

iWRITE Annual Report

January 2019 - July 2020




iWRITE

10th Anniversary Celebrations

The New iWRITE TV

School Partner Spotlight: Fort Bend ISD



Every child has a voice. And every child deserves to be heard. But to truly be heard, children need to learn and grow as writers, which builds confidence and helps them excel in any subject.

Our Mission

Our mission at iWRITE is to build student confidence through writing.

Our Vision

Through writing, students become more creative and confident, which opens the door to opportunities they never had before.

Our Values

Every Child has a Voice

We believe every child has a voice and we want them to know that what they have to say is important. We give every young writer opportunities for expression.

By Kids for Kids

We take kids seriously and give them experiences that are often reserved for adults. Here, they can be known as a published author, a speaker, an editor, and a leader.

Diversity & Inclusion

We actively break down stereotypes about who can become a Writer, and reach out to every ethnicity, culture, religion, country, and socioeconomic group to make writing part of a young person's life.

Respect

We respect the children, families, and educators in our programs. We also promote respect among students, working to prevent negativity and bullying, and instead, helping each child to feel proud of their culture and optimistic about their future.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO AND FOUNDER



Dear Friends,

Even in the midst of a pandemic, students have been searching for ways to learn, express their creativity, and process the often-chaotic world we're living in. Last spring, the biggest challenge was, not all iWRITE programming was available online. But that quickly changed. Even with shutdowns worldwide, we found a way to grow and to be there for the students who need us most.

In this report, I'm proud to share the work that you have made possible during this unforgettable year. We ended 2019 with our Ten-Year Anniversary Book Signing, publishing students' stories, poems and artwork from all over the world and celebrating their beautiful diversity. And in 2020, we helped our students adapt to a hybrid learning environment, encouraging them to excel whether in the classroom or online.

The "i" The Guy Writing curriculum and character became the foundation for this rapid digital and virtual expansion. This spring, we offered free digital resources on our website during the school shut down and developed television programming for *iWRITE at Home TV*, which aired on Houston's FOX/My20 to provide learning opportunities for students who had limited (or no) access to the internet. Summer camps and workshops went virtual, and we plan to continue offering an ever-growing library of online resources for teachers, parents, and students. The "i" The Guy bilingual programming expanded into Mexico with the launch of a partnership with the Boys and Girls Club in Cabo San Lucas. And, our Youth Club launched a digital iWRITER Magazine to share their generation's voice with the world.

Strong partnerships have made the expansion and productivity possible during the pandemic when the needs have been extreme. Our partners helped get writing journals into the hands of students who didn't have access to the internet; partners helped support video and TV productions; and partners are helping create new resources for teachers and parents.

I owe a heartfelt THANK YOU to all of you who devote your time and your hard-earned dollars to help these children succeed. We couldn't do it without you, and we are grateful that you have joined us in our commitment to helping kids truly find their voice.

As always, if you have questions, or if you see a place where you'd like to get more involved, I'm just a phone call or email away!

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Melissa Williams Murphy'.

Melissa Williams Murphy, Founder & CEO
Melissa@iwrite.org | 713-845-5811

Cover Photo by Michael McKinney

10th Anniversary Book Signing and Luncheon

Celebrating 10 Years of Literacy



H-E-B sponsored a media event where young authors answered questions from print, broadcast, and digital journalists.



Students autographed copies of the anthology for guests.

More than 450 people attended our milestone event, making this the biggest event to date. The memorable luncheon and book signing was emceed by our very own student-author-turned-actor, Chase Alexander.

Here are a few event highlights from the celebration:

- 100 newly published authors and illustrators represented schools from all over Houston, the United States, and even all around the world.
- Reverend Gregory Han of Interfaith Ministries, the artist GONZO247, iWRITE Founder and CEO Melissa Williams Murphy, Dr. Seun Adigun, H-E-B Director of Public Affairs, Lisa Helfman, iWRITE Youth Club Officers Alyssa Reid and Alex Zhang, and International authors Beisan An and Shruti Chakraborty delivered inspirational speeches.
- Seven honorees represented international cultural diversity and the seven continents of the world.
- Editor's Choice Recipients Fiza Kuzhiyil and Prisha Shivani read from their work.
- Debuted iWRITE's 10-year anniversary video.

