

Author Biographies

ABLE Class, Live Oaks (pp. 15, 73)

Fumiko Adair (p. 45)

With my ESOL teacher's great support, I have been fortunate to go to the OLRC [Writers Conference] since "Beginnings IV." My daughter (who is half-American, a high-functioning multiple disabilities) gives inspiration to keep me writing.

John Aleshire Sr. (p. 107)

I am 31 and married with two kids. This poem came out of a very hard time in my life. It has a lot of feelings in it from my soul.

Nelida Arroyo (p. 68)

My name is Nelida Arroyo from Puerto Rico. I am one of eleven children, and we came as a family to New York. Six years ago we came to Youngstown, Ohio. Now I work at the English Center and study English too.

Polly Baker (p. 38)

I am a mother of four young children ages 1 to 6 years and am currently expecting a 5th child! Our family is very close and we share a great love of reading, poetry, and the arts. The events of 9/11 had great impact on our lives, and it has carried with it a great sorrow and a desire to become more involved with our fellow man.

Michael Ballentine (p. 55)

I submitted three works. All of them are special to me, and are dedicated to people who are or were special to me. I wanted to thank my wife, friends, family, co-workers, and if

he can look down, my grandfather. I have a different love for each person listed, but I wouldn't know love without them.

John Berling (p. 29)

People say if they could have their grandchildren first, they could enjoy their children more. I have enjoyed my grandson and agree with them. I hope to be able to teach him many things and have lots of fun with him.

Theresa Blanchard (p. 48)

My name is Theresa. I am working toward my GED at the Lorain County JVS Adult Education. One day I hope to write the story of my life and share my short stories and poetry with the world. I love to write. "They say beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. I say it is in the sound of the written word."

Tracy Bodnar (p. 40)

My name is Tracy Bodnar, and I am 31 years old. I have three special needs children ages 8, 6, and 4 years old. I have been a divorced mother for approximately one year. I wrote my poems to inspire my children to grow and thrive in life.

Brandy Charles (p. 63)

I am 21 years old, and I have one child with another one on the way. My interests are reading and playing with my baby. I will help my children to know their grandfather.

Ashley Christian (p. 87)

I was born in Zanesville, Ohio, in 1983. I began writing around my freshman year in high school. I think my interest in music had a big influence in my writing because I started writing lyrics at first, and I still do. If I had to pick, poetry and songs would be what I enjoy the most.

Lori Clemons (p. 41)

My name is Lori Ann Clemons. I live in Columbus, Ohio. I was born in Toledo, Ohio. I enjoy my family and friends. I love to help people.

Anna Cline (p. 100)

My name is Anna Cline. I have one boy and one girl. I have been married to Rodney for 22 years, and I came to school to get a GED.

Altair Costa (p. 7)

I am Brazilian. I'm an ESOL student at Max Hayes School in Cleveland, Ohio. It's my first time writing poetry, and I'm enjoying it very much.

Nichole Cronenberg (p. 114)

I am a twenty-year-old mother of a beautiful little girl, and she means the world to me. So I wrote this piece to remind her to always follow her dreams.

Marie Davis (p. 9)**Frances Dillon** (p. 19)

My name is Frances Dillon. I am a mother of five children and the wife of a wonderful man. I am a 41-year-old woman who loves children and also works with them. I was born in New York City and lived there until I was 12 years old; then my parents moved to Cleveland. I've been here ever since.

Phyllis Endicott (p. 113)

I have been married for almost seven years, and I have two boys. I was born in West Virginia and soon after moved with my family to Columbus. I lived on the south side until I moved to Perry County in 2001, and I have spent the last three years trying to adjust to country life.

Farhan Farah (p. 25)

I came to the United States in 2000 after an endless civil war in my country, Somalia. I came with the intent of working hard, saving money, and hoping to become rich overnight. I worked in many warehouses in Columbus, Ohio, the first state I lived in. Then I went to work in Alaska, where I thought I could save more money. However, all that hard work encouraged me to go back and receive my education.

Paul Fisher (p. 124)

I am 19 years old and lost my sister when I was 11, and this is who I wrote this poem for.

Sherri Flynn (p. 39)

I just like to write a lot of stuff all the time.

Carl Foreman (p. 108)

I grew up in Columbus and always seemed to be in trouble. At the age of 16, I moved to Perry County and met some caring teachers, but I had to quit school three months before graduation to support my new family. I have been married since 1993 and have four children. Since earning my GED, I have enrolled in Hocking College and hope to become an X-ray technician. All the struggling will pay off.

Rachael Fraelich (p. 111)**Susan Fugett** (p. 91)

I am 34 years old, and I live in Blanchester, Ohio. I have 3 beautiful daughters. It has been really hard for me and my kids since my husband passed away. But thanks to my family and friends, I know we will make it. My challenge now is to get my GED.

