

## *A uthor Biographies*

FUMIKO ADAIR (p. 17)

I was born and raised in Japan and now I live in Cuyahoga Falls with my American husband and our only daughter, Sarah. Since I have been in the Self Even Start program, I have learned that learning is fun and easy. This program gives me the privilege of entering this writing contest. It is an exciting reward to see my writings published!

LAAT ARIER (pp. 39, 41)

A survivor from war-torn Sudan, Laat has a powerful, profound story to share which inspires readers to reflect on the significance and repercussions of 9/11/01.

MICHAEL BALLENTINE (pp. 123, 136)

I am a 29-year-old husband and father. I would like to thank my wife Sandra and her family for their love and encouragement for my accomplishment. I would also like to thank my daughter Ellie, for her innocent affection, as well as my family for their support. This is a lifelong dream for me, and I now hope, with my renewed interest in writing, this is a springboard into something bigger. Remember winners never quit and quitters never win.

LILLIE BARGAINER (p. 62)

As soon as Lillie learned about the Ohio Writers' Conference, she was most anxious to share her story, and what a story unfolded! Such inspiration to all!

MELISSA BARTLEY (pp. 61, 81)

My name is Melissa Bartley. I am 23 years old, born August 25, 1979. I have 2 beautiful children, ages 2 and 3, and a loving significant other who supports me 100%. My passion in life is to help others in their time of need.

RESHAUNDA BEAL (p. 28)

Reshaunda is 27 years old and was born in Hamilton County, Ohio. She attends the YWCA LEARN program.

THELMA L. BENNETT (p. 113)

JOHN BERLING (p. 89)

I am a husband of 31 years, a father of a boy who was born on my birthday and a daughter who was daddy's girl, and a grandfather of a very smart grandson. I am a man of faith who trusts in God to help me day by day. I attend Live Oaks ABLE class and hope to get my GED soon.

TAMMIE BOLING (p. 128)

I am a 52-year-old woman. One night I had trouble sleeping because the words of my poem kept running through my mind. I couldn't sleep until I got up and wrote them down. Returning to school has re-sparked my interest in writing. When I was younger I used to love to try to write. Through the years my confidence got shattered. I am so grateful to have my confidence return and to begin to find joy in my ability to write.

SHEYLA CARABALLO (p. 71)

CANDY CHILDS (p. 22)

I have been coming to O.R.C. for 3 years, and I am a grandma of 3 kids. I am very glad to be a part of this Writers' Conference and am honored to be here.

CAROLYN CLARK (p. 64)

My name is Carolyn Clark. I am a student at the Martin Center. I have a 10-year-old son, Marcqualis. I am a native of Canton, OH. I enjoy learning new skills. My son and I enjoy composing and singing together.

WILLIAM CONWAY (p. 139)

CRYSTAL CSUHTA (p. 69)

I am a twenty-nine year old woman. I am married and have one son. I am a hard-working American and believe that all people were created equal in God's eyes.

MARIE DAVIS (p. 26)

My name is Marie Davis, and I am going to school to get my GED. I have two kids—a boy and a girl. I am a grandma with four grandkids.

MICHELE DEVORE (p. 33)

MIROSLAVA DEYNEGA (p. 50)

My name is Miroslava Deynega. I have been in the USA for six years. I'm married. I have two children, a son and a daughter. I like the USA.

GABRIELLE DOHERTY (pp. 97, 129)

TONYA DUKES (p. 127)

CHASITY FORREST (p. 79)

LEANNA GILLESPIE (pp. 92, 115)

WILLIAM GORDON (p. 4)

MELVIN GRIGGS (p. 75)

I, Melvin Griggs, was inspired to write poems by God.

ANGELA HAMILTON (p. 121)

VICKIE A. HARGRAVES (p. 6)

My name is Vickie Hargraves. I am a student at Live Oaks to further my education. I love to write. I have been working on writing a book that I hope will turn out to be a great success. I am a five-year winner in the Beginnings books. I would like to thank my teacher Marty Lopinto, Live Oaks, Kent State, and the OLRC and everyone who helped to make this project possible.

RON HECKERT (p. 47)

CYRUS HENRY (p. 31)

AARON HIGHLEY (p. 27)

LISA HOLMES (p. 67)

I am married to a wonderful man, and I have two beautiful children. I have never written anything longer than a paragraph in my life because fear held me back. I have taken the steps to get help, and I have found the courage to write. It has been very therapeutic, and I am very proud of myself.

MAMIE ITO (pp. 40, 87)

I came here from Japan two and a half years ago for my husband's work assignment. I think I'm a very lucky person, because I can keep doing something to learn in this class.

JOYCE JEFFRIES (p. 101)

I am a 21-year-old mother of two beautiful boys, and I wrote this piece to remind people that giving something to someone, no matter how big or small, can leave a good impact on someone's life. So keep the gift of giving going.

KAROL KUBASEK (p. 120)

ELLA LOWE (p. 30)

I'm hard-working, love my flowers, and enjoy good weather. I also like meeting new people. I enjoy my quiet time very much.

TIMOTHY D. LOWE (p. 85)

Just when you think things are going well, here comes your little black cloud. My bad day experience "What Next?" shares one of my worst days with readers. I was born October 1957 in Columbus, Ohio. I enjoy short stories in English literature and believe in life-long learning. Presently I am working on an undergrad degree at OU-Lancaster. I reside in the beauty of rural southeastern Ohio.