**10th Anniversary
Book Signing
and Luncheon**

Celebrating 10 Years of Literacy



Proud, published students from Spring Branch Elementary.



iWRITE is grateful to H-E-B for its support as the official publishing contest sponsor.

Celebrating 10 Years of Literacy



Multiple students participated on stage as event speakers.



Looking Back: 10 Years of Literacy

iWRITE exists because we believe every child has a voice and deserves to be heard. As children learn and grow as writers, they build the confidence to excel in any subject.

The problem is, standardized education, poverty, and now, the chaos of COVID-19, can make learning a challenge and pose even bigger hurdles when it comes to creativity. We want students to feel creative and motivated to learn and excel.

During the 2019-20 fiscal year, we celebrated our 10th anniversary. That's 10 years of powerful curriculums that combine proven learning strategies with fun characters who help children get excited about learning. Many of our writing activities also promote emotional well-being and self-expression – something parents and educators tell us is also more critical now than ever.

With support from our donors and sponsors, we're committed to making the next 10 years even more impactful than the last.

HERE'S A QUICK LOOK BACK:



iWRITE's anthology has now been published for a decade, with more than 2,200 entries from the United States, United Arab Emirates, China, and the Philippines.



From short stories and poems to illustrations, 730 young authors have experienced the thrill of seeing their work in print.



Through 22 summer camps, workshops and writing presentations, we've coached 15,388 children as they explored ideas, let their imaginations run wild, and created new characters, stories, poems, and illustrations.



Collaborated with educators in "i" The Guy partner schools to teach writing to 7,542 students.



Partnered with local, national, and international nonprofits to deliver writing programs to 23,562 children.



Reached 15,388 children in 22 summer camps, workshops, and writing presentations.



Reached 23,562 children through partner programs, including international nonprofits.

Looking Back: 10 Years of Literacy



2019



2018



2017



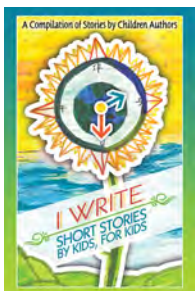
2016



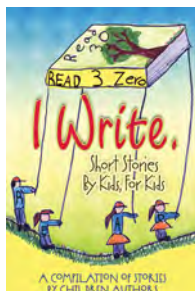
2015



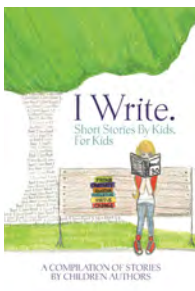
2014



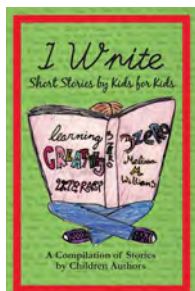
2013



2012



2011



2010



CLICK HERE TO WATCH
[Celebrating 10 Years of iWRITE! - An Anniversary Timeline](#)

