Behind the Book’s mission is to inspire New York City public school students to love reading by bringing accomplished authors and their books into classrooms and creating rich, innovative literacy programs.

Our organization empowers students from low-income neighborhoods with literacy programs that enrich learning and nurture appreciation for books.
Dear Friends:

Behind the Book has had its best year ever - full of growth and exciting new experiences for students, teachers, staff, board members, and participating authors and illustrators. If that sounds familiar, it is because each year Behind the Book gets better and better.

We were featured on NBC’s program GIVE, conducted more social justice programs than ever before, expanded our summer school to seven programs, and, with the help of KPMG, gave away 6,000 non-program-related books. That’s a record-breaking number of books!

We increased our classroom programs by 28%, completing 68 programs with 409 workshops in 16 Title 1 schools for Pre-K to 12th grade classes in Brooklyn, Manhattan, and the Bronx. Well over 700 actively engaged students became published authors this year thanks to the dedicated work of our staff and volunteers, authors, teachers, and Board members.

To meet the expanding needs of our new participants, we have also grown our Board of Directors and Young Executive Board, our list of authors, and energetic volunteers.

Last year was our first foray into Pre-School, where we successfully adapted our programs for four year olds. We will continue to develop strategies for Head Start programs during the school year as well as over the summer.

We are very committed to taking our students out of the classrooms whenever possible. Trip sites in the last year included the United Nations, Kings County Supreme Court, the Central Park Zoo, Statue of Liberty, the African Burial Ground, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, and the American Museum of Natural History.

Behind the Book is also directly encouraging literacy by offering neighborhood kids and community groups as many free books as they want from our office, if they come back and give their opinion about the books to a staff member. A constant stream of kids now come in after school, building a mini community of readers in our office.

None of this would have been possible without your support. Thank you so very much for sharing our passion for books and our firm belief that young people need to experience the joy of reading to be good readers and successful contributors to the world.

Looking forward to a wonderful 2018!

Happy Reading,

Jo Umans     Susan Elman
Executive Director    Board Chair
“Everyone is different and our writing describes our picture. Everyone has a different story.”

Grade 6, BAL
Behind the Book provides intensive literacy programs for public schools in New York City. We work with all ages – Pre-K through 12th Grade – in schools at which 75% or more of the student population lives below the poverty line (Title I schools). Our results come from our unique strategy:

**Customizable Programs**
Behind the Book invests individual attention in each classroom. We work with every teacher to develop a program that is appropriate to the students’ various reading levels, but also scaffolds material in a way that encourages rapid advancement. Our programs can be customized for populations such as English Language Learners and Special Education classes.

**Diverse Literature**
Whenever appropriate, Behind the Book uses an anchor text that reflects the students’ lives in New York City and introduces the classroom to an accomplished author with a background similar to theirs. The real-world connection established by meeting the author and reading books that are familiar, vivid and relevant is key to fostering reading engagement.

**Book Ownership**
Behind the Book purchases at least one book for every student to keep. Book ownership helps our students identify as readers and adds reading material to their home. Easy access to books is essential to sustaining the engagement created by Behind the Book after our program is completed.

**Multiple Workshops**
Each Behind the Book program involves at least four and up to eight workshops that combine to bring books to life. In addition to meeting the author two or three times, programs can include art, research, and writing/editing workshops which include an influx of volunteers to the classroom. Students receive the individualized attention that drives their success. Field trips expose the kids to all that New York City has to offer. With so many varied workshops, our programs broaden our students’ experiences while developing literacy skills.

**Creative Final Projects**
Programs culminate in a writing project that reinforces all that the students have learned. Behind the Book celebrates the students by publishing their work in a class book or by creating a public exhibit of their work. Mastery experiences like this demystify success, and increase our students’ confidence and their willingness to try challenging new tasks.
“I learned that I am brave and I could do everything but the only thing I need to do is participate.”

