

826
VALENCIA

ANNUAL
REPORT

2013–2014



Dear friends,

How many times have you sat down to write? A bazillion or more times, right? Whether it's an email, a college-entrance essay, an article, a story, or a love note, we know that the ability to write well is a game-changer that helps us inform, inspire, persuade, entertain, and woo.

What I love about 826 Valencia is that we take this profound appreciation for writing and ensure that our young people hone their craft through a unique combination of ingredients that we often call "the secret sauce:" the volunteers who provide much-needed individual support for our students, our unparalleled spirit of fun and possibility, the symbiotic partnerships with our schools and families, and the gorgeous publications that are a testament to our students' talents. As an educator who has spent eighteen years committed to improving public education for students with the greatest need, I can tell you that this secret sauce is essential to helping our students thrive.

We cannot make the difference we aim to make without your support. Please read on to learn about our accomplishments from last year and our expansion plans. Thanks for all that you do for our young writers and scholars.

Warmly,



Bitá Nazarian
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



PHOTO BY SETH GOLUB



Mission

826 Valencia is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting students ages six to eighteen with their creative and expository writing skills and to helping teachers inspire their students to write. Our services are structured around the understanding that great leaps in learning can happen with one-on-one attention and that strong writing skills are fundamental to future success.

History

Named for its street location in the Mission District of San Francisco, 826 Valencia was founded in 2002 by author Dave Eggers and educator Nínive Calegari. 826 Valencia comprises a much-used writing lab, a student-friendly retail pirate supply store that partially funds our programs, and three satellite writing programs

at nearby schools. Since we opened our doors, more than 7,000 volunteers have dedicated their time to working with tens of thousands of students.



“Kids can’t learn until they feel heard. 826 Valencia gives young people the opportunity to be heard, and to have their voices honored and amplified. That’s life-changing for any student.”

DAVE EGGERS, CO-FOUNDER, 826 VALENCIA

PHOTO BY HENRIK KAM

Due to the success of 826 Valencia's model, 826 National was founded in 2008 to help other cities launch their own organizations. We are now one of seven official 826 chapters in the United States, and we've been the inspiration for many other like-minded groups worldwide, all dedicated to supporting strong writing skills in students.

“When students learn how to communicate well, doors open. The 826 staff, volunteers, and teachers are changing lives every day.”

NINIVE CALEGARI, CO-FOUNDER, 826 VALENCIA

Vision

At 826 Valencia, we believe that all students, regardless of income or background, deserve a chance to be successful. We know that with the attention of a caring adult, an opportunity to become a published author, and an environment that cultivates wonder, the power of writing can come alive for students. As students express themselves, they develop self-confidence and skills that help them succeed in school and beyond.

Some of the difficulties our students face involve a public school system challenged by large class sizes, underfunding, and poor teacher retention. And sadly, our most under-resourced families and schools are disproportionately affected by budget cuts and understaffing. These shortfalls lead to higher dropout rates among at-risk students, lower rates of college attendance and completion, and a lack of readiness for jobs and careers.

Our approach to these challenges is to leverage the goodwill and talents of our community of volunteers and supporters to help students achieve their full potential. Every day we welcome fleets of trained and dedicated volunteers to give students individualized attention as they roll up their sleeves and write. This hard work is met with creativity, imagination, and possibility that is best represented by our magical storefront on Valencia Street. Our tutors effectively inspire students with rigorous project-based learning; teachers are supported in delivering their curricula; families are engaged and heard; and our constant output of books, magazines, newspapers, and chapbooks gives students a voice beyond their classroom and allows them to share their stories.



After-School Tutoring

Throughout the 2013–2014 year, we offered long-term, intensive support to students outside of their regular school day. From August through May, 826 Valencia was packed four days each week with neighborhood students who came in for one-on-one tutoring in all subject areas. After-School Tutoring supports students' academic success by providing individualized tutoring on homework assignments, daily creative writing practice, and chats about high-interest books. Students also have access to drop-in tutoring on Sundays.

SURVEY SAYS...

94% of parents said 826 offers their child help with homework that they cannot provide.

