



826 VALENCIA

ANNUAL REPORT

2018-19





Photo by William Mercer McLeod

Dear friends,

It is with great pride that we share how much you have helped 826 Valencia accomplish over the last year. With your support, we have served over 9,000 students in San Francisco and opened our third center as an anchor service in an affordable housing building for families in Mission Bay. What's more, we engaged in a strategic planning process that helped us reflect on our rapid scaling these past six years and focus on our plans for the future.

As part of this process, we asked ourselves critical questions. What is our biggest, most audacious goal? In other words, what kind of community are we trying to create for our students, in our city, and in our world? And what is the role of writing in our lives? These questions led us to reflect on what makes our model successful, and how to leverage it to support more students more deeply. We examined how our programs transform our students' relationships to writing, how to amplify their voices to an even wider audience, and how we can support our people (staff, volunteers, and board) to be effective allies for our youth.

As we reflected, it was amazing to see our stakeholders talk and write about their ideas, and then take action! I realized that this is the power of writing—as we write and share, we are emboldened to act on things that matter to us. We see evidence of this every day in the young people we serve.

In this report, you will get to read our students' perspectives on this transformative experience in our first ever student-written Spotlights! I hope you are as inspired as I am by the power of their stories.

In community,
Bitá Nazarian

ABOUT US

826 Valencia is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting under-resourced 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.

Named for the street address of our first writing center in San Francisco, 826 Valencia was founded in 2002 by educator Nínive Calegari and author Dave Eggers. 826 Valencia now comprises three writing centers—our flagship location in the Mission District, a center in the Tenderloin neighborhood, and a new center in an affordable housing building in Mission Bay. We also have three satellite classrooms on site at partner schools, and provide in-school programming at nearly a dozen others around the city. All of our programs are offered free of charge and serve predominantly low-income students of color and English Learners.

Due to the success of 826 Valencia's model, a separate organization called 826 National was founded in 2008 to help other cities launch their own successful writing and tutoring centers. We are now one of nine official 826 chapters in the United States, inspiring a global community of like-minded writing groups around the world.



OUR VISION

By 2030, every under-resourced student in San Francisco will have the writing skills and publishing platforms they need to use their voice for positive impact.



WRITING IS AGENCY

In a society that systematically devalues the histories and experiences of young people of color, writing empowers students to express themselves, celebrate their perspectives, succeed in college and career, and engage in the national dialogue. This is essential to a just and democratic society.

WHY WE'RE NEEDED

Nationwide, only 25% of high school seniors are proficient in writing.¹

In California, only half of third graders read and write at grade-level proficiency.²

In SFUSD, less than 30% of African American, Latinx, and English Learner students are proficient in English Language Arts, compared with 80% of their white peers.²



“I view 826 Valencia as another kind of protagonist in my students’ lives... through committed tutors and their writing toolboxes, my students were given the opportunity to explore the bruises on their hearts, or their own testimonies to the America they experience, for better or for worse. 826 Valencia found and nurtured their voices into stories. In light of this, 826 Valencia is a kind of activist, a systematic challenger.”

K.R. MORRISON
10TH GRADE TEACHER
GALILEO HIGH SCHOOL

1
2017 National Assessment
of Educational Progress

2
2018 California Assessment
of Student Performance
and Progress



“When you are writing you might have an amazing idea, but have trouble adding it to your story. Well, a tutor can always help you with that!”

RENO T., AGE 10
 BUENA VISTA
 HORACE MANN K-8

OUR APPROACH

All of the programs in our unique and effective model share the following traits. All of our programs are:

Responsive. We develop our programs in collaboration with teachers, families, partner organizations, students, and schools. Through this collaborative process, we create learning opportunities that are tailored to meet community needs and aligned with teachers’ curricular goals.

Individualized. All of our programs leverage the power of trained volunteers, who are led by our professional teaching staff to provide one-on-one tutoring and support, helping students make great leaps in learning and writing. This individualized support helps teachers do their difficult jobs more effectively, and gives students the time and attention they need to thrive.

2018–2019 BY THE NUMBERS

Students, parents, and teachers surveyed reported that our programs led to an increase in:



86%
**TRANSFORMED
 RELATIONSHIP
 TO WRITING**

Project-based. We publish our students' writing and give it an audience. We see great increases in students' confidence and pride when their hard work results in an authentic, tangible end product. And the books, magazines, podcasts, and more that we produce help amplify our students' voices to the world.

Wonderful and whimsical. Everything we do is designed to inspire creativity and foster imagination. To set the tone, each center is fronted by a whimsical store. At the Pirate Supply Store in our Mission Center we purvey, yes, supplies for pirates. King Carl's Emporium in the Tenderloin offers tools for exploration of real and imaginary worlds. Our third center in Mission Bay, Woodland Creature Outfitters Ltd., transports students and visitors to an enchanted forest. Our stores also sell our students' publications, and all proceeds go right back into our programs.



