**About the Program**

Born from a $100,000 Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to the City of Phoenix in 2016, Piper Center Director Alberto Ríos worked with students at Dunbar Elementary School to produce artistic, literary, and musical responses to the places they lived. With the grant closed, the Piper Center has continued serving students, providing creative writing workshops in poetry, letter writing, personal narrative, and more.

**About the Center**

Founded in 2003 with a gift from the Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust, the Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing at Arizona State University is a non-academic university center dedicated to offering classes, readings, talks, workshops, and other literary events and programs for the larger community.

As a center, we aspire to be a point of reference in people’s lives—a way of orienting oneself in relationship to others, of finding a direction—by creating moments of individual, social, and cultural significance around creative writing and contemporary literature.

To learn more about who we are and what we do, visit our website at piper.asu.edu.
Foreword

The students have worked on an array of incredible things in their time at Dunbar Elementary School. When they’re not acting in plays or singing at ASU basketball games, they’re translating photographs of their neighborhoods into original music compositions or writing poems of all forms and about all different subjects. And, this year, they’ve been hard at work writing letters, personal narratives, and short stories to add to their already stellar portfolios. They are not only inventive and playful, but also incredibly dedicated to creating new works that showcase their talent as artists and writers.

This year, I worked with the 4th-, 5th-, and 6th-graders on a variety of exercises. At the beginning of the year, we had a special dedication ceremony during which they put all their energy into decorating notebooks that they would write in when I visited their classrooms. These notebooks were pasted with stickers and washi tape, colored with markers and crayons, and each journal was as unique and marvelous as its creator. Their imagination and wonder carried forward, and the students continued adding to their books throughout the school year.

Based on the importance of what was contained within these journals, we have fashioned this second volume of Voices from Dunbar after the notebooks the classrooms decorated at the beginning of the year. Within, you’ll find selections from their body of work. To all you wonderful, inventive Dunbar Dragons, thank you for showing your F.I.R.E. power this year. It has been an absolute joy to have you share your writing with me. And thank you for exhibiting the courage it takes to share it with the world as well.

None of this would have been possible without help. I want to thank Principal Millsaps for her enthusiastic support of these continued endeavors at Dunbar. Ms. Pettit and Ms. Calderon, thank you so much for hosting me in your classrooms this year, and for sharing with me lessons that I will carry with me in my future career as an arts educator. Lastly, but certainly not least, thank you to my colleagues at the Piper Center for making this fellowship, these projects, and this book possible. I am eternally grateful to you all.

With gratitude and wonder,
Charlee R. Moseley, Community Outreach Fellow, May 2019
**My Poem**

I cry
I sigh
I hear something nearby.
I look outside then I cry.

I saw a dog dead on the ground.
I saw people looking around but they weren’t looking on the ground.
They were looking at the clouds.

I saw everyone open their mouths.

My best friend is the best.
She is always there for me.

She is so funny,
Funny as a bunny.

She is kind as a bird
Which I can’t find.

She cares like a bear.
She is the best.
She is so smart.

**Birthday Party**

Balloons popping
Blowing candles
It’s a birthday party!

Singing songs
Everyone playing
It’s a birthday party!

Opening presents
Spending time with friends
It’s a birthday party!

Chocolate is something people Eat and can get in stores
You can get it at Christmas
And at Easter
At Christmas you can get hot chocolate
That is delicious
And makes me happy.

**I Hear**

I hear my wish
I feel my wish
I can’t smell
I don’t know feeling
I see kids
I taste candy
When I was younger, my arm was hurt. It was almost put in a cast. But my mom came fast to see if I was hurt. I would always go to the child care.

First, this happened when I was at recess. I was in a lot of pain. That is why I had to go a couple days. When I was seven years old, this all happened.

Next, it was a couple weeks later now. Now my arm was a little bit better. When I was at the doctors, I got in the X Ray. The doctor was making sure the arm was not broken.

Finally, I felt much better and I did not hurt. I did not have to go to the doctor anymore. I did not have to go to the doctor. When my arm hurt I could not do anything.

Chickens are pecking at my door
And clowns are looking through the window at me.

Boogeyman is under my bed.
The ghosts are pulling me in the dark room.

Bears are eating my brains.
The zombies are my friends.

I was falling into the black.

Memory

My favorite memory is when I got a phone for christmas last year. Then when I woke up in the living room the phone was in a big box and then the box gets smaller and smaller. Then when I saw the phone box, my mom pulled out her phone and started recording.
**My Cut**

I was washing dishes. And there was a broken glass in the dishwater. I did not see it in the water, and I cut my thumb so bad. My thumb was split open. I still have the scar on my thumb. I went to the hospital, I got stitches on my thumb. I was so sad I did not get to wash dishes anymore. But now I get to do the dishes again.

