



A Place for Words in Taos



## 2023 SOMOS Board of Directors and Staff

### SOMOS Board of Directors

María Teresa García - President  
Estelle Laure - Vice-President  
Baksim Goddard- Treasurer  
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### Staff

Jan Smith - Executive Director  
Laura Green - Administrative Assistant  
Isobel O'Hare - Administrative Assistant  
Danielle Freeman - Bookshop Manager

And thanks to our front desk volunteers and our behind-the-scenes book dusters and sorters who keep our bookshop in operation!

Leslie Bishop, Chuck Faires, Miles Kimber, Michael Blevins, Sarah Stitt, Barbara Jones, Kathy Claunch, Terry Patton, Nancy Weaver, SandyTonneson, Danielle Reyes, Cynthia Wiggins, Barbara Norris and Sky Roshay



Dear SOMOS members,

We closed out 2023 with the success of our annual appeal drive. As of 12/31/2023, we'd received \$14,000. Every dollar that came in—from small gifts to larger ones—will have a big impact on our ability to pursue our mission. In addition to regular programming in 2023, we celebrated three milestones: the 25th anniversary of our annual Taos Storytelling Festival, the 30th anniversary of the Young Writers Program, and the 40th anniversary of our organization. We served over 2000 people who attended these events and/or Taos Writers Conference, Poetry and Prose Months, Heritage Reading Series, Writers Showcase, Open Mic, community readings and workshops by local, regional and national writers and poets.

Our Board, Executive Director, staff and volunteers participated in eight hours of training in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion conducted by Margaret Garcia and Meghan White of Rehumanize, LLC. We hope to continue training in practices designed to ensure people of all backgrounds feel welcome at SOMOS.

Our outgoing Poet Laureate Joshua Concha completed his "Taos Poetry in Motion" multimedia project. Unfortunately, its premiere at the Harwood was canceled due to inclement weather. We look forward to its unveiling in the spring. We were pleased to announce that the Taos Poet Laureate for 2024 through 2025 is local teacher, storyteller, musician and poet Miguel Santistevan. His project "Poetry with Youth" will include performances, a possible zine, artwork and other generative works.

We were all saddened by the recent death of literary icon John Nichols. John was a brilliant writer and a great friend. His standing-room only readings were always infused with his incomparable sense of humor. The last time I saw him at SOMOS the first thing he said after greeting me was, "Want to take a selfie?" It's a photo I cherish. The SOMOS bookstore, among its impressive selection of used and new works, has a limited number of copies of **Nichols—essays...interview...illustrations**, a special edition of The Almagre Review edited by Joe Barrera. All the drawings in the journal were done by John Nichols.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank Executive Director Jan Smith, our staff and volunteers for their dedication and hard work. I also want to acknowledge the businesses, and private and government foundations who help fund our operations and programs. Finally, I thank you, our members. Your supportive network inspires us to continue our work and improve each year.

With gratitude,

María Teresa García  
President, SOMOS Board of Directors

## 2023 Poet Laureate Annual Report

1/10/2023: Traveled to Albuquerque, New Mexico to scout the Albuquerque Public Library as a possible venue for filming poetry readings. 7 hours logged.

1/21/2023: Traveled to Albuquerque New Mexico to film poet Vivian Carroll reading her poem 'Crouching Indian' and Hedda P. Saltz reading her poem 'Fishing' at the Albuquerque Public Library. 12 hours logged

1/28/2023: Filmed poet Kate O'Neill reading 'All We Carried' at the Taos public library. 4 hours logged

1/28/2023: Zoom meeting video recorded with Iris Keltz reading 'A Vessel Holding Dream'. 2 hours logged

2/22/2023: Invited to participate as a judge in the Taos Public Library's first annual poetry slam.

3/22/2023 – 4/14/2023: Established email correspondence with poet, Steven Schneider, that resulted in the poet video recording the reading of his poem 'Off the Beaten Path' at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. The footage was then emailed and downloaded for editing in the film project.

4/6/2023: Filmed poet, Daniel Sage, reading his poem 'Taosss' at the Taos Public Library. 6 hours logged

4/7/2023: An open call for visual artwork for the *Taos Poetry in Motion* project made public through SOMOS' website, the Taos Fall Arts Festival website, and the Taos News Tempo.

April through June, 2023: The open call for visual artwork was also posted as a flyer on bulletin boards throughout the Town of Taos.

