Andover Bread Loaf
A Phillips Academy Outreach Program
Writing Around the World
Ripples in a Pond

The first 16 teachers from Lawrence and Boston, Mass., who attended a small gathering on the Andover campus in 1987 were the tiny stones tossed into the vast pond of developing young minds. It was called Andover Bread Loaf (ABL), after the world-famous graduate level writing program at Middlebury College that had recently graduated a young Phillips Academy English teacher named Lou Bernieri. At PA, Lou had an idea. Since then more than 500 teachers have attended ABL workshops and have returned to their classrooms to inspire more than tens of thousands of youngsters in the joyful and invigorating experience of writing. The ripples from those first stones have broadened and deepened as they spread from teacher to teacher, classroom to classroom, student to student. As you will see in this 25th anniversary report, today they are reaching far corners of the world—Karachi, Nairobi, Mumbai—and deepening their reach into the very identities of cities such as Lawrence, Brooklyn, and New Orleans. Congratulations, ABL!

—Peter R. Ramsey
Secretary of the Academy
Phillips Academy

Editorial contributors: Christine Jee, Bread Loaf “Slice”; Richard Gorham, El Puente Academy conference; Mohsin Tejani, Karachi Writing Workshop; Lee Krishnan, Lawrence Student Writers Workshop; Victor Martinez, Community Organization Collaborations; Ummi Modeste, ABLWW for teachers
The Mission

The Andover Bread Loaf mission is to promote literacy and educational revitalization in the most economically disadvantaged school systems and communities around the world, particularly in U.S. urban public schools.

Brief History

ABL’s first literacy education program was launched in 1987 in Lawrence, Mass., as a site of the Bread Loaf Teacher Network (BLTN)—a professional development network established by Middlebury College’s Bread Loaf School of English. That first ABL program was so successful that it has become a compelling model for similar initiatives across the country and around the world.

The Need

Public education faces the most severe crisis in its history. Why?

- Dramatic underfunding
- Threadbare teacher support
- Standardized test-driven curricula

The Approach

Build communities of learners in urban schools and communities to:

- Inspire student learning and activism
- Enrich school curricula with fresh teaching approaches
- Create supplemental educational programs
- Work for systemic change in policies
Making Writing as Exciting to Kids as Sports and Video Games

What are we trying to do? We are practicing “celebratory pedagogy,” an educational approach that builds and sustains learning communities, that celebrates the intelligence and creativity of youth, that stretches them academically and intellectually, that nurtures their individual and cultural gifts, and that engages them in social justice and civic activism. This is a profoundly democratic methodology that offers students and teachers a useful tool for educational and personal transformation.

How does it work? ABL programs are organized and run by teachers, students, and youth workers. Whether they are two- or three-week workshops, one-day conferences, or after-school clubs, these programs can draw more than 200 youth, grades 1–12, who choose to spend their free time creating, writing, and sharing. They leave these programs with the kind of collective joy usually reserved for concerts and sporting events.

This report primarily focuses on ABL’s collaborations with youth organizations and schools in struggling communities around “Expanded Learning Time,” i.e., the time students spend outside of school. Our next report will focus on the innovative classroom projects and curricula of Andover Bread Loaf Writing Workshop (ABLWW) alumni.
Why is this so important? Lawrence is one of the most culturally rich and economically depressed cities in Massachusetts, a multilingual community, with most residents speaking Spanish as a first language. What does it mean that young people who grow up in this context hunger to write? One thing is clear: students’ intrinsic love of writing, storytelling, and self-expression is perhaps the most important educational tool we have.

As an administrator at the Lawrence Boys and Girls Club said after an ABL Teacher Network writing conference in December 2010: “We’ve only seen this kind of excitement at basketball games.”

How can you help? ABL has an annual budget of approximately $200,000, funded each year through the generosity of alumni and parents of Phillips Academy, and friends of the program. ABL does not have an endowment upon which it can rely. We are totally dependent on fundraising. Join us and become a part of the Andover Bread Loaf revolution.

