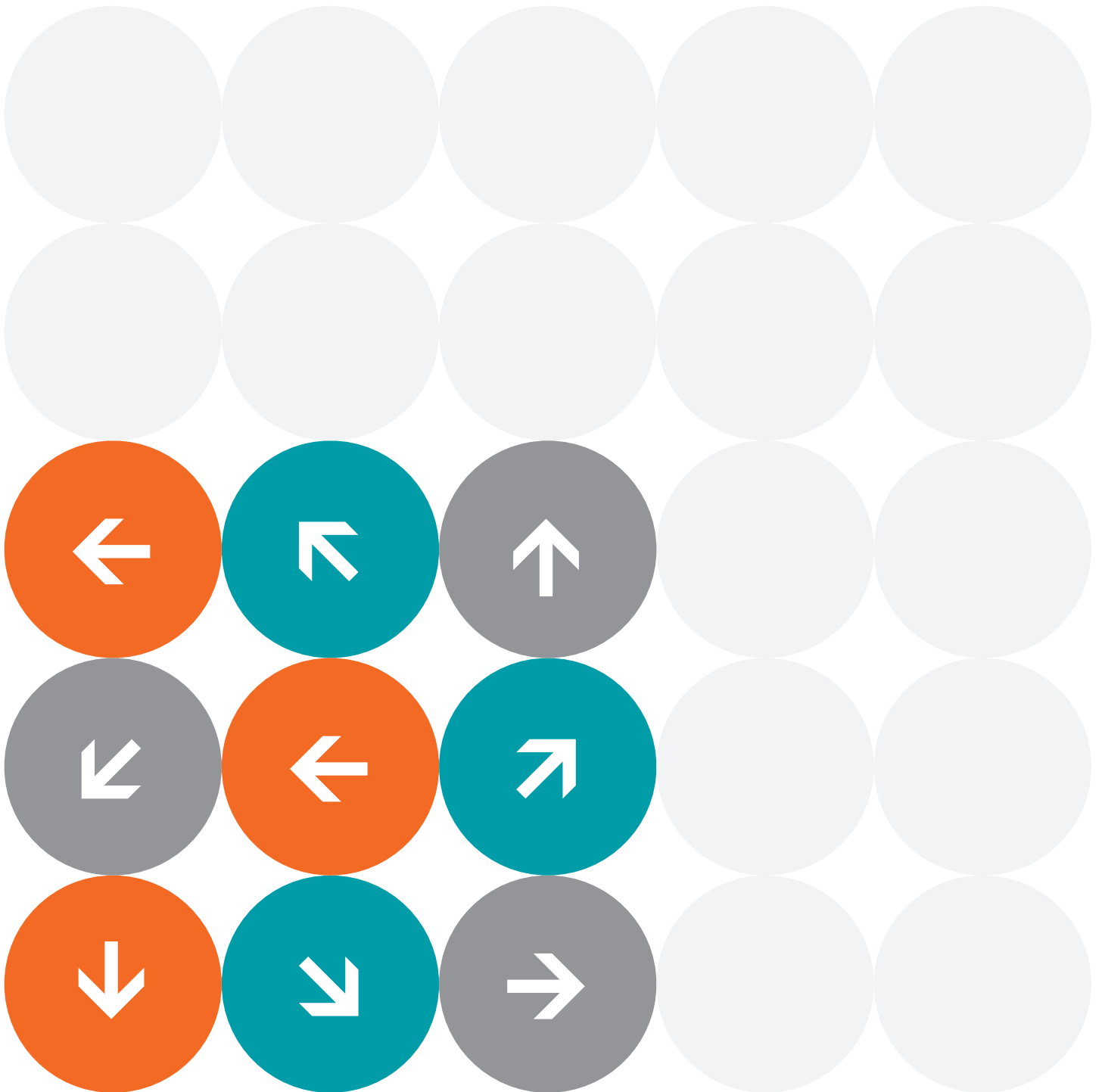




LIGHTHOUSE WRITERS WORKSHOP

2020 ANNUAL REPORT





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THE LIGHTHOUSE MISSION & 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.