4/17/2023: Canceled participation as a judge and reader for the UNM-Taos poetry slam due to illness.

4/22/2023: Canceled participation as a judge for the Taos Public Library poetry slam due to illness.

5/1/2023: Poet Steven Schneider submits watercolor artwork via email attachment from the artist, Reefka, for his poem 'Off the Beaten Path' and the work is archived digitally for later use.

5/13/2023: Filmed poet, Soge Track, reading an untitled poem at the Taos Public Library. 4 hours logged

5/22/2023: Artist Lysa Montwill submits a painting via email attachment for poet Hedda P. Saltz' poem 'Fishing' and the artwork is downloaded and digitally archived for later use.

5/25/2023: Artist Carl Wagner submits two visual arts pieces via email attachment for poet, Annalisa Martinez', poem 'Tah Ah' and the artwork is downloaded and digitally archived for later use.

6/2/2023: Painter S. Todd Christensen submits a painting via email attachment for Daniel Sage's poem 'Taosss' and the image is downloaded and digitally archived.

6/11/2023: Artist Norlynne Coar submits via email attachment the painting 'Border Crossing' for the Anne MacNaughton poem 'Blowing Weed Near the Border'. The image is downloaded and digitally archived.

6/11/2023: Photo artist Sunny Redmond submits via email attachment collage photography artworks 'Solaced Intrigue', 'September Flame', and 'Hope Reborn' for Catherine Strisik's poem 'Opening the Kernel' and all the images are digitally archived.

6/16/2023: Artist Aaron Garlick submits 3 paintings via email for Soge Track's untitled poem. All images are digitally archived.

6/16/2023: Photographer Zoe Zimmerman submits 3 photographs via WeTransfer.com for the Kate O'Neill poem 'All We Carried' and the images are downloaded for digital archiving.

6/20/2023: Artist Lynette Haozous submits a visual artwork via email for the Charlie Kalogeros-Chattan poem 'Migration' and the image is digitally archived.

6/18/2023: Artist Aya Trevino submits two photo collages via email for the Whitney Molly Neiman poem 'Into the Earth Together' and are digitally archived.

6/23/2023: Aya Trevino submits an additional pastel/charcoal piece for 'Into the Earth Together' and the work is archived.

7/7/2023: Gave a poetry reading and introduced keynote speaker, Ramona Emerson, for SOMOS' Taos Writers Conference at the Encore Gallery at the Taos Center for the Arts.

8/9/2023: Multimedia artist Sabra Moore completes and submits via email a work for the Rose Gordon poem 'Tell Me'. Image is archived for editing.

9/1/2023: Film scouting in Taos County at Tres Orejas, Two Peaks, Carson, and Pilar area. Digital filming of various landscapes and landmarks. 12 hours logged

9/7/2023: Film scouting in Los Alamos County at Bandelier National Monument and city of Los Alamos. Digital filming of landmarks and various landscape features. 14 hours logged.

9/8/2023: Taos Pueblo youth artist collective, Aspen Song Kids, submit multiple artworks for general use in the Taos Poetry in Motion project. All the images are digitally archived for editing purposes.

9/10/2023: Gave a poetry reading at the 2023 Taos Fall Arts Festival held at Coronado Hall, Taos, NM.

9/18/2023: Artist William Stewart submits work for the Iris Keltz poem 'A Vessel Holding Dream'. Images digitally archived.

9/19/2023 through 10/25/2023: Editing of the *Taos Poetry in Motion* project. 90 hours logged

10/20/2023: Gave a visual presentation and poetry reading for *Taos Lightning Talks: Envisioning the Future* at the Taos Center for the Arts.

11/5/2023: Digital master copy of *Taos Poetry in Motion* is burned to DVD.

11/7/2023: Film trailer for *Taos Poetry in Motion* created and subsequently sent to SOMOS and the Harwood Museum for promotional purposes of the project's premiere on December 14, 2023 at 6PM the Harwood Museum's Arthur Bell Auditorium.

11/13/2023: Trailer sent to all poets and artists involved in the project along with invitations to view the project and then participate in a Q&A after the film's premiere screening.

11/28/2023: Interview with Taos News Tempo reporter, Haven Lindsey, for a feature article on *Taos Poetry in Motion*.

12/13/2023: Tech screening of the project at the Arthur Bell Auditorium. 2 hours logged

12/14/2023: Premier screening of *Taos Poetry in Motion* (the event was postponed due to inclement weather on the date).