Best regards,

To make your gift, visit: www.andover.edu/ablgiving
**New York City**
Site of all-day conferences such as “Word Up!” at El Puente Academy in Brooklyn in April 2011, involving more than 360 students and teachers from 5 NYC schools. This conference was organized by Ummi Modeste (ABLWW 1997), an ABL director, and El Puente teachers Carlos Rosello (ABLWW 2008) and Anthony Morales (ABLWW 2008), with the support of Principal Hector Caldéron.

**New Orleans, Louisiana**
Working in partnership with United Teachers of New Orleans and Students At the Center (a powerful school-based organization), ABLWW alumni offer professional development workshops and student writing programs during the school year and summer. They are also building partnerships with teachers and students from Port-au-Prince in ABL’s Haiti project.

**Port-au-Prince, Haiti**
A grant from Andover’s Abbot Academy Association allows ABL to bring Haitian teachers to PA and to Middlebury College’s Bread Loaf School of English for summer workshops and graduate work. Goals include building a teacher network in Haiti and creating writing projects between the U.S. and Haiti, and between the Dominican Republic and Haiti.
Lawrence, Massachusetts

Lawrence was ABL’s springboard as the first focus of its program in 1987, and is a major hub of the national Bread Loaf Teacher Network. Among the model initiatives developed by ABLWW Lawrence teachers, youth workers, and students are: classroom curricula; one-, two-, and three-week workshops for students and teachers; partnerships with community organizations and cultural institutions; citywide writing conferences; Writing and Publishing for the Community projects; slam poetry programs and open mics; pen pal and college mentoring efforts; and youth leadership training.

Reach

Since its founding, Andover Bread Loaf, with a full-time staff of one, has worked in nine states and 21 cities in the United States, as well as in nine other countries. In every site with a project, ABL is driven and sustained by the enormous amount of sweat equity provided by teachers, youth workers, students, parents/guardians, and volunteers.

These locations demonstrate the universality and power of ABL’s philosophy and pedagogy—and its ability to connect with teachers and students of all races, nationalities, socioeconomic backgrounds, and academic preparation. The reach of the program expands exponentially: all participants are asked to share their experiences with others in their communities.
International Highlights

El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice Conference

What magic can come from more than 360 Brooklyn high school kids writing and performing together at the all-day “Word Up!” conference at their school? Here’s the answer: when the 3:30 bell rang to end school, more than half the kids stayed glued to their seats for another hour. Last April, ABL’s big experiment of collaborating with the staff of highly regarded El Puente Academy in Brooklyn, N.Y., for a day was a rocking celebration of writing, performance, music, and mutual affirmation. The applause was thunderous, the dancing spirited, the collaborations powerful. ABL presenters were thrilled by the intensity of intellectual engagement, the levels of mutual support, and the depth of concern for key political issues of equality and justice. Rich Gorham (ABLWW 1998) asks: “Why can’t this celebration of kids happen in every school in the world on a regular basis?”

*Why indeed!*
Karachi, Pakistan Workshop

The same ABL writing and teaching methods that inspire Latino elementary school children in Lawrence create the same impact on high school students in Karachi. Last July, 15 Pakistani high school students experienced a 10-day creative writing workshop at the Karachi School of Writing, organized and directed by Mohsin Tejani (ABLWW 1998). Sessions explored poetry, fiction, art and writing, reading, blogging, the writing process, peer conferencing, and open mic performances for parents. Students took field trips to art museums and galleries, and studied the publishing process with a mission to understand the very real future of the publishing industry in Pakistan, despite the common notion that “book reading is not part of the culture.” The Karachi School is working to influence younger generations with support from ABL.

Nairobi and Mumbai Projects

ABL’s work in Nairobi, Kenya, and Mumbai, India, stretches back to 1998, when teachers from the Aga Khan Development Network joined the ABL network. Despite lack of funding, ABL alumni from these sites continue to play active roles in ABL.

In Nairobi in 2009, Patricia Echessa-Kariuki (ABLWW 1999) and David Wandera (ABLWW 1999), ABL alumni who earned master’s degrees at Middlebury’s Bread Loaf, organized and ran a weeklong ABL international conference that drew 12 ABL teachers from the U.S., and 35 teachers and more than 100 students from Nairobi.