ACCESSIBILITY	Lighthouse welcomes all people who want to learn more about writing, no matter their age, experience, or education. 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	Lighthouse believes in the innate creativity of all people by encouraging and fostering experimentation and innovation.
COMMUNITY	Lighthouse provides space and spirit for fellowship. We offer readers unique ways to discover and embrace the human experience. 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.
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION	Lighthouse Writers Workshop upholds a commitment to a diverse community where all participants, employees, and volunteers, whatever their gender, gender expression, race, ethnicity, national origin, age, sexual orientation or identity, education or disability, feel valued and respected.
EXCELLENCE	Lighthouse is dedicated to supporting the highest potential of each writer, whatever their goals. We are committed to increasing awareness of local and national authors producing high quality work.



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



To start, I feel the need to state the obvious: It has been quite a year.

When the country shut down in March of 2020, Lighthouse staff and faculty didn't know what was going to happen. Would we close? Would anyone be interested in our virtual offerings? Who would get laid off first, and how long might a program shutdown last?

And then we got to work. The Lighthouse staff and teaching artists did an incredible job pivoting to Zoom offerings, working long hours and through entire weekends to ensure that Lighthouse's programs would remain available and viable. While so many local arts organizations shuttered or went into hibernation, or closed altogether, Lighthouse thrived.

SOME ENROLLMENT DETAILS

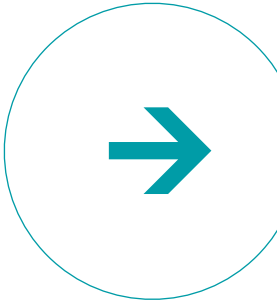
Overall attendance—workshops, classes, events, and community engagement programs—grew exponentially. In all, Lighthouse served more than 31,000 individuals in 2020, compared to approximately 21,000 in 2019.

Youth Community Engagement	Adult Community Engagement	Lit Fest Participation	In-House Adult Workshops Participation	Young Writers Program Participation
↑ 20%	↑ 86.5%	↑ 133%	↑ 135%	↑ 164%

Another remarkable development: the expansion of the Lighthouse community in the global sphere. We've had writers from all over the world join our programming—from places like Costa Rica, Bermuda, New Zealand, India, Puerto Rico, Iceland, and the United Arab Emirates, not to mention from all across the US and Canada. Moving forward, Zoom workshops and offerings are going to be an integral part of our programming.

One other program note: the community engagement team did an incredible job engaging our community partners to reboot programs after the shut-down. They worked with partner organizations to secure proper technology so participants could attend. This is especially important because many of our community engagement participants experienced heightened challenges and stress during the pandemic.

I believe that our success was due to the hard work of our staff and volunteers, but also due to you, our community, who showed up and contributed so much—your support, your creativity, your smiling faces at Zoom events.





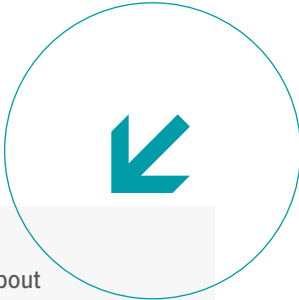
LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The adventures of 2020 speak to something we've always known: creative writing and literature are simple, yet infinitely powerful, avenues for human beings to connect with one another. Writing and reading allow us to know who we are, and help us navigate the unknown and anxiety-making things that none of us can predict. (Please see exhibit A. a global pandemic.)

Thank you for your support, patience, honesty, and your willingness to learn and grow with us. Without your good will, who knows how 2020 would have turned out. Let us join together and celebrate, soon, as Lighthouse continues on this ambitious trajectory.

Regards,

MIKE



I loved being a guest of Lighthouse Writers Workshop, but quickly noticed this project was about much more than bringing authors like me to Denver. A genuinely inviting space had been created where ideas, experiences, and feelings could be exchanged. It's one of the best projects of its kind I've encountered anywhere in the world. Denver should be truly proud.