Submitted by Joshua K. Concha  
Poet Laureate of Taos, N.M. (2022-2023)

## 2023 SOMOS Poetry Month



Paul Tran, Writers Showcase Poet

SOMOS' featured Writers Showcase poet for 2023 was Paul Tran, from Madison, Wisconsin, who read on 4/14/23 and taught a workshop on 4/15/23. They were a very engaging speaker and instructor and both ticketed events were well attended. They read from their award-winning debut of poetry, *All the Flowers Kneeling*.

The rest of Poetry month was populated by local and regional poets including: Taoseña Sawnie Morris reading new works and from *Her Infinite* with Renee Gregorio from El Rito reading from *Abyss & Bridge* on 4/1/23.



Santa Feans Alicia Elkort and Rebecca Aronson reading from *A Map of Everything* and *Anchor* respectively on 4/8/23.

On 4/12/23: A Taos Press launched *Blood Secrets* with Taoseña poets Joan Ryan, Andrea Watson, and Anita Rodriguez – a collaborative publication with each reading a series of their poems.

On 4/21/23 the 2022-23 Young Writers Program students read from their writing during the year and SOMOS also celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Young Writers Program, with an address by Taos Mayor, Pascual Maestas (who was in the Young Writers Program years ago), cake, and alumni readings by Olivia Romo (also a former student in the YWP).

The finale of the 2023 Poetry month culminated on 4/23/23 with a reading by Santa Fean poet Tommy Archuleta reading from *Susto* and his chapbook, *Field Notes* with Taoseño Lawrence Gregory reading from his second poetry collection, *Phenomena*.

All events were held at the SOMOS Salon and were free with the exception of the ticketed reading and workshop by Paul Tran.

Submitted by Jan Smith

## 2023 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Taos Writers Conference, 7/7-7/9/23



**Ramona Emerson - Keynote  
Speaker, 2023 TWC**

The 7th Annual Taos Writers Conference was held 7/7-7/9/23 at the SOMOS Salon and via Zoom. There were seventy-six attendees hailing from Ireland, Oklahoma, Illinois, North Carolina, Washington, D.C., West Virginia, Texas, Colorado, California, Ohio, Arizona, Washington, Michigan, and New Mexico.

Tommy Orange was originally selected to be the keynote speaker but due to unforeseen circumstances, had to cancel his appearance. Fortunately, he recommended novelist, Ramona Emerson, to read from her debut, *Shutter*. Her reading was held on Friday, 7/7/23, at the Encore Gallery at the TCA, and was well attended by both faculty, attendees, and the public. The reading was free and open to the public.

Earlier in the day six intensives were offered by faculty members: Connie Josefs, Veronica Golos, Valerie Martinez, Leeanna Torres, Jamie Figueroa, and Sean Murphy. All but two of them had a waiting list.

On Saturday morning from 9am-12pm there were three three-hour workshops including ones by Aaron Abeyta, EJ Levy, and Linda Michel-Cassidy. A fourth, by Brenda Beardsley was cancelled due to low enrollment.

Roundtable discussions from 12-2 included Linda Michel-Cassidy speaking on "Submitting to Literary Journals" and literary agent, Natalie Kimber from the Rights Factory, on "Writing the Query Letter."

Saturday afternoon workshops were taught by Amy Beeder, Sharon Oard Warner, Lauren Camp and Ariel Gore from 2-5pm. Later that evening there was a reception followed by faculty readings and book signings.

On the third day of the conference, Sunday, from 9am-12pm morning sessions were presented by Susan Mihalic, Sawnie Morris, Natalie Kimber, and Allegra Huston.

There was a mixture of presentations in poetry, fiction, memoir, creative nonfiction, and hybrid genres, as well as a workshop taught by a literary agent.

Submitted by Jan Smith

## 2023 Heritage Reading Series



Three heritage reading series were planned but only two were executed due to scheduling difficulties. The first was in honor of National LGBTQ+ month in June 2023, and featured poets and prose writers both locally and regionally. Seventeen-year-old Julia Edmonds read from her poetry; Frank Oatman read from his soon-to-be published collection, *From the Eye to the Heart*; Julian Spalding read from an essay focused on LGBTQ+ themes. Victoriano Cardenas, a trans poet from Albuquerque, shared poems from his debut collection, *Portraits as Animal*.