"I love 826 because you get to be so creative. And plus you write a lot and they treat you with love."

YAJAHIRA B., AGE 8
BUENA VISTA
HORACE MANN K-8



9,086 STUDENTS SERVED



1,293 ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS



3,577 PROGRAM HOURS



2:1 STUDENT: VOLUNTEER RATIO



30 PUBLICATIONS

STUDENTS SHOWED

33% GROWTH IN WRITING PROFICIENCY

per the National Writing Project's Analytic Writing Continuum

OUR PROGRAMS

Field Trips. Field trips to 826 are wild adventures, but we also pack in a lot of learning. Classes from public schools visit our writing centers for a morning of high-energy writing, performing, and storytelling. Our Field Trips produce bound, illustrated books and professionally-produced podcasts, infusing creativity, collaboration, and the arts into students' regular school day.

In-School Projects. We bring teams of volunteers into public schools around the city to support teachers and coach students one-on-one as they tackle various writing projects, including newspapers, research papers, oral histories, and more. We have permanent, 826-ified spaces—called Writers' Rooms—at Buena Vista Horace Mann K-8, Everett Middle School, and Mission High School.

After-School Tutoring. During the school year, our trained volunteers provide one-on-one support with homework in all subject areas for enrolled students ages 6 to 18. Our Mission Center also hosts drop-in tutoring on Sundays, open to all. In the summer, students from after-school and other programs participate in our summer camps and workshops.

Workshops. Our Mission Center offers evening and weekend workshops designed to foster creativity and strengthen writing skills in a wide variety of areas, from playwriting to personal essays to comics, and everything in between. All workshops, from the playful to the practical, are project-based and taught by skilled volunteers. At our Tenderloin Center, our After-School Workshops serve a variety of neighborhood organizations and enrich their programming with weekly curriculum to build students' writing skills in a fun, inspiring environment.

College and Career Readiness. We offer a range of programs designed to help students develop their leadership skills, get into college, and be successful there. We provide scholarships to college-bound seniors, and one-on-one support via the Great San Francisco Personal Statement Weekend and personal statement tutoring in schools. We also offer paid opportunities for our youth leaders to serve as mentors and role models to our younger students, while also exploring a range of careers and ways to contribute to their community.





In all of our programs, trained volunteer tutors provide individualized attention to students. Here, a tutor supports a young writer in our Everett Middle School Writer's Room.

MISSION CENTER



Our namesake center hums with programming from morning to night, while its ship-like interior transports students on a voyage of learning. Our cranky editor, Captain Blue, lives in the attic and hollers down the ladder each morning that “kids can’t write original stories!” while a class of elementary students visiting on a Field Trip sets out to prove otherwise. Our After-School Tutoring Program has a strong community of families, who gather to celebrate the end of each semester with potlucks and readings. All this and more can be found through the portal of San Francisco’s only independent Pirate Supply Store.

A DAY AT THE MISSION CENTER

Morning

2nd-5th grade classes from schools all over San Francisco come to us for a Storytelling and Bookmaking or Choose Your Own Adventure Field Trip. They leave with their very own book—written, illustrated, and bound within two hours and complete with an “about the author” page.

Afternoon

After-School Tutoring bustles with enrolled students who get help with their homework, respond to the day’s writing prompt, and discuss what they’re reading with a tutor.

Evening

Tutoring continues into the evening for middle and high school students who need a quiet place to work. Workshops are offered on topics ranging from the art of the short story to the craft of journalism.

Weekends

Talented volunteers lead workshops in all subjects. On Sunday afternoons, our Writing Lab is open to all, with tutors at the ready for drop-in homework help and a daily writing prompt.

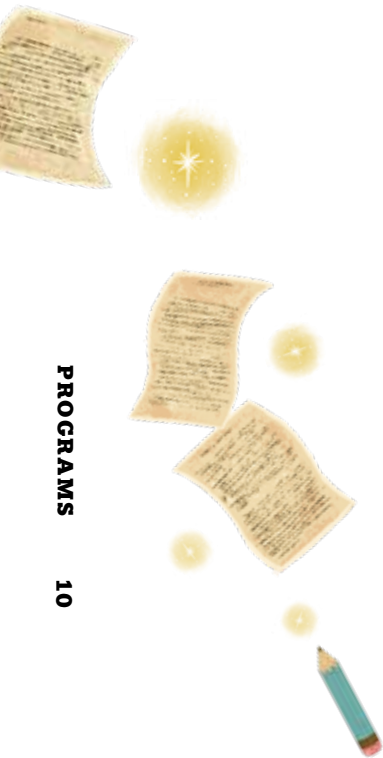




Photo by Kristin Cofer

2018–2019 HIGHLIGHTS

- Our Field Trips served 127 classes this year, with 93% of them coming from the San Francisco schools with the highest academic and socioeconomic need.
- 93% of students in After-School Tutoring reported that support from 826 helped improve their grades in school.
- Volunteers and staff offered 42 workshops this year; 40% of workshop attendees enrolled in multiple 826

programs, advancing our goal of serving students more deeply with a variety of pathways for support.

