

# 826michigan



826michigan  
inspires  
school-aged  
students to write  
confidently and  
skillfully with the  
help of  
adult volunteers in  
their communities.



# At a Glance



Communities Served	Detroit, Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor
Active Volunteers	500
Students Reached	3,229
Publications Per Year	20-25
Hours of Programs Per Week	45

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# History

Established in Ann Arbor in 2005, 826michigan is based on the successful model of 826 Valencia. 826 Valencia was founded in 2002 by award-winning writer and philanthropist Dave Eggers and educator Nínive Calegari.

Eggers and Calegari saw a need – students living alongside them in San Francisco’s Mission District had little access to after-school programs – and an opportunity – the Mission District was also full of writers and artists who had time during the day and the desire to contribute to their community. 826 was born as a means to connect artists and students, and quickly achieved success as well as national recognition.

Today, there are 826 centers in seven cities (Ann Arbor/Detroit, Boston, Chicago, DC, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco) and 826 National, an umbrella organization. Each 826 chapter is an individually incorporated nonprofit and provides programming developed by and for local students.





## A New Chapter



826michigan first opened in 2005 in an office park on South State Street in Ann Arbor. In 2007, the organization moved its headquarters downtown in an effort to increase its accessibility to volunteers and students. In 2008, 826michigan opened Liberty Street Robot Supply & Repair, a creative novelty shop which raises enough revenue to offset our rent and utility costs.

826michigan continues to grow, having launched programs in Detroit in 2013 and partnering with beezy's café in downtown Ypsilanti for greater visibility and accessibility to Washtenaw County students. In 2016, 826michigan will open the doors to a second permanent location, the Detroit Robot Factory, in Detroit's Historic Eastern Market.

826michigan has been featured in *Huffington Post Detroit*, *The Ann Arbor News*, *The Detroit News*, *The Detroit Free Press*, *WDIV*, and *Model D Media*. For more 826michigan press coverage please visit [www.826michigan.org/press](http://www.826michigan.org/press).



# Awards & Honors

- 2015—Knight Arts Challenge Winner, *Knight Foundation*
- 2015—Governor’s Service Award Finalist, *Outstanding Volunteer Program*
- 2015—Outstanding Community Collaboration Award, *Eastern Michigan University*
- 2014—Metro Detroit’s Most Innovative Nonprofit, *Metromode Media*
- 2013—Crain’s Best Managed Nonprofit Finalist, *Crain’s Detroit Business*
- 2013—Library of Congress American Literacy Prize awarded to 826 National
- 2013—Excellence in Academic Service-Learning, *Eastern Michigan University Office of Academic Service Learning*
- 2012—Leader in the Literary Arts Awards, *Ann Arbor Book Festival*
- 2008—“20 In Their Twenties” Award for Innovative Leadership Executive Director Amanda Uhle, *Crain’s Detroit Business*

# Programs



826michigan offers a variety of programs to young writers and students across Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, and Detroit. Designed to enrich public school curricula, our programs are provided completely free of charge.

For schedules and more information about our programs, please visit [826michigan.org/our-programs](http://826michigan.org/our-programs) or contact Education Director Catherine Calabro at [catherine@826michigan.org](mailto:catherine@826michigan.org) or (734) 761-3463.

- **Tutoring**

One-on-one homework help for all subjects is available to students ages 8 to 18. Currently 826michigan offers tutoring Monday through Thursday at the Liberty Street Tutoring Lab in Ann Arbor from 3:30 to 5:30 pm, and the Washington Street Tutoring Lab in Ypsilanti from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. No registration is required for this program.

- **Workshops**

826michigan offers a variety of evening and weekend workshops designed to inspire students creatively and to encourage them to take on projects that they may not normally have the time or assistance necessary to attempt in school. Workshop schedules are released quarterly at [www.826michigan.org](http://www.826michigan.org).



# Programs

- **Field Trips**

826michigan field trips welcome classes from area schools into our Ann Arbor writing lab, where students respond to creative writing prompts, play interactive games, and participate in other activities designed to foster interest and excitement for writing.

- **Publishing**

826michigan publishes two professionally bound volumes of student writing each year – a Young Authors' Book Project in partnership with one of our in-school programs and the 826michigan *OMNIBUS*, an anthology of student works. We also publish a variety of small chapbooks, zines, and digital journals. Many student publications are available for sale in the Liberty Street Robot Supply & Repair and in our online store, [www.onwardrobots.com](http://www.onwardrobots.com).

- **In-school Residencies**

Volunteers work in classrooms in Ypsilanti, Detroit, and Ann Arbor, assisting teachers and giving one-on-one attention to the students who need it most. 826michigan carefully selects partner schools to maximize our impact in under-resourced classrooms.

- **Drop-in Writing**

Available at our location on Liberty Street in Ann Arbor and at various branches of the public libraries in Ypsilanti and Detroit, 826michigan's Drop-in Writing sessions encourage students to develop their writing skills outside of the school environment. No registration is required for this program.