The second heritage reading was held on 9/22/23 in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month and featured Dr. Enrique Lamadrid who taught at UNM from 1985-2009 on the subjects of folklore, literature, and cultural history. He read from his profound poem in honor of Rudolfo Anaya, a species piece, entitled, “Northing Above, Everything Below: Zumbadores de la sierra Jemez.”

Plans were initiated for a heritage reading for Veteran’s Day on 11/11/23 with Patrick Million, Director of Not Forgotten Outreach, but scheduling conflicts interfered. SOMOS hopes to coordinate a reading in honor of veterans in 2024.

Submitted by Jan Smith

## 2023 SOMOS Storytelling Festival



**RECLAIMING OUR  
IDENTITY  
THROUGH THE  
ARTS!**



The Festival began on Friday evening, 10/13/23, at the Talpa Community Center to a standing-room-only crowd who enjoyed the music of Maggie “La Rancherita” Vigil, the stories told by local community members: Elena Arguello, Miguel Santistevan, Laura Jagles, and Joanna Trujillo and traditional New Mexican food (primarily by kitchen cooks and managers – Ray and Priscilla Romo). Poet and SOMOS Board member Olivia Romo curated and coordinated the event including selecting tellers, musicians, and arranging food items for the free dinner for all attendees. Miguel Santistevan was chosen to be invited to tell a tale on the main stage at the TCA on Saturday evening, 10/14/23.

On Saturday morning from 10am-noon professional storyteller and former president of The Storytellers of New Mexico, Sarah Malone, taught “The Art of Storytelling” workshop to 15 registered students. Later in the afternoon Sarah also facilitated a free Community Story Swap at Hacienda Martinez from 2-3:30pm with 25 people. That evening, MC Cisco Guevara told a warmup story on the TCA stage followed by community teller Miguel Santistevan and then the featured hour and one quarter stage production of “Spider Woman Stories” with Two Worlds, involving six actors, backstage music, drumming, and screen images. Immediately after the performance Two Worlds actors led an audience talk-back which explored the themes in “Spider Woman Stories” and answered questions from the attendees about the ceremonial aspects of the stories. There were approximately 120 for the main event. MC Cisco Guevara offered a setting and food for the cast in an after-party following the event.

Submitted by Jan Smith

## 2023 SOMOS Prose Month



**Kinari Webb, MD., Writers Showcase, 11/3/23, *Guardians of the Trees***

Our featured Showcase writer for November Prose Month was Dr. Kinari Webb from San Francisco, who read on 11/3/23 from her nonfiction book, *Guardians of the Trees* and delivered a three-hour workshop on “The Art of Radical Listening” the following day. She was followed on 11/5 by local writer Sean Murphy with Alexander Shalom Joseph from Colorado. Sean read a short story followed by Joseph who read from his prose and poetry work.

Environmentalist Ben Goldfarb, author of *Eager: The Surprising Secret Life of Beavers and Why they Matter* read on 11/6/23 from his newest book, *Crossings: How Road Ecology is Shaping the Future of our Planet* read and showed slides. His reading was hosted by Mi Casita and

the friends of the Aldo Leopold Foundation.

On 11/10 Santa Feans James Reich and Julia Goldberg read from *The Moth for the Star*, and an excerpt from a nonfiction essay. The 11/17/23 reading was Karen Thibodeau and Chris Rugeley. Rugeley read from his debut novel, *Take Creek, For Example*, a story set in a prestigious art school that explores the relationships between students and faculty on campus. Thibodeau read from a short story in-progress.

The finale was a reading on 11/18/23 by Shannon Rogers from Brooklyn, NY, and Santa Fean Kathryne Lim. The reading was sponsored by Kundiman Press and hosted by Peggy Chung. Rogers read from her debut YA novel, *I'd Rather Burn Than Bloom* and Lim read from her poetry collection, *Constellation of Wings*.

Additionally local author and poet Johanna DeBiase facilitated four free write-ins on 11/2, 11/12, 11/19 and 11/30 in honor of National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo); two were in-person at SOMOS and online and two others were offered via Zoom. All the other readings were held at the SOMOS Salon.

