

Poetry

ISLAM



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

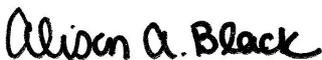
Friends and Supporters of America SCORES,

America SCORES Cleveland is proud to present our 17th annual Poetry SLAM! This occasion is about recognizing our poet-athletes' creativity and accomplishments over their fall season, and we are so pleased you could join us to celebrate! Though COVID prevented us from hosting this event live, it hasn't stopped us from empowering our youth to express themselves and find their voice through poetry and spoken word.

All of our poet-athletes, 1st-8th grade scholars in ten Cleveland Metropolitan Schools, have worked hard this fall learning how to write poetry and work together as a team on the soccer field. We are honored to showcase the 3rd-8th grade poet-athletes in our Slam and although the event is virtual, you can feel the energy and excitement to be back on the stage performing for their community.

Thank you to all of our sponsors, coaches, volunteers, parents, staff, and board members that made this program possible. It is with your help that we are able to continue to provide our poet-athletes with the inspiration and encouragement to express themselves and grow as leaders in our community. As a team, we continue to inspire Cleveland youth to lead healthy lives, be engaged students, and have the confidence and character to make a difference in the world. If you want to make a difference, please consider joining the America SCORES team as a donor or volunteer. Your support will help us continue to provide a much-needed creative outlet for all of our poet-athletes – now serving over 2,000 youth annually through afterschool and summer programming!

Yours in service,



Alison Black, Executive Director

WATCH SLAM POEMS!

You can watch all of our scholars' poems, including the full Poetry SLAM and videos of our Juniors teams by visiting:

Full-length SLAM video: bit.ly/2021SLAMVideos

Juniors teams' videos: bit.ly/JuniorSLAMVideos

SPECIAL THANK YOU

This year continued to present unique challenges, and we could not have had such a wonderful Fall season without our amazing coaches and liaisons. They dedicated their time to teach our poet-athletes about the art of poetry and how to write and perform their original work for our Poetry SLAM.

THANK YOU TO:

Kassy Allen - School Liaison

Garfield

Waleska Berrios - Soccer Coach

Buhrer Dual Language Academy Core Girls Team

Christine Burns - Writing Coach

Robinson G. Jones Core Girls Team

Joseph Caroniti - Writing & Soccer Coach; School Liaison

Marion C. Seltzer Core Boys Team

Synthia Ervin - Writing & Soccer Coach

Wade Park Core Boys Team

Colleen Gallagher - Soccer Coach

Robinson G. Jones Core Girls Team

Shadonna Griffin - Writing Coach

Wade Park Juniors Team

Valorie Hempstead - Writing Coach

Warner Girls' Leadership Academy Juniors Team

Rochell Hester - School Liaison

Willson

Jenn Holder - School Liaison

Robinson G. Jones

Craig Housum - School Liaison

Artemus Ward

SPECIAL THANK YOU (CONTINUED)

Matthew Hribar - Writing Coach

Buhrer Dual Language Academy Core Boys Team

Stacy Hubert - School Liaison

Thomas Jefferson

Catrina Huffman - Writing & Soccer Coach

Wade Park Middle School Team

Kathleen Krulik - Writing Coach

Robinson G. Jones Core Boys Team

Denise Likar - Writing Coach

Artemus Ward Juniors Team

Tanisha Madden - Writing & Soccer Coach; School Liaison

Wade Park Core Girls Team

Zaid Mahdi - Soccer Coach

Thomas Jefferson Core Boys Team

Brenna Manning - Writing & Soccer Coach

Franklin D. Roosevelt Academy Core Coed Team

Karen Miranda - Writing Coach

Thomas Jefferson Core Boys Team

Jennifer Nieves - Writing & Soccer Coach

Thomas Jefferson Core Girls Team

Kim Norris - Writing & Soccer Coach; School Liaison

Warner Girls' Leadership Academy Middle School Team

Mark Ogilvie - Soccer Coach

Artemus Ward Juniors & Core Coed Teams

Michelle Orlando - Writing Coach

Garfield Core Coed Team

Crystal Ortiz - Writing & Soccer Coach

Marion C. Seltzer Core Girls Team

Matt Pempin - Soccer Coach

Artemus Ward Middle School Team

Chandra Peoples - Soccer Coach

Wade Park Juniors Team

Jennifer Poore - Soccer Coach; School Liaison

Buhrer Dual Language Academy Jrs. and Core Boys Teams

Marie Posner - Writing & Soccer Coach

Thomas Jefferson Juniors Team

SPECIAL THANK YOU (CONTINUED)