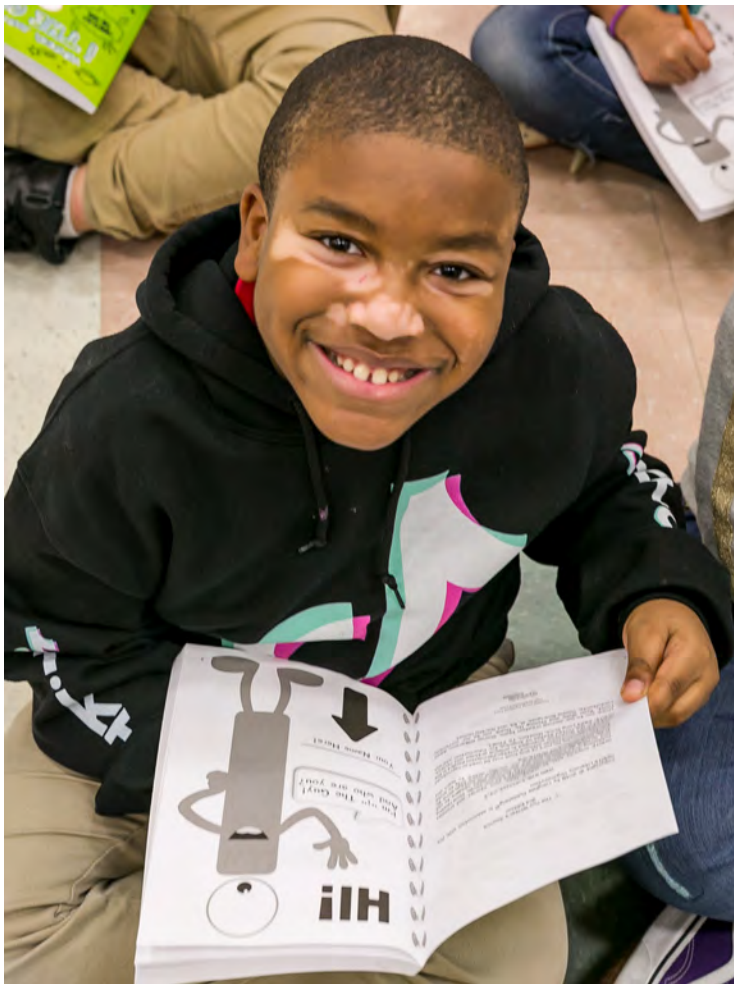
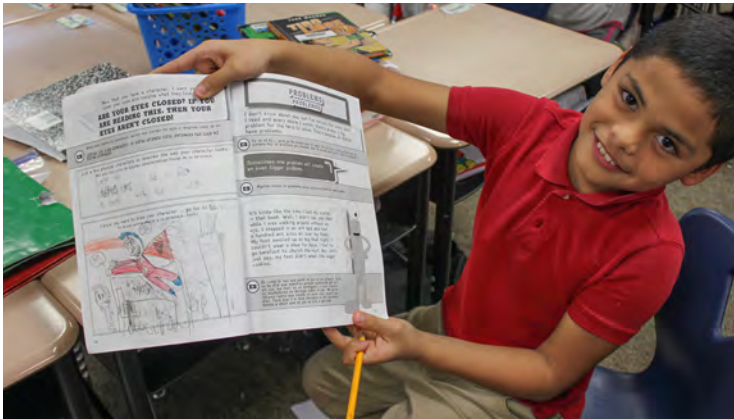


Worked with 7,542 children in "i" The Guy partner schools.

"i" THE GUY

In The Classroom

"i" The Guy is the main cartoon character found in iWRITE's classroom curriculum and writing journal. He's also a mentor who teaches students about the writing process, making writing interesting and fun. During the 2019-20 school year, "i" The Guy worked with 2,157 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders in 15 schools.





One of iWRITE's dedicated volunteers, Yamileth H., fell in love with iWRITE's programs and hoped her son's school could experience the magic of "i" The Guy. Yamileth recommended her child's school, Lula Belle Goodman Elementary in Fort Bend ISD, and connected iWRITE with the school administration. Thanks to Phillips 66's generosity, the partnership with this Title I school, which has 44 percent English Language Learners, became a reality.

"We're always on the lookout for programs that advance literacy and truly engage students because education and literacy are great equalizers," says Claudia Kreisle, Director of Social Impact for Phillips 66. "I immediately saw the passion from the iWRITE team around creating a program that was entertaining for children while still focusing on the required school curriculum."