Submitted by Jan Smith

## 2023 Readings, Workshops, Events, and Conferences/Festivals

**Writers Showcase:** Paul Tran, Ramona Emerson, Loida Maritza Perez, Kim Gleason, & Kinari Webb

**April Poetry Month (see detailed report)** - six events: sixteen poets, 279 total attendees

**LGBTQ+ Reading** -45

**Taos Writers Conference** – 76

**40th Anniversary of SOMOS** – 8/19 – 71 attendees

**Storytelling Festival** – 265

**Hispanic Heritage reading** – 42

**Prose Month** – 140, plus sixteen attendees for WriMoNaNo write-ins

**Open Mic, 3rd Thursday/month**, average 6-15 each month, approximately 120/year

**Workshops** – eight workshops on Craft & Critique, three workshops on Self-Publishing, three workshops on Craft of Fiction, twenty workshops at TWC, one workshop on “Radical Listening,” two on Craft of Poetry, total - 31 workshops

**Community Readings** – 23 readings, total of 960 attendees

**Rental Spaces** – Unitarian Book Club & Noetic Sciences, one two-day Poetry Retreat by Radha Marcum

**Young Writers Program** – see report for 30th Anniversary of Young Writers, Young Writers night, weekly writing groups, 1:1 mentors and guest writers in the schools (Pamela Pereya on Digital Literacy)

**Collaborative events** – monthly meeting of NPACT (nonprofit arts & culture together) at the Taos Public Library, From Here to There with Bridges at the TCA, and UNM, “Water for the People” at UNM-Klauer campus, Twirl, Invent Event

**Parking rental spaces for concerts** – 6/17, 7/4, 7/9, 9/2, 9/7, 9/8, and 9/9

**Membership Drive table at Cid’s** – June

**Selection of 2024-25 Poet Laureate** by judges Catherine Strisik, Cisco Guevara, & Vivian Carroll

# Young Writers Program Spring Semester 2023

Young Writer Salons hosted by Estelle Laure  
Young Writers Salons supervised by Breanna Messerole

**February-April 2023:** We served approximately 20 students between the ages of eleven and thirteen in varying group sizes and a highly diverse population. Salons were held at Taos Integrated School for the Arts, mentors Grace Carmen-Yong (Grade 12) and Ilana Weisfeld (Grade 11) led the writing group at TISA every other Monday, supervised by Breanna Messerole. Students were led through quick writes that facilitated an array of exploration of their own identities as well as characters created from imagination. Focusing on sharing and workshopping, students enjoyed having younger mentors facilitate, and over the months many writers' confidence soared within this safe creative space.

**January to April 2023:** We served six students weekly by hosting at Taos Academy Charter School. The second part of the year also helped students fine tune original writings and workshop them prior to premiering them at the Young Writers Night (YWN) in April. Estelle helped students practice reading their writings. Each writing attendee read their original poetry at the YWN.

## Attendees

Taos Academy Charter School:  
Ilana Weisfeld, Julia Edmonds, Sawyer Sides, Solymar Espinoza, Amelia Martinez

Taos Integrated School for the Arts students  
Mentor Ilana Weisfeld, Mentor Grace Carmen-Yong

## School Visits

Pamela Pereyra served Taos High School seniors by visiting classrooms and conducting workshops with a focus on media literacy, a critical skill. Pamela did activities and slideshow presentations that helped the students gain essential higher order thinking skills while allowing them creative play. Ages served: 12th grade. Total school visits: seven, stipend: \$700

THS Senior reflections (who read & decoded & then wrote and encoded conspiracy theories)

## How will learning about conspiracy theories help you move forward into your life?

*"Learning conspiracy theories takes a lot of brain power. The brain is working hard causing us to think critically. These skills help grow the brain and theories actually make you think"*

*"It is going to make me really think if it is a good idea to trust certain sources or certain things."*

*"I created an amazing slideshow [conspiracy theory game]."*

## Mentor Program

Continuing to build from the fall, the mentor program has not recovered from the pandemic. We are actively in search of new mentors and are pivoting slightly to provide older youth as mentors for younger. We hope this will feel fresh and exciting to our youth and will encourage more participation. We feel this program could benefit from being either online or in person. Olivia Romo has offered Spanish speaking mentoring. At this time we do not have any current mentees requesting Spanish speaking mentors.