—Kazuo Ishiguro
author of *The Remains of the Day*, *Never Let Me Go*, and *Klara and the Sun*; recipient of the Nobel Prize in Literature and Man Booker Prize





LETTER FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR



Dear Lighthouse community,

As we approached the end of 2020, the year that marked the beginning of a new era, we found that our place in the community had transformed and broadened, and our mandate reaffirmed: to bring the power of creative writing to as many people as possible.

A lot of press attention is given to the many ways human beings are divided from one another, but those of us lucky enough to work with communities engaged in story sharing get to see a more uplifting picture. As the pandemic struck and we transitioned all our offerings to virtual spaces, one of the first things we did was offer free one-hour workshops to essential workers who had to face the dangers of the pandemic while ensuring our healthcare, food production and delivery, and transportation systems remained operational. Responses from our essential workers' "writing for sanity" workshops poured in, all along the lines of this one:

"This class almost felt like it was divine intervention. It came into my life when I needed it most, and the hour spent was cathartic and encouraging."

—Essential worker who participated in one of the free "writing for sanity" workshops



Many of our pre-pandemic plans had to be shelved or re-envisioned. While we had to put off a visit from Edwidge Danticat until October 2021, we were able to host Yaa Gyasi, celebrate the book release of faculty members Elisa Gabbert, Khadijah Queen, and David Heska Wanbli Weiden (with special guest Craig Johnson), and offer hundreds of workshops and events through Zoom and other online alternatives.

PRE-PANDEMIC SUCCESSES:

- In January, we celebrated our best winter session in 20+ years. The Book Project welcomed the addition of a new mentor, Vauhini Vara, a novelist, short story writer, nonfiction writer, and editor for publications like the *New York Times Magazine*, *The Atlantic*, and *The New Yorker*.
- We managed to secure a dreamy roster of visiting authors for our fifteenth Annual Lit Fest, including Sarah Broom, Justin Torres, Danez Smith, Garth Greenwell, Jenny Offill, Hanif Abdurraqib, Lacy M. Johnson, Melissa Febos, Emily Rapp Black, Akhil Sharma, Jami Attenberg, and many others.
- Our regular faculty roster was bolstered with stunning new talent, writers who expand our capacities into new genres and specialties. We welcomed writers Toby Altman, Alan Brooks, Abby Chabitnoy, Emily Flouton, Sarah Gerard, Trent Hudley, Traci Groff-Jones, Lisa Kennedy, Alyse Knorr, William Henry Lewis, Julia Madsen, Dino Enrique Piacentini, Joey Siara, Melissa Alvarado Sierra, and Mathangi Subramanian, among others.

THINGS THAT WERE POSTPONED:

- 2020 was going to be the inaugural year of Story Fest, a weekend, multidisciplinary celebration of the many narrative arts—drama, music, visual art, dance, and writing, of course—thriving here in Denver. We'd secured presenters like Roxane Gay, Jeff VanderMeer, Saeed Jones, Melissa Febos, Lidia Yuknavitch, and others, but of course we had to shelve those plans for a later date. Instead, we offered some Story Fest "Previews," like Yaa Gyasi's performance and conversation with faculty member Khadijah Queen.



LETTER FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

SOME HIGHLIGHTS, NEVERTHELESS:

- Lighthouse faculty, members, and workshopers were well represented as finalists for the 2020 Colorado Book Awards, in almost every category. At least ten faculty and members had books come out, and hundreds had stories, essays, poems, and hybrid work published in terrific venues. Two Book Project writers got into the Iowa Writers Workshop, and half a dozen more signed with agents.
- Our fifteenth annual Lit Fest was our largest, most robust ever. Thousands from all over the country and overseas attended, and at least five writers met their agents, and two participants in our Lit Fest advanced workshops announced book deals with Big Five publishers by the end of the year (one of them had met her agent at Lit Fest). We were rich with talent, hosting emerging writer fellowship winners and veteran writers from Canada, Washington, Fort Collins, Illinois, New Mexico, New York, and Denver.

I hope this gives you a snapshot of what 2020 looked like from the adult program perspective. Thanks to those who teach for Lighthouse, those who write with us, and those who enjoy hearing and telling stories. We're a richer community because of you.