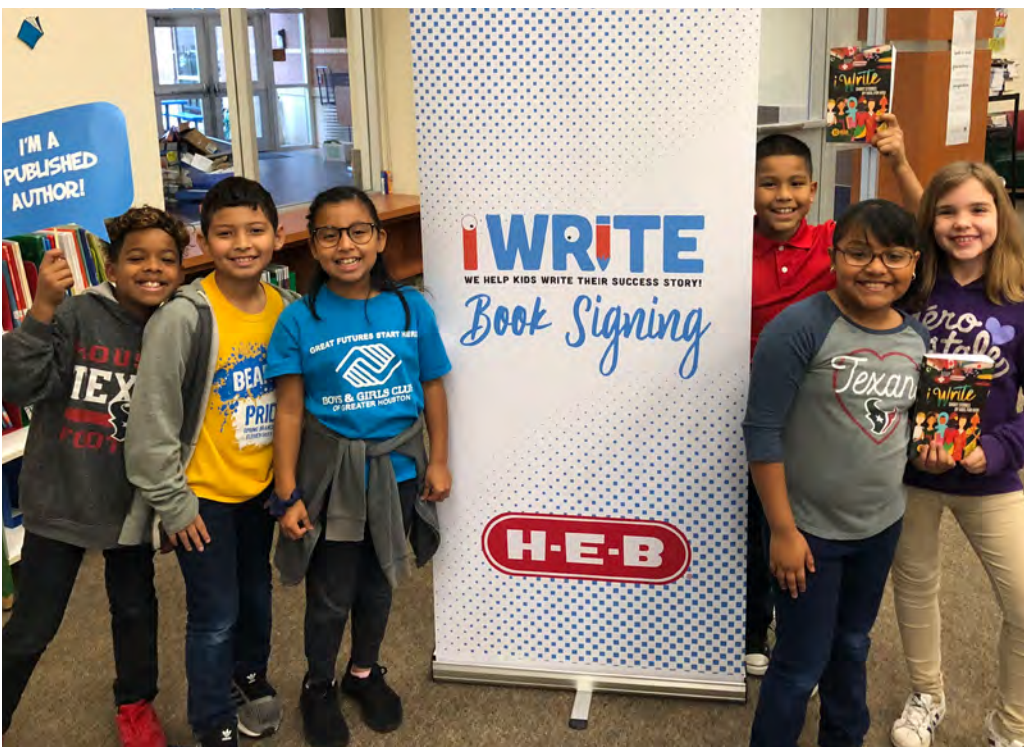
During a visit to Goodman Elementary, Kreisle saw firsthand the fun "i" The Guy brings to learning. "The journals are entertaining and relatable," she says, "and I



always want to move on to the next lesson to see what happens with "i" The Guy. As much as I enjoy reading through the journals as an adult, I know I would have loved learning with these journals as a child."

This partnership illustrates the impact our sponsors have when they invest in literacy and offer new opportunities for students in some of the country's most disadvantaged schools.

Update on Spring Branch ISD



Last year, we featured Spring Branch ISD, showcasing how they'd put "i" The Guy to work for elementary students. We were excited to see that 10 Spring Branch students were ultimately selected for publication in the annual anthology. (Students are selected by Houston librarians in blind judging.) That's meaningful progress and demonstrates that being an ESL learner, as many of the students were, is no barrier to success.

iWRITE at Home TV



Featuring Joy Sewing,
Author of *Ava and the Prince*

Tune in Friday, July 3rd at 11am CST for an episode that will focus on:

- how to connect to your readers
- point of view

and readings from iWRITE Poets

Mariah A.

Katie G.

Grace G.


iWRITE reached 16,000 children via eight programs produced for iWRITE TV. These aired on Houston's FOX/My20.

Another new initiative, the iWRITE at Home television series, aired on Houston FOX 26 KRIV/ My20 KTXH during the spring and summer of 2020, providing educational and fun learning programs for all kids at home.

Hosted by iWRITE Founder and children's author Melissa Williams Murphy, the series included cameos from the iWRITE Mascot, "i" The Guy and guest appearances by children's authors, iWRITE's student authors, and iWRITE Illustrator, Ryan Shaw. Lessons included creating characters, developing stories, describing settings, exploring Texas history, telling stories through art, acting, and songs.

