

Foreword

Welcome to *Beginnings IX*, the annual publication of original and inspirational works created by Ohio ABLE students and sponsored by the Ohio Literacy Resource Center. This year over 430 entries were submitted to the OLRC and judged using a rubric that includes such writing qualities as creativity, reader engagement, and style. The submissions comprised a wide array of poetic thoughts, reflective essays, and entertaining stories.

In addition, we are proud to share the artistic talents of ABLE students in two of the Great Oaks ABLE programs. The front cover art was created by Gumerciendo Lopez of the Scarlet Oaks program, and the back cover art was created by Aaron Willoughby of the Live Oaks program. Their creative renditions reflect the wide variety of multicultural, ethnic writing selections that are included in this issue of *Beginnings*.

The authors of *Beginnings IX* and their teachers were honored on May 12, 2006, during the 9th Annual Ohio Writers' Conference in Columbus, Ohio. As the kickoff to our 9th Annual Writers' Conference, Lyn Ford, nationally renowned storyteller, engaged the participants in a storytelling interactive welcome.

Next, the day-long conference featured keynote speaker, Eileen Moushey, of Kent, Ohio. Eileen is a freelance writer/director. She founded an acting group in 1986 that performs interactive mystery stories throughout the Midwest. Also, hundreds of theaters, colleges, and high schools around the world have performed "Mysteries by Moushey." In addition to her plays, Ms. Moushey has written and directed commercials, video scripts, and educational programs. In

1999, Eileen Moushey won a regional Emmy Award for a children's series written for PBS/WNEO/WEAO. Following her keynote, Ms. Moushey engaged the audience in an interactive session that invited the participants to work with dialogue as a writing style.

In this edition of *Beginnings* we also acknowledge the writers who submitted entries that we were unable to publish. They are listed in the *Honorable Mention* section. We thank them for their commitment to writing and encourage them to submit their original work next year.

We thank the Ohio Department of Education's Adult Basic and Literacy Education Office – for the continued support it has provided for this successful project. We also thank the many reviewers and judges for the dedicated hours they committed to the Ohio Writers' Conference and this publication. And we offer a special thanks to the ABLE teachers throughout Ohio for the encouragement and support they provide to their students!

So, sit back, relax and enjoy *Beginnings IX* ! We hope you find yourself thoughtfully engaged as you read about topics that include: *Tapestry of Culture, Woven Memories, Mending & Alterations, Threads of Family Life, Patchwork, New Patterns for Learning, and Fabric of Love.*

Chris McKean
2006 Conference Organizer