Thank you,

Andrea Dupree





YOUNG WRITERS PROGRAM UPDATE

What can we say about a year like 2020? It was certainly a difficult one for youth, with children and teens abruptly and protractedly disconnected from school, extracurricular activities, and friends. **Our brightest silver lining by far was seeing our in-house youth workshop enrollment increase by 94%.** Early in the pandemic, we welcomed children and teens across the country and the world into our workshops to virtually explore art museums like DAM and the Louvre and write about art, pen letters to their future selves, and create short films. As the year and the pandemic wore on, summer offered a chance to deeply explore poetry, fiction, screenwriting, book writing, and blogging in a variety of classes and formats. Our summer camp registration numbers had never been higher, and we were thrilled that young people right here in Denver and as far away as Pakistan, as well as from dozens of U.S. states, found our virtual workshops to be a place of community, connection, and creativity.

Many of our youth outreach programs came to an abrupt halt at the start of the pandemic. Though we've been working with partners and sites to offer virtual outreach workshops as often as possible, connecting to Denver's most vulnerable children and teens has been one of our biggest pandemic challenges, and we continue to look for ways to connect with them. See the full list of schools, libraries, museums, neighborhood youth centers, and medical and residential treatment centers we were able to partner with in 2020 at right.



OUR BRIGHTEST SILVER LINING
BY FAR WAS SEEING OUR
IN-HOUSE YOUTH WORKSHOP
ENROLLMENT INCREASE BY **94%**

LIBRARIES AND MUSEUMS

Boulder Public Library
Broomfield Public Library
Denver Public Library, Sam Gary Branch

MEDICAL AND RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT CENTERS

Children's Hospital Medical Day Treatment (Aurora)

NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH CENTERS

Columbine Bridge Project (Denver)
Lincoln Park Bridge Project (Denver)
Sun Valley Youth Center (Denver)
Sims-Fayola Foundation (Denver & Aurora)

SCHOOL ENRICHMENT

Adams County Career Expo
Aspen Creek PreK-8 School (Broomfield)
Bradford K-8 (Littleton)
Broomfield High School
Chatfield Senior High School (Littleton)
Carson Elementary (Denver)
C3 (Creativity, Challenge, Community) (Denver)
Denver School of the Arts
Hulstrom K-8 (Northglenn)
Jamestown Elementary (Jamestown)
Overland High School (Aurora)
Peak to Peak Charter School (Lafayette)
Southmoor Elementary (Denver)
South High School (Denver)
Thornton High School
Two Roads Charter School (Arvada)

TITLE I AND ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS

Title I is a federal education program that supports low income students throughout the nation. Funds are distributed to high poverty schools, as determined by the number of students (40% or more) who qualify for free or reduced lunch.

Arapahoe Ridge High School (Boulder)
Boulder Prep High School
Green Gables Elementary (Lakewood)
Joan Farley Academy (Denver)
Jefferson County Open School (Lakewood)
McLain Community High School (Lakewood)
North Arvada Middle School
Options Secondary (Littleton)
Peak Expeditionary School (Wheat Ridge)

SCHOOLS OUTSIDE DENVER METRO AREA

Eaton High School (Weld County)
Fort Morgan High School
Fountain Valley School (Colorado Springs)
Genoa Hugo High School (Lincoln County)
Liberty High School (Colorado Springs)
Summit High School (Breckenridge)



YOUNG WRITERS PROGRAM UPDATE

One of the ways we've attempted to reach out to a wider population of young people during the pandemic was to significantly increase the number of **free workshops** we offer in-house throughout the year, removing the barriers of tuition and/or applying to receive financial aid. Our free **Academic Writing Help Sessions** met every Wednesday and offered small group help on school writing assignments. We also launched **Writing in Color for Teens**, a free workshop for teens of color led by local, working writers of color. This workshop encouraged talented and curious teens to explore ideas, share their writing, celebrate successes, and talk about challenges they face. **Writing for Happiness and Stress Relief**, also free, offered young writers ages 12-18 a chance to experience how creative writing can reduce anxiety and increase happiness and resilience (perhaps more important for them now than ever). And free monthly **Creative Writing 101** offered youth new to creative writing a chance to see what it's all about, while monthly free virtual **Youth Open Mics** gave our young writers a place to share their words and work. We're pleased to report that these programs continue into 2021 and beyond.