Thanks to support from Phillips 66, all of these episodes are available for free online.

Even more sponsors will be able to participate in the future as new content, including a Mindfulness series, is developed.



iWRITE at Home TV Genre & Theme

Copy link

iWRITE at Home TV

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

PHILLIPS 66

MORE VIDEOS

CLICK HERE TO WATCH
iWRITE at Home TV

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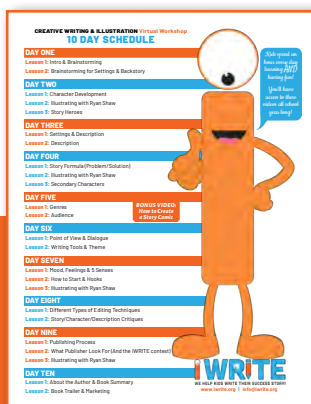
CC YouTube

Summer Camps, Workshops & Free Activities

Virtual Creative Writing Summer Camps and Workshops gave kids an ongoing opportunity to learn how to create characters and stories with professional authors and illustrators. More than 25 lessons included hands-on writing and illustration exercises, and reviews of sample manuscripts, tips on getting published, and lessons from published authors.

The video-based lessons gave students and parents the ability to log in and participate when it was most convenient for them – flexibility that parents emphasized was critical in the pandemic environment.

iWRITE interns and young authors participated in many of the lessons, making each day fun, fresh, and relatable for the students.



During the pandemic iWRITE began creating and sending weekly activities to teachers and parents. The new writing and illustration activities are available free online!

[Click Here To See More Activities](#)

LEARN ALL ABOUT THE 10-DAY BACK-TO-SCHOOL WORKSHOP

[Click Here To See The Writers Workshop Page](#)

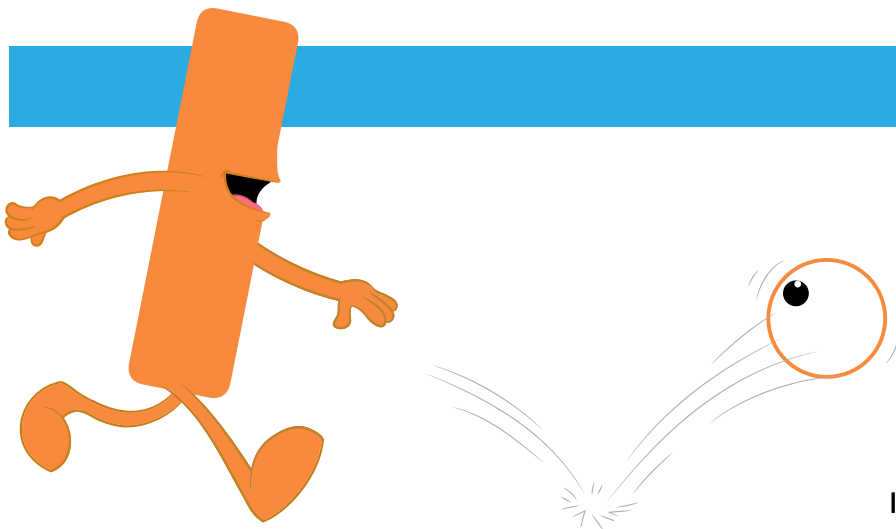


Virtual Programming included a Masterclass for middle and high school students (grades 6-12). Students enjoyed a live conversation with iWRITE's very special guest, astronaut Bob Hines. He shared his experiences at NASA, his fascination with space, and what it took to become an astronaut.



The iWRITE Youth Club is all about leadership (AND writing). It's a group of Houston students in grades 6-12 who learn to innovate, network, and engage with their community. Their most recent project is the iWRITER magazine, which, like the annual anthology, is written by kids, for kids.

The magazines gave students a voice at an especially important time in history. They shared their views on the coronavirus and social unrest in their first two issues.