Marquita Preston - Soccer Coach

Robinson G. Jones Juniors Team

Shaynae Price - School Liaison

Franklin D. Roosevelt Academy

Yanera Rivera - Writing & Soccer Coach

Buhrer Dual Language Academy Middle School Team

Michele Sady - Writing & Soccer Coach

Franklin D. Roosevelt Academy Juniors Team

Hanna Seelbach - Writing Coach

Willson Core Coed Team

Lisa Sergi - Writing Coach

Robinson G. Jones Juniors Team

Leslie Shannon - Writing Coach

Marion C. Seltzer Juniors Team

Vickie Shucofsky - Soccer Coach

Robinson G. Jones Core Boys Team

Cynthia Simonski - Writing Coach

Buhrer Dual Language Academy Juniors Team

Ebony Sorjourney - Soccer Coach

Warner Girls' Leadership Academy Juniors Team

Mindy Stephens - Writing Coach

Artemus Ward Middle School Team

Austin Thompson - Soccer Coach

Willson Juniors Team

Deborah Vaughn - Writing Coach

Buhrer Dual Language Academy Core Girls Team

Kimberly Watkins - Writing Coach

Willson Juniors Team

Garrett Wheeler - Soccer Coach

Willson Core Coed Team

Madeline Wright - Writing & Soccer Coach

Warner Girls' Leadership Academy Core Team

Kenniston Yoder - Soccer Coach

Garfield Core Coed Team

Rebecca Yoder - Writing Coach

Artemus Ward Core Coed Team

ARTEMUS WARD SCHOOL

JUNIORS TEAM, "THE BLUE BUNNY"

The blue bunny
Is funny
He is cute
He wears a Texas boot
He wears a shirt
His name is Bert
The bunny likes to hop
And drink pop
The bunny likes to play
Everyday!

CORE COED TEAM, "IF I COULD CHANGE THE WORLD"

If I could change the world;
I'll help others and be someone who inspires
Everyone around me and ignite a fire
So that they can save people's lives
Doing what we can to survive
If I could change the world;
I would support those who are in need
In the garden of life planting seeds
Expressing myself through all forms of art
A change of mind and a change of heart
If I could change the world.

ARTEMUS WARD SCHOOL

MIDDLE SCHOOL TEAM, "WE ARE"

We are

Diamond shining in the night
Make us feel very bright
Illuminating the sky
Like shooting star flying by

We are

Students striving for success
So we can be our very best
We persevere through the stress
To this day we stay blessed.

We are shining.

JADON, 5TH GRADE, "UNTITLED"

I go through the tiers of people who are sad and alone
They are in need of us to get up and fight for what's right
To help people following their dreams to do heroic things
Creating hope for yourself and others
To stand tall for the world and light a fire

I know today is the day to act
Time to make a plan and sign a pact
If you want to, here's a map
It is my hope that the world reacts.
Needs above, wants
Food, water, shelter
Stop Global Warming, everyone's a helper.



ARTEMUS WARD SCHOOL

ARAMIS, 4TH GRADE, "THE SNOW IS COMING"

The snow is coming
And we must prepare
The snow is coming
Everyone beware

The snow is coming
People forget how to drive
The snow is coming
Hold on for your lives

The snow is coming
Please call off school
The snow is coming
And let the kids rule

The snow is coming
Like a swarm of bees
The snow is coming
Let's hope it's not up to our knees.



BUHRER DUAL LANGUAGE ACADEMY

JUNIORS TEAM, "TURKEY"

I saw a turkey
In the street
He had a bug
Next to his feet
He tried to walk
He tried to talk
But all he did
Was gobble gobble.