Speaking of sharing work, **our annual youth anthology, *And We Created Words***, included over 30 students this year from a variety of workshops. And happening in-person just before the pandemic began in March 2020, **Poetry Out Loud** served over two thousand students participating across the state. Unlike many other states across the country, we were able to hold an in-person Poetry Out Loud State Championship, and Kiya Cockrell from Fountain Valley School in Colorado Springs was crowned the 2020 State Champion.

As a measure of our children and teens' experiences in our programs, student evaluations from 2020 reflect high scores: 88% of students both said they could better express themselves and 85% reported gaining confidence in writing; 90% reported that they found a creative outlet and 89% said that they learned something new about making a story, poem, or other piece of writing; and 86% felt like part of a writing community and 76% said that they learned something new about someone in their workshop. We're looking forward to serving youth both in-person and virtually in the year to come, and we can't wait to welcome more children and teens to Lighthouse.



Kiya Cockrell from Fountain Valley School in Colorado Springs was crowned the 2020 Poetry Out Loud State Champion. Kiya was featured on Denver's Channel 4 (CBS)—watch it at bit.ly/polchamp.





COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM UPDATE

If you're lucky enough to invite in and build a relationship with a community, they will share their stories. This is a sacred act. At Lighthouse we are honored that so many communities have invited us in and shared their stories with us over the past five years.

2020 was a year where we needed community more than ever, but we couldn't gather in our usual ways. We had high hopes for our in-person programming as we started the year, with ambitious plans and exciting collaborations on the books as we geared up for the launch of Storyfest, aimed at celebrating the various aspects of storytelling within our community. And then the world shut down.

And so our plans changed. We hosted our first virtual event on March 27, just weeks into the pandemic, days after the state issued a stay-at-home order. The event—a reading with José Olivarez and Tara Shea Nesbit—was just the first in a long line of virtual Happy Hours with authors from all across the United States. Our goal with this event, which quickly spread to our other community programs, was simply to give folks a place to check in with each other on a regular basis, especially at a time when we were all feeling so disconnected from the outside world. This is what our community looked like for the vast majority of 2020: a series of Zoom events and readings, of community check-ins. We learned how to read, write, laugh, and cry with one another as we shared our works over sometimes unstable connections.

And through all this, our community program expanded. We continued our ongoing programs like Hard Times, Writing with Cancer and the Office of Veteran Affairs writing program, added drop-in writing sessions with Museo De Las Americas and Denver Botanic Gardens. We connected monthly with Queer Creatives and Writing in Color, hosted our second annual Writing in Color/Queer Creatives Retreat virtually, with participants joining from Navajo Nation, New York, Chicago, Seattle, and across the country. We partnered with MCA Denver, Colorado Photographic Arts Center, Denver Museum of Nature and Science and a number of other community organizations across the Denver-Metro area.

Over the course of 2020, we were fortunate to have 4,035 youth attend community engagement events, 11,292 Lighthouse participants attend events such as those free Happy Hour readings, and 7,233 people attended adult community engagement programming.

As we look ahead to 2021, we see a much more inclusive Lighthouse community, spread out across Denver, Colorado, the United States, and other countries, connected by our love of writing and our shared community. We look forward to seeing one another in person or over Zoom.

Manuel Aragon
Community Engagement Manager



“I just wanted to say thank you for the wonderful class Lighthouse provided to our Veterans. The participants felt they had a purpose and were a meaningful part of the group; often they can feel isolated so that is a great outcome. They enjoyed the topics and are inspired to continue to write through the pandemic and in the future. It gave them something to look forward to each week and they enjoyed the socialization. We look forward to having another class in the future!”

