

# Austin Bat Cave Transparency Report 2023



## OUR STORY

Founded in 2007, ABC works with young authors ages 6 to 18 in Central Texas, primarily Travis County. We provide programs in creative writing, journalism, college essay writing, resume writing, expressive journaling, and more. We strive to make our programs safe and accessible for all students, and prioritize partnerships with Title 1 schools and communities that have limited access to creative arts programming. With Austin's rising housing costs and shifting demographics, we continue to adapt. In the past two years, ABC expanded its geographic reach to increase program equity and accessibility, activated youth civic engagement through op-ed programs, integrated therapeutic journaling into our programs, and provided monthly workshops for system-involved youth.

## OUR MISSION

ABC engages local writers and artists who serve as mentors and role models to our students. Our students are encouraged to use their voices confidently, explore expression and identity through writing, and gain skills that will promote academic and personal success. To support students whose voices often go unheard, ABC partners with local organizations that work with vulnerable youth, such as LGBTQIA+ teens (Out Youth), first-generation college-bound students (Breakthrough), young people in foster care (CASA of Central Texas), system-involved youth (Gardner Betts Juvenile Center), and more. Further, through our Mobile Program, we create opportunities beyond Austin city limits to serve the growing number of low-income families displaced by rising housing costs.

## THE LEADERSHIP TEAM



**RICHARD SANTOS**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**LETICIA URIETA**  
PROGRAM DIRECTOR



**XÓCHITL GONZALEZ**  
PROGRAM MANAGER



**HEATHER JONES**  
INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAM  
MANAGER



### **RICHARD SANTOS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Richard Z. Santos has a degree in English and History from UT Austin, an MA in English from Georgetown University, and an MFA in Creative Writing from Texas State University. He taught nearly every English class and elective from grades 8-12 and most of the Social Studies courses. *Trust Me*, his debut novel, was published by Arte Público Press. In a previous career, he worked for some of the nation's top political campaigns, consulting firms, and labor unions.

### **LETICIA URIETA, PROGRAM DIRECTOR**

Leticia is a proud Tejana writer from Austin, TX. She is a graduate of Agnes Scott College and holds an MFA in Fiction writing from Texas State University. She has been a teacher and teaching artist in the greater Austin area for ten years and loves working with folks to help them tell their stories.



### **XÓCHITL GONZALES, PROGRAM MANAGER**

Xochitl is an Austin native and lives with her two dogs. Her first experience with a nonprofit was Austin Bat Cave, and it was so impactful she decided to major in business and pursue a career in the industry of giving back. Working for the people who started it all for her is a dream come true.

### **HEATHER JONES, INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAM MANAGER**

Heather holds a degree in comparative literature from Oberlin College and a master's in social work from UT Austin and is passionate about developing programs that teach writing as a tool for healing and social change. At ABC, Heather leads therapeutic journaling groups for teens and seniors in partnership with the St. David's Foundation Connecting Generations Learning Collaborative. Prior to joining ABC, she worked in the areas of publishing, youth mental health, and restorative practices.





## CONSTITUENT FEEDBACK

How the ABC Leadership Team feels about what we do:

### LETICIA URIETA, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Austin Bat Cave is a creative community that provides opportunities for youth and adults to express themselves through writing and connect with one another through the power of storytelling. ABC writing workshops are designed by and for the community as volunteers from across the city bring their passions and areas of expertise to the classroom to create innovative programming that is fun, boundary-breaking, and student-centered. ABC pursues equity by prioritizing programs at schools or community organizations where there is limited access to creative writing workshops.



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## **EQUITY & INCLUSION**

ABC has provided anti-racism training for all staff and board members. We've also provided these for instructors and are actively looking for further, cost-effective ways to provide these trainings to all instructors and volunteers.

Equity and inclusion is at the heart of our work. By working with Title 1 schools and other nonprofits that work with young people, we hope to erode some of the oppressive structures that have limited equity for so long in this country. We believe the work we do is anti-racist and liberatory because it values the voice of those often unheard.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

ABC is an equal opportunity employer. We always look for ways to increase the diversity of our staff, board, and instructor pool.

## **MEDIA, PRESS, AND PUBLICATION RELEASE FORMS**

ABC asks students and families to sign release forms in order to appear in any public facing posts, whether that's social media, grant applications, etc. We also ask for permission to share student writing in our anthology. We believe it's important for students to give their informed consent with regards to how we're using their likeness and their work.

