



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Lizzy Petersen, in partnership with Sarah Tisdale & Britny Cordera, Receive \$20,000 Grant for Expansion of Student-led Literary Arts Program, Outside Literary Magazine

ST. LOUIS, MO - Young writers, artists, and creatives in Saint Louis Public Schools high schools will get a little more help thanks to Mid-America Arts Alliance's Interchange Artist Grant.

Lizzy Petersen, in partnership with Sarah Tisdale and Britny Cordera, received a \$20,000 grant on October 15, 2021, from Mid-America Arts Alliance's Interchange Artist Grant program to expand Outside Literary Magazine, a student-directed literary arts program based at Central Visual & Performing Arts High School.

With support from Interchange, Outside Literary Magazine has been able to expand into Collegiate School of Medicine & Bioscience, Gateway STEM, and Soldan International Studies high schools, as well as create a new curriculum centered on local BIPOC and Queer writers embedded in local histories. In creative writing workshops provided by Outside Literary Magazine, students explore their identities as individuals, and as St. Louisans, through interaction with local texts and community-focused archival research.

In celebration of the students' hard work and creation, Outside Literary Magazine will host its first ever in-person and virtual showcase event open to the public. This event will take place on **April 28th from 6-8 p.m. at High Low Literary Arts Center**. Through a partnership with Saint Louis Poetry Center, students from across the district will have the opportunity to perform their written work and display their visual artwork for the wider St. Louis community.

Beyond creative writing workshops, over the last five years, Outside Literary Magazine has worked with over 100 young artists, writers, and editors from across St. Louis Public Schools to publish an annual online and hand-printed magazine, garnering over 11,000 online views.

Leah Williams, who served as the Managing Editor throughout her four years at CVPA, shared, **“I wasn't really sure at first because I didn't really write that much, but I'm much more of a writer now than I ever was.”** Leah is now a freshman at Columbia College Chicago.

Through partnerships with **Central Print Printmaking Studio** and **Saint Louis Poetry Center**, Outside Literary Magazine provides students with opportunities to learn new skills in design, publishing, marketing, and leadership to grow as young creative professionals. This year, Outside Literary Magazine is also working with **PSA STL** to showcase one student contributor from Issue 6 in their installation on 2222 Chippewa Ave and their poster series.

These exciting new opportunities for St. Louis's youth would not be possible without the support of the Interchange Artist Grant program.

### **About Lizzy Petersen**

Lizzy Petersen (she) is a poet from St. Louis, MO, where she has led creative writing programs for young people for seven years, most recently, *OutsideLitMag.com*. She was a 2019 Community Arts Training Institute fellow at the Regional Arts Commission and is currently a resident for the Kranzberg Arts Foundation. Her recent poetry can be found in *december*, *Ninth Letter*, and *Southern Humanities Review* and her reviews have appeared in the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* and *The Bind*. She has served as Managing Editor for *River Styx* and Poetry Editor for *Sycamore Review* at Purdue University, where she received her MFA in Poetry.

### **About Sarah Tisdale**

Sarah Tisdale (she/they) is a Black and Queer poet and teaching artist from St. Louis, working most recently through a teaching residency at Saint Louis Poetry Center. Sarah has been teaching for over a decade and has received training through Center for Creative Art's Institute for Arts Integration, the Center for Art of Translation's Poetry Inside Out teacher workshop, and the Regional Arts Commission's Community Art Training Institute. Sarah has attended workshops through Winter Tangerine and Tin House and is set to attend the SAFTA writer's residency in Summer 2022. Sarah also helps run the CHanging Reading Series at GCADD in Granite City, IL.

### **About Britny Cordera**

Britny (she/they) is a published poet, nonfiction writer, and emerging journalist. Britny has been a teaching artist for Outside Literary Magazine for the last two years, helping pilot the contributing editor program. She is a reporter for Focus Black Oklahoma. Britny received her MFA from Southern Illinois University. She was a finalist for the 2020 Narrative 30 Below contest. Her work can be found or is forthcoming in *Grist Fix*, *The New Territory*, *Rhino*, *Narrative*, and *PANK*.

### **About Saint Louis Poetry Center**

Founded in 1946, Saint Louis Poetry Center (SLPC) is a literary arts nonprofit organization that supports poets and audiences in the St. Louis region through an innovative array of artistic and educational programs, championing the power of poetry to enrich our communities and lives.

### **About Mid-America Arts Alliance**

Mid-America Arts Alliance (M-AAA) is a nonprofit, regional arts organization—representing Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas. M-AAA, in partnership with the

National Endowment for the Arts, creates and manages programs, trainings, and grants in support of individual artists and arts and culture organizations throughout middle America and beyond.

## **About Interchange**

Mid-America Arts Alliance's Interchange program supports artists working for social change and is backed by a grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Interchange will support sixteen artists with an active socially-engaged creative practice in the Mid-America Arts Alliance region. Grantees will receive \$20,000 in direct project support, professional development retreats, and mentoring. The Interchange Artist Grant program is designed to strengthen communities and individual artists within the region by supporting artist-led projects focused on social impact.

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