In Mumbai, Lee Krishnan, an ABL graduate with a master’s degree from Bread Loaf, is known for the great work she does with her students, including such landmark projects as the Child Labor Photojournalism Project. Her middle school students photographed, interviewed, and published articles on child laborers in Mumbai. Lee returns every summer to codirect the ABL Lawrence Student Writers Workshop at PA.

The Haiti Project

A Bread Loaf initiative in Haiti was launched in 2011 with a three-year Abbot Academy Association (AAA) grant that brings nine Haitian teachers to Andover for ABL’s two-week professional development during the summers. The first three Abbot Academy Scholars, teachers from schools in Port-au-Prince, attended last summer. During the year, they are supported by ABL staff, including visits from ABL Haitian Project Director Stephanie Curci, an instructor in English at Phillips Academy. The AAA grant culminates in a weeklong conference in Port-au-Prince in summer 2013 that will reach hundreds of teachers and students.
Recent Events

Throughout the school year, Lawrence’s chapter of Bread Loaf Teacher Network meets twice a month for professional development focused on teaching writing and reading, developing alternative forms of assessment, and organizing school-wide and citywide student and teacher conferences.

BLTN is a network of teachers—many of whom were educated at Bread Loaf and supported during the academic year by Bread Loaf staff and faculty. Its primary goal is to encourage year-round collaboration among teachers, faculty, and their students on innovative online projects designed to promote culturally sensitive and transformative literacy.

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The ABL/Bread Loaf Teacher Network
Teacher-to-Teacher Professional Development

The Bread Loaf Teacher Network, of which ABL is a major hub, is a research-based network that relies on teacher-to-teacher professional development as well as work with university professors. ABL/BLTN provides teachers with year-round support, ongoing professional development, and an organization with the capacity to run conferences and workshops. It is a voluntary, self-perpetuating, and dynamic group of people.

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Poet

Unaccustomed
to the power of her voice
she whispered
“I want to be a poet.”
Her words churning lava in the pit of her stomach,
wanting to erupt into molten meaning.

You are a poet.
You are a poet if thoughts dance in your mind wanting to salsa
across your tongue.
You are a poet every time
You double-dutch with the lines of your loose leaf.

Yes, poet,
Who in your dream dreams of a better world
Do not let the coldness of the page frighten you
nor the glow of the screen
turn your muse into a stone.
Part your lips,
the curtains of your stage
and let your muse speak.

—Grace Beniquez (ABLWW 2011), teacher, Brooklyn, N.Y.
The experience...has been extraordinarily inspiring and emotional; it’s had all the richness, diversity, and discovery of life itself.

—Chantal Kenol Desmornes (ABLWW 2011), teacher, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Andover Bread Loaf Writing Workshop (ABLWW) for Teachers

The ABLWW is an intensive two-week graduate-level professional development program that uses the Lawrence Student Writers Workshop (LSWW) as its pedagogical laboratory. This workshop is the engine that drives ABL and its projects in various cities. For 25 years, more than 500 teachers have attended ABL’s summer workshop and often have cited their ABL experience as the force that propels them to return to their schools not only to change what they do in their classrooms, but to work with other teachers and students in developing programs that will affect a wider and wider circle of students and teachers.

Recent Events

ABL Writing Workshop for Teachers on the Phillips Academy Campus

July 1–16, 2011

The 2011 Andover Bread Loaf Writing Workshop for teachers included educators from Lawrence and Springfield, Mass.; Brooklyn, N.Y.; Washington, D.C.; New Orleans; and Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Sixteen teachers and four youth organization staff participated in the intensive 14-day graduate level professional development session—which included workshops given by writers, actors, artists, teachers, professors, and community activists. In addition to writing every day, the group worked with students in LSWW, read and discussed educational theory and practice, performed a small theatre piece, and completed a literature seminar. They also paid a two-day visit to the Bread Loaf School of English in Vermont, the home of the Bread Loaf Teacher Network, where they met a group of ABL alumni studying there, joined classes and presentations, and learned about the national and international reach of BLTN. Participants who successfully complete the ABLWW program receive three graduate credits from Middlebury College’s Bread Loaf School of English.