CORE GIRLS TEAM, "RECIPE FOR A PET"

1 Ton of loyalty
1 gallon of energy
50 pounds of respect
70 ounces of bravery
3 teaspoons of silliness
A handful of intelligence
1 package of cuteness
Blend all this together with a barrelful of caring
Add a sprinkle of happiness
A drizzle of naughtiness
A pinch of shyness
Bake for two days
And love for life.



BUHRER DUAL LANGUAGE ACADEMY

CORE BOYS TEAM, "A RECIPE FOR TEAMWORK"

A handful of kindness
3 gallons of determination
2 cups of unselfishness
A half-pint of healing
1 liter of sportsmanship
3 cups of responsibility
A pinch of good ideas
7 and a half tablespoons of companionship
Mix it all together
Bake for practices
Serve on Game Day, and
Share with all your friends.

MIDDLE SCHOOL TEAM, "THIS IS NOT A POEM"

This is not a poem
This is our history
Our history is important
Our history is cruel

This is not a poem, this is our lives
Everyone around us is dying
All I hear is cries

This is not a poem, this is the world
The world is cruel and evil
We could make it better
This is fixable

This is not a poem, this is our hope
That we will wake up confident and unafraid
With no tears, no cries.



BUHRER DUAL LANGUAGE ACADEMY

GABRIELA, 5TH GRADE, "MY CAT IS FAT"

I've a cat named Asher, and he eats all day.
He always lays around and never wants to play.
Not even with a squeaky toy or anything that moves.
When I have him exercise, he always disapproves.
So we've put him on a diet, but now he yells all day.
And even though he's thinner, he still won't come and play.

GOD, 8TH GRADE, "CHANGE"

Change is something we need
A change is like a breeze
If we change
We won't hear people crying on their knees
Saying help me
With one change the world will
Be beautiful again
So let's start with change!



FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT ACADEMY

CORE COED & JUNIORS TEAM, "FAMILY"

Family is different for everyone
Some families are strict, some are fun.
Some family members are crazy and some are lazy
Some are odd and some are young
A different perspective, some are protective
Work hard, get smart, do my part.

My best memory with my family
Involves holidays and vacations
My memories are both happy and sad
I love my family.

This is who we are in our families
We are athletic
We play games
We are the youngest, middle and the oldest
at the same time.
This is my family and me
This is not the end of our story.



FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT ACADEMY

JANIAH, 5TH GRADE, "UNTITLED"

Something that you can know about me
Is I like to go shopping
So I can look cute and
Sit at the table and eat fruit.
I like to eat, me and my family
Come together to get better.
I like to come to school to get smarter.
I am not good at reading
So I have to work harder.
I like to play football
But I don't like other sports at all.
I like to stay in my room from the window
I like to see lights
These memories are some of my best nights.



GARFIELD SCHOOL

CORE COED TEAM, "GARFIELD EAGLES UNITED"

Garfield Eagles United
Good, Grateful
Amazing
Respectful, Responsible
Fun, Family, Friends Intelligent,
Inspiring
Excellent
Leadership, Love
Daring, Dynamite
Extraordinary
Awesome, Adventurous
Generous, Giving
Learning, Local
Educated, Engaging
Super Smart, Studying, Stim
Unique, Universal, Unstoppable
Nice, Notorious
In it together, Interesting, Individuality
Teamwork, Thoughtful, Talented
Encouraging, Experienced
Determined, Direction.
Garfield Eagles United!



MARION C. SELTZER SCHOOL

CORE GIRLS TEAM, "WHAT IF"

What if Joe from the movie Soul didn't fall into a manhole

What if Joe fell into the manhole, but jumped right out.

What if Joe from the movie Soul was not funny at all.

Joe would never have learned about life.

Joe would never have made a friend.

Joe would never have made it to the end.

We love the movie SOUL!!!

What would your "What if..." be?

CORE BOYS TEAM, "WE ARE THE SELTZER STARS"

We are the Seltzer Stars. Seltzer Stars Seltzer Stars.

We are the Seltzer Stars. Seltzer Stars Seltzer Stars.

We are the Seltzer Stars. Seltzer Stars Seltzer Stars.

