



Who We Are

Austin Bat Cave (ABC) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that provides children and teenagers (ages 6-18) with opportunities to develop their creative and expository writing skills. We connect a diverse population of young learners with a dynamic community of adult volunteers in Austin. All of our programs are free.

What We Do

This summer marked the start of our second year of programming. It also marked an exciting milestone: on June 1, we moved into **our first physical space**.

In our new home in Clarksville, we offered a weeklong summer program for two age groups in mid-July. We served 5th-7th graders in the mornings and 8th-10th graders in the afternoons. Overall, we served thirty-two students.

This fall, we are debuting an **after-school tutoring and mentoring program**, as well as enhancing our calendar of workshops.

2008

Summer Program Report & Fall Prospectus



Summer Program Overview

Our program was built around a collaboration with **Texas Monthly**. On the first day, a senior editor visited the group, announcing that he had lost all his files and would need their help creating the next month's magazine. Our students went straight to work, with interviews, service journalism projects, and editorials. One popular activity asked students to investigate a giant squid discovered at Barton Springs.

Each day of the program also featured local **guest artists**—poets, playwrights, screenwriters, and fiction writers. Guests led one- or two-hour exercises in their area of expertise.

An **anthology** of student work is forthcoming from Dalton Publishing.

Positive Feedback

Response from students, parents, and volunteers was highly encouraging. Some highlights from the surveys:

100% of parents surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that their child seemed more enthusiastic about writing as a result of the program.

90% of students agreed or strongly agreed that guest artists and volunteers were effective and creative.

100% of volunteers surveyed said that they felt a part of a creative team that met the needs of