Related to this, we've never asked students to appear in front of donors or at fundraisers. We share student work with donors of course, but we've never asked students to attend galas, fundraisers, etc.

## **STUDENT CONTACT & ON-CAMPUS PRACTICES**

ABC has a handbook that guides instructor behavior with students.

We also abide by the policies and procedures with all of our campus partners.

## **DISABILITY AND ADOLESCENT (5-10 YRS) INSTRUCTION**

Our programs are open to students regardless of ability. Most of our activities have non-written options for students with limited English proficiency or writing skills.



## HOW WE COLLECT FEEDBACK

Our adult students are always sent survey forms that ask them the bright and low spots of their program.

Our students are surveyed at the beginning and end of the semesters. This information is used to help us gauge where the students are with their writing skills and confidence. We also use these to gauge the effectiveness of our programs and to learn what interests our students.

## HOW WE USE FEEDBACK

The surveys and other feedback are reviewed by the staff. We frequently reflect on our program processes in order to find ways to be more efficient and effective for the students.

We share our collected feedback internally.

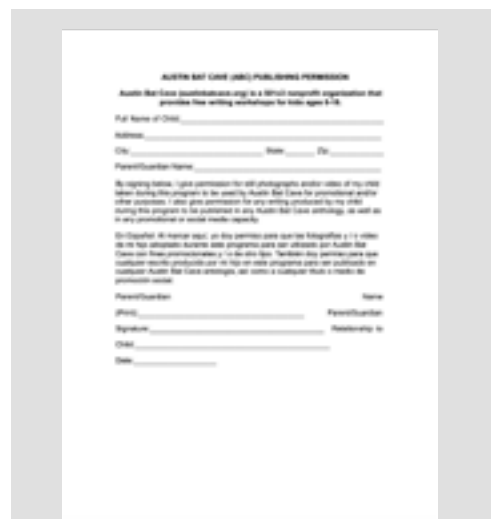
## OUR CHALLENGES IN COLLECTING FEEDBACK

Young students often have trouble articulating areas of concern. This means that often are instructors and program staff have to look at other signs: not paying as much attention, not completing work, general student restlessness. These are opportunities to look at what's the root cause of these effects.

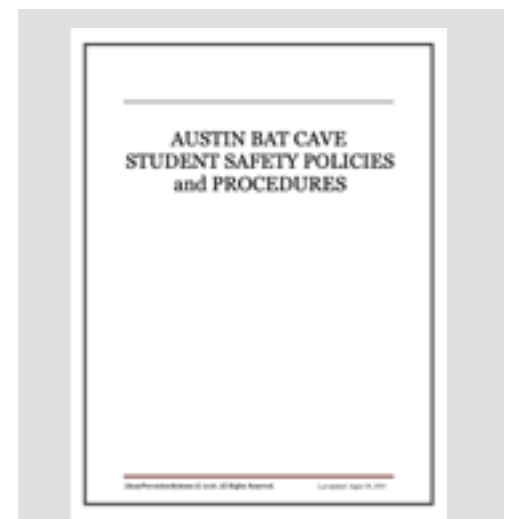
# RELEASE FORMS & POLICIES



**ABC TEACHING ARTIST POLICIES**



**PUBLISHING RELEASE FORM**



**AUSTIN BAT CAVE STUDENT SAFETY POLICIES & PROCEDURE**



## ABC TEACHING ARTIST POLICIES

The purpose of this policy is to enforce the Austin Bat Cave’s policy that all employees, interns, volunteers, contractors, collaborators, directors, clients, and program participants are treated with dignity and respect and that employees, interns, contractors, volunteers, contractors, collaborators, directors, clients and program participants treat others with dignity and respect, free from harassment and bullying. All employees, interns, volunteers, contractors, collaborators, directors, clients and program participants are required to take the time to ensure they understand their obligations under this policy.