Gaby
I feel I didn’t know my Mom until she came to live with me.
I saw her slowly slimming down to bones and skin.
She hardly ever goes out but always carries her bag around.
"A treasure is in there," she says laughing.
If I insist she puts it down. She gets upset and says she is entitled at her age to do whatever she wants.
Yet, sometimes she says otherwise when frightened by her own shadow.
She started moaning in her sleep after my father died.
I heard it that very first night.
I didn’t know it never stopped.
At times, she stares at her reflection in the mirror,
At the dark circles under her eyes,
At the dress hanging loose around her figure.
She sighs, naming herself: “Adye!* Gaby, what has become of you?”
—Chantal Kenol Desmornes (ABLWW 2011), teacher, Haiti

*My God or Good Lord in Haitian Creole
This workshop has provided me with a proverbial ‘shot in the arm’ of powerful pedagogical practices that will sustain me as I travel back to Cochise College and the frustrations and joys that await….This has been an incredibly powerful two weeks. My head is full, but my heart is fuller.

— Ceci Lewis (ABLWW 2011), teacher, Sierra Vista, Ariz.
ABL Student Programs
Middle School and High School Students

ABL’s flagship student program is LSWW, a summer writing and arts program offered at Phillips Academy, where teachers and students can practice the ABL approach to learning with an intensity not afforded in their school year regimen. The LSWW, directed by teachers from Lawrence and other ABL staff, offers approximately 100 Lawrence public school students of all academic abilities in grades 5–12 the opportunity to develop writing and artistic skills that will help them succeed in school and ultimately in the workplace. At the heart of these programs is ABL’s emphasis on the joy of learning and its focus on young people’s natural gifts as writers and artists.

Recent Events
Lawrence Student Writers Workshop (LSWW) on the Phillips Academy Campus
June 28–July 19, 2011

For three weeks last summer, 100 middle and high school students joined 20 high school and college writing teachers for an intensive writing and arts program that included theatre, singing, dancing, photography, art, sculpture, film and multimedia productions.

The LSWW places a special focus on social justice, civic activism, and self-expression. The workshop culminates in a public exhibition that last year drew more than 200 parents, guardians, teachers, and community members.

We
We are the children of the world
We all have sun shiny faces
We all come from different places
We all have different sizes
We all talk with different voices
And our languages come from different places
We all learn different things. And sorrow, pain, joy, or love fills our faces
We all sing different songs and play games
We all have hearts that beat each day
We all can be hurt in some way
We all can feel tall or small
We can all cry or scream
We all can be taught. But some things should not be
We all are loved in some way
We all can be afraid
We all have things or have not
We are the children of the world. And Jesus Christ forgets us not.

—Veronica, 7th grader,
Lawrence, Mass.
I believe this experience has been more than professional development, it has been life development....I have a new flame in my belly...because of ABL.

—Julissa Jerez (ABLWW 2011), Director of Youth Programs, Lawrence CommunityWorks/Movement City Lawrence, Mass.
ABL Student Programs

Elementary School Students

The “Slice of Bread Loaf”

For the first time ever, ABL welcomed the youngest group to the “Slice of Bread Loaf” program, modeled after ABL’s Lawrence Student Writers Workshop (LSWW) for middle and high school students. The program ran during the first two weeks of July 2011 at the Lawrence Boys and Girls Club and included students in grades 1–5.

Workshops leaders—comprised of favorite guest writers from the local Bread Loaf community—focused on the theme of storytelling. Teen Writing Leaders from the Boys and Girls Club worked with the children and quickly became role models who both fostered and witnessed transformation in our participants.