We are the Seltzer Stars. Seltzer Stars Seltzer Stars.

We are strong, we are smart.

We are good at math and art.

We like to read, we like to learn
Gaining knowledge at every turn.

We are kind, we have heart
Building up, not tearing apart.

We help others when their down
And love the people in our town.

Respect and pride is always ours
Because we are the Seltzer stars.

We are the Seltzer Stars. Seltzer Stars Seltzer Stars.

We are the Seltzer Stars. Seltzer Stars Seltzer Stars.

We are the Seltzer Stars. Seltzer Stars Seltzer Stars.

We are the Seltzer Stars. Seltzer Stars Seltzer Stars.

We believe in our greatness!



ROBINSON G. JONES SCHOOL

JUNIORS TEAM, "SOCCER LIFE"

A soccer team is what we are
Blocking the ball so they don't score
Cheering on
Down the field we go
Excitement and teamwork
Friendships that we have made
Guarding the goal so they don't score
Helping each other out
I am a soccer player
Jumping running blocking
Kicking the ball down the field
Loving what we do
Moving all around
Never giving up
On the field is where we will be
Practice to improve
Quick to kicking the ball
Remember it is not about winning, but being a team
Soccer is our passion
Teamwork is what It's about
Ultimate winning goal
Victory and beyond
We can do this as a team
X-cellent job
Yippity Yay
Zippity zip, make that goal!!!



ROBINSON G. JONES SCHOOL

CORE GIRLS TEAM, "WHO AM I?"

Who am I?
I am smart and kind
I am a butterfly as blue as the sky
I am a bird as light as the sun
I am a girl that likes making friends
I am bold as the raging seas

Who do I want to be?
I want to help people
I want to study life
I want to be a shoulder to cry on
I want to be a good friend
I want to teach life lessons

If I could save the world...
I would get rid of pollution
I would sacrifice my life for others
I would stop racism
I would stop gun violence
I would find a cure for all diseases
I would let everyone know that all people deserve kindness and respect

This is who I am!

This is who I want to be!



ROBINSON G. JONES SCHOOL

CORE BOYS TEAM, "WE'RE THE BEST"

You know we all got the respect
We get on the field. We put everyone in check
Guess what? We finished a project
When we come together everything connects

We're the best

You already know we're number one
Every time we play, it's gonna be fun
They know we shine like the sun
When the games over we make them our sons

We're the best

We have a whole team of legends
We take our curses and turn them into blessings
We got them guessing, winning feels like heaven
We're not texting on a phone, but you get the message

We're the best!



ROBINSON G. JONES SCHOOL

BRANDON, 5TH GRADE, "RACISM"

If I could stop racism that's
What I would do. They should not take
It out on you.
2022 will be better I hope the racist things
Will stop. Moms are losing
Their kids, just because they
Are black. We don't deserve that.

If I could help the homeless I would, if
I had 15 million I would give
It to the homeless
I would bless the homeless then I get blessed
I would do anything to help the homeless.

You know I will become a legend
I will be famous one day
I'm nice, funny, smart and wise
Why do people like you
Know why but if you are a bully
I don't like you but if you
Don't like me I don't like you.



THOMAS JEFFERSON INTERNATIONAL NEWCOMERS ACADEMY

CORE GIRLS TEAM, "WE ARE STRONG AND BEAUTIFUL SOCCER PLAYERS"

We are
I am nice
I am good
I am friendly
I am caring
I am smart
We are all beautiful

We wonder
I wonder if I will ever go back to Zambia
I wonder if my family in Congo is missing me
I wonder how my friends and family are doing in Puerto Rico
I wonder how my grandma is doing
I wonder when I will see my family again

We hear
I hear laughter
I hear music
I hear birds singing
I hear the ocean
I everybody around me

We see
I see tall buildings
I see flowers
I see my friends
I see trees
I see beautiful people

We want
I want to graduate high school
I want COVID to be over
I want people to be happy
I want people to be healthy
I want to see my family

We are all strong and beautiful soccer players!



