

Project Abstract

Protest Through Poetry-Boulder is a pilot program designed by a new community writing partnership between the Program for Writing and Rhetoric (PWR), the Protest Through Poetry Collective (PTP), and the “I Have a Dream” Foundation of Boulder County (IHDF). Protest Through Poetry-Boulder aims to enhance the writing lives of young people facing income inequality from our local community by providing summer poetry workshops in which students will work with CU Boulder faculty and gain experience telling their own stories and amplifying their own voices. In these summer workshops, 20 middle and high school students will engage in a PTP curriculum, experiment with writing as a meaningful form of activism, publish their writing in a printed anthology, and participate in a public reading. Through such experiences, Protest Through Poetry-Boulder aims for students experiencing income inequality to realize that poetry is a viable form of community engagement, protest, catharsis, and corrective justice.

Project Summary

Protest Through Poetry-Boulder is a pilot summer writing program that harnesses the expertise, resources, and labor of three already-cemented programs dedicated to education, justice, equity, diversity and inclusion: The Program for Writing and Rhetoric (PWR), The Protest through Poetry Collective (PTP), and the “I Have a Dream” Foundation of Boulder County (IHDF). PWR is a program at CU Boulder that prioritizes diversity and community-based learning through an extensive undergraduate writing curriculum, including a new Writing and Public Engagement (WPE) minor. PWR is especially invested in expanding the CU-Boulder pipeline to local and regional K-12 school districts and organizations that aim to serve first-generation students, students of color, and others facing income disparity. PTP is an international collective of activist poets of color who design and deliver writing seminars and workshops that aim to generate solidarity and activate the relations between poetry and activism. IHDF is an educational non-profit organization that aims to help young people experiencing income disparity in Boulder County succeed in school, college, and careers by providing academic, social, financial, and emotional support. Protest Through Poetry-Boulder will merge the commitments and efforts of all three organizations to help middle and high school students who are facing income inequality improve their abilities to imagine, write, and speak out for a more just future.

The participants in the Protest Through Poetry-Boulder program will be Dream Scholars already enrolled in IHDF’s summer programming, nearly 83% of whom are Latinx/a/o students. As part of IHDF’s summer programming, Protest Through Poetry-Boulder will offer 10 two and 1/2 hour workshops to be delivered in June of 2023 for 20 middle and high school students. During the 25 hours of instruction, students will engage in a PTP curriculum that will be custom tailored for Protest Through Poetry-Boulder and delivered by one of PTP’s founding poet activists who now works for PWR—Marisa Tirado. Teaching assistants will include a graduate student from English working on their MFA in poetry or an undergraduate WPE minor along with interns working at IHDF. Over the 10 days of instruction, students will learn about the genre of poetry, explore its

potential as a form of civic activism, study poet activists, craft their own poetry, polish it for publication, and practice oral delivery of their poems. The instruction team will prepare it for print publication and, approximately one month later, students will read from their published work in local bookstore to an audience of invited guests such as parents, friends, family members; PWR and IHDF employees, College of Arts and Sciences administrators, as well as the general public. If successful, and granted future funding, this pilot program will be built into IHDF's subsequent summer programming.

The number one goal of Protest Through Poetry-Boulder is to enhance the writing lives of first-generation students, students of color, and others facing income disparity in Boulder County. Protest Through Poetry-Boulder's vision is for students to discover a vehicle to tell their individual stories, experiment writing in the genre of poetry, and gain confidence in writing for corrective justice. This vision has been inspired not only by the curriculum and mission of PTP but also the Barrio Writers (BW)—a national program providing free college level writing workshops to teenagers in underserved communities that the current director of IHDF, Dr. Perla Delgado, has historically been involved with. Through Protest Through Poetry-Boulder's innovative programming, students will specifically have the opportunity to:

- **Enhance** their reading and writing abilities.
- **Exercise** creative and critical thinking.
- **Experiment** with poetry as a means of public engagement.
- **Engage** in multiple phases of writing: pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing.
- Gain **experience** with oral delivery for public audiences.

At the heart of Protest Through Poetry-Boulder is also the aspirational goal for students in Boulder County to gain three important beliefs: 1.) that the articulation of their own voices matter not only for their own well being but also for building solidarity and working toward a more just future; 2.) that writing education matters to not only their personal lives but also their community and the public good at large; and 3.) that CU Boulder matters—that it is a place that cares about them and our shared community and that invites them to imagine themselves one day on our local campus.

In working toward these learning and aspirational goals, Protest Through Poetry-Boulder will enhance the DEI initiatives of the College of Arts and Sciences that aim to build more community-engaged partnerships and recruit a more diverse and local student body. The 2019 IDEA plan specifically states that we need to “improve outreach and engagement with K-12 grade students from under-resourced communities” (13) and to recruit students who are currently underrepresented at the university (14). In her experience as Director of IHDF, Dr. Delgado says that it is highly rare for Dream Scholars from Boulder County to consider applying to CU Boulder. Protest Through Poetry-Boulder is an opportunity to improve outreach and extend recruitment to young people in our community who would enhance our university through their unique experiences, perspectives, and assets.

Project Budget

| Budget Item | Estimated Cost | Details | Funding Source |
|---|--|---|----------------|
| <i>SALARIES</i> | | | |
| Poetry Workshop Instructor (Marisa Tirado, Teaching Assistant Professor, PWR) | \$6,545 Salary + \$196.35 (3%-minimum adjustment rate for 2023) + \$1981.96 (~Benefits) TOTAL=\$8723.31 | 25 Instructional Hours (2.5 Hours x 10 Days) 12.5 Hours for Design, Publication, and Production of student anthology of poetry 37.5 Hours Total | 1 |
| Teaching Assistant (CU-Boulder Grad Student with Poetry Workshop Experience) | \$1125 | Student Assistant IV Pay for Paraprofessional 37.5 Hours @ \$30/Hour | |
| <i>MATERIAL SUPPORT</i> | | | |
| Daily Snacks and Beverages for Students | \$500 | Water and Snacks for 10, 2.5-Hour Morning Classes | IHDF |
| Student Writing Supplies | \$400 | Notebooks, Pens, and Reading Materials for 20 Writing Students | IHDF |
| Design Cost for Student Anthology | \$400 | PTP Design for Student Anthology. Designer is Kara Lin, a BIPOC Visual Designer Focused on Identity and Design. kara-lin.com | PWR |
| Printing Cost for Student Anthology | \$500 | 60 copies (2 per student, 20 for launch party) of Anthology, 30-pages, Color-Printed, Bound Book. Inkspot Printing Services, Boulder Colorado | PWR |
| Boulder Book Store | \$150 | 2 Hour Rental for Public Reading | |
| Workshop Space | \$800 | For 20 Students Plus Instructors | IHDF |
| TOTAL GRANT REQUEST | \$10,000 | Total Costs (\$12,598.31) minus shared costs (\$2600) = Total Needed (\$9998.31) | |