**A Cat Who Can Meow**

Dab Dab Dab kitty cat
Dab Dab Dab kitty cat kitty
You’re you’re you’re so pretty.
Meow pretty kitty
Meow long legs
Meow catchin’ mice

Meow

Kitty paws
Meow
Kitty cat
Meow

Meow

**Midnight Sky**

Clowns are scary.
Clowns laughing under my bed in the dark, a creaking sound.
Down the stairs I see a clown.
hide under my covers
holding a light
the creaking sound gets LOUDER.
I take off the covers
turn on the light.
I see a shadow under my door.
I close my eyes.
I open my eyes.
A clown I see in the midnight sky.

Ghosts screaming in pain
They’re calling out my name
Every night it’s just the same
They have the voice of shame

Creepy demon in the night
Running around shouting in fright
Defeating with the power of light
Trying hard with all my might
**Burned Thigh**

When I was younger, I burned the back of my thigh. I was at the Swap Meet with my mom, dad, and my sister. I felt my thigh burning. I was on a slide in summer, and the sun was literally pointing at the slide. There was just other people in line and the guy that owned the slide. I missed my carpet and went before me. I tried to get up, and I fell down. Don’t wear shorts in the summer!

It’s nighttime. I hear a laugh. A big laugh. A big and creepy laugh. I look out my window to find a clown at my porch. I look back at my room, then look out the window again. It’s not there. I slowly look back at my room. HE’S BEHIND ME!

The lights go out. All I could see was his smile with teeth as shiny as diamonds. All I could see and hear was a laugh and a smile. I try to shout. But something holds my mouth shut.

I open my eyes, and I could see its long fingernails scratching my window. And I blink twice, look around me. “I will come back next time,” he said to me.

When I was going upstairs, I heard something in the bedroom so I ran upstairs to my room and locked the door. I heard the clown knocking at my door. I went to hide under the bed. Then what happened next was the clown was in my room. Then I ran down the stairs and waited outside to find my parents. I couldn’t find them. I was home alone, and the clown came. He said, “I want to eat you, come here.” And my parents came downstairs and said, “What’s going on downstairs.” So I told them what happened, and we all ran upstairs to my room.
Dear Diary,

I hope I have a good day. My day so far is good because I got Starbucks. I wish Donald Trump was not president. I like coming to music class. I love my life. In two days, I'm going to Camp Tonto. It will be fun. Four days til Halloween. I don't know what to be. I don't want Donald Trump to be president because he is rude to people.

What I Care About

Wake up
Need a cute outfit for wherever I'm going.
I'm going to do my hair
It needs to be perfect
Paint my toes blue and pink
Shoes, no heels
Everything has to be perfect.

Family

I have a tia. Her name is Briana.
She's always dancing like bananas.

My tia Alexis is really pretty
She's always shopping
REALLY!

My cousin Alana is really cute
She can never be mute;

My nana is very kind
She always has us on her mind

My tata is really strong
He's just like King Kong.

Sleep and Netflix

Roses are red
Violets are blue
Sleep is good.
But Netflix is Better.
Areli: A True Story

When I was younger, I got gum in my hair. It was at my house. I was very mad. I was playing with my sister’s yoyo, and she got mad at me and she stuck gum in my hair. My mom had to cut my hair. And I was very mad and sad that my mom had to cut my hair. She told me not to play with my sister’s stuff, and we went to get ice cream after that. My aunt, mom, sister, and brother went with me, and we went to go to a shop where they do your hair so I could get a haircut.

Favorite Things

Out of school
Playing Fortnite
Getting skins
Dogs
Great Danes
Playing sports
Favorite things

Ghost

Ghost walking in my hallway
I see a huge shadow in my living room
Laughing all around me
HELP ME HELP ME HELP ME!

...  

One Year Later
Jan 2, 1899

The girl died. The sound got louder and louder. Her ear started to bleed. She had to go to the hospital, and she passed away.
I am in my room all alone thinking about puppies and kittens. Then I hear a thump downstairs. I go downstairs and there are boxes with a note on top of them that says LEAVE NOW with a bloody handprint. I scream with fear, and I go to get my phone. There was something you wouldn’t want to see ... a dead puppy on the floor! I got my phone, and I hurried up to hide in the closet.