—Sarah El Hage, site coordinator at Office of Veteran Affairs,
about the VA Writing Workshops





WEEKLY SESSION WORKSHOP
REVENUE



\$488,679 to \$543,000

12% INCREASE

LIT FEST
REVENUE



\$311,731 to \$323,300

4% INCREASE

ONE-DAY WORKSHOPS
REVENUE



\$42,865 to \$95,439

122% INCREASE

MEMBERSHIP
REVENUE



\$74,260 to \$79,072

6.5% INCREASE

YOUTH WORKSHOPS
REVENUE



\$70,795 to \$136,596

93% INCREASE

INSTRUCTOR FEES PAID



\$790,967

9.1% INCREASE





ASSETS	2020	2019
Current Assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$123,353	\$458,634
Accounts receivable, less allowance for doubtful receivables of \$12,605 (2020) and \$3,750 (2019)	99,197	382,375
Promises to give	37,647	52,457
Pledges receivable, current	96,250	297,141
Prepaid expenses	26,301	17,246
Total current assets	<u>382,748</u>	<u>1,207,853</u>
Property and equipment	189,559	208,218
Less accumulated depreciation	109,886	144,034
	<u>79,673</u>	<u>64,184</u>
Other Assets:		
Intangible asset, net of accumulated amortization of \$4,308 (2020) and \$2,640 (2019)	2,360	692
Capital campaign development in process	34,672	154,806
Deposit	6,250	6,250
Total other assets	<u>43,282</u>	<u>161,748</u>
Noncurrent Assets:		
Rose Community Endowment	31,316	34,317
Accounts receivable, noncurrent		66,150 -
Pledges receivable, noncurrent	30,000	414,693
Total noncurrent assets	<u>61,316</u>	<u>515,160</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$567,019</u>	<u>\$1,948,945</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities:		
Accounts payable	\$69,069	\$25,107
Payroll liabilities	34,102	31,827
Deferred revenue	116,268	544,325
Class deposits	1,984	3,204
Total current liabilities	<u>221,423</u>	<u>604,463</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>221,423</u>	<u>604,463</u>
Net Assets:		
Without donor restrictions:		
Undesignated	186,847	271,921
Board designated	7,000	7,000
	<u>193,847</u>	<u>278,921</u>
With donor restrictions:		
Purpose restricted	127,433	1,038,244
Endowment fund	24,316	27,317
	<u>151,749</u>	<u>1,065,561</u>
Total Net Assets:	<u>345,596</u>	<u>1,344,482</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u>\$567,019</u>	<u>\$1,948,945</u>

**2020**

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Support, revenue and gains:			
Earned income	\$1,307,986	-	\$1,307,986
Memberships	42,137	-	42,137
Donations	477,266	1,125,373	1,602,639
Paycheck Protection Program Grant	155,473	-	155,473
Donations	34,800	-	34,800
Investment income (expense)	(113)	3,001	2,888
	<u>2,017,549</u>	<u>1,128,374</u>	<u>3,145,923</u>
Satisfaction of program restrictions	214,562	(214,562)	-
	<u>2,232,111</u>	<u>913,812</u>	<u>3,145,923</u>
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	<u>2,232,111</u>	<u>913,812</u>	<u>3,145,923</u>
Expenses:			
Workshops	1,527,476	-	1,527,476
Other activities	209,668	-	209,668
Management and general	239,258	-	239,258
Fundraising	170,635	-	170,635
	<u>2,147,037</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,147,037</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>2,147,037</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,147,037</u>
Changes in net assets	85,074	913,812	998,886
Net assets, beginning of year	193,847	151,749	345,596
	<u>278,921</u>	<u>1,065,561</u>	<u>1,344,482</u>
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	<u>\$278,921</u>	<u>\$1,065,561</u>	<u>\$1,344,482</u>

Creative writing and literature are simple, yet infinitely powerful ways for human beings to connect with one another, and to themselves. Writing and reading allow us to know who we are, and they help us come to terms with the unknown and anxiety-making things that happen to us.





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RedLine Contemporary Arts Center

\$5,000+

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Lighthouse Writers Workshop is Colorado's nonprofit literary arts center whose mission is to ensure literature maintains its proper prominence in the culture and individuals achieve their fullest potential as artists and human beings. For over 20 years, Lighthouse has offered award-winning writing workshops, author events, and community engagement programs to people of all ages and backgrounds in Denver and beyond. For more information, visit lighthousewriters.org.

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