Grade 4, P.S. 98

Behind the Book Schools

**Manhattan**

Community Life Center
Mount Morris Head Start

Community Life Center
Taino Towers Head Start

P.S. 4 The Duke Ellington School

P.S. 98 Shorac Kappock School

P.S. 125 The Ralph Bunche School

P.S. 154 The Harriet Tubman School

High School for Dual Language and Asian Studies

Thurgood Marshall Academy for Learning and Social Change

**Brooklyn**

C.S. 21 The Crispus Attucks School

P.S. 46 Edward C. Blum School

P.S. 241 Emma L. Johnston School

Eagle Academy For Young Men II

**The Bronx**

Collegiate Institute for Math and Science

DeWitt Clinton High School

International Community High School

Urban Assembly Bronx Academy of Letters
Our Year in Review

1,500 Students Served
68 Classroom Programs
16 Schools

10,200 Books Donated
409 Workshops
725 Published Student Authors

Student Demographics

- 47% Latino
- 37% Black
- 10% Asian American
- 6% White or Other

- 87% qualify for free lunch.
- 23% are English Language Learners.
- 26% of our programs are customized for Special Education classes. We serve additional Special Education students who are integrated into General Education classrooms.

* Estimates are based on partner school data averaged by the number of BtB programs per school. Free Lunch data taken from 2015-2016 School Quality Guides. All other info taken from 2015-2016 School Quality Snapshot.
Over the course of six fun-filled weeks, Ms. Hodge’s 3rd grade students at PS 4 The Duke Ellington School learned about southwest and central African culture and dance when they read *Drumbeat in Our Feet* by Patricia Keeler and Júlio Leitão.

The class was abuzz with exciting discussions led by Patricia about the fascinating origins, unique rituals, and colorful costumes of African dance. They learned that costumes and body paint are especially symbolic in African dancing and that in southwest and central Africa dancers paint white dots on their bodies before performing. Each dot represents an ancestor. Students also learned about libations - a ceremony that symbolizes the ancestors joining the celebration. In the ceremony some water is spilled on the floor and one by one each dancer steps into the puddle. Patricia also told the students the story of Queen Nzinga, the powerful leader who helped free her people from slavery in the 16th century.

Students painted dots on their bodies, just as the characters do in the book. Patricia led the students in their own water circle ceremony, and later, students made costumes from the fabrics and performed the story of Queen Nzinga.

Inspired by their learning about traditions and customs, the class enthusiastically started on their writing project. Each student chose an African country to explore and worked with volunteer research helpers - who assisted them with brainstorming and researching their topics. After completing first drafts, the students worked with volunteer writing coaches, who helped them revise and edit their writing.

To tie the project all together, Candice Humphries, a BtB teaching artist, helped the students create illustrations to reflect all the wonderful facts and interesting information they had discovered about the African country they had chosen. The result was the publication of a book that not only shared important facts about Africa but also, through the marvelous illustrations, celebrated its beauty, too.
Students in Mr. Goss’ 11th grade classes at DeWitt Clinton High School reimagined their own neighborhoods as landscapes for personal heritage and magic through original writing and drawing. They were mirroring the themes in Daniel José Older’s acclaimed YA novel, *Shadowshaper*. In the book, when muralist Sierra Santiago witnesses her Brooklyn neighborhood face chaos and attacks from outsiders, she discovers that she is a descendant of “shadowshapers.” Shadowshapers practice Caribbean magic that channels guardian spirits into art. Sierra and her newfound magic must defend her community from threats of appropriation, gentrification, and cultural erasure.

The story of Sierra and her awakening became the inspiration for the students to create their own flash fiction about community, magic, and individual power. During the first workshop with Daniel, they were instructed to think about their immediate neighborhoods. They then were to reimagine and write about that same neighborhood by adding a supernatural or fantastic element. During the second workshop, the author helped the students to improve on character development and find quick and efficient ways to get to the heart of the story—the dilemma and the conflict.