- Students from After-School Tutoring participated in a workshop on how to navigate San Francisco public transit led by dedicated volunteer and former city planner Peter Albert, and reported on their experiences at a transit board meeting at City Hall.



“My favorite part of 826 Valencia is the nice events they host and the support I get for homework and literature to make my path all the way to college.”

YAHIR A., AGE 11
GATEWAY MIDDLE SCHOOL



Photo by Sindy Santamaria

YOUR VOICE AND MESSAGE ARE IMPORTANT!

BY AMINA FULLER, AGE 16
MISSION CENTER WORKSHOPS
AND YOUTH LEADERSHIP ADVISORY BOARD

When I first started at 826, I was amid the transition from elementary school to middle school. I was not nearly as confident as I am now as a writer or learner. I felt nervous about feedback as I saw it as an opportunity for people to criticize me, but now I see it as an opportunity for growth.

826 Valencia has had a significant impact on my life and has opened countless doors for me. For starters, 826 has helped me develop my greatest passion: writing. I love fiction, poetry, and personal narratives. Even within the course of a workshop at 826, I can see how much I've grown as a writer. This growth is reflected in my ability to add sensory details to my stories, develop strong characters, and to explore different forms of writing. 826 Valencia has also taught me to approach my work in a constructive way rather than being stuck in self-criticism. During Writing and Publishing Apprentices, a workshop that I've taken for several years now, we have a slogan: "No disclaimers." This means don't insult your writing before sharing it, something that many authors do.

Another passion of mine is advocacy for children, to prevent acts like Trump's

Detention camps and fight for AB-2888 (legislation preventing gun violence). I apply the tools that 826 Valencia has instilled in me to do this work. Most important, the ability to build a strong argument in favor of my position, and to communicate descriptively, which I used to develop a website supporting humanitarian causes.

Since 2017, I've been taking this knowledge and applying it to the Youth Leadership Advisory Board, as I help younger students with their homework and writing at After-School Tutoring. After starting workshops at 826 Valencia, it didn't take me long to hear their message: *Everybody's voice and stories need to be heard.* This is one of the most important things that you can teach anyone, especially a child. As I work with the students during After-School Tutoring, I apply these values; that not only is your voice essential but we are going to strengthen it, and amplify it! If I could teleport one message to future Amina, or any future 826 student it would be, "You have developed countless skills at 826, which you should treasure forever. Use them! Your voice and message are important!"

TENDERLOIN CENTER



Our Tenderloin Center welcomes students from the neighborhood and beyond to share their stories and amplify their voices—sometimes literally, through the student podcast recordings that we broadcast on to the street! Students arrive through an interactive wall of doors and venture into the shade of an indoor treehouse to work with tutors on poetry, personal narratives, short stories, and more. Through strong partnerships with neighboring organizations and schools, students fill the space nearly every day to write, learn, and, as King Carl (our traveling pufferfish mascot) says, “set forth and explore!”

A DAY AT THE TENDERLOIN CENTER



Morning

Classes come to our center from all over the city for a four-hour field trip experience in which they write and record professional podcasts, learning how to craft an engaging story and read it with confidence. The final products are posted on SoundCloud so students can share them with their families and the world. We also host field trips in which we help students polish personal statements, write poetry, or complete other classroom writing projects.

Throughout the day

Our tutors and staff provide in-school writing support at Bessie Carmichael K-8 and Tenderloin Community School.

Afternoon

Neighborhood partner organizations bring their students to the center for after-school writing workshops. Students build their skills and explore the writing process with a fun, creative curriculum and the support of 826 tutors.

2018–2019 HIGHLIGHTS

🦋 In a unit on persuasive writing, students wrote “letters of change.” Mechell, age 8, wrote to the United Nations that, “We need world peace and no segregation!” Mechell was thrilled when she received a letter back from the United Nations in response to her passion and ideas.



🦋 Our students’ podcasts garnered 38,000 new listens on SoundCloud (that’s nearly 10,000 more than last year!), and were broadcast on KQED during its Youth Takeover week.

🦋 Student writing from the Tenderloin reached audiences all over the world, thanks to partnerships with outlets like the Tenderloin Talk newsletter, the Mozilla.org blog, Common Sense Media, and the Walt Disney Foundation.