When I’m in the closet, I feel nervous and turn around and there is a person with an evil smile looking at me. And he had a knife in his hand. I try to open the door, but I remember it was locked. So I get my room key and open the door. I call my mom and dad. They come very quickly and get me.

We are never going back to that house, and someone is looking for us.

Kristall is just a funny, calm teen girl. Until one day she was singing. A unicorn came by and she started to feel strange and learned that she had diamond crystal power. Meanwhile her and her unicorn started to practice. Then a villain in town was robbing the bank and our superhero had to fo as fast as possible to save the day. Finally she saved the day. Everyone was happy to see a superhero named Silver Thunder.

Food!

Food gets me in a good mood.
Food looks good but not the veggies.
This poem is not that catchy.
Speaking of this, now I want some food.
Violet

Violet was born in Paris. Violet has friends named Emma, Jack, Lilly and Sumeya. Things that make her happy are singing or talking to her friends. Things that make her sad are when her friends are mad. Violet liked to go to Paris Tower and have dinner with her Friends. When Violet goes to school she has a hard time in EIA class. One day Violet wins a nursery class and her friends throw her a surprise party. Violet’s family member take Violet and her friends on a trip to the U.S.A. When Violet and her friends come back she wins $100 million. Violet feels happier and rich in the same time her life is better.

Good Dream

Last night I went to sleep. Then I had a good dream that my dad had did my hair and it looked REAL Noice! But when I woke up was kinda sad because it was a good hairstyle.

Clowns laughing at my doorstep
Then they come in, step by step
They come in and give me a scare
Then there was a birthday party down the stairs
I ran down there to go see what it was
There was a birthday party for my cousin
I didn’t know what was going on
There were ghosts everywhere in a pond
Moostafa the Great

O’ Moostafa you are The Great. You are 18,000 health and You deal 40 damage Per hit that’s how Great you are

Oh Moostafa then Again you are the Great your axe does 100 damage on Contact you are Also a hostile mob You are better than The alpha wolf Moofie

Moostafa you love to Destroy the MC_gang Which I’m a part of That’s why you are the Great

Sun

The sun is out It’s a new day I’m not gonna Be like the person I was yesterday

Friendly

Friends are friends Family is family How about you What happens When you’re not friendly

God

God is here I am Great! How about you? Are you ok?
Food!
Food gets in me a good mood.
Food is like a choo-choo train going down my stomach.
Food is tasty make my taste buds go crazy
Food is my best friend.

Family
My family is great
But my sister, she’s just the one I’m close to.

Life Doesn’t Frighten Me
People walking behind me
Airplanes flying above me
Nothing doesn’t frighten me
At all

Big dogs looking at me
Mean ghost chasing me
Nothing doesn’t frighten me
At all

Rats running around
Spider in my house
Nothing doesn’t frighten me
At all

Troll Hunter
Dodge, dodge
Slash, slash.
Trolls turn
to stone with the
Slash of my sword

The sun raises
It raises to its heights
Trolls run and hide.

Trolls hide waiting for the sun to set.

Finally, the sun is down
More and more
Trolls
Trolls
Trolls.
**Moostafa the Giant**

Oh, Moostafa  
The giant of the land  
And the breaker of walls  
With 18,000 health  
That deals 40 dms

Moostafa the leader of  
The desert with a companion  
Named Moofie, Moofie is an  
Alpha wolf with a master

Moostafa loves destroying the MC_gang  
And destroying buildings and turrets  
And more but the MC_gang fights back  
With fear and destruction.

**Dear Fortnite**

Dear Fortnite,  
Would you add new characters  
and new places and weapons  
from far away?

**Sensory Details**

I heard people talking  
I felt no feeling  
When closing my eyes  
My mind was cleared  
Basically.

**What I Heard**

What I heard  
Talking  
Paper getting crumpled  
Sounds  
Bangning  
And then beats

What I felt  
Feet on rug  
Jacket on top of hand  
Pencil in my hand  
Backpack on my back  
I feel my jacket on me
Grace

Grace used to live in Paris. She was having fun there but when her family was suffering she decided to go see them and help them. She bought them a house and then a car so then after her family got happy. They made a party. They eat and dance. After the party finished she told family that she’s leaving and her family fold her thank you for everything you did. I love you. Hope you come visit us again. So she went back to Paris.

Gannon Doesn’t Frighten Me

Evil on the wall
Goblins down the hall
Gannon doesn’t frighten me

Bad sand seal barking loud
Big ghost in a cloud
Gannon doesn’t frighten me at all

Mean old Zora
Sand seals on the loose
They don’t frighten me

Gannon breaths fire
On my shield of tires
That doesn’t frighten me at all.