**ABC TEACHING ARTIST POLICIES**



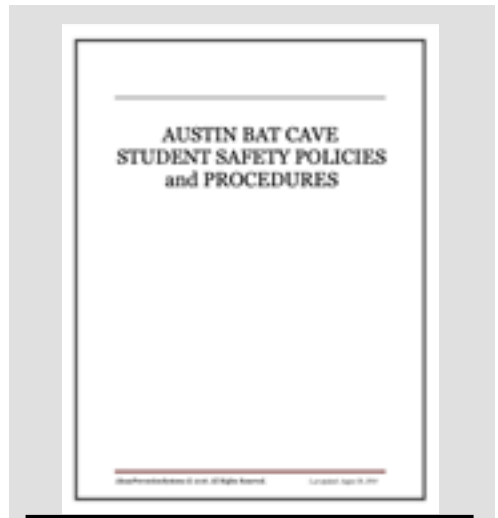
**PUBLISHING RELEASE FORM**

## ABC PUBLISHING RELEASE FORM

This form allows permission for still photographs and/or video of children taken during the programs to be used by Austin Bat Cave for promotional and/or other purposes. It also gives permission for any writing produced by the participating child during this program to be published in any Austin Bat Cave anthology, as well as in any promotional or social media capacity.

## ABC STUDENT SAFETY POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for Austin Bat Cave volunteers and staff members. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for children, protecting children, staff, and the mission of Austin Bat Cave. The following procedures have been adopted and will be strictly enforced.



**ABC STUDENT SAFETY POLICIES & PROCEDURE**



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<b>DEBORAH DE FREITAS</b> PRESIDENT	<b>RACHEL MCELROY</b> VICE PRESIDENT	<b>DALIA AZIM</b>
<b>SINDYA BHANOO</b>	<b>TIMOTHY BRAUN</b>	<b>MIGUEL FERNANDEZ</b>
<b>JOEL GROSS</b>	<b>INDIRA GUTIERREZ</b>	<b>KYLE HAWLEY</b>
<b>SIMONE POLLARD</b>	<b>LAURA RAZO</b>	<b>AISHA GAYLE TURNER</b>

## ADVISORY COUNCIL

<b>ROBERTO AINSLIE</b>	<b>WENDY CARNEGIE</b>	<b>CLAUDIA CHIDESTER</b>	<b>DOUG DORST</b>
<b>SPIKE GILLESPIE</b>	<b>TOM GRIMES</b>	<b>SYED ALI HAIDER</b>	<b>MICHAEL HALL</b>
<b>SHAUN JORDAN</b>	<b>KEITH KREEGER</b>	<b>RICHARD LINKLATER</b>	<b>JAMES MAGNUSON</b>
<b>NAOMI SHIHAB NYE</b>	<b>JAMES PENNEBAKER</b>	<b>RUTH PENNEBAKER</b>	<b>LARA PRESCOTT</b>
<b>JUNE RODIL</b>	<b>EVAN SMITH</b>	<b>ANA STAPLETON</b>	<b>NATALIA SYLVESTER</b>
	<b>S. KIRK WALSH</b>	<b>SIMONE WICHA</b>	



## ACCOUNTABILITY & FINANCE

### REVENUE — CONTRIBUTIONS, GIFTS, GRANTS, AND OTHER SIMILAR AMOUNTS

FUNDRAISING EVENTS	\$11,565
GOVERNMENT GRANTS	\$72,510
ALL OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS	\$342,889
NONCASH CONTRIBUTIONS	\$28,876
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$426,964</b>

### REVENUE — PROGRAM SERVICES

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS	\$50,475
OTHER PROGRAMS	\$43,319
PROGRAM SERVICE REVENUE	\$724
FREE SUMMER PROGRAMS	-\$4,622
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$89,896</b>
<b>2020 TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$516,860</b>

### EXPENSES

PROGRAM SERVICE EXPENSES	\$150,349
MANAGEMENT & GENERAL EXPENSES	\$211,444
FUNDRAISING EXPENSES	\$37,767
<b>2020 TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$399,560</b>





## 2020 AT A GLANCE

TOTAL EXPENSES	\$399,560
TOTAL REVENUE	\$516,860
NET INCOME	\$117,300
NET ASSETS BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$182,432
PPP LOAN FORGIVENESS	\$44,500
NET ASSETS END OF YEAR 2020	\$344,232

## NOTES ON ABOVE IRS FORM 990 DISCLOSURES

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Due to IRS delays in processing paper-filed 990 forms received during or after 2021, there are delays in data updates for the Tax Exempt Organization Search Tool. Therefore, Austin Bat Cave's most current Form 990 available to the public was published in 2020. Executive Director Richard Santos made the request to use this source of public information for the Transparency Report since the Form 990 from 2021 and 2022 have not been returned to the organization from their CPA.

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According to the Austin Bat Cave Form 990 from 2020, the organization does have a written conflict of interest policy where officers, directors, or trustees are required to annually disclose interests that could give rise to conflicts. They also have a written whistleblower policy, as well as written document retention and destruction policy.