2019-20 STUDENT OFFICERS:

President — Alyssa Reid

Vice-President — Sofia Bajwa

Vice-President Elect — Ava Reid

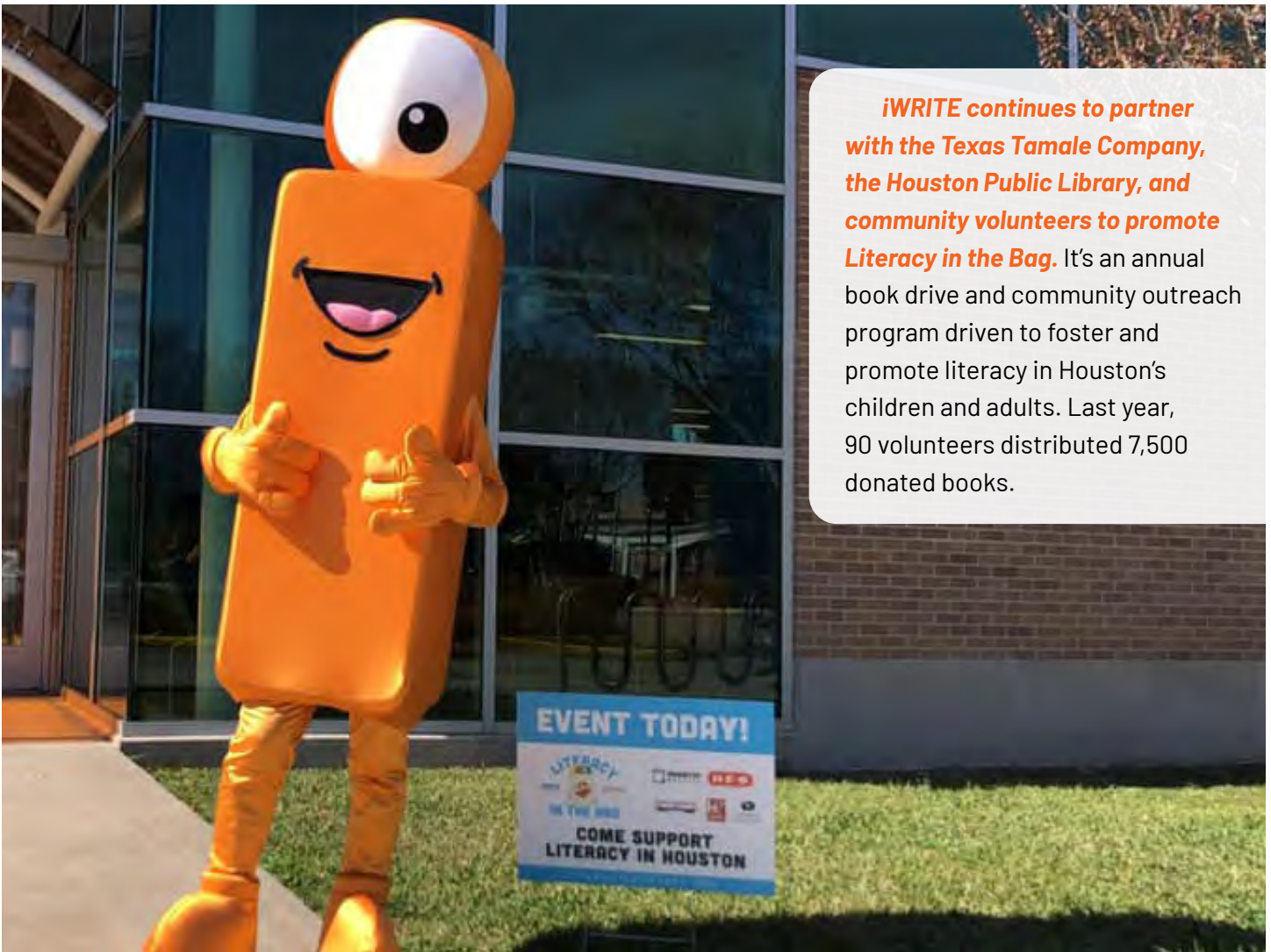
Treasurer — Kurt Kauffman

Secretary — Annie Jones

Historian — Eshaan Mani

Parliamentarian — Katie Giveon

International Relations Officer — Alex Zhang



iWRITE continues to partner with the Texas Tamale Company, the Houston Public Library, and community volunteers to promote Literacy in the Bag. It's an annual book drive and community outreach program driven to foster and promote literacy in Houston's children and adults. Last year, 90 volunteers distributed 7,500 donated books.



