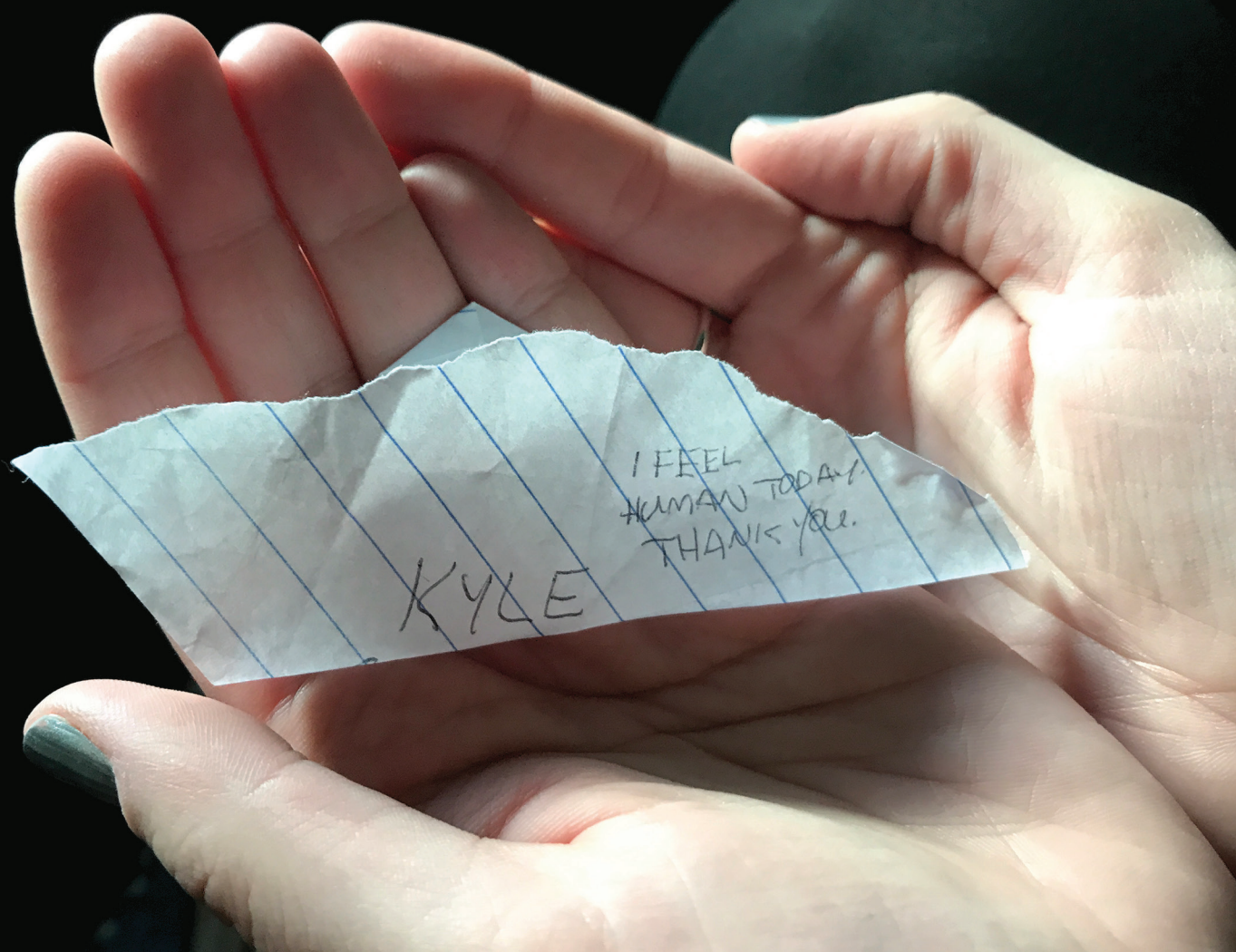



# The Good Listening Project

Annual Report 2019



Actual note given to one of our listener poets at the Mayo Clinic's Transform 2019.

To be present with someone (life giving)  
::all i am doing is sitting across from you  
Is to humanize them (indescribable)  
::all i am doing is holding your hand  
And yourself (the greatest regard)  
::all I am doing is making you everything



*“Presence,” he said.  
“It’s polysensual. It’s ineffable. You can’t describe it, or just decide to have it, but everyone knows it when they see it.  
“Being fully present is the greatest respect you can show someone.”*

*~ Attendee, The 2019 Gold Humanism Summit*

**Dear Friend and Supporter of The Good Listening Project,**

Thank you for being so involved with our organization that you’re literally reading the first ever annual report!