# The Liberty Street Robot Supply & Repair



Crafted initially as a practical solution to the retail-only zoning designation of 826 Valencia Street, San Francisco, 826 storefronts have become integral parts of the community identities of each chapter. At 826michigan, the Liberty Street Robot Supply & Repair offers a fun, intriguing space to attract passersby who may never have heard of 826michigan and to recruit new volunteers and donors. The store's window is a collaborative space, designed by local artists.

The LSRS&R sells such robotic curiosities as the Positronic Brain and Whistling Femur, as well as various publications featuring 826michigan student work. The wacky, whimsical store atmosphere also helps to establish 826michigan as a “third space,” allowing students to learn in an educational environment that does not feel like school.



# Volunteers



826michigan is fortunate to have many talented, dedicated, and energetic volunteers, without whom our programs would not be possible.

Volunteers facilitate many of our programs, from tutoring to field trips to drop-in workshops, and we are endlessly grateful for all of the time and hard work they put in for our students. Each month we spotlight one outstanding individual on our Volunteer of the Month page at: [www.826michigan.org/volunteer-of-the-month](http://www.826michigan.org/volunteer-of-the-month).

We also host a number of social activities for our volunteers, including board game nights, networking chats, and monthly social outings. More information about our volunteer program can be found at [www.826michigan.org/volunteer](http://www.826michigan.org/volunteer).





# 826michigan Events

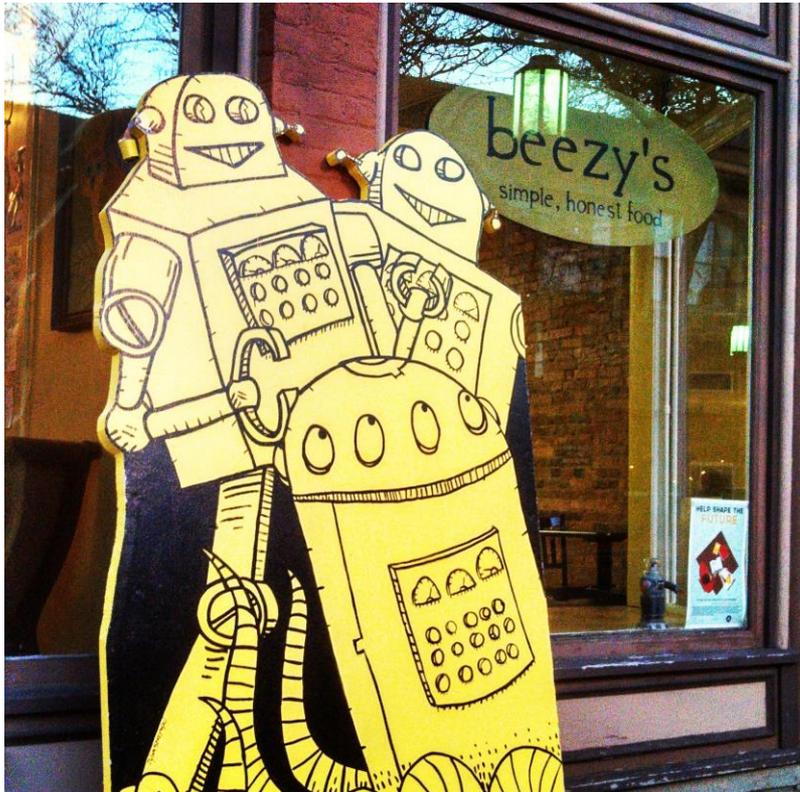
826michigan hosts a variety of fundraising events each year, including The Storymakers Dinner, Sweater Weather, Paddlestar Galactica, and—our most popular—Mittenfest—an annual winter music festival in Washtenaw County.

Now in its tenth year, Mittenfest was first conceived in 2005 as a benefit concert for the newly-formed 826michigan. The event has since grown into a five-day winter extravaganza., organized by a dedicated community of volunteers.

For more information about Mittenfest, please visit [www.mittenfest.org](http://www.mittenfest.org).



# 826michigan and the Business Community



826michigan is grateful to have the support of many wonderful businesses and organizations across Southeast Michigan. Our supporters make up a diverse profile, including Washington Street Tutoring partner beezy's café, Suburban Chevrolet Cadillac of Ann Arbor, The Eyrie, and Ogmog Creative among many others.

Each month we honor one generous supporter on our Supporter of the Month page at: [826michigan.org/get-involved/donate/supporter-of-the-month/](http://826michigan.org/get-involved/donate/supporter-of-the-month/).



# 826michigan Staff

## Executive Bio: Amanda Uhle

Executive Director **Amanda Uhle** has over twelve years of nonprofit and arts administration experience and has served as the Executive Director of 826michigan since September 2006. She holds degrees in Communication and Visual Arts and has exhibited her prints several times through the years.

