videography and more. If you have a couple of hours to spend, we have a place for you.

SUPPORT SARABANDE WRITING LABS

Your financial gift provides supplies for writers and training for instructors as well as supporting anthology production and free community readings.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
KRISTEN MILLER, KMILLER@SARABANDEBOOKS.ORG
SARABANDEBOOKS.ORG/SWL

\$50 SPONSORS 1 PARTICIPANT

\$250 TRAINS 20 VOLUNTEERS

\$350 SPONSORS 1 PUBLIC EVENT

\$450 PRINTS 100 ANTHOLOGIES

\$600 PROVIDES 1 INSTRUCTOR FEE

\$3K SPONSORS 1 WORKSHOP SERIES

WRITING GALLERY

PEOPLE ROVING

Lara B.

[redacted] people
 [redacted] roving
 [redacted] Moving
 [redacted] modernist
 [redacted] master-planned
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted] They staged
 [redacted]
 [redacted] walks, built a village of driftwood
 and dropped paper from trees.
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted] (This interview
 has been edited and condensed.)

“The ablutions of *mujeres*
firme, badass ladies,
femmes courageux are
 in these words. Let them
 cleanse you.”

David Tomas Martinez, Author of *Hustle*
 Sarabande Writing Labs Guest Speaker

PARADISE

Nicole T.

Me and my best friend went to Paradise
had breakfast

had Salem cakes
fried apples
hashbrowns and

one silver dollar

SWEET POTATO PIE

Jean K.

The woman who loves sweet potato pie bakes on
 Sundays and holidays. She is barefoot, dancing
 around the kitchen, windows open and radio playing.
 Mama is singing as she sets out the things she needs.
 Always said *You put your foot in it*. Never let me taste
 it in bowl—not till she was done. Said *Never to try to*
cut it while it's hot. But when it was still a little warm
 she put ice cream on top and let it run down the sides.

WITH OR WITHOUT BREAD

Jeanette Y.

You get used to cold pizza
with warm soda

You get used to Ramen noodles
half cooked

You get used to leftovers
from the dinner you didn't eat

You get used to bologna and cheese
with or without bread

You get used to ravioli
straight out of the can

You get used to feeling sick
when you think about eating

You get used to not eating
when you just want another drink

VOICES HEARD

Schnita M.

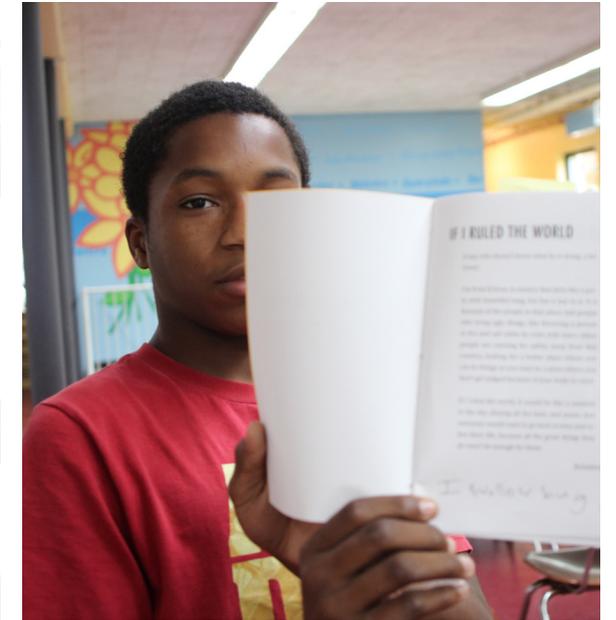
[redacted]
 voices [redacted]
 [redacted] heard
 [redacted] agile and clear
 [redacted]
 Then [redacted]
 [redacted] flat
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted] a language that
 [redacted] could be gentle one moment and
 [redacted] knotty another, yet
 [redacted]
 [redacted] seemed briefly
 [redacted] a single voice
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted] a poem

READ MORE, VOLUNTEER, AND
 DONATE ONLINE:
SARABANDEBOOKS.ORG/SWL

2016 PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

AMERICANA COMMUNITY CENTER

Americana Community Center is an organization in Louisville's South End that provides a spectrum of services to the diverse individuals and families of the metro area, including refugees, immigrants, and those born in the United States.



**EXCERPTS FROM *IF I RULED THE WORLD:*
WORDS BY THE YOUNG WRITERS OF
AMERICANA COMMUNITY CENTER**

WHAT I AM MADE OF

Amina M.

I am made of the light of the sun
I am made of the scent of my mom's cooking
I am made of the night in Kenya—
it sounds like a wave
I am made of sugar water
I am made of clean rooms
the gold light of morning sun.

WHAT IS DIFFERENT

Julio M.

We live in such a cold world, where hate is promoted and handed out like candy, where we have dangerous people sitting at every corner, hoping to get others caught and consumed by hatred and coldness 10x stronger than 51 years ago, when Martin Luther King Jr. would fight these bad actions with words stronger than muscle, but now all of these good values passed down are being lost and forgot, and Hip Hop, which was made to unite, is now being used to divide the good, and promote the bad and evil things that 10 year olds are caught up in, but then our parents were 14 years old, they loved having piñatas, playing with toys, and watching cartoons.

WHO I AM

Abdimajid H.

I'm gonna strive for greatness
Play my hardest and become outrageous

MILK

Pooneh T.

Milk tastes different
because mom is around
because mom is kind

WHO I AM

Claudette U.

I am African
I am a girl
I am my own self
I am I
I am a teenager
I am a unique person
I am positive
I am a high school student
I am the oldest in my family
I like to cook, play music, laugh, chill with my friends
I love using Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Kiki, Viber, Whatsapp, and the other social medias
I am from Africa
I am a person

**2016
AT A GLANCE**

FIVE NEW WORKSHOP INSTRUCTORS



2016 COMMUNITY PARTNERS AMERICANA COMMUNITY CENTER / WELLSRING / YOUNG POETS OF LOUISVILLE / HOUND DOG PRESS / PROJECT UNCAGED / SCARLET HOPE / ARIEL MAGAZINE / ARTHUR K. SMITH FOUNDATION / HAZEL & WALTER T. BALES FOUNDATION



**THREE NEW
WRITING
ANTHOLOGIES**

LOCAL & NATIONAL MEDIA COVERAGE



HI, MY NAME IS PAMELA,
AND I'M AN ADDICT.
BUT TONIGHT
I'M A POET.

Pamela G.
Sarabande Writing Labs Alumna