At the program’s conclusion, the little “slices” joined the rest of the 150 older LSWW participants—students and teachers—in the Blackbox Theatre on the Andover campus for a spoken word workshop. ABL Director Lou Bernieri, aware that history was being made, addressed the young writers: “This is an incredible gathering! We have people from the ages of seven to 64 writing together in this room today!” A new generation of writers was on its way.
10 Things I Would Say To…

1. Thank you for letting me be myself in a world that judges.

Two. With creative juices flowing, we realize not everyone thinks the same.

Tres. I am not who I used to be. A shy-spoken girl has become a teen who won’t shut her opinions up.

#4. You have introduced me, no, us, to new people. Diversity is one of your main roots.

Cinco. I’m attached to you. I’m a part of you as you’re a part of me. What happens in such little time can shock us.

Six. I’m hooked on writing because of you. And because of us, you still exist.

Siete. I admire what you have done. For all of us.

8. I’ve found opportunities. You’ve helped me gain confidence. I want to hug you for accomplishing that. Isn’t that one of your goals for every year?

Nueve. For the past five years, I’ve secretly admired you. For making voices heard. For making them matter. For letting strangers know each other in such little time. For letting us get to know each other. (Well, maybe not secretly admired.)

# One-Zero. THANK YOU, BREAD LOAF

For letting us do what we kids do.

—Jackie, 8th grader, Lawrence, Mass.

Where I Am From

I am from a place
Where it’s either liberty or death
Independence or death
The world’s first black-led republic
Broken by despair and gained hope
History made and still in the making.

I am from a place
Where decades of poverty,
Environmental degradation,
Violence, instability, and dictatorship
Have left it as the poorest nation in the Americas.

But we surprised the world by taking our freedom.

I am from a place
Where my nationality is a disgrace
Respect never granted, opinions never taken
Treated as dumb, boat people, an inferior
Culture, religion, and mentality
Single me as a nobody.

I am from a place
Where we declared liberty
Riding the train of freedom since 1804.
Whether you think it is the pearl of the Caribbean
Or the poorest in the West Hemisphere
Haiti is where I am from.

—Esther Saintus (ABLWW 2011), teacher, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

The Wish of Space

I had a dream to go to space. I had the dream ever since. I wanted it to happen so I made some moon and planets and dressed up in space clothes. I felt I really was in space. I saw all the planets around me. There is Jupiter. I saw my special wish come true. Thank you my special wish-dream I wanted.

—Jaineida, 2nd grader, Lawrence, Mass.
Collaborations with Community Organizations

ABL is actively working to expand its collaborations with community organizations, leading conferences year-round for students outside their regular school regimen. Ranging from one day to three weeks in length, conferences are modeled on the student workshop/laboratories developed and refined each summer. These events attract as many as 300 students at a time and convey the joy of writing and learning. ABL conducts writing conferences at community organizations in Lawrence, Brooklyn, and New Orleans and provides college mentoring, leadership training, and academic tutoring as well. This new initiative eventually will reach thousands of students.

Collaborators
Addison Gallery of American Art, Phillips Academy
Community Service Office, Phillips Academy
Essex Art Center, Lawrence
Lawrence Boys and Girls Club
Lawrence CommunityWorks/Movement City
Lawrence Teachers’ Union
Office of Community and Multicultural Development, Phillips Academy
Youth Development Organization (YDO)

Recent Events

The Lawrence Boys and Girls Club and Lawrence CommunityWorks/Movement City hosted three citywide conferences last year for grades 1–12. In addition to the performances of visiting poets and performance artists, students attended workshops offered by teachers.

Sample workshops

Native Tongues—This workshop affirms the voices and native languages of participants by encouraging writing that celebrates their home languages, examines the importance of maintaining proficiency in native tongues, and shares experiences within the group and through social media.

Generation Facebook: Are You In It or Of It?—This workshop explores through song, poetry, visuals, and performance art the role Facebook and Twitter play in our lives: social, academic, and literary. Do you express yourself more, less, or differently when in public? Are you the person in your profile or does Facebook free you to be someone else?

Cultural Memories in Writing—This workshop explores how memories contribute to our writing, the notion of shared memories, and how using the same memory can create very different stories.
Since beginning my career as an educator in Lawrence, I looked to Bread Loaf to add depth and breadth to my skills. This past summer, the Andover Bread Loaf Writing Workshop inspired and encouraged me to self-actualize as a writer and to light that same fire within young minds.