THOMAS JEFFERSON INTERNATIONAL NEWCOMERS ACADEMY

CORE BOYS TEAM, "IF WE WERE IN CHARGE OF THE WORLD"

If we were in charge of the world
We would have more trees and flowers
Red, pink, purple and orange
We would have less homework and two recesses -
Four hours and ten minutes of outside playing!

If we were in charge of the world
Factories would have less smoke
And no people would be fighting
And there'd be free candy for everyone!
We would give money to the poor to give them a better life
And it would rain money from the sky!

If we were in charge of the world
Our sillas would be comodas
(and they would fly!)
La calle would be limpia
And for lunch we would eat healthier food
Like broccoli, zanahorias and ice cream!

When we are in charge of the world
We will play soccer and video games all day
We will drive flying Lamborghinis
And our schools would have everything they need!

There will be no more cancer, COVID, or diabetes
And no more guns
And no mas drogas!
And NO WAR
When we are in charge
We will have peace,
Love,
And respect for everyone!



WADE PARK SCHOOL

JUNIORS TEAM, "HAPPY"

H is for hugs

A is for apples, that are green and juicy

P is for Pies that are yummy!

P is for parties that are lit lit

Y is for yo-yos that light up like rainbows.

CORE GIRLS TEAM, "WE GOT CONFIDENCE"

We got confidence

We stay strong

We play soccer and we get along

Ain't no competition, but we still slay

I do my homework just so we can play

When we practice, yeah we go hard

Playing in the mud all season

We got confidence

We stay strong

We play soccer and we get along

Ain't no competition, but we still slay

I do my homework done just so we can play

C is for Courageous

O is for Outstanding

N is for never giving up

F is for Fierce

I is for intelligent

D is for Delightful

E is for Excellence

N is for Natural

T is for talented

We got confidence

We stay strong!!!!!!!



WADE PARK SCHOOL

CORE BOYS TEAM, "BE A BUDDY NOT A BULLY"

Be a buddy not a bully
Non-toxic like this marker
Be happy not sad
If you're mad just talk
It could be me or a counselor
If you feel pain give joy
Like an awesome toy
Pain is sadness
Healing is happiness
If you've been abused I will be kind
Don't waste your time and you will shine like the sun
Open your heart and open your mind
So you can have fun
Talk and share
Please before
Don't feel left out
I really really care
Come out of the darkness
Choose the light
Be a buddy not a bully
Do what's right.



WADE PARK SCHOOL

MIDDLE SCHOOL TEAM, "UNTITLED"

Here's our poem,
I am me, he and she
When we come together
We're a team.
We score a goal and are all happy
Then we win the game, because we don't come to play.
Wade Park has a heart for soccer.
We just want to win.
Losing is ok but winning is best.
If we fall, we stand back up.
If we lose we just play again

KA'LEHYA, 4TH GRADE, "BEST FRIENDS"

You see me
I see you
Floating in the sky
Like we always do,
We are BFFs forever, never do we fight
We will always have each other's back
You will always have my back like I have yours.
Floating in the sky is like me and you are shining like a star.
We started in school and became BFFs because we rule.
BFFs forever!!!



WADE PARK SCHOOL

KARIZMA, 4TH GRADE, "RESPONSIBILITY"

Responsibility
R is for responding
E is for education
S is for satisfaction
P is for personification
O is for openings
N is for never wrong
S is for special
I is for intervention
B is for besides
I is for identification
L is for living the dream
T is for talented
Y is for yesterday

LONDON, 5TH GRADE "LONDON, THAT'S ME!"

Lend a helping hand to others in need
Others may be sad, just help them up
Never bully!
Don't ever blame anybody about anything
On a mission with permission
Next time you will make it, try harder.

Always go harder
Level up to challenging things
Accomplish the things you want to achieve
Shake it off when you fail
I love soccer
Always have fun!



WARNER GIRLS' LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

JUNIORS TEAM, "THANKSGIVING"

I hear people talking
I smell Turkey, yum.
I see cousins
I feel great or grateful
I taste stuffing
What am I?
Thanksgiving!