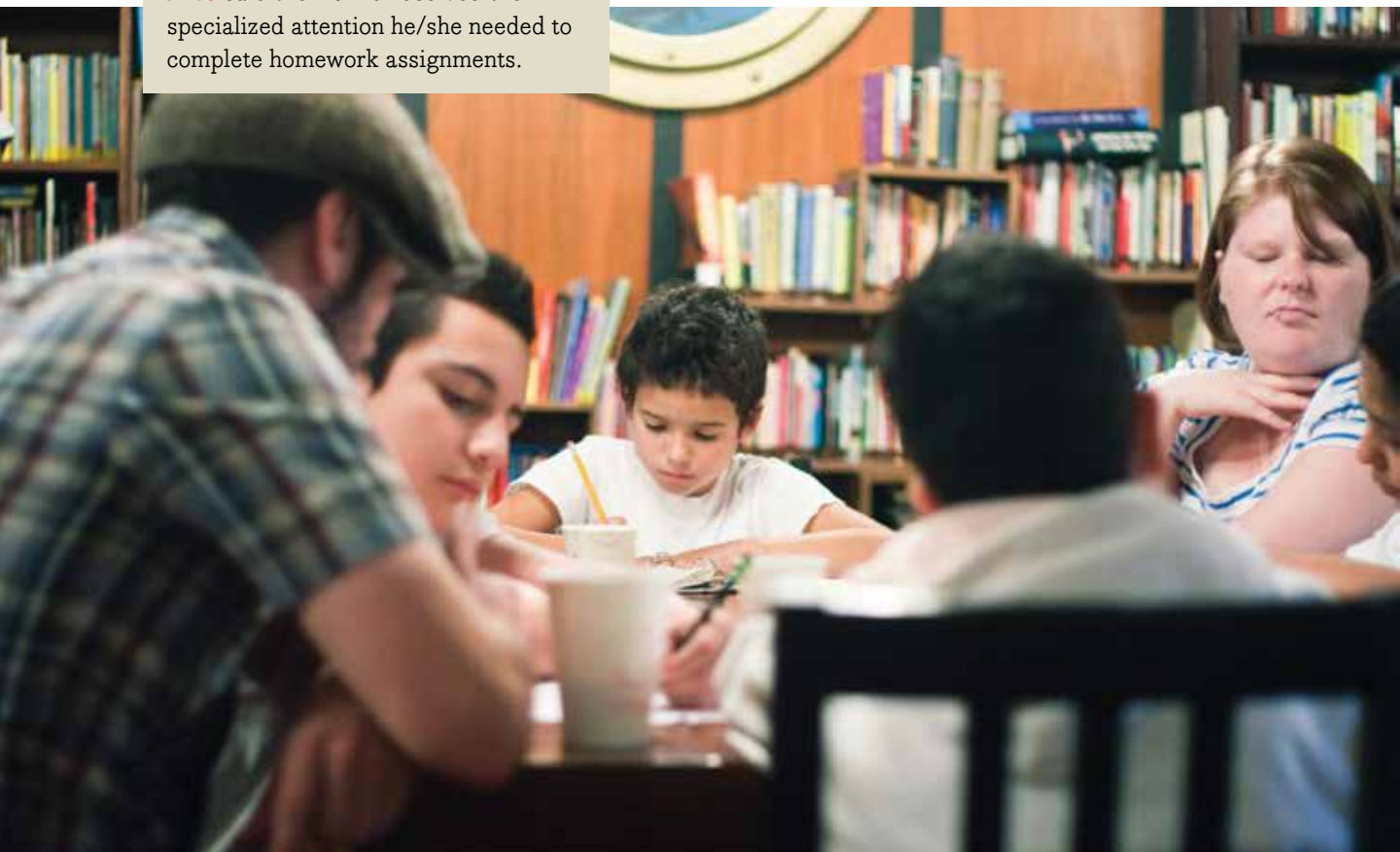
94% said their child is getting better grades in school.

94% said their child understands his/her homework better with the help of tutors.

94% said their child received the specialized attention he/she needed to complete homework assignments.

Last school year, 826 Valencia expanded its After-School Tutoring program with a twice-weekly evening session geared toward the unique needs of older students. Tutors came prepared to support more complex homework assignments, and provided

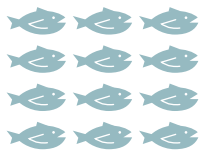
PHOTO BY COLIN SMITH



AFTER-SCHOOL TUTORING BY THE NUMBERS

TOTAL N^o. of **ONE HUNDRED THIRTY SIX** SESSIONS

TOTAL N^o. of **77** STUDENTS SERVED



77

AVERAGE N^o. of STUDENTS PER SESSION **THIRTY FOUR**

TOTAL N^o. OF INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEERS



college-entrance essay help for high school seniors. We partnered with nearby ScholarMatch for these evening sessions to help students and parents access college application and financial aid support.