Though we officially launched in December 2018, 2019 has been our real first year in operation. It’s been an incredible one. In this report, you’ll find out about our extraordinary activities. You’ll read testimonials from people we’ve impacted, like the person who wrote the note to our listener poet Ravenna Raven that she’s holding on this report’s cover. And you’ll see more photos of our team in action at hospitals and conferences around the world.

We’re excited to share this with you and for all that we’ll build on this inspiring foundation. Thank you for being part of the journey.

With gratitude,



Frankie Abralind  
Executive Director



Kay McKean  
Cofounder

**Testimonial**

*“I am truly appreciative of and impressed by your thoughtful listening and synthesis! My colleagues and I recently reported out on our highlights from the conference and your Free Custom Poetry stuck out to our group.*

*“Thanks again—I’ll pay it forward by listening more to others and embracing silence.”*

*~ G*



We befriended many star hospital leaders at the Gold Humanism Summit and Planetree International Conference (pictured: Frankie & Kay).





Courtesy of Brendan Bush Photography

## Activities

- **SXSW\*** (Austin, TX)  
Frankie started the year writing Free Custom Poetry as a featured attraction at *Energizing Health House*, a pop-up at South by Southwest (SXSW) sponsored by the American Hospital Association, the American Cancer Society, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and others.
- **American Nurses Association Annual Conference\*** (Orlando, FL)  
Listener poet onsite for two days.
- **International Integrative Nursing Symposium\*** (Galway, Ireland)  
Listener poet onsite for two days.
- **Medical Society of Virginia** (Richmond, VA)  
Hourlong “Listen Like a Poet” training for the Physician Leadership Institute.
- **Inova Schar Cancer Institute\*** (Fairfax, VA)  
Listener poet onsite each Wednesday, coordinated with the Artist in Residence program.
- **Philips Healthcare** (Pittsburgh, PA)  
Hourlong “Listen Like a Poet” training for a team of healthcare experience designers.
- **Erie Shores Healthcare\*** (Leamington, ONT)  
Listener poet onsite for one month.
- **Mayo Clinic Transform\*** (Rochester, MN)  
Mainstage talk by Frankie (pictured at left); two listener poets onsite for two days.
- **Gold Humanism Summit & Planetree International Conference\*** (Orlando, FL)  
Two listener poets onsite for four days.

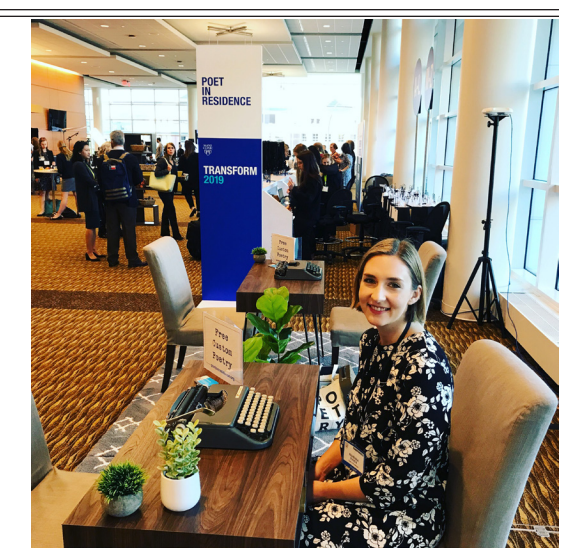
*\*Printed collection available.*

## Testimonial

*“Lots of things just sort of blurted out. It was raw and emotional and quite a bit messy (thank you for the tissues). It was satisfying in some odd way to share these unfiltered reactions and words with someone.*