CORE GIRLS TEAM, "I AM FROM"

We are from the Wildflower family and America SCORES
That grows successfully, respectfully, and has originality
I am from my mom's long legs and my dad's brown eyes
I am from my dad's sharpie elbows and my mom's big smile
I am from mac and cheese and cornbread with strawberry pop
I am from vegan chicken nuggets with rice on the side

We are from the Wildflower family and America SCORES
That grows successfully, respectfully, and has originality
I am from Uno, Double Dutch, truth or dare and musical chairs
I am from soccer and goals, poetry and poems
with America SCORES on our side
I am from small and big houses where homeless people ask for
change
Stray cats and dogs look for homes all day long and that's wrong
I am from I like your hair and you are extraordinary

We are from the Wildflower family and America SCORES
That grows successfully, respectfully, and has originality.



WARNER GIRLS' LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

MIDDLE SCHOOL TEAM, "WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?"

What is Social Media?

A place where expectations that are not realistic are held
A place in 2004 full of cat videos and now it's crazy and not safe
Social media is like a backyard, it can be sunny, fun and bright
It can also be dark and scary

What is social media?

Social media is like the ocean it can be all fun and games
Until you realize what's actually inside of it.
Social media is more toxic than the Cuyahoga River
Social media was good at first but then it turned into hateful
comments and bad rumors.

What is social media?

Social media is something that people use more
than they spend time with their family
Social media is a place to hide your face and maybe
end up on Catfish one day
Social media, somewhere teens go and hide when
the real world will sit, talk and shame
When kids spread their pics to people including
their privacy around the world

What is social media?

Social media turned into canceling and death threats
Social media makes you have a different perspective on things
Social media was a place to play games but now it's not too safe
Social media is good and bad we have predators,
cyberbullying and sometimes it makes people sad.

HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE SOCIAL MEDIA?



WARNER GIRLS' LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

ANGELA, 4TH GRADE, "MY AUNT"

My aunt is pretty as a Bobcat
Serious like a business woman
Amazing like artwork, talented as
A magician, smart, like Albert Einstein
Fantastic like an Orchid flower
Sweet like Pink lemonade, tall as
The Eiffel Tower.

BROOKLYN, 7TH GRADE, "THIS IS NOT A POEM"

This is not a poem
This is life
Young black men
Having to fight
For their life
This isn't how
We're suppose
To live
Mother's having
To worry
About their children
Dying each and every
Night
Blacks having to
Fight for their
Rights
They're trying to
Make a perfect story
But this is not a poem
This is life.



WARNER GIRLS' LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

NYLA, 7TH GRADE, "HOLIDAYS"

Holidays, holidays, holidays.

Halloween is frightening, may be some lightening
Scary skeletons, vicious vampires, whimpering werewolves
Wonderful witches.

Holidays, holidays, holidays

Cheerful jollies during Christmas
Tasty hot chocolate with marshmallows
Lovely decorations and Christmas songs
Holidays, holidays, holidays

Love filled the air

Date nights full of love
Chocolates, food and wine
Valentines day!

Holidays, holidays, holidays

Yummy food that isn't done until 7 pm
Turkey, ham, candy yams, collard greens, dressing
Surrounded by family and friends
Thanksgiving.

Holidays, holidays, holidays.



WILLSON SCHOOL

CORE COED TEAM, "TEAMWORK"

Be brave and collaborate - PASS
Try your best and have good sportsmanship - PASS
Be a good player - PASS
You have to work if you want to achieve in life - PASS
And our team can achieve anything - PASS
Help others - PASS
Be kind to each other - PASS
TEAMWORK.



GUEST POETRY SLAM JUDGES

Charisse Bailey is finally passing my 6 month benchmark with LEI in the new role as Director of Programs. She enjoys creating opportunities for youth to find their voice and create spaces for them to deliver the message. She is fully committed to community and youth development work!

Ledia Diedrichs has been employed by the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) for the past 22 years, initially as a Bi-lingual Instructional Aide at Walton School and for the last ten years as an Intervention Specialist working with Mild-Moderate Special education students at Scranton K-8 School. It was while at Walton School that she became involved with America SCORES as a Writing Coach for boys in 3rd-5th grade.

Katie Giglia is a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant who provides occupational therapy services to children age 5 to 22. As an Alumna of The University of Akron, she was a State champion of Poetry Interpretation for the Ohio Forensic Association and multi-year national finalist in literary interpretation for the National Forensic Association.