EXPLORING WORDS SUMMER CAMP

School may let out each summer, but 826 keeps at it with year-round educational programming. In the summer of 2013, we offered our seventh annual Exploring Words Summer Camp to support the summer learning goals of our After-School Tutoring students.

In addition to our traditional creative writing curriculum, the five-week camp focused on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math). Students from second through fifth grade conducted science experiments, wrote stories, and developed portfolios of their best work with the one-on-one support of tutors.

Q: DID YOU NOTICE ANY CHANGES IN YOUR CHILD'S ATTITUDES TOWARD SCIENCE OR WRITING?

A: "Yes, it's very notable. He talks to me a lot about cells and animals and he comes home to read more books, with more enthusiasm."

PARENT, EXPLORING WORDS SUMMER CAMP

In-Schools

Every school year, 826 Valencia dispatches teams of volunteers to local high-need schools around the city to support teachers and provide one-on-one assistance to students as they tackle various projects. During the 2013–2014 school year, our volunteers helped students write research papers, plays, college-entrance essays, poetry, and articles for school newspapers.


We gave additional support to nearby Everett and James Lick Middle Schools, where we staffed two dedicated 826 Writers' Rooms to support teachers and students on site throughout the year. Our staff worked with the administration of each school to serve all students, and particularly focused on supporting English Language Learners. Teachers reported that students developed their ideas more fully and expressed themselves more clearly as a result of the support in the Writers' Rooms.

Last year, we launched a new satellite after-school program for forty third- and fourth-grade English Language Learners at Buena Vista Horace Mann (BVHM), a bilingual K–8 school in the Mission District. 826 Valencia staff worked with teachers at BVHM to develop an after-school writing curriculum that enhanced academic learning in the classroom. As a result, students experienced accelerated reading level gains, with 75% achieving more than a year's growth in just five months.

IN-SCHOOLS TUTORING BY THE NUMBERS

  TOTAL N° OF STUDENT ATTENDEES **2,878** 

TOTAL N° OF
IN-SCHOOLS
PROJECTS
**THIRTY
NINE**

AVG. LENGTH OF PROJECT
FIFTEEN HOURS

TOTAL N° OF
INDIVIDUAL
VOLUNTEERS **176**

TOTAL N° OF
PROGRAM
HOURS



PHOTO BY TRACY LIU

Workshops

During the 2013–2014 school year, 826 Valencia offered thirty-two workshops designed to foster creativity and strengthen writing skills in a wide variety of areas. Workshop topics included the art of the personal essay, writing for sketch comedy, and our in-house newspaper, the *Valencia Bay-farer*. All workshops, from the playful to the practical, are project-based and taught by experienced, accomplished professionals working in their field.

SURVEY SAYS...

91% of students said they learned new things about how to be a good writer.

96% said they had fun.

82% said the workshop increased their confidence about writing.

81% said the activities made them think hard about writing.

91% said they were proud of their work.

SUMMER YOUNG AUTHORS' WORKSHOP

Last August, 826 Valencia hosted its tenth annual Young Authors' Workshop, an intensive week-long writing camp for Bay Area students entering grades ten through twelve. Students teamed up with professional writers, poets, and spoken word artists to craft original work that they shared with their peers in a rigorous and supportive learning environment.


PHOTO BY CLAUDIA SANCHEZ



WORKSHOPS BY THE NUMBERS

 AVERAGE N^o. OF STUDENTS PER SESSION **TEN** 

TOTAL N^o. OF
WORKSHOP
SESSIONS
**one hundred
twenty one**

TOTAL N^o. OF
SCHOOLS SERVED **90**
TOTAL N^o. OF **TWO**
STUDENTS **HUNDRED**
SERVED **FIVE** 

TOTAL N^o. OF
INDIVIDUAL
VOLUNTEERS
6 5

TOTAL N^o. OF STUDENT WORKSHOP HOURS **2,366**

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VALENCIA 826

BAY-FARER

50

WRITTEN BY STUDENTS. READ BY ALL. SPECIAL ISSUE FREE TO KIDS AND OCEAN-GOING MARAUDERS

UKRAINE AND RUSSIA: IT'S COMPLICATED
BY BONA MURPHY, AGE 12



Cultural area of map depicts Ukraine; courtesy of tarsus.com

You may know about the crisis in Ukraine right now. You may ask, how does this concern young people? Well, you might have to buy a new map!