“{The students} get to use their creativity and imagination to discover new things about themselves and the world around them. They love the tutors and the space. They have been given priceless opportunities to amplify their voices.”

ADAM VINCENT
VICE PRINCIPAL
DE MARILLAC ACADEMY





Photo by Sindy Santamaria

YOU CAN WRITE WHAT'S IN YOUR IMAGINATION

BY MAYSА ALSANEA, AGE 12
BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
TENDERLOIN CLUBHOUSE

Writing, writing, writing. I used to hate writing, but because of 826, I love writing now. When I first started coming to 826, I used to rip up my papers and scribble all over them because I was mad and frustrated about having so much work to do. But then I started working with a tutor named Stina. She could calm me down. She would give me advice about writing. Now when I come to 826 Valencia, I am so excited to write, and it's all because of the lovely tutors.

826 Valencia has also helped me with writing for school. They always tell me to plan first, add more details, explain, and use similes. One day at school, I had a writing test. I was as worried as someone going into surgery, but I used all the advice from my 826 tutors while I was taking the test. When I got my scores, I was so shocked. I got a 5, which is a perfect score! It's even higher

than the highest score I can get on my report card. I was so, so, so proud of myself.

Writing is important to me because you can write what's in your imagination! With our imaginations, we can explore the forest, ocean, universes, and made up lands. Writing also helps me be a leader. Being a leader means standing up for what you believe in. For example, I have a lot of opinion writing assignments, and I write what I believe in and come up with solutions that will make people with all different opinions happy.

I am so thankful that I have 826 Valencia because without them, I wouldn't be such a great writer. I feel like 826 Valencia is actually the perfect place to go if you hate writing—they will make you love it, because they make writing so fun.



“My students were so excited about the support they received from 826. Students who were stuck were able to get one-on-one check in time with a tutor and get unstuck on their topic.”

KAMARIA CARNES
TEACHER
EVERETT MIDDLE SCHOOL

IN-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

826 Valencia has always had the goal of supporting teachers and providing individualized attention in classrooms. To do this, we bring our volunteer tutors into schools throughout San Francisco. Our Writers’ Rooms—special 826-designed spaces in three local schools—serve students in small groups for greater individualized attention, allowing teachers to provide targeted instruction. This has a transformative effect on the school day; the average teacher-to-student ratio in SFUSD is 22:1; and in some schools the ratio is as high as 35:1. With the support of 826 Valencia education staff and our trained volunteer tutors, that ratio becomes 2:1.



2019 YOUNG AUTHORS' BOOK PROJECT **WE ALL BELONG**

ABOVE

Author Luis J. Rodriguez wrote the foreword to this year's Young Authors' Book Project, *We All Belong*, and met with the students to inspire their writing.

Each year, we partner with a local high school to produce an anthology of student work called the Young Authors’ Book Project. This year, our young writers set out to answer the question: What is a border to you? Inspired by Luis J. Rodriguez’s *Always Running*, the tenth-grade students of Galileo High School thoughtfully crafted personal narratives, fictional short stories, letters, and poems reflecting on the boundaries that have impacted them—from those between nations, to divisions between people in their communities, to the borders they encounter within—and how to cross them. Luis J. Rodriguez wrote the foreword to the book and visited the students to discuss his life and writing—an inspiring experience for all.

THE 826 WRITERS' ROOMS



Buena Vista Horace Mann K-8

A former locker room houses our after-school writing program at BVHM, where 3rd-5th graders who need extra support receive one-on-one attention as they build their writing skills. We also support 6th-8th grade classes during the school day, and measure our impact on students' reading levels in their most critical years.



Everett Middle School

Here in our first Writers' Room, 6th-8th grade students produce the *Straight Up News*, pen poetry chapbooks, and learn the basics of argumentative essay writing with the support of our tutors.



Mission High School

In this Writers' Room, students learn to research and write pieces for *Mission Magazine*, get help with college application essays, and publish chapbooks, monologues, and more.



2018-2019 HIGHLIGHTS



We offered 1,137 hours of in-school programming, and served 2,777 students.

Mission Magazine, a publishing project out of the Mission High Writers' Room, celebrated the first ever poetry issue of the bi-annual publication.

In the BVHM After-School Program, 96% of students reported that their writing skills had improved as a result of the program, and

that they were proud of their writing.

826 projects led students to opportunities outside the classroom. One student, Jenny Ramirez, wrote a play about gentrification and shared it with supervisor Hillary Ronen, which led to her getting an internship at City Hall to work on improving her community—just like the protagonist of her play!



Photo by Sindy Santamaria

THAT MAKES ME FEEL CONFIDENT

BY JOSUE RAMIREZ, AGE 12
BUENA VISTA HORACE MANN K-8

I first started at 826 when I was a third-grader in the after-school program at Buena Vista Horace Mann. At first I didn't really know how to write a lot, but the more I practiced, the easier it got for me.