— Eliana Martinez (ABLWW 2011), teacher, Lawrence, Mass.
Graduate School Fellowship Program at the Bread Loaf School of English

Andover Bread Loaf has sent more than 50 of its teacher workshop graduates to the Bread Loaf School of English at Middlebury College in Vermont to pursue master’s degrees in English. The majority of these teachers were awarded fellowships by Bread Loaf to fund their studies. When the teachers return from their summer study, they bring back what they learned, enhancing the network’s capability to affect change.

Recent Events

Writing Workshop for Teachers

In summer 2011, seven ABL teachers spent five weeks at Middlebury College’s Bread Loaf School of English in Vermont working toward master’s degrees in English. It was just one of the five summers they spend at the college’s bucolic campus—reading, writing, discussing, critiquing—to earn their degrees. More than 50 ABL graduates have earned master’s degrees in English and American literature at Bread Loaf—all but a few on full fellowships—and the great majority are teachers of color who work in urban public schools. Many of these teachers have won local, regional, and even some national awards. For Lawrence teachers, studying at Bread Loaf where Robert Frost lived and taught for more than 40 years has special meaning: Frost was a Lawrence High graduate.

I Am From...

I am from leaning chain link fences & lead paint,
Black-hand superstitions & candle saints,
“Cono muchacha” and “hay Dios Mio,”
“En este pais si hace frio”
I am from broken bottles and pincho sticks,
Loud Latino Festivals with carnival tricks,
Merengue, Bachata, and Reggaeton,
“Un tripleta con salchichon.”
I wanted to leave, but I came back,
I finally got my life on track,
Wherever I may choose to roam,
In the end, the warmest place is home.

—Patricia Nuñez (ABLWW 2010), teacher, Lawrence, Mass.
As I work on my master’s degree at the Middlebury Bread Loaf School of English, I see how important language is and how much my students really need someone to teach them how to navigate our global society through language. Through Bread Loaf I have met teachers from all types of schools, neighborhoods, and backgrounds. My experience is testimony to how important the network is that keeps us together, in communication, and working as a team.

—Lorena German (ABLWW 2010), teacher, Lawrence, Mass.
ABL Advisory Board

The Andover Bread Loaf Advisory Board’s role is to provide strategic guidance to assure the program is moving in a path consistent with its mission to promote literacy and educational revitalization in the most economically disadvantaged school systems and communities around the world, particularly in U.S. urban public schools. The Advisory Board also assures adequate staffing and financial resources, and supports the director in his role.

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We gratefully acknowledge the following foundations, organizations, and individuals for their support of the mission and work of Andover Bread Loaf. Each year we rely on their generous gifts of nearly $200,000 that allow Andover Bread Loaf to continue to develop, offer, and expand its programs.

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The Experience of My Grandpa’s Death

When I was watching NCIS, I went back to all those memories and said to myself, I miss him. NCIS was our favorite show. It locked me in a dark closet and gave me all the memories back. I knew that in my world he is alive but in a different world he is dead.

But that’s not really the point. The point is that it flashes me back every time I watch the show. I say my prayers for him, may God bless. Once the memories are in my head, they do not come out until alone time.

I feel bad for my Grandpa because he has been through a lot of pain. He went through cancer surgery, ear infection, broken finger and other pain. My Grandpa was a good man he was never in the street he never fought someone. He never got into a problem.

The next day I didn’t remember anything except my Grandpa was dead.

When my Grandpa died I felt like a little tiny baby ant being squashed by the world’s biggest Giant. I felt lonely watching NCIS alone. I felt sorry for my Grandpa and I felt devastated. I thought I was broken into 1,000,000 pieces I thought I was a nobody.

I suffer without him. It’s like being trapped in a dark spooky cave. I will never forget the time my grandpa told me when he dies he is still gonna be with me.

Just feel my heart and he’s inside.

—Anthony, 3rd grader, Lawrence, Mass.