

Acknowledgements

“It is my hope that whoever reads this finds that though the road back for some of us is hard, it is not impossible. Don’t give up!”

~ Billy Wagner, *Beginnings XIII* author biography

Beginnings XIII is not just a collection of words. It is the result of the perseverance of many writers – finding just the right word, making time to attend class, and working to accomplish goals they set for themselves. For some, writing is a chance to put thoughts into poetry; for others it is a chance to tell a story they’ve been developing in their minds for years or to inspire their children and grandchildren. Some write to express themselves in a language they didn’t grow up speaking. For many ABLE authors, writing demonstrates that their determination is stronger than any obstacle put before them.

This year over 300 ABLE authors submitted nearly 400 pieces of writing to be considered for publication in *Beginnings XIII*. Putting words to paper in just the right way is difficult in itself, but letting others read those words is even more difficult. We celebrate all ABLE authors and acknowledge the courage it takes to let others read their work. Each author should feel a tremendous sense of pride in their accomplishments.

The pages of *Beginnings XIII* showcase the artistic skills of three ABLE students. Santos Yolivan Cabrera is the artist responsible for the work that graces the front cover; Mario Alexander Martinez created “Taking Flight,” located on the back cover; and Hikaru Sato’s “Heartful Wind” is found on page viii.

We are so grateful to the Ohio Board of Regents State Adult Basic and Literacy Education program for their ongoing support of the Ohio Writers’ Conference and *Beginnings*.

To the teachers and tutors in Ohio ABLE programs: your dedication, guidance, and leadership give your students the opportunity to achieve not only their goals, but also their dreams.

A special thank you to the 2010 Writers' Conference featured speakers: Ray McNiece, nationally recognized poet and performer, who is our keynote speaker, and Lyn Ford, Writers' Conference resident storyteller, who inspires us all with her Home Fried Tales.

Finally, we'd like to acknowledge the retirement of Dr. Nancy Padak, who has been Project Administrator for the Ohio Literacy Resource Center since its inception in 1993. Nancy's support, guidance, and expertise have been invaluable to the OLRC and the *Beginnings* project. It was because of Nancy's desire to publish student writing that this project was started and, because of the dedication of ABLE students and teachers, it continues to flourish. We are forever grateful.

"I never knew I was a writer until we had our first writing workshop at Godman Guild. That goes to show that you never know what you can do until you try."

~ Marketa Slaughter, *Beginnings XIII* author biography