## Mentees

Santiago DeHerrera, Zoe Rakin-Villalobos

## Mentors

Sabina Jones, Brian Allan Skinner, Tenny Walsh, Michael Schatzberg

### **Young Writers Night and 30th Anniversary Celebration**

Young Writers Night happened on Friday, April 21, at 6 pm at SOMOS. All six of Estelle's writing group members read original poetry. Ilana Weisfeld and Grace Carmen-Yong were the night's MCs. Both MCs read as well. Young Writer alumni and current Taos Mayor Pascualito M. Maestas attended and spoke about his experience as a Young Writer. Olivia Romo, SOMOS board member and Young Writer alumni, ended the night with two readings. Cake was served at a short reception following the night's performances.

### **Twirl Invent Event**

On April 22, from 12-4, Young Writers co-curators organized SOMOS participation in the widely attended celebration of crafts and creativity. SOMOS had a bookmark making table for all ages to come and make something special for their reading adventures. There was also a small reading nook set up for kids to sit and read, and parents could sign up to win one of Estelle Laure's six donated picture books *Before the World Wakes*. It was a successful turn out. Bre Messerole and Jan Smith volunteered to run the table.

### **Young Writers Conference**

Due to receiving a generous grant from a private local foundation, SOMOS launched an inaugural Young Writers Conference. Taking place on Saturday, May 6th, SOMOS offered four two-hour workshops for participants to choose from. Workshop presenters included Myrth Killingsworth, Johanna DeBiase, Breanna Messerole, and Anne MacNaughton. This event was free and included lunch and snacks.

### **Scholarships**

Ilana Weisfeld, Julia Edmonds, Solymar Espinoza, and Sawyer Sides received scholarships to attend Paul Tran's SOMOS reading.

### **Continued Effort**

Moving forward and with the assistance of board member Olivia Romo, the Young Writers Program will continue focusing on community partnerships, building diversity within the program, doing active outreach, and inviting in a diverse group of artists and writers. Our first step in this direction is to make all program materials available in Spanish. We will also be visiting the schools to make sure there is equal access for all of the Taos community. (Estelle, Olivia, Breanna)

### **Future Happenings**

We will be awarding several scholarships to the Taos Writers Conference and hope our salon members will attend in order to further their understanding of the story. (Breanna and Estelle)

Ilana Weisfeld, Julia Edmonds, Solymar Espinoza, and Sawyer Sides also received scholarships to attend Tommy Orange's reading happening in July. (Breanna and Estelle)

Julia Edmonds will be reading at the 2nd Annual LGBTQ+ Reading on June 11th.

### **Anticipation for Fall**

- More classroom visits
- Writing Salons offered at THS and TMS
- Expand into Questa
- Bring back Slam Poetry
- Build mentor and mentee participation
- Continuing TISA mentor writing salon led by Ilana Weisfeld
- Continue writing salons at Taos Academy led by Estelle Laure
- Bringing writing mentors into the classroom

Respectfully submitted by Estelle Laure and Breanna Messerole 5/28/23

## Young Writers Program Fall Semester 2023

Over the summer, Julia Edmonds bravely read their poetry at the LGBTQ pride celebration in June, which opened up the door to more cross-participation and collaboration between traditionally adult events and the young writers, a trend we hope will continue.

The main focus of the Young Writers Salon this fall has been the Young Writers Salon capped at ten juniors and seniors, which meets on a weekly basis for about two hours each time. As most of the writers are poets, we've been working on experimenting with group poems, honing poetry for the showcase, and sharing process. Apart from a couple of them, these are advanced writers who have been participating in the program for years, so they are deeply committed and looking forward. We're now looking forward to turning toward performance and I am mentoring the two newer writers separately, so they'll feel confident when they read.

We have also received a small budget to be used for in-school workshops so we can reach more students. We're looking for local authors who might be willing to do school visits. We've reached out to Vista Grande but been told their programs are full for the spring, so we hope to send authors to TISA, Taos Academy, and Taos Charter School. We've also been on the hunt for students interested in mentorships. We have several volunteers waiting to be matched with students, so we'll be circulating around the schools and with the help of local educators, hope to get our mentor program underway.

Looking ahead, we'll be revisiting our collaborations with Twirl and Paseo, will be awarding an internship to one of our young writers to help manage books in the store, and will be looking to expand into the community with a focus on Media Literacy and Creative Writing Workshops.

Submitted by Estelle Laure, Young Writers Program Curator

## 2023 SOMOS Bookshop Report

It was almost a normal year at the SOMOS Bookshop. COVID was a factor early on but as time passed the public adjusted to shopping again despite the continued presence of the disease in the community. The income for 2023 was \$26,287.66.