Richard Gabbour (p. 121)

My name is Richard Gabbour. I was born July 18, 1966, in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. My hobbies are bowling, running

5K, 10K, and mini-marathons. Someday I would like to do a marathon. Now I have lived 17 years in Cincinnati, Ohio, and have been married for 5 years.

William Gideon (p. 119)

I was born in Toledo, Ohio, in 1980. I spent most of my childhood in foster homes, jails, and group homes. When I turned 19 years of age, I moved to Columbus, Ohio, where I am now a resident.

Louise Nymann Hansen (p. 81)

I lived in America for a year. I was here as an au pair. I'm from Denmark where I live again now. The story I wrote is about my year here and a special event I had in my year in America.

Vickie Hargraves (p. 49)

Hello, my name is Vickie Hargraves, a mother of three. I have been published in the last five Beginnings books. I am a radio broadcaster, going after a goal to further my education in fine arts. Thank you Kent State for making this all possible.

Carol Helton (p. 33)

To my grandson Garrett--I love you long, long, time.
Grandma Carol. I live in Perry County and have been here 1½ years. With this poem I now see Garrett all the time.

Ginger Herman (p. 117)

My name is Ginger Herman. I'm a young mother of a little boy. I'm going to Fairhome GED/FT School in Lorain. After I get my GED, I'm going to go to the LCCC for Creative Writing and then try to get my teaching degree.

Lisa Holmes (p. 37)

In memory of my father who died in 1996. I miss him and his stories.

Julie Howard (p. 71)

I am 22 years old. I live in Dayton, Ohio. I am due to have my fifth child in the spring. I am a student at the LEAF classes at the Job Center in Dayton, Ohio, where I am preparing for GED classes.

Yuan Hua (p. 105)

My name is Yuan Hua. I am from China. I came here 5 months ago. My husband is American; we married two years ago. We take long time for each other so we love each other very much. America is new life for me. I need to learn everything.

Carole Jones (p. 75)**Eunjung Kim** (p. 20)

My name is Eunjung Kim. I'm from Korea (South). I have been here about one year. I was born in 1971, and there are five members in my family: father, mother, elder sister, younger brother and me. After growing up, I married and I have a daughter now. I'm staying just temporarily, but I won't forget all the memories in America.

Mi-Sook Ko (p. 106)

I was born in Seoul, South Korea. I grew up in the city. After I married, I moved to the country and had so many different experiences. Now I live in Copley. I'm very happy because I have had many different experiences while living here.

Charles Ladd (p. 16)**Joel Lawry** (p. 85)

My name is Joel Lawry. I am 20 years old. Poetry is my escape and helps ease my mind. I dedicate my writing to my love Ashley and my friend Natalie. I hope you enjoy it as much as I enjoy writing it.

Angela Long (p. 101)

My name is Angie Long. I am a 24-year-old single mother to 3 adorable kids: Jacy, Rayna, and Malachki. Thanks to the Even Start/ABLE program in Adams County, Ohio, I am able to better my education, and they help me with my kids. I love to write when I get a chance.

Arthur Massengill (p. 67)

I am concerned about driving in the rain and storms, but when I see the rainbow in the valley, I know the rain will soon cease. The sun will soon shine again.

Teresa Maynard (p. 57)

I'm twenty-five years old with two boys with Duchenne's muscular dystrophy. People who are faced with challenges and struggle with day-to-day activities inspire me a great deal. We all should be thankful for the small things in life.

Brandi McDaniel (p. 70)

I live in a small town here in Ohio. Manchester, Ohio, has been my home since I was six years old. Before moving here in 1986, I lived in Georgetown, Ohio. I have two children, two and four, and am a single mother. God and the children he gave me have inspired me.

Terry McMillan (p. 79)**Amanda McPeak** (p. 80)

When I was little, my mom used to read poems to me all the time, and now I like to write poems to express my feelings.

Rita Perez Morales (p. 10)**Rebecca Mzik** (p. 3)

Someday I would love to see my book published.

Hiromi Nabeshima (p. 28)

My name is Hiromi Nabeshima. I'm from Japan. I live here with my husband and 7-year-old son. My husband is working in Tipp City, OH. My poem tells how excited I was to see the beautiful contrast of a winter morning become life and beauty. (Form: Haiku)

Emilly Nutter (p. 17)

I was born in Manizales, Colombia, South America. This beautiful city celebrates the Festival of Culture every year. I came from a humble family with good values such as honesty, work, and strong family unity.

Sol Ortiz (p. 99)

My name is Sol J. Ortiz. I am from Puerto Rico. I am a student at Max Hayes Vocational School. I am in the ESOL program, and also I am in the Computer Inf. Class. I love poetry. I think this is a good way to express our feelings.

Brandis Patrick (p. 59)

My name is Brandis Patrick. My written poetry reflects my journeys in life.