When I first started at 826, I couldn't write in full paragraphs. The tutors would help me, and help me revise and make corrections, and then it got easier for me. My favorite memory of 826 is when we made up a character and then wrote about their superpowers. I liked making stories with 826 because I got to be more creative.

When I first started in third grade, I was reading at a Level K, which was below my

grade level. By the end of third grade I was reading on grade level. It used to be harder for me to read, but now I'm reading at a Level Z, which is above my grade level.

I am proud of myself. 826 helped me grow as a reader and as a writer. Now it's easier for me to write essays in class. I have been published nine times, and that makes me feel confident. Later, when I get to high school, 826 will help me do better in school and write better essays.

If I had to give advice to little kids I would tell them to stay in 826! It will help you to grow and become more confident in your writing.



**SUMMER AT
826 VALENCIA**

School might let out for the summer, but the learning doesn't stop at 826 Valencia. We offer a variety of programs to reduce summer learning loss and keep students writing and thinking creatively. Here is all the great work that happened in the summer of 2018!

Exploring Words. We offered our eighth annual Exploring Words Summer Camp in partnership with Jamestown Community Center. The program served 120 3rd–5th grade students from our Buena Vista Horace Mann school-year program and Jamestown's summer camp. The camp focused on creative writing, which was paired with a hands-on science curriculum, and students grew their writing and science skills in an atmosphere filled with rigor and fun.

Exploring Leadership. This camp focused on developing middle school students as youth leaders. Students learned about college and career pathways and opportunities through field trips to companies like Dolby and Pinterest, researched and presented about social justice issues, and built their public speaking and teamwork skills.



SURVEY SAYS

100% of students in the Young Authors' Workshop said, "This workshop increased my confidence about writing."

92% of participants in the Exploring Words Summer Camp reported learning new things about both writing and science.



"I learned about creativity, adding big details, working with someone, and writing big stories."

ADRIANA R., AGE 9
EXPLORING WORDS SUMMER CAMP



The Young Authors' Workshop. Each year, we offer a two-week intensive writing camp for high school students called the Young Authors' Workshop. Participants spent ten full days writing together, led by guest speakers including poets, journalists, oral historians, and artists. Students grew their confidence and skills throughout the writing and editing process as they became a strong community of writers.

Tenderloin Summer Programs. We hosted summer workshops at our Tenderloin Center, serving over 300 students from 12 partner organizations. Workshops included poetry, podcasting, science writing, college essay support, and more.

Sometimes I feel like a buffalo: as strong as a leopard and as sneaky as Spiderman. When I feel like Beyonce, all I want to do is shine like the moonlight. In my dreams, I can be as tall as a cornstalk and swim like a dolphin. Sometimes I feel like a unicorn: as magical as can be. I wish I was invisible, just like glass.

"ME", BY ZARA G., AGE 8
EXPLORING WORDS
SUMMER CAMP



MEET OUR
NEW CENTER





The Mission Bay Center is home to a host of enchanted details for students to explore.

photo by Celso Rojas

AMPLIFYING STUDENT VOICES IN MISSION BAY

Our new neighborhood brought exciting partnerships for amplifying our students' voices all over the city.

Advice for the Warriors

While we think our arrival in Mission Bay is a pretty big deal, we admit that our soon-to-be new neighbors are exciting too. We teamed up with the Warriors and Dropbox on a project in which students wrote welcome letters with advice about the neighborhood. Chloe, age 7, wrote: "We are cheerful, we are eager to meet you... don't jump in the channel!" Retired Warriors Jason Richardson and Stephen Jackson met with our students to get the full tour of the Dubs' new community.

THANKS TO THE BUILD TEAM!

Our Mission Bay writing center needed a storefront to welcome the community and inspire creativity. Enter Woodland Creature Outfitters, Ltd. This truly magical space would not have been possible without the generosity of an incredible team of pro-bono builders, architects, artists, and contractors, led by WRNS Studio, BCCI Construction Company, and Office. Thank you to all of the following who contributed:

- Anderson Rowe & Buckley,
- Andrea Cochran Landscape Architecture,
- Ayoob & Peery Plumbing Co.,
- B&L Commercial,
- BEI Construction,
- California Drywall Co.,
- CE Toland & Sons,
- CISCO Meraki,
- Commercial