Chalk drawing and art are integral aspects of the novel, and with that in mind, Behind the Book teaching artist Sara Reynolds guided the students in creating illustrations to accompany their fiction writing. They were given black and white printed textures of concrete, brick, and wood as drawing surfaces. Then using chalk markers in various colors, students drew imaginative creatures and designs inspired by the textures, similar to how a muralist would paint a wall.

The resulting art and writing appear in their book called *Stories From the Hood*. The student authors autographed a copy for Daniel, as he had done for them.
Behind the Book continues to provide and devise updated evaluative metrics to assess and quantify the strength of our programs. Perhaps the most direct way staff, teachers and students notice our success is in the publication of student books. Last year we published twenty professionally designed and printed books of student writing and art, thus empowering over 700 students with the satisfaction and pride in the accomplishment of becoming published authors. These books are now in the school libraries and homes of each student, where they serve as a permanent reminder of their work with Behind the Book.

Most importantly, students learn that even the most Herculean labor (such as bringing a book to print) can be broken down into simple and manageable tasks. It is this simple life skill – breaking down the overwhelming into the manageable – that will carry them furthest in life. And the tangible reward of the life skill – holding book in hand – demonstrates this achievement like nothing else can. This solitary pride of accomplishment spans all grades and age groups.

Becoming a published author provides that platform for students to be seen and heard and have their experiences validated by others. They become storytellers with both the vision and the tool set to share their stories. And what once overwhelmed their lives, is now manageable and just another daily challenge to be conquered.

### Student Book Designers

Tree Abraham  
Annabel Brandon  
Laura Duffy  
Nina Dunhill  
Kate Espada  
David Garner  
Lindsay Guim  
Ginnefine Jalloh  
Sara Loos  
Meghan O’Connell  
Sara Reynolds  
Khalid Rosemin  
Iris Shih  
Linda McCarthy Tropeano  
Sherry Wang
At the conclusion of last year’s programs, teachers reported that after working with Behind the Book:

- **82%** of students showed increased reading engagement.
- **84%** of students have increased motivation to read.
- **80%** of students had a better understanding of the writing process.
- **82%** of students now have increased motivation to write.
- **81%** of students improved their belief in their own skills.

**Evaluation Findings**

“Before working with Behind the Book, I had second thoughts about my writing, but now the program opened doors for me. Now I know I can do whatever I put my mind to.”

Grade 12, ICHS
We’d like to thank everyone who supports Behind the Book, especially our major donors and partners:

**Government Supporters**
- New York City Councilwoman Inez Dickens
- New York City Department of Cultural Affairs
- New York State Council on the Arts
- New York City Councilman Ydanis Rodriguez

**Foundation & Corporate Supporters**
- AIG Matching Grants Program
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- Gary Eisenkraft
- Carole & Richard Eisner
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- Nancy Newman Elghanayan & H. Henry Elghanayan
- Diana & Fred Elghanayan
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- Susan Elman & Joseph Ronson
- Nancy Evans & Seymour Wishman
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Stephanie Tam
Jane Wang
Helen Zhang

“Making us read makes us smarter and smarter.”
Kindergarten, P.S. 241
“I learned it is ok to be yourself and have fun. Even it’s ok to be awesome.”

Grade 3, P.S.241
The Behind the Book Reading Series completed its 12th year of hosting a monthly event at KGB Bar. This reading series brings a wide variety of authors, including both established and emerging voices, together to share their work. Just as our student programs help bring stories to life, our adult audience gets transported to whatever world our readers have created, and get to experience those books in the author’s own voices.

KGB Bar has a long and storied history of supporting the arts and especially writers; it is a wonderful, intimate venue in which to escape from the everyday and open the door to the extraordinary. Many audience members return again and again, and we have developed relationships with readers and listeners alike, helping us to further extend our brand and share our passion for our mission.