JERMAINE MARTIN (p. 56)

PATRICIA A. MARTIN (pp. 83, 91, 111)

I was born in Lexington, KY. I grew up in Dayton, Ohio. I went to Southwestern College of Business and got my GED. I went to Miami Jacobs College for a short period. I have four children. I want to go to nursing school to be an LPN, and that is why I was attending the ABLE classes.

KIMBERLY MATTHEWS (pp. 57, 119)

I'm twenty years old, and I have a two-year-old daughter named Caitlin. I've been writing since I was twelve years old.

CLINT McKEE (p. 23)

TINA McKENZIE (p. 84)

TRACY MILLER (p. 65)

My name is Tracy Miller and I am 32 years old, married with 4 children. My love for reading and writing is something I have always remembered even from an early age. I hope my poem invoked thoughts and ... a greater love for others.

DEBORAH MOON (p. 77)

FERNANDO NEGRETE (p. 70)

My name is Fernando Negrete. I have lived in the USA for about 10 years. I am proud to live in the United States because this country gave me an opportunity to have a better life. Everyday I want to improve my knowledge for a better future.

MARTHA O'CONNOR (p. 131)

I'm 50 years old and have 3 sons. I have been married for 27 years to James O'Connor, a good man. I'm the director of Hands of Jesus at Gospel Temple. Our pastor's name is Tim Hume. My ministry is city outreach, P.T.L.

IDA E. OSBORN (p. 109)

I am just a plain old-fashioned girl (73 years old) trying to better myself with a high school education. I want to go on to college to be a dress designer.

ANGIE MARIE PARKS (p. 133)

Angie is 28 years old and was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. She attends the YWCA LEARN program.

MONICA PAZMINO (p. 103)

I am from Quito, Ecuador. I came to the U.S. with my husband and our sons in 1999. Since then I've been trying to improve my English language skills and learn as much as possible about American life and culture. I discovered that writing allows my thoughts, feelings and imagination to come out freely, and I like it very much. It was a wonderful surprise to know that my story was selected. I am so happy about it.

CONREL PENLAND (p. 5)

I am a 64-year-old, single male determined to get my GED and participate in the graduation ceremony wearing cap and gown. I began attending classes in September of 2002 and by the grace of God will complete my studies soon and be ready to take and pass the GED test.

JEAN PISCITANI (p. 45)

I am a 47-year-old mother of two teenaged children. I enjoy reading, writing, and gardening.

CAROL RUDDER (pp. 3, 12)

Originally from Canada, I was raised in the Chicago area. I have been living in Ohio for 35 years. I have two children, four grandchildren and one great grandson.

LELAND SALYER (p. 59)

DALE D. SHERMAN (p. 9)

I have been a student at the Medina Project LEARN for six years. I have become involved in student groups throughout Ohio and the nation.

MISTY SHOOK (pp. 122, 125)

Misty is in Even Start, which is a Family Literacy Program. With the help of Even Start, Misty is a parent representative on the Even Start Task Force, and is also a member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Misty's goal is to continue her education and to become a better writer. Misty is also a single mother of a three-year-old son, James.

KAREN SMITH (pp. 25, 88, 107)

I have been writing for 25 years. I have been published in Beginnings every year so far. I'm a working mother of two lovely girls who inspire my writing. They are always proud of my accomplishments.

TAMARA SMITH (p. 35)

Tamara Smith is a longtime resident of the Franklinton area of Columbus, Ohio. She and Ken, her husband of seven years, live on Meek Avenue. They share their duplex with their two cats, Lilo and Stitch.

CARROL A. STARCHER (p. 10)

I have been at O.R.C. now going on 4 years, and if it would not be here, I would not be able to read or spell. The teachers here have brought me along so I can teach my great grandchildren.

DESHAWN STEED (p. 58)

I am 27 years old. I've lived in Dayton, Ohio, all my life. I've always had the desire to write poetry. I want to be the best Gold allows me to be. I hope my work helps those who can relate to enable themselves to change from within.

BEVERLY TINSLEY (p. 53)

Because I am a student who struggled with a learning disability, I have a concern for others who have this problem. I was able to graduate from high school and attend college. I have invented a board game that is geared toward students with learning disabilities.

SHELLIE VAN DRIEL (pp. 80, 98)

I am a native Daytonian. I love reading, writing, movies, jet skiing, animals, travel, and new challenges. I plan to get my GED, go to college, and work in a helping profession.

DOUGLAS VELAZCO (p. 43)

DARIA VOYTILLA (p. 93)



JESSICA M. WESTDYKE (p. 102)

I am a single parent with one child. I obtained my GED diploma through Canton City Schools. I am now enrolled at AEC Technical School in the medical assisting program. I enjoy writing and am grateful for this opportunity to have something published. This will encourage me to keep on writing (a book someday, I hope)!

MATT WHITMAN (p. 78)

My name is Matt Whitman. I live in Dennison, Ohio, and hope to earn my GED this spring. After that I am considering joining the military.

LISA WRIGHT (pp. 49, 124)

My name is Lisa Wright and I am 39 years old. I have two boys, ages 17 and 12, and I have been married to my husband for twenty years. I wrote this essay to encourage and inspire my two teachers. I wanted them to know how thankful I am for their God-given talents. With the help of these two ladies and the Lord Jesus Christ, I've discovered my own talent and for that reason alone, I will always be thankful.

WAN-HE ZHANG (p. 29)