- Casework,
 - Complete Millwork,
 - Creative Ceilings Inc.,
 - Cutting Edge Drapery,
 - De Anza Tile Co. Inc.,
 - Design Workshops,
 - Dropbox,
 - Giampolini & Co.,
 - Golden Gate Fire Protection,
 - Luna Textiles,
 - Majestic Floors Inc.,
 - McMillan Electric Co.,
 - Minton Door Co.,
 - Paganini Electric,
 - Sheedy Crane Rental,
 - Stockham Drywall,
 - Tipping Structural,
 - Two Furnish,
 - and Young Electric.
- And thanks to all these talented artists for adding special touches: Borderline Art Collective, CCA BuildLab, Pete Belkin, Jacqueline Brown, Lundberg Design, Matthew Grubisich, Lauren Hartman, Slice Lab

MUNI Poetry

Thanks to a partnership with Dropbox, our students' writing was featured at MUNI stops throughout the Mission Bay, Bayview, and Mission neighborhoods. Students were thrilled to see their work displayed in the bus shelters, and the project helped raise awareness of our need for volunteers and donations to support the expansion.



LEFT

As a way to welcome their new neighbors, Mission Bay students took to the court with some former Warriors.



photo by Quynh-Le Nguyen

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

The doors are open, but this project still needs your support. OCII and TNDC provided us with generous seed funding and free rent for 20 years (wow, right?). Even with that generous support, we still need your help. We are in a \$4.2M campaign to fully launch our new center and all of its programs. As of the end of the fiscal year, we've raised \$3.6M toward our goal.

Reach out to development@826valencia.org to donate or get involved!



"I love it because it helps me to write and read and finish my homework every day."

SALMAN A., AGE 9
MISSION BAY CENTER STUDENT AND BUILDING RESIDENT

OUR MISSION BAY COMMUNITY

Mission Bay is a new, intentionally diverse neighborhood being developed to help address the housing crisis and growing income inequality in San Francisco. One-third of all new development in the neighborhood is affordable housing, largely for families—but until recently, there were almost no support organizations for the 1,000 low-income children who will soon be living in the area. So when our partners at the Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation invited us to be the anchor educational support in their new low-income housing building in Mission Bay, we said yes.

We began working with neighborhood organizations to bring writing programs to their youth in 2018, while our building was under

construction. In March 2019, we cut the ribbon on the 826 Valencia Mission Bay Center. Many of the students who come to our Mission Bay Center for tutoring live in our building, or in other affordable housing nearby. We're now also serving schools in the Bayview and Potrero Hill neighborhoods.

The 826 Valencia Mission Bay Center is a space where our students can access our unique model of one-on-one tutoring, writing, and publishing, and share their stories with their communities. And in hallmark 826 style, it all takes place in a strange, beautiful, and whimsical environment. Who knew you could get to an enchanted forest on the T line?

MISSION BAY BY THE NUMBERS



I FELT LIKE I WAS FAMOUS

BY KHACINA BIGGS, AGE 8
AFTER-SCHOOL TUTORING IN MISSION BAY

When I first worked with 826 Valencia, it was with 826 tutors in the library community room. They were leading a writing workshop. I started writing a comic by myself. It was fun because it was my first time making a comic book. I felt so creative. Now I am in the After-School Tutoring program, and what I like about this program is that it is creative and cool.

This year, I have grown in confidence because I had the opportunity to write a letter to the Warriors and Dropbox. They used my letter in a video, and I got to read my letter to the Warriors. I felt like I was famous.

826 Valencia has helped me by showing my writing around the whole of 4th Street, and my poem, “Recipe for Playing Together,” was put on a billboard in Mission Bay. My teacher saw it and she asked me to read my poem in front of my whole school. This made me feel proud of myself and happy, excited, and nervous.

My favorite memory of 826 Valencia is when I made my own comic book that was about my own creature. It was grey and it was part wolf and part bird. My confidence has grown since I started coming to 826, because I have been picked for very big events because of my writing.



COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

826 Valencia offers a variety of programs that support our students on their path to college and whatever career they choose. Our College and Career Readiness programs provide channels for ongoing involvement with 826 Valencia through middle school, high school, and beyond, coaching students to serve as role models for their younger peers. This constellation of programs aims to increase our students' post-secondary success by offering leadership development, support with writing across the disciplines, and financial aid in the form of stipends and scholarships.



"{The best part was} hearing about the stories and experiences of the student I was working with—he cares about dialogue, civil discourse and democracy, and has done amazing things to further them. I found it inspiring."

2018 PERSONAL STATEMENT WEEKEND VOLUNTEER

2018–2019 HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ The annual Great San Francisco Personal Statement Weekend served 156 students, providing nearly 400 hours of one-on-one support to high school seniors working on their personal statements for college applications.
- ❖ Our Youth Leadership Advisory Board (YLAB) consisted of 18 students in grades 8 to 12. They shared that their highlight of the year was the Career Carousel, a panel of professionals representing careers that YLAB members were interested in, from journalism to medicine to working at a nonprofit.
- ❖ 99% of Personal Statement Weekend participants reported that they felt more confident about their essays after working with a tutor.
- ❖ 32 youth provided 908 hours of tutoring in our programs. 30% of them are current or former 826 Valencia students!
- ❖ This year's Scholarship Program was dedicated to the late Sydney Goldstein, founder of City Arts and Lectures and a loyal supporter of this program since its founding 17 years ago. 826 Valencia and our community of scholars are honored to carry forward Sydney's beloved memory.