---

### Authors in Schools

Selina Alko  
Marc Aronson  
Tracey Baptiste  
Paulette Bogan  
Coe Booth  
Marina Budhos  
Julie Chibbaro  
Yangsook Choi  
Ginjer Clarke  
Lisa Cline-Ransome  
Sharon Dennis Wyeth  
Zetta Elliott  
Robbin Gourley  
Paul Griffin  
Jessie Hartland  
Thyra Heder  
Isabel Hill  
Tad Hills  
Patricia Keeler  
Michelle Knudsen  
Steve Light  
Torrey Maldonado  
Page McBrier  
Kevin McCloskey  
Patricia McCormick  
Tony Medina  
Daniel Jose Older  
Raquel Ortiz  
Sofia Quintero  
Doreen Rappaport  
Sandra Richards  
Adam Rubin  
Virginia Sanchez-korrol  
Julia Sarcone-Roach  
Stephen Savage  
Jean-Marc Superville Sovak  
Danette Vigilante  
Renee Watson  
Rita Williams-Garcia

### Authors in Support of BtB

Andre Aciman  
Kate Angus  
Cyzar Arca  
Nicole Dennis-Benn  
Marcy Dermansky  
Cara Hoffman  
Randa Jarrar  
Eileen Johnson  
Nicole Krauss  
Maris Kreizman  
Min JinLee  
Alexander Maksik  
Alia Malek  
Margaret Malone  
Tom McAllister  
Tim Murphy  
Anna Noyes  
Eric Puchner  
Jonathan Safran Foer  
Iris Smyles  
Ellen Umansky  
Teddy Wayne  
Jessica Winter

---

“Meeting the author made me read more because now I think authors are cool.”  
Grade 1, P.S.4
Volunteers