All jokes aside, this is the first international crisis of my lifetime, and it really caught my attention because of that. It shows that we've come a long way in terms of civilization, but we still have a long way to go. There's a lot of war and diplomatic crises erupting all over the world. Ukraine is currently on a very fast journey down the road from a little uprising in an unimportant, faraway country, to possible "all-out war," NPR's Ari Shapiro said from Donetsk.

It seems as if this might be a bad sign for an era of relative harmony in Europe. This apparition disintegrates for country borders could have consequences. Other countries may follow Russia's example and invade their neighbors.

Here's what's been happening. The express of Ukraine was getting money from the Russian government, which caused unrest in Kiev and other regions, including Crimea and Donetsk. There were a lot of protests starting at the end of 2013. On February 26, Russia annexed Crimea without warning. Since then, there have been a lot of protests starting at the end of 2013. On February 26, Russia annexed Crimea without warning. Since then, there have been a lot of protests starting at the end of 2013.

Theories range from terrorist attacks to abduction by aliens. The governments investigating the crash, including the United States, Cambodia, Thailand, Australia, and of course Malaysia, have said that almost all the theories are untrue. The exact reasons for how the plane crashed are unknown, but here are some theories.

In *Wired*, veteran pilot Chris Goodfellow suggested a simple theory: the plane suffered an electrical fire on board. This would explain why communications were lost. Another reasonable theory put forth by the *Daily Express* was that a container of manganates could have contained bombs. There were also flammable lithium-ion batteries and miscellaneous electronics that could have started a fire.

There have even been theories related to singers and songs! YouTubeers are saying that lyrics from the singers Pitbull and Shakira's 2012 song "Criminal Minds" are evidence. Specifically the lyrics "Now it's off to Malaysia, it's off to Malaysia, three cities, two countries, one day. Some theories are even more crazy. One theory is that the plane got sucked up by a black hole even though a small black hole would suck up a solar system.

continued on

INSIDE:
BAY AREA, CALIFORNIA & THE WORLD
PUBLIC INTEREST
BAY-FARER CLASSICS
HEALTH
NATURE
VIEW

"I've learned a lot at 826 from both tutors and students, and I'm grateful that I have the privilege of now being a veteran student at 826 Valencia."

ZORA ROSENBERG, AGE 16, WRITING & PUBLISHING APPRENTICES WORKSHOP



IN ALL ITS DARK BLUE GLORY

The Journal of The Writing & Publishing Apprentices
FALL 2013

Field Trips

Up to four times every week, 826 Valencia welcomes an entire class for a morning of high-energy learning. Our Storytelling and Bookmaking field trip leads students to collaboratively write an original story, end the story with a cliffhanger, and then individually write their own conclusions with the help of trained tutors. Meanwhile, a professional artist illustrates the story, and volunteers bind a book for each student to

take home with them that day. Students are motivated to perform at their highest levels through the urging of a cranky editor whom they never see. Field trips are popular and priority is given to schools with the greatest needs.

SURVEY SAYS...

99% of teachers said the field trip program was a unique and valuable learning opportunity.

100% said their students seemed engaged in the program.

100% said their students learned new things about writing.

100% said the program met curriculum standards.

100% said their students were challenged during the program.

99% said their students will take a new excitement for writing back to the classroom.

PHOTO BY SETH GOLUB



Good vs. Evil: The Fight for the Red Diamond (excerpt)

MS. WONG'S FOURTH GRADE CLASS, PAUL REVERE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Down on the beach on the light side of the island, Mr. Z was trying to conquer his fear of water. Mr. Z was a ninja policeman in a bright red suit. His friend, Kary Beary, was a cuddly teddy bear on top and a sleek dolphin on the bottom...



“It was excellent from start to finish. One of my students, who is never excited about writing, was the most enthusiastic of them all—I think we might have jumped a hurdle. I can’t wait to apply for next year!”