Uhle has earned a reputation in the Southeast Michigan region as a leader in the nonprofit sector, speaking at TEDxDetroit in October 2012 and serving on the University Musical Society Advisory Committee at University of Michigan from 2007-2011. In 2008, Uhle was named one of *Crain's Detroit Business* "20 in Their Twenties", an award celebrating innovation and leadership.

*Additional staff bios are available upon request.*





## Student Writing Samples

826michigan produces two professionally bound volumes of student work each year along with countless smaller chapbooks, zines, and digital journals. Publishing student work is a critical component of 826michigan programming and is one of the most significant ways that we celebrate and honor the creative and original ideas of the young writers we serve.

Across all of 826michigan's programs, students are asked to respond to a variety of different writing prompts and interactive scenarios designed to engage the imagination and develop concrete writing skills. The following samples are only a few of the countless wonderful stories, poems, and narratives our students have created.





# The Adventures of Jacob Tootoo

By Mrs. Valerio's First  
Grade Class

Adams STEM Academy

PJ Day Field Trip

**PAGE 1**

One day, in the sky over Ypsilanti, Michigan, Jacob Tootoo was swimming around, monitoring for any signs of danger. He was a gigantic fish made out of banana split ice cream. He was in charge of protecting all of the other fish from dangerous sharks. His best friend Isis, a purple polka-dotted dinosaur cowboy, was hanging out with him and they played dominoes during his breaks.

All of a sudden, down on Earth, they saw a spaceship landing in the middle of Ypsilanti. A strange looking creature jumped out and headed straight for the bank. It was big and furry and looked a lot like a wolf, except it was made out of chocolate.

“What should we do?” Isis said to Jacob Tootoo.

“Let’s spy on him and see what he’s up to,” Jacob replied. “Maybe that alien just needs to cash a check. Let’s hack into the bank’s security cameras and watch what happens next.”

As Shawn the Chocolate Wolf walked into the bank, he pulled out a laser and shot it at the wall, covering it in peanut butter and jelly. “Anyone who gets in my way gets covered in goo,” threatened Shawn. “Hand over the money.”

The bank tellers looked down at their fancy business suits and stepped out of the way.

“Thanks. Now I’m going to be able to upgrade my peanut butter and jelly laser to make it even stickier,” Shawn laughed as he ran out of the bank and headed off to the Laser Store.





# The Adventures of Jacob Tootoo

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**PAGE 2**

Back up in the sky, Jacob Tootoo and Isis were very upset. “We’ve got to stop him,” said Isis. “There’s nothing worse than extra-sticky peanut butter and jelly.”

“I bet my ice laser can stop him,” said Jacob. “There are certain benefits to being made out of a banana split.” He and Isis flew down and confronted Shawn. Jacob zapped him with the ice laser and he froze in his tracks. Jacob and Isis were very proud of themselves and began to plan their Saving the World Celebration Party.

Just then, the clouds in the sky started to clear and a beam of sunlight came down and hit Shawn. As it warmed him up, he began to defrost and pretty soon he was able to move around again. He looked at Jacob and Isis and quickly ran away. Isis jumped on her trusty horse and rode up ahead to block off the road. She spread glue all over the street so that Shawn had nowhere to run. Jacob swam up behind him and tossed a boomerang at his head. Shawn was still a little stiff from the ice laser, but he was able to duck out of the way as the boomerang passed him. He stood back up and aimed the peanut butter and jelly laser at Jacob. Just as he was getting ready to fire, the boomerang came back and smacked him in the head, knocking him out. Jacob and Isis ran up and handcuffed Shawn, so they could take him off to jail and finally save the world once and for all.

**THE END**





# A Flower With No Petals

By Victor Nembhard

Age 7

YDL Youth Drop-in  
Writing

Without you I'm like  
a car without wheels. I'm like  
a tree with no leaves. I'm like  
a mouth with no teeth. I'm like  
Earth without sun. I'm like  
a queen with no king. I'm like  
a flower with no petals.  
Because without petals a flower is plain.





# Excruciating

By McKinley Garcia

Age 10

Drop-in Tutoring

If I were any condiment I would be hot sauce because I could give the excruciating burn to food, or I could give the cool tickle to your tongue.

I would be pineapple-flavored because it's an exotic flavor for hot sauce, and it has an exotic color for hot sauce because it's yellow and most people think of hot sauce as red or green, and its texture is not the same as most ingredients in hot sauce.

Tomatoes are saucy and smooth, and cilantro is like a cat's tongue, whereas pineapple is spongy and when you bite into one, it is chewy and it feels like you are exploding little balloons filled with pineapple juice.

And I would be behind the ketchup and mustard, and next to the sugar packets, and the salt and pepper would be to the left of me. I would be behind the ketchup and mustard because it would be mysterious.

The sugar packets would be to my right because sugar is my right-hand man/woman. And salt and pepper are my left-hand men/women.