MEET OUR 2019 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



CELESTE GUERRERO

Sydney Goldstein Scholar

“Writing has been everything for me at some points in my life: it has been a therapist, a way to speak up, to have fun, to study, to work, to understand. Writing is a part of me.”



MOHAMED ALHAYAWA

Sydney Goldstein Scholar

“My specific goal is to use coding to create technology that will enable others to learn languages, and I would especially love to benefit youth in Yemen who haven’t been afforded the opportunities I have.”



CRISTA ALARCON LUNA

City Arts & Lectures Scholar

“My parents’ bravery in the past is my motivation to keep pushing until I achieve my goals.”



JESSICA CAO FENG

Art Berliner and Marian Lever Scholar, in honor of Sydney Goldstein

“The way that I write is a reflection to the world of who I am. The sentence that I post on Instagram, the messages that I send to my friends, and the writing for my classes are the ways that I express myself to the world.”



MELISSA GOMEZ

Tom Savignano Scholar

“Wearing [my mother’s] jewelry inspires me to work hard in school and earn the education my parents wanted for me, and didn’t have the chance to get.”



NEWBERTH PALMA

Tom Savignano Scholar

“I want to continue improving my writing skills, delivering justice to my community through essays, poems, and vignettes. I want to become a writer, and do it freely and wholeheartedly.”



JENNIFER VORRATH

Taylor Renfrew Ingham Scholar

“I know that as I have a new path full of challenges ahead of me. Writing will always be there for me, as it’s something that no one can take away from me.”

INTERDEPENDENCE IS KEY

BY MOHAMED ALHAYAWA, AGE 19
SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

I first started writing in elementary school in Yemen. One day my teacher took an interest in the stories I was writing about challenges I was facing at the time, and the following day the principal of my school came into the classroom, gathered around all of the students, and read my stories to the class. At the time, this was roughly equivalent to winning the lottery for me. I was ecstatic, and my excitement about writing grew tenfold.

More recently, my effort in writing has been centered on writing in English. It was difficult to learn a new language and know how to communicate my thoughts through it, but I have continued to improve my English through writing in school, daily communication with my teachers and administrators, and at my job where I need to compose itemized receipts for clients.

I first participated with 826 Valencia when they came to my school to help us with writing essays, and they helped me begin to navigate transitioning to the United States from my country. We would have one-on-one discussions, which was extremely helpful to me. 826 Valencia provided a space for me to ask questions to trusted people who care about me. This taught me about interdependence, which is where someone actively seeks out mutually supportive relationships to help

both people achieve their goals and dreams. Interdependence is going to be a key factor in my college success.

When I was selected as a scholarship winner I was extremely happy and couldn't believe it, because before that I was very worried about college academically and financially, especially how I would pay for college tuition. Now, as a college student at San Francisco State, I foresee continuing to improve my English while keeping in touch with my Arabic roots. My goal is to learn an entirely new form of writing through computer coding. I have already begun to learn coding languages like Python and Java, and can't wait to learn more. Two major classes I'm taking now are computer science and math. My specific goal is to use coding to create technology that will enable others to learn languages, and I would especially love to benefit youth in Yemen who haven't been afforded the opportunities I have.

Writing is important to me because it is going to allow me to make a difference in my community. I think writing is not just about sentences, it's actually a whole world that has a lot of meaning. Not everyone thinks that writing can make big changes in this world, but I think that with writing, I can do anything.



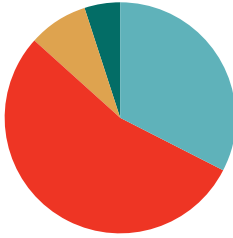
Photo by Kristin Cofer

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Thanks to the generosity of so many, we were able to raise significant capital and operating funds to open our Mission Bay Center in February, and did so while maintaining stable funding for our existing programs. This year's financial report also reflects about \$1.1 million raised toward our Mission Bay expansion campaign, where there is still a gap of \$600K toward a \$4.2M goal for future years' programming expenses.

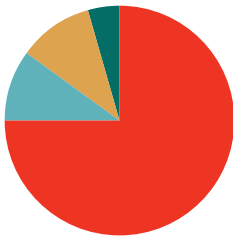
Our highest priorities for fundraising are closing the gap on our Mission Bay campaign, and raising multi-year unrestricted operating support that will allow us to grow sustainably and weather changes in the political landscape, economy, and our communities.