RON RUSSO, SECOND GRADE TEACHER,
DANIEL WEBSTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

FIELD TRIPS BY THE NUMBERS

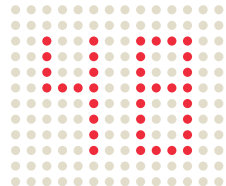
TOTAL N^o. of
STUDENTS
SERVED **2 3 4 6**

TOTAL NUMBER OF
FIELD TRIPS 
ONE HUNDRED TWO

AVERAGE N^o.
OF STUDENTS
PER
SESSION

23

TOTAL N^o. OF
INDIVIDUAL
VOLUNTEERS



College and Career Readiness

Last year, we offered a series of programs designed to prepare students for college. We provided a record eight \$15,000 scholarships to college-bound seniors, served 198 high school seniors at the Great San Francisco Personal Statement Weekend where students received undivided attention on their college-entrance essays, and partnered with ScholarMatch to offer college access workshops for our seventh- to twelfth-graders during evening tutoring. ScholarMatch also provides ongoing support to our scholarship winners while enrolled in college to help them transition successfully.

2014 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

826 VALENCIA SCHOLARSHIP

Dayra Banales
Yesika Menjivar Cruz
Daisy Fong

NEW VOICE SCHOLARSHIP

Ammar Lee Fowler

ART BERLINER-MARIAN LEVER SCHOLARSHIP

Josseline Juarez

NATHAN JILLSON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Jaime Velis Sanchez

FLORENCE & IRVING HOCHMAN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Wanyi Chen

YOUNG AUTHOR'S SCHOLARSHIP

Giorgia Peckman



DAYRA BANALES



YESIKA MENJIVAR CRUZ



DAISY FONG



AMMAR LEE FOWLER



JOSSELINE JUAREZ



JAIME VELIS SANCHEZ



WANYI CHEN



GIORGIA PECKMAN

PHOTOS BY RUSSELL EDWARDS



PHOTO BY SETH GOLUB

SURVEY SAYS...

100% of students reported feeling more confident about their personal statements after working with a tutor.

97% reported making significant progress on their essay.

97% got accepted into four-year universities.

93% reported that they received help during Personal Statement Weekend they would not have received otherwise.

“My family would not have been able to afford a private college counselor to help me polish my essays. I was admitted to all my top choice schools. My essays got so much better thanks to the 826 weekend.”

LEO PAGE-BLAU, STUDENT,
PERSONAL STATEMENT WEEKEND, 2013

Publishing

In all of 826 Valencia's programs, students have the ability to experience, appreciate, create, and recognize great writing in part because of our professional-quality publishing. Last year, 826 Valencia published literary quarterlies, magazines, newspapers, books, and chapbooks, all created by students. Experienced editors and designers are involved in these projects to give students greater insight into the realities of professional publishing. Our student books are publicized through our website, community events, and the local media, and are sold nationwide. Publishing student work is an essential component of our project-based approach; when students have the opportunity to share their writing with a broad audience, their motivation to do their best climbs.



SURVEY SAYS...

Before & After Publishing Projects

BEFORE AFTER

47.8% **85.9%** of students said they were proud of their writing.

68.1% **90.1%** said they were confident that they could complete their writing assignments.

Pirate Supply Store

San Francisco's only independent Pirate Supply Store opened its doors at 826 Valencia in 2002. Since then, the retail space has served as a creative gateway for our students, families, and volunteers as well as an invitation to the wider community to let their imaginations run wild. The store provides 826 Valencia with a unique space for the general public to learn about and interact with the programming happening on a daily basis. We sell student publications alongside beautiful, surprising, and bizarre products designed by local volunteer artists to provide a source of revenue for programming and whimsy for visitors from around the world and just down the street.





