

Background on the West Virginia Writing Project

In 1978 the West Virginia Writing Project (WVWP) was established as a site of the National Writing Project (NWP) at what is now Marshall University Graduate College (MUGC) to improve the teaching of writing across the state. This year, 2008, begins the eighth year of the Central West Virginia Writing Project (CWVWP) whose goal is to serve the teachers in the region immediately surrounding MUGC. CWVWP contracts with county school districts, currently Kanawha, Nicholas, and Putnam to present its highly regarded Invitational Summer Institute for its teachers. CWVWP also offers a variety of professional development opportunities during the school year.

All CWVWP programs and activities are based on the following principles:

- Student writing can be improved by involving teachers of writing of all grade levels.
- The best teacher of other teachers is a successful classroom teacher.
- These programs should be cooperatively planned by schools and universities.
- Large-scale change occurs only over time.
- It can best be accomplished by those who work within the schools.
- What is known about the teaching of writing comes from research and from the successful practices of those who teach writing.
- Because writing is fundamental to critical thinking and learning in all subject areas, all writing project programs should involve teachers from across the disciplines.
- Teachers of writing must also write because only by writing can teachers fully understand what they are asking of their students.

This anthology represents the best efforts of a committed group of teachers who attended an overnight “Kickoff” meeting at Cedar Lakes, Ripley, in May and fifteen full days of reading, writing and sharing of best practices in July and August at MUGC in South Charleston. They will return to their classrooms in the fall as CWVWP “Teacher Consultants.” We hope you enjoy these poems and stories.

Barbara Holmes, director

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