*“That brief human connection was profound to me.”*

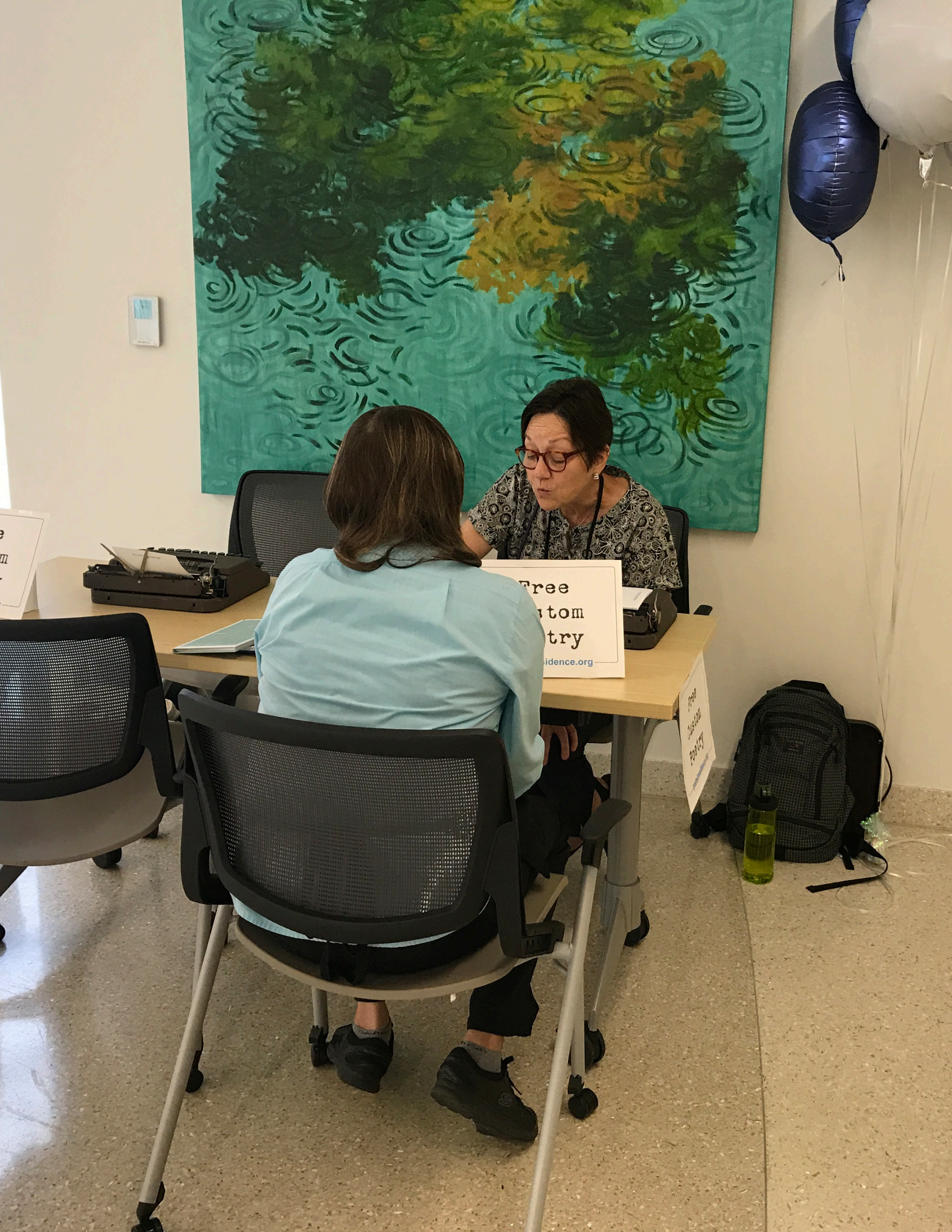
~ P



◀ Cofounder Frankie Abralind gave a Pecha Kucha-style talk on how to be a better listener at Mayo Clinic Transform 2019.

Our setup next to the Mayo Clinic’s conference registration featured potted plants and area rugs (pictured: listener poet Ravenna Raven).





## Impact

### Total Poemees: **421**

We use the term “poemee” for folks who stop to talk with us and have us write them poems. We never call people over; they always self select.

When we ask, “What should the poem be about?” there’s no telling how they’ll respond.

### Testimonials: **106**

A day or so after we deliver the receipt of good listening that we call a “poem,” we email each recipient to follow up.

How was their experience? Should we be doing anything differently?

We get a *lot* of enthusiastic responses. Each of our printed collections includes a half dozen on the first two pages.

### Ripple Effect: **Significant**

At the Mayo Clinic’s Transform 2019 conference, Frankie spoke on the main stage about how to be a better listener. Later that day, an older woman walking through the lobby saw Frankie and dragged a man over to him very enthusiastically.

“Is this him?” she asked him. “The one who gave the talk?” He nodded sheepishly. She looked at Frankie with a huge smile.

“I didn’t see your talk, but my husband here did. I want you to know he just listened to me better than he has in years. It was amazing. I was so surprised I asked him what was happening, and he said it was you.”

### 10-out-of-10 ratings: **94%**

On our post-interaction surveys, we also ask poemees how likely they are to recommend us on a scale of 1-10.

They’re very likely. Some break the rules and award us a 10+, 11, or 12.

At conferences, this has also turned into sales referrals to poemees’ hospital execs back home.

## Testimonial

*“It was the highlight of my morning speaking to you about my battle with cancer and the impact it’s had on my young kids. It’s so calming talking about my love for them and now I forever have this beautiful poem that captures so much in so few words.*

*“I read it aloud at dinner tonight and it was everything.”*

~ C

◀ Listener poet Katherine Gekker set up in the second floor hallway at the Inova Schar Cancer Institute.