INCOME



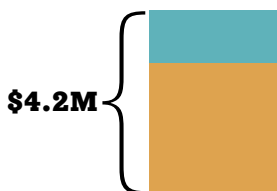
- 54% ORGANIZATIONS
- 32% INDIVIDUALS
- 8% SPECIAL EVENTS
- 6% OTHER

EXPENSES



- 75% PROGRAMMING
- 11% ADMINISTRATIVE
- 10% FUNDRAISING
- 4% STORES

MISSION BAY CAMPAIGN



\$600K NEEDED
\$3.6M RAISED

2018 - 2019 OPERATING BUDGET

Income

Contributions from organizations	\$2,887,280
Contributions from individuals	\$1,745,583
Special events (net)	\$443,637
Other (includes stores)	\$256,647

Total income **\$5,333,147***

Expenses

Programming	\$2,845,444
Administrative	\$406,310
Fundraising	\$374,649
Retail Stores	\$158,235

Total expenses **\$3,784,638**

*Includes \$1.1 million for multi-year Mission Bay expansion campaign.

OUR GROWTH

826 Valencia has been on an exciting growth trajectory for the last five years, including opening a new Writers' Room and new centers in the Tenderloin and in Mission Bay. Our strategic plan for the next three years will bring continued growth, especially as our new center reaches its full capacity.

But our focus is on deepening our impact, to give our students more opportunities to amplify their voices, develop as leaders, and have a positive impact on their communities. This shift represents a doubling down on our mission—one we cannot achieve without your generosity. Our vision for the future is more audacious than ever. Thanks for coming along for the adventure!



2013

\$1.2M budget
4,500 students served
500 active volunteers

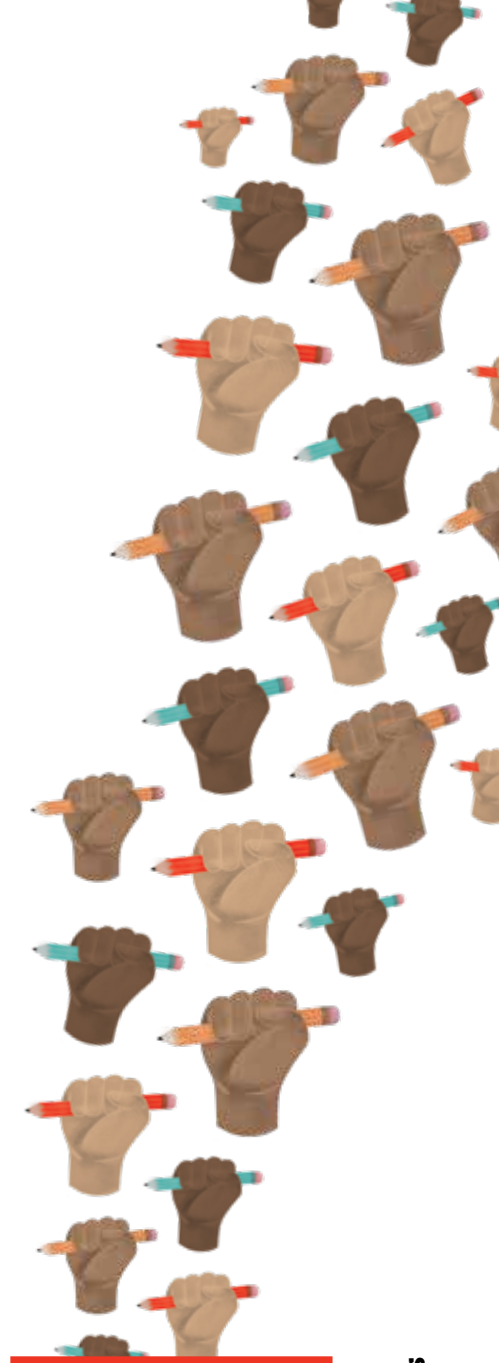
One center
Two Writer's Rooms



2019

\$4.1M budget
9,000 students served
1,300 active volunteers

Three centers
Three Writer's Rooms



2030

Every under-resourced student in San Francisco will have the writing skills and publishing platforms they need to use their voice for positive impact.



826 VALENCIA SUPPORTERS

“Thank you for helping me with words when I get stuck.

You are kind as a raindrop and gentle as a flower.”

LILY, AGE 10

GUADALUPE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

We extend our deepest gratitude to the individual, corporate, and organizational donors who supported us in the 2018-2019 fiscal year (July 1, 2018–June 30, 2019) through their generous gift, grant, sponsorship, pro-bono, and in-kind contributions. Without you, we would not have been able to provide over 9,000 San Francisco students with free writing, tutoring, and publishing programs this year. Thank you!

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