Paul Giglia has earned his living as a writer in many fields, including marketing/advertising, television, radio, print, and for speakers. He also has experience working on stage in front of audiences, helping him to better judge the performances of our SLAM participants. Although retired, he fills his time with his hobby, photography, and has donated his work to America SCORES' Inspired Art events.

Cynthia Larsen loves teaching creative writing. As education director at Lake Erie Ink, she teaches teachers and students about the many ways we can express ourselves creatively, from comics, to poetry, to creative nonfiction, fiction and playwriting. Oh yeah, and she writes, too.

Laura Mimura is responsible for the development and execution of communications and public relations strategies for Key's institutional bank, commercial bank and wealth management business segments. She is a long-time member and chair of the governance committee for the America SCORES Cleveland governance board. Laura is the 2018 Calliope Award from America SCORES Cleveland for her long-term commitment to the advancement of SCORES' mission of inspiring urban youth to lead healthy lives, be engaged students, and have the confidence and character to make a difference in the world.



GUEST POETRY SLAM JUDGES (CONTINUED)

Lisa Baskin Naylor is the Director of Programs and Partnerships at Say Yes Cleveland. Prior to Say Yes, Lisa served as the Director of Community Engagement and Wraparound Services at CMSD. Lisa has a Masters degree in Non Profit Management from Case Western Reserve University and has been working in the nonprofit sector for over 20 years. Her passion for social justice has led to work with local nonprofits advocating for children and families, victims of domestic violence and healthcare inequalities.

Vet Nixon has over 20 years of community and youth development experience. Ms. Nixon has worked in both micro-level and macro-level social work practice. She is very passionate about increasing access to opportunities for youth in the Cleveland community. Ms. Nixon is currently the OST Program Specialist at Starting Point. In her role as the OST Program Specialist, she provides grants management to funded OST programs: consultation to youth serving providers, program planning, program implementation, and professional development. Ms. Nixon monitors OST contracts and provides technical assistance to grantees regarding OST grant funding requirements.

Kimberly Rush is a teacher of English and writing at Cleveland State University, where she has taught for several years. Also a soccer player, both of these skills (writing and sports) are near and dear to her heart. She is also the mom of 14-year-old twin boys.

Alesha Trudell is currently in her 22nd year of teaching with Beachwood Schools. Reading and writing are her passions, and she loves teaching them each day! She also enjoys watching her children play soccer, basketball, flag football, and track, as well as spending time with family and traveling. She enjoys running and other forms of exercise. She is excited to be a part of this America SCORES event!

Maria Varonis is a writer and editor based in Akron, Ohio. She has helped launch several startups in Northeast Ohio and currently works in the e-commerce space doing strategic communications and marketing. Maria is happy to support America SCORES as a creative writer and soccer player!



SPECIAL THANKS

THANK YOU TO:

The **guest judges** for sharing their expertise of poetry and their love and support for the youth of Cleveland. They had one of the toughest jobs of the event - scoring all these amazing performances!

The **coaches** of America SCORES Cleveland who tirelessly serve as mentors, role models, and educators. It is with a humble heart that we thank our coaches for all of the effort that each has contributed to another great season with America SCORES Cleveland!

The **parents** for supporting and guiding their children and for remaining flexible as we returned to in-person programming!

The **guest SLAM poets** from Lake Erie Ink who worked with the students to get them ready for their performances. They were a huge help and a major source of inspiration for our poet-athletes!

The **America SCORES Cleveland Board of Directors** for all of their dedication, vision and leadership in helping us reach new heights in providing quality afterschool programming in Cleveland.

The **America SCORES Cleveland Associate Board** for their innovative ideas, can-do spirit, and dedication to the mission of America SCORES Cleveland.

All of our **community partnerships and sponsors** for their dedication to providing opportunities for our youth to grow and succeed. Without their contributions, America SCORES Cleveland programming would not be possible!

To our former **Executive Director, Debi Pence-Meyenberg** for her 15 years of service to our organization. America SCORES Cleveland would not be where it is today without her leadership and vision.



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