Partnerships in Action

iWRITE began its exciting partnership with Club de Niños y Niñas de B.C.S. in April 2020. The organization is working with the Club to pilot its bilingual “i” The Guy Journal program during after-school lessons online. The journal includes writing instructions in both English and Spanish making it a useful aid for students in Mexico learning the English language. The pilot program currently has 30 kids (ages 8 - 13) participating weekly. iWRITE is thrilled to expand its programming outside of the U.S. This partnership will allow iWRITE to share additional support including online resources, teacher trainings, and more.



“i” The Guy made his debut at Houston’s Thanksgiving Day Parade in 2019, in partnership with Sister Cities Houston.



While artists worked to “Chalk the Block” iWRITE students read from their stories and poems.



KIDS MEALS is a nonprofit working to feed some of Houston’s most vulnerable children. While delivering meals, they distributed 506 bilingual and English writing journals, sponsored by Phillips 66, to support learning during the quarantine.

After-School Programs

In fall 2019, iWRITE partnered with local teachers to incorporate the “i” The Guy Writer’s Journal Program into the Alief Children Interacting Afterschool (CIA) program and the Houston Public Library’s afterschool workshops.

These afterschool programs provide enrichment and help students develop social skills and it was the perfect place for students to utilize their “i” The Guy journals. Similarly to the in-school programs, these students receive full access to iWRITE’s resources but they get to spend much more time working in the journal.

iWRITE staff and their illustrator worked with students closely to create stories and drawings during afterschool hours. It was refreshing to see the “i” The Guy program implemented in smaller groups with various volunteers and students from different classrooms. iWRITE found that many of the students participating in afterschool programs were students who needed it most.



In 2019-20, iWRITE launched after-school programs in nine Houston-area schools.

2019-2020 FINANCIALS AT A GLANCE

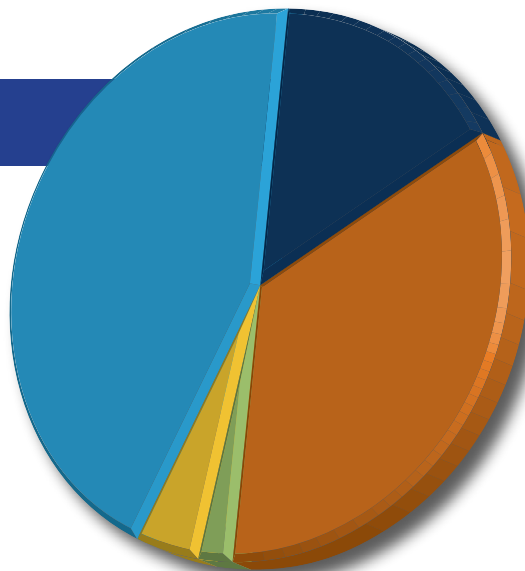


AUGUST 1, 2019 - JULY 31, 2020

PROFIT AND LOSS

\$356,974	-	\$324,873	=	\$32,100
REVENUE		EXPENSES		NET INCOME

PROGRAM EXPENSES:



PROGRAM EXPENSES:

■ Publishing Programs	\$30,949
■ Writing Programs	\$68,421
■ Instructional Programs	\$4,293
■ Other Programs	\$8,076
■ Program Management	\$86,109