Monica Pazmino (p. 13)**Rudy Perez** (p. 104)**Melissa Perry** (p. 77)

At 30 years old, I have lived in Dayton, Ohio, for the majority of my life. Raised in a Chicano heritage, my inspiration had always stemmed from my love for the spoken word as well as the love for my race. I try to infuse a mix of reality and culture into every piece that I pen, and one day, I hope to have my works published.

Alla Pilipenko (p. 31)

I was born in the former Soviet Union Ukrainian Republic. I graduated from the university and worked as a teacher of Russian literature. I am a widow now. My only son works as a programmer. He has a wife and two children. We came to America in 1996. I live on Lake Erie now in Cleveland.

James Prohn (p. 8)**Adriana Cardenas Ramirez** (p. 74)

I'm Adriana Cardenas Ramirez from Mexico. I've been in the US for three months as an au pair and will only be here until the end of this year. I enjoy camping, walking, and photography. My goals are to learn English, meet people and to learn the American culture.

Carol Rudder (p. 56)

I have worked at Pierre for seventeen years. I have two children, four grandchildren, and one great grandson.

Sharon Russell (p. 93)**Maria Santos** (p. 58)

My name is Maria Santos. I'm from Portugal, and I am 34 years old. I moved to the US about 2½ years ago because my husband is military and working at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio. I'm learning English as a second language, and it's very stimulating for me to write this tribute to my Uncle Tony.

Bobbi Sassen (p. 44)**Linda Seymour** (p. 53)**Jane Shepherd** (p. 123)

I am a mother of 5 children and grandmother of 12. I live in a small community of 500 people with my husband, Jim. I love

to read and enjoy my Bible as an example of how to live my life.

Patricia Shields (p. 4)

I am 52 years old going on 53, married, have three natural children and nine stepchildren. I am trying to get my GED to better myself and to make my family proud of me, especially my husband who is my strength and salvation. The only person first is God in my life.

Mark Simon (p. 88)

John Skaggs (p. 52)

My name is John Skaggs. I am 18 years old. I would like to thank God for sending this opportunity to me.

Karen Smith (p. 86)

I am a mother of Cynthia Marie Smith, age 13, and Angelica Christine Smith, age 7. My family has always been important to me. That's why my heart goes out to anyone whose loved ones had to fight at war.

William Joseph Smith III (p. 125)

A little about me: I'm now 21 years old and currently going to Live Oaks to get my GED. I'm from a small town named Goshen, Ohio. While I was in high school, I had a teacher named Miss Moscar. She got me into writing. All through school I loved to write short stories. Now that I'm getting my GED my teacher asked me if I would like to send one in. I love to write so here is one of my stories about my life. Hope you like it.

Latoya Spears (p. 118)

My name is Latoya. I am 21 years old. This is my second time in GED classes. I took the test once, now I'm back better than what I started off. Next, I'll be preparing for nursing school to take better care of my two kids and myself.

Latosha Stokes (p. 69)

I am a single mother of four beautiful children. I recently passed my GED in December 2003 and am now attending Stark State College. I am majoring in Human and Social Services. I am also taking a writing course (College Composition) to help me prepare to write my first book titled "My Autobiography."

Argiro Thimakis (p. 78)

Born in NY, I came to Canton at 15 years old, and have been here since. I have a 6-year-old son in first grade. I'm shy and mostly quiet. I believe strongly in family. I have good reading skills and enjoy it.

Nakia Thomas (p. 103)

My name is Nakia Thomas. I've been writing poetry for almost ten years. It brings me joy, and I hope it will bring you joy as well.

Georgia Tutu (p. 54)

My name is Georgia Osei Tutu. I'm 20 years old. I moved to the United States 18 months ago to visit my sister who lives here as a citizen. I'm learning English as a second language, and I wrote a tribute to my mom.

Heather Warner (p. 12)

Heather is from Windham, Ohio. She is a new student with the Even Start Program.

Tonya West (p. 92)

My name is Tonya West, and I'm a twenty-four-year-old mother with two children who are smart. Ryan is three and Robert is two, and together we go to Even Start at West School. I'm in Even Start to help my children through school.

Jesse Wilson (p. 21)

This story is about childhood memories that, no matter how old you get, you will never forget.

Aimee' Womack (p. 102)

My name is Aimee' Womack. I am 18 years old. I have been writing since I was 11, and I enjoy writing poetry a lot. I write from all my own experiences.

Delores Wong (p. 43)

I am a spiritual woman and have given God every aspect of my life. I am married with three children. I like to read, and my hobby is golf. I don't like writing, but God inspired me to write this poem.

Kristy Young (p. 90)

I am a 23-year-old mother of two. My inspiration for writing comes mostly from my children.

Marie Young (p. 32)

Hyder Zuern (p. 61)

My name is Hyder Zuern. I am 39 years old, and I am very interested in improving my writing skills.