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Sustaining donors of \$30 a month or more can join our **Circuit Board** for regular updates and special inside looks, and more! See the return envelope for details.

thank you!



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826michigan 2015



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y dear friends,

Nine years ago, I walked into 826michigan—then in its earliest days. Like our office space and tutoring lab today, it was a little cluttered with homework pages, rough drafts of essays and short stories, laptop power cords, and cardboard boxes full of books. My first day on the job, a well-regarded local writer coached 14-year-olds through a workshop called Poetry of Audacity and Weirdness. Adult volunteers knelt beside each student and coaxed them into not just excellent writing, not just stories they'd never told, and much more than audacious weirdness. 826michigan volunteers inspire school-aged students to celebrate their individuality, to ask for help when they need it, and to do their very best work. It's as true today as it was that September afternoon in the poetry workshop.

That first year, we were proud to have served about **500** school-aged students—mostly from Ann Arbor-- with tutoring and writing workshops. That's about **15%** of the **3,200+** students we're serving now in Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, and Detroit in programs that include in-school activities, field trips, neighborhood programs, and more free writing and tutoring at our sites in Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor. In 2016, we'll open our Detroit site and offer our full range of programs there as well.

And in the beginning, a handful of supporters helped us meet our budget needs. Now, an astonishingly large and diverse group of supporters give to us in what feels like a million important ways.

You may be one of the adults whose thoughtful help has urged on some of our students. Or perhaps your contributions help us meet the expenses to run our programs. Or maybe you're in your twenties now and benefited from writing audacious poetry with us sometime in your adolescence. **I'm inviting you to think about how you can contribute generously to 826michigan's next decade.**



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Student-centered individualized attention has always and will always be at the heart of 826michigan. Like I did this morning, you can still walk in here any day of the week and overhear a heartfelt conversation about geometry homework, a giggle from behind a chapter book, or our copier faithfully churning out chapbooks of student writing.

How humbling and exhilarating to know that you believe in us—and importantly in 826michigan’s students—so much that your gifts of time, money, and more have brought us this far in our first decade. I hope you share my pride that among the many changes, your support has allowed us to keep the powerful and essential core exactly the same: helping students succeed in school and in life. Please donate now to 826michigan to bring meaningful support to thousands more students in 2016 and beyond.

With gratitude,



Amanda Uhle
Executive Director



p.s. In addition to making a year end financial gift, we'll be grateful to have you consider making a commitment to volunteer or a pledge to join our **\$30/month** donation club, the **Circuit Board**. Details enclosed!

826michigan served **3,229** students from Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor, and Detroit.



Our volunteers contributed **23,460** hours to the benefit of our students.

826michigan students were published in **739** different publications.

826michigan served **93** teachers and worked with students from **128** different schools.



520 adults served as volunteers in 826michigan programs.



“There are few places as magical as 826michigan. Not only is it a welcoming environment, but it’s a space where you can immediately see your impact.”

Katie Corbitt, 826michigan volunteer



“The community that I developed as a student at 826michigan has been incredibly important in pushing me to pursue my passion of writing in college. The confidence I gained from 826michigan workshops has certainly carried through to my experiences in college, and I am so grateful for it.”

Hanel Baveja, 826michigan alumna & second year student at Harvard College



“My students learned to think of themselves as writers outside the classroom walls. The more reluctant writers benefited from the satisfaction of their hard work being ‘approved’ at the end of the morning. They learned that their writing has a purpose, even if they are only seven years old.”

Elsa Musko, former 826michigan intern & current first grade public school teacher



*“The most memorable moment for me was when they commented on my work. It made me feel good and like **I could do anything.**”*

Terrance, 826michigan fifth grade student

*“They **changed my writing skills.** They cheered me on when I thought I couldn't do it.”*

Kasim, 826michigan fourth grade student

WHERE IS IT COMING FROM?



In 2014, 826 National founder, novelist, and artist Dave Eggers was so inspired by our after-school writing club students at Detroit’s James & Grace Lee Boggs School that he decided to try his hand at illustrating their stories. The result is a *New York Times*-lauded collection of weird, funny, and heartfelt drawings and stories: *Where is it Coming From?*

A LANTERN OF FIREFLIES



In 2015, Huron High School students struck out on a most noble and arduous literary adventure—composing the bedtime stories that they wish they had read when they were younger. *A Lantern of Fireflies* collects their magical, adventurous tales alongside original illustrations by world-famous artists.



Did you know?



- Until 2010, we never had more than three staff members. In fact, Program Director Amy Sumerton has been here since the day we opened, and Amanda Uhle joined the following year.
- Liberty Street Robot Supply & Repair was born in 2008. Before that, robot supplies were difficult to locate in Southeast Michigan.
- 826michigan moved to Liberty Street in 2007. Except for us, Kilwin's and Running Fit, every other neighboring business on the block has changed since then.