Donations were strong and steady until we instituted a moratorium due to the space and function constraints caused by the ADA bathroom construction that took inordinately long (from late September '22 to early January '23).

The Quarterly Sales were discontinued in mid-year but have just been resumed. I tried an experiment of featuring higher priced/higher quality books on the front table instead of the \$1 sales of overstock. It was not successful enough to warrant continuing it though. Those quality books are now for sale and are displayed in the glass case or are integrated into regular stock wearing a white stick and a higher price.

The archival collections are gradually being sold/phased out. Customers were frustrated seeing books in the glass case that they wanted but couldn't buy; and the collections have been taking up too much precious storage space.

The Volunteers have been loyal and responsible. There are two groups of volunteers: the afternoon ones who work at the desk and sell the books and the morning ones who work behind the scenes dusting and re-stocking. Both are crucial to the functioning of the Shop.

We welcomed two new bookcases and lost one that broke up when being shifted for the construction.

Donations have been strong and well appreciated. Because donors give us books in varying condition, there are plenty of unsaleable books available for both of the FREE BOOK cases. We were the recipients of three substantial "estates" which are stored in my garage and until there is space for them in the Shop.

We continue to collaborate with the Brodsky Bookshop to sell especially valuable books online. This is a beneficial arrangement for both of us.

My plans for the Bookshop in 2024 are to finish the revision of the Volunteer Handbook, update the Bookshop section of the SOMOS Website, put more sections into alphabetical or categorical order and delegate more responsibility to the morning volunteers. Actually, the first order of business is to deep dust the books, shelves and chairs that were affected by the construction debris.

Respectfully submitted,  
Danielle Freeman

# 2023

## SOMOS Financial Reports

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The US economy is showing resilience in 2023 with the stock market rebounding, stable inflation with lower gas prices, and the potential of interest rate cuts by the Federal Reserve in the new year. Although this is generally good news for most US companies as the consumer confidence is steady and spending is strong, stress continues to be noticeable in large section of the population. Non-profit organizations are sensitive to these changes as they affect our budget and the generosity of gift giving.

We, at SOMOS, feel extraordinarily grateful to our sponsors, donors, and members for their continual generous and trusting support of our organization in fulfilling our mission statement. Our FY23 budget that ended on December 31 reports that we have a net income of \$21,621. The result is based on grant income that exceeded our expectation for a second year. Our expenditure of last year included \$19K of capital improvement on our building. The board has approved \$15K in the 2024 budget for the purchase of a new boiler and the replacement of the flooring in the SW room.

At the annual board retreat in December, we had a collective reflection of our individual board member's contributions to SOMOS, and our desire to be actively involved in fund-raising ideas that can be executed, effective and successful. The group also proposed assigning teams to cultivate and gain access to local businesses and members of the community for their support.

Finally, we cannot end our financial report without extending enormous thanks to our volunteers of our superior second-hand bookstore. It is important to be reminded of the value of books and of the written word.

The Board of Directors at SOMOS thanks everyone in the community for your support, consideration, and participation.

Submitted by Baksim Goddard, Board Treasurer

## SOMOS OPERATIONAL BUDGET FY 2023

	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Difference</i>
<b>REVENUE</b>			
<b>PROGRAM INCOME</b>			
Membership Dues Income	\$8,500	\$8,885	\$385
Gate Income	\$4,000	\$2,328	-\$1,672
Workshop Income	\$7,500	\$12,056	\$4,556
Rental Income/Office	\$500	\$241	-\$259
Bones Admin Fee	\$975	\$560	-\$415
TWC	\$18,000	\$17,487	-\$513
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>\$39,475</b>	<b>\$41,556</b>	<b>\$2,081</b>
<b>FUNDRAISING INCOME</b>			
Parking Income	\$0	\$120	\$120
Grants	\$79,500	\$36,227	-\$43,273
Scholarships	\$4,000	\$0	-\$4,000
McCune Discretionary Fund for DEI training	\$2,500	<del>2,500</del>	-\$2,500
Donations	\$6,000	\$3,817	-\$2,183
Sponship	\$2,500	\$3,225	\$725
Appeal Letter	\$12,000	\$5,273	-\$6,727
Fundraising Event	\$4,000	\$1,200	-\$2,800
Merchandise Income	\$0	\$150	\$150
Book Sales	\$25,000	\$21,842	-\$3,158
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>\$135,500</b>	<b>\$71,854</b>	<b>-\$63,646</b>
<b>RENTAL PROPERTY INCOME</b>			
Rental Unit Income	\$10,750	\$9,000	-\$1,750
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>\$10,750</b>	<b>\$9,000</b>	<b>-\$1,750</b>
<b>OTHER INCOME</b>			
Dividends	\$2,000	\$2,898	\$898
Interest Income	\$20	\$13	-\$7
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,020</b>	<b>\$2,911</b>	<b>\$891</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$187,745</b>	<b>\$125,321</b>	<b>-\$62,424</b>