Angele Ali
Brenna Anderson
Monique Anderson
Safa Ansarifar
Lisa Archigian
Shayla Askew
Debbie Avila
Marianna Baer
John Barbera
Eddie Barger
Jordan Barsky
Melissa Baumgart
Kevin Beck
Paula Berg
Donn Bernstein
Jessamyn Block
Ron Blumer
Mary Catherine Bolster
Kristen Bonano
Linda Boni
Pari Boopalan
Eduardo Llanos
Nerca Brosh
Sofia Bredice
Nancy Bredice
Paul Braverman
Nancy Brecke
Cecilia Brown
Susanna Buckley
Manoj Budidha
Joe Burby
Richard Burgio
CJ Bzdewka
Raquel Calero
Linda Camacho
Laura Cappiello
Patty Carnavale
Ciara Diaz
Stefanie Delgado
Anthony DeCaro
Caroline de Vries
Anthony Delgado
Ciara Diaz
Kelsey Dickey
Alfredo Dominguez
Nika Drandova
Cormac Driver
Nina Dunhill
Lauren Eckerle
Leah Einhorn
Omon Ejemai
Khalid El Khatib
Phyllis Elkind
Elise Elman
Susan Elman
Raquel Fairweather
John Farrell
Christopher Fellows
Brenda Felsher
Viviana Ferreras
Debbie Fingers
Heidi Fitterling
Chris Fleming
Geovana Flores
Brendan Foley
LaToya S. Ford
Brenda Freso
Qian Gao
Jessie Garretson
Justin Gates
Maureen Germain
Rose Giannavoli
Dan Glaser
Ellen Gold
Brian Goldrich
Teresa Goudie
Maxine Grant
Kate Greathed
Matthew Greenfield
Ariel Grigg
Ilene Guralnick
Tenjah Hamilton
Tom Han
Briana Harris
Myra Hernandez
Patricia Hill
Jake Hirsch
Heather Holland
Christy Hood
Elizabeth Howard
Nusrat Islam
Geraldine Ivins
Praachi Jain
Adam Jenah
Aaron Jennings
Jane Jeong
Avis Johnson
Caitlin Johnson
Cameca Johnson
Peter Johnson
Netzayet Jones
Nick Jones
Klaa Kalia
Tracy Ellen Kamens
Aehee Kang Asano
Denise Kapelus
Valerie Kaufmann
Jim Kavanagh
Noah Kershaw
Linette Kim
Amanda Koffler
Susan Kovach
Claire Kwong
Nikki Kynard
Rebecca Lacayo
Meredith Lanzen
Jean Laupus
Trevor Lazarus
Emmelene Lee
Joslyn Levy
Denis Licardo
Toni Liebman
Calvin Lin
Christopher Lind
Michael Little
Tarilyn Little
Natasha Lituchy-Kempf
Eduardo Llanos
Billy LoBue
John Lombardo
Weihui Lu
Alexandra Lubensky
Heather Luciano
Rosanna Maddelena
Ann Malaspina
Karina Maldonado
Tara Maldonado
Linda Mancio
Laura Mandel
Linda Marchand
Jessica Massiah
Kara Matthews
Anne McCain Engman
Whitney McGowan
Brooke Meyer
Rosa Moyo
Lyn Miller-Lachmann
Claire Mitchell
Aravis Moore
Jazmin Moreno
Helena Morrissey
Claire Mortensen
Molly Mosher
Thomas Mulvany
Roger Myers
Amna Nasrullah
Brad Negbauer
Bill Nelson
Marianne Nelson
Jessica Nham
Brooke Norris
Andrew Nosrat
Ivy Nunez
Margel Nusbaum
Alexandra Olson
Yoshiko Ono
Micool Otsow
Ashley Ouderkerk
Anastasia Page
Patricia Pagnotta
Aileen Painter
Jenna Pate
Dhruv Patel
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Truett Petty
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Lindsay Pryor
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Emilie Quiroz
Cece Ramsey
Betsy Ray
Josh Redlich
Eri Reinit
Sara Reynolds
Raquel Reynoso
Miriam Richtman
Amanda Rivera
Madeleine Robson
Brad Rodney
Nercy Rodriguez
Alexandra Rosario
Emily Rosenberg
Bureen Ruffin
Bridget Runge
Rebecca Ryan
Mary Salvaggio
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Tess Sanders
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Shya Scanlon
Liz Schalet
Lucy Schanzer
Jeff Schneider
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Ann Sherman
Iris Shin
Vaughn Shinall
Michael Simon
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Summer Smith
Karen Smul
Amanda Snead
Emma Sohberg
Bert Sonjiprasad
Brian Staub
Stephanie Steinberg
David Steiner
Victoria Stephanova
Rachelle Stephens
Charles Stephenson
Claire Strickland
Mariza Struyvenberk
Latahata Sukho
Ali Syed
Stephanie Tam
Saki Tanaka
Claire Tao
Lyudmyla Tarelkine
Ryan Thompson
Alex Toutouni
James Tucker
Perla Valentin
Oscar Victoria
Larry Vitale
Lizzie Vogt
Susie Wagner
Katie Wallace
Grace Ward
Teddy Wayne
Natasha White
Trevor Wiessmann
Jim Wiggin
Margaret Wiggins
David Wigglesworth
David Wilcox
Derry Wilkins
Brandon Wilson
Ian Woolley
Woody Yoon
Allison Young
Nagol Zand
Paul Zender
Estefani Zighami
Zoe Zimski
Ibi Zoboi
Zara Zuckerman
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Houlihan Lokey
Huge, Inc.
Kepler Group
Mergermarket
Nielsen
Nordic Consulting
Temboo
### Financials

#### Assets, Liabilities, Net Assets

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<th>2017</th>
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#### Summary of Revenues & Expenses

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<th>2015</th>
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<td>Contributions - properties &amp; services</td>
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<td>Investment Income</td>
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<td>Program Service Income</td>
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<td>Total Revenue &amp; Support</td>
<td>$648,939</td>
<td>$550,195</td>
<td>$409,150</td>
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#### Revenue

- **36%** Individuals & Events
- **32%** Foundation
- **9%** Corporations
- **8%** In Kind Contributions
- **8%** Fees for Service
- **7%** Government

#### Expenses

- **75%** Program Services
- **12%** Fundraising
- **13%** General & Administrative