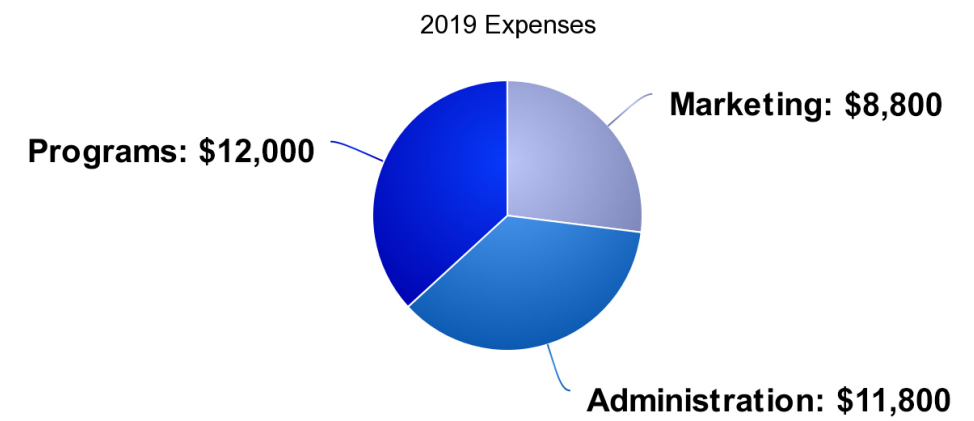
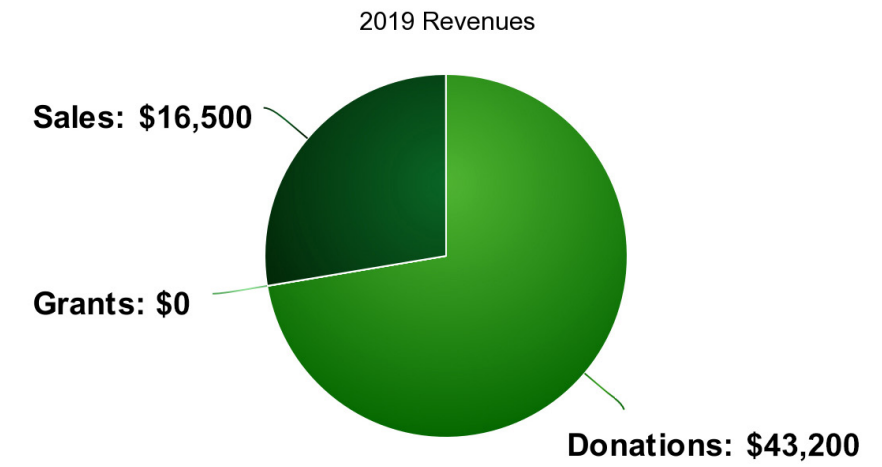


Katherine spent nearly every Wednesday talking with and writing poems for people as part of Schar’s pioneering Artist In Residence program.





## Financials



## Testimonial

*“I was excited to receive my poem. It made my day. Reading it, I understood many things and pieced together something troubling I was going through. It made sense.”*

*“This poem is a gift. It is insightful, and I treasure it. Thank you.”*

~ R



Listener poet Elle Klassen spent a month talking with and writing for people at Erie Shores Health Care in Leamington, Ontario, Canada.

◀ Cofounder Kay McKean volunteered in the cafeteria of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York, NY.





Courtesy of Ian Sights Photography

## Donors & Supporters

These particularly awesome people donated their time, money, and expertise. We wouldn't be having anywhere near this much impact without their support.

- |                       |                         |                               |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
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| ☞ Brand Newland       | ☞ Ben McKean            | ☞ Sarah Wineland              |
| ☞ Lara Keeley Wosepka | ☞ Tali Phoenix          | ☞ Shana Glickfield            |
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| ☞ Callan Fleming      | ☞ Penelope Saffer       | ☞ Matt Markoff                |
| ☞ Rachel Shoflick     | ☞ Maria Tribble         | ☞ Lee Decola                  |

## Testimonial

*"I went in because I was curious about what the poets were doing, and it ended up having a very positive impact on my day.*

*"I didn't realize how much I was feeling until I opened up to the writer. I've never shared so much with a stranger before!"*

*"It almost felt like a mini therapy session."*

~ A

☛ Frankie served as listener poet for the Energizing Health House at South by Southwest in Austin, TX.



Listener poets Jenny Hegland (L) and Ravenna Raven volunteered at the Smith Center for Healing and the Arts in Washington, D.C.



We believe that  
good listening  
leads to  
good health.