PHOTO BY HENRIK KAM

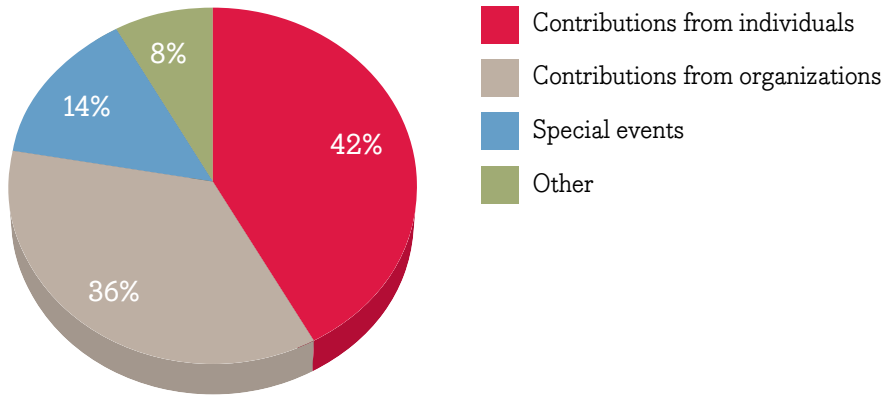


By the Numbers

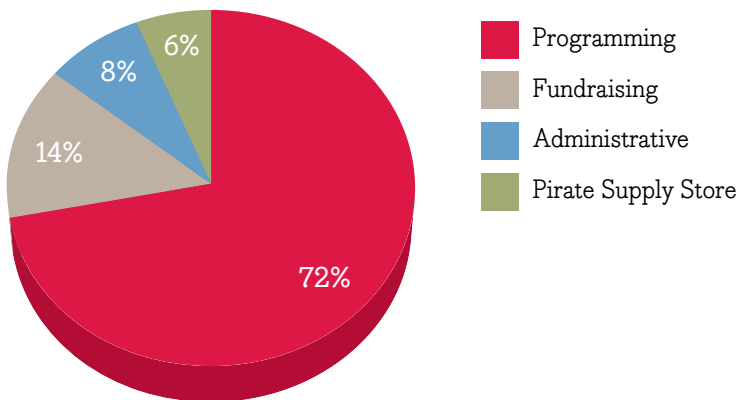
We are proud of our financial track record at 826 Valencia. Thanks to our many supporters, we were able to increase our revenue significantly, which positions us to expand our services with stability in the coming years.

	2012 – 2013	2013 – 2014
INCOME		
Contributions from individuals	\$ 309,500	\$ 749,690
Contributions from organizations	\$ 623,562	\$ 641,484
Special events	\$ 54,911	\$ 248,194
Other	\$ 203,070	\$ 156,170
TOTAL	\$ 1,191,043	\$ 1,795,538
EXPENSES		
Programming	\$ 975,951	\$ 1,063,519
Fundraising	\$ 183,021	\$ 202,648
Administrative	\$ 101,055	\$ 126,315
Pirate Supply Store	\$ 81,983	\$ 81,275
TOTAL	\$ 1,342,010	\$ 1,473,757
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 1,972,599	\$ 2,347,772

2013 – 2014 SOURCES OF INCOME



2013 – 2014 EXPENSES



Tenderloin Expansion

After twelve years serving students of the Mission District and our neighboring schools, we are extending our services to more children by building a second center in San Francisco's Tenderloin District!

Through extensive outreach last year, we've built relationships with nonprofit agencies, schools, businesses, and government officials. Without exception, 826 Valencia has been encouraged at every turn to invest our resources and programming in the Tenderloin community. The welcome has been incredible. We've also enjoyed early press, large-scale investment by leadership donors, and pro bono commitments. Everyone seems to think this is a great idea, and we agree!

"826 Valencia is an incredibly creative answer to so many parents' prayers: a safe, loving, imaginative, inspiring, original, and inventive after-school and so-much-more space for children to learn to write well, to get their work heard, admired, polished, and published."

DEBRA HANNULA, DONOR

It is clear that the impact our programs make extends beyond students' improved writing skills. It is about the growing self-confidence a student feels, the importance of appreciating writing as an artistic endeavor, and the invaluable effect that undivided attention from a caring adult mentor can have. We can't wait to help these students learn and grow.

WHY THE TENDERLOIN?

- The Tenderloin is San Francisco's most densely populated neighborhood, and the home of 6,000 of our city's children, youth, and teens.
- The Tenderloin has the second highest incidence of food stamp use in the city, with a median household income of \$23,804.
- We surveyed our active volunteers, who said that the neighborhood is accessible.
- Mayor Ed Lee has designated the neighborhood as a priority area for development and arts stabilization.
- Nearby tech companies and financial institutions are looking for meaningful ways to invest in the community.

If you'd like to help us write this next chapter, please contact Development Director Allyson Halpern (allyson@826valencia.org).



Supporters

826 Valencia would like to thank the following members of the Shipmates Society for their generous investment in our students during the 2013–2014 school year.

“We believe that anyone wishing to continue his or her education deserves a hand to get there. It is a privilege for us to give. Giving to 826 Valencia is a very straightforward way to respectfully offer support. We are truly grateful that 826 Valencia gives us this opportunity.” —MARIAN LEVER, DONOR

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We strive for accuracy in our listings. Please email us at development@826valencia.org if your information is incorrect. This list reflects gifts of \$100 or more, from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014.



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826 VALENCIA is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting students ages 6 to 18 with their creative and expository writing skills and to helping teachers inspire their students to write. Our services are structured around the understanding that great leaps in learning can happen with one-on-one attention and that strong writing skills are fundamental to future success.

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