

Poetry Heals Quarterly Newsletter—July 2016

Dear Friends of Poetry Heals,

We started this adventure to bring poetry writing and respite to young people living difficult lives, and in our first year, that is exactly what we've done. At Cedar Springs Hospital, we taught poetry classes in the high school there and through Springs Recovery Center, we presented a six-week classes for young people and Writing to Recover workshops twice a week for a month.

We have also done a few other things we didn't foresee. We have worked with homeless, addicts, and alcoholics of all ages, not just young people. We have trained fifteen people in the methods developed by Richard Gold and Pongo Teen Writing. Most recently, we have been collaborating with potter Mark Wong to present Poetry and Pottery workshops for the street kids in Manitou Springs.

We also received grant money from more organizations than we anticipated: **The Bee Vradenburg Foundation, The Pikes Peak Community Foundation, The Smokebrush Foundation, The Manitou Springs Planning Office, The Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce** and we are going before the Manitou Springs City Council this month for funds to continue Poetry and Pottery into mid-August. The **Manitou Arts Center** has provided insurance and deposits for us to use of city parks.

Finally, we have received financial support from friends and community members in numbers that warm our hearts. With your support, Poetry Heals made the \$7500 match needed to receive \$1500 from the Bee Vradenburg Foundation. Also, your support has shown foundations that we are a new, growing enterprise that people are excited about.

THANK YOU!!!!

Molly Wingate, Project Director



Writing Mentor Stacy Pintor and Brian watch as Manson revises

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Justin with his glazed cup



After a turn at the pottery wheel, Kasandra shows off her scores from the Food Bank while working on a poem.

Takin' it to the Streets

"I came back to glaze my pot."

"I want to write some poems."

"Is there any food left from the food bank?"

Poetry and Pottery on Wednesday afternoons in Manitou Springs. In just three weeks, the project has a following and has set some expectations. Tyler sits down with Casey Blum at the potter's wheel and learns the basics of throwing a pot. Justin finds the pot he made last week which has been fired once and is now ready for glazing. Mark Wong explains the glazing process and hands over the brushes for Justin to get busy. Amanda bring her newborn for everyone to admire a she dictates a poem to Molly Wingate who encourages her to write the baby's birth story. Summer works with Beth Arrowsmith on a poem about her mom. Manson wants to share his poem, and Adam slides his poem in front of Molly so only she can read it.

In the next two hours, all the kids will trade places, making pots, glazing and writing poems. The baby will be passed around to strong arms, and we will talk about the ever changing situation for homeless kids in Manitou Springs. Several more kids show up and work on pots and poems. Members of the community and tourists stop in to play, too. Laura Teachout and Molly go back on the avenue looking for homeless folks to invite to come makes pots and poems and come back with another half dozen kids. Mark fires the glazed pots in his portable kiln and then smothers them in damp newspaper in an air tight vessel so that the crackled surface of the raku technique and the copper glaze glisten. The kids support each other's creations, listen to their poems, and work together in merry creation.

"Will you be here next week?"

"I may not still be here, but if I am, I want to glaze the pot I made."

"I'll keep telling kids to come."

"You can have a copy of my poem, if you want."

As Mark, Molly, Casey, Laura, and Beth pack up, we talk about how things went and what we want to do next week. Mark wants to make a banner and Laura wants to make laminated signs so more people will come join us. Molly updates everyone on efforts to extend the project. We have enjoyed using the facilities at **St. Andrew's Episcopal Church**, but they have a chamber music festival going on so we are moving to a city park in two weeks. Lots of details! And lots of support. Casey will bring fewer typewriters next time, and Beth has an idea for writing on the tags he brought and tying them around the city. Okay, we are finished for today. We lock the door and tidy up the parking area where we have the pottery shop. Until next week.

Seeds of Change Fund

Seed money to start a project or fund an ongoing project can make the difference. Nonprofit organizations and government offices are not usually able to pay for Poetry Heals without support. The Pikes Peak Community Foundation's Everett Family fund provided this year's seed money for projects at Springs Recovery Connection, Cedar Springs Hospital and with Poetry and Pottery.

We want to make a Seeds of Change fund a permanent fixture at Poetry Heals. We have set a goal of \$2500 to provide up to 50% of the cost of a Poetry Heals project. This will allow organizations to bring in a team of writing mentors who will teach young people the magic of writing — a portable, accessible and affordable tool for processing their lives. It may help grow the next project!

I hope you will want to be part of the Seeds of Change and will donate whatever seems right. You can donate on line through our we bpage at Cause Vox <http://poetryheals.causevox.com> or you can send a check. Please make checks out to our 501c3 sponsor, **Proprius Learning**, and send them to 724 N. Cedar, Colorado Springs, CO 80903. Questions? Give Molly Wingate a call at 719-685-4114.