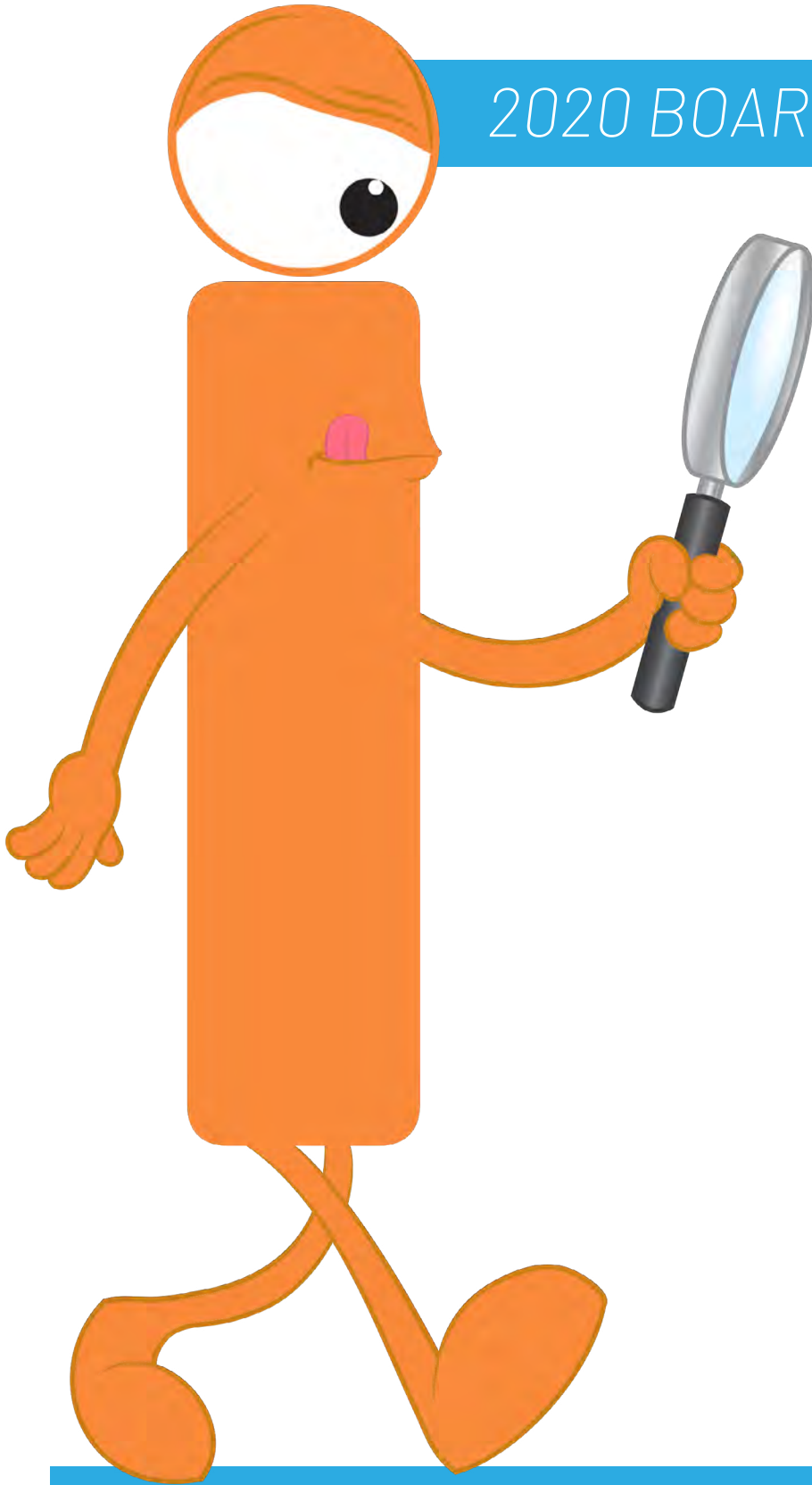


TOTAL **\$197,848**



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The students pictured above were all professionally published in the 2019, 10th Anniversary anthology: *I Write Short Stories, by Kids for Kids*.



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