<b>EXPENSES</b>			
<b>PROGRAM EXPENSES</b>			
Curator Fees	\$5,500	\$3,750	\$1,750
Honorarium	\$11,000	\$10,951	\$49
Workshop Instructors	\$5,500	\$3,050	\$2,450
TWC Instructors	\$6,000	\$10,300	-\$4,300
Storytelling Presenters	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
Supplies	\$300	\$83	\$217
Facility Rental Expenses	\$800	\$733	\$68
Travel and Lodging Expenses	\$4,500	\$1,683	\$2,817
Refreshments	\$500	\$457	\$43
Advertising	\$10,000	\$5,759	\$4,241
Video	\$500	\$0	\$500
Book Sales to Authors	\$600	\$1,340	-\$740
Volunteer Appreciation	\$350	\$293	\$57
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>\$50,550</b>	<b>\$38,398</b>	<b>\$12,152</b>
<b>ADMIN EXPENSES</b>			
990-T tax	\$0	\$436	-\$436
Administrative Services	\$4,500	\$6,490	-\$1,990
Accounting	\$3,200	\$2,935	\$265
Grant Writer Expense	\$250	\$1,298	-\$1,048
Dues	\$275	\$930	-\$655
Printing and Reproduction	\$115	\$0	\$115
Gas/Electric	\$3,500	\$2,877	\$623
Trash Collection	\$300	\$273	\$27
Water	\$1,400	\$1,090	\$310
Telephone	\$1,300	\$1,484	-\$184
Office Repairs	\$1,500	\$200	\$1,300
Office Supplies	\$7,500	\$3,741	\$3,759
Postage/Delivery	\$1,000	\$397	\$603
Interest Expense	\$0	\$48	-\$48
General & Admin Expenses	\$0	\$201	-\$201
Liability Insurance	\$2,700	\$3,131	-\$431
Business Meals	\$700	\$895	-\$195
Bank and Credit Card Fees	\$1,280	\$815	\$465
Paypal Fees	\$775	\$704	\$71
Investment Fees	\$700	\$693	\$7
Education	\$500	\$2,911	-\$2,411
DEI Consultation and Training	\$2,500	\$973	\$1,527
Donation paid	\$0	\$500	-\$500
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>\$33,995</b>	<b>\$33,022</b>	<b>\$973</b>

<b><i>PAYROLL EXPENSES</i></b>			
Excutive Director Wages	\$50,000	\$41,667	\$8,333
Employee Benefits (for ED)	\$2,600	\$2,379	\$221
Payroll Taxes	\$7,500	\$3,945	\$3,555
Developmet Coordinator Wages	\$15,600	\$3,165	\$12,435
Coordinator Paid Sick Leave	\$0	\$222	-\$222
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>\$75,700</b>	<b>\$51,377</b>	<b>\$24,323</b>
<b><i>Misc EXPENSES</i></b>			
Fundraising Expenses (Printing & Design)	\$0	\$157	-\$157
Leasehold Improvement budgeted	\$25,000	\$18,511	\$6,489
Rental Building Repairs	\$2,500	\$405	\$2,095
<b>SUB TOTAL</b>	<b>\$27,500</b>	<b>\$19,073</b>	<b>\$8,427</b>
<b><i>TOTAL EXPENSES</i></b>	<b>\$187,745</b>	<b>\$141,870</b>	<b>\$45,875</b>



## **SOMOS**

**thanks all our donors and funders for supporting our literary programming and bookshop during 2023. Funding organizations include: LANL, Taos Community Foundation, New Mexico Humanities Council, McCune Foundation, Nusenda Foundation, J3 Advised Fund, TCLT New Mexico Arts, Virginia Wellington Cabot Foundation, Smith's Inspiring Donations, Libro.FM audiobooks.**

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**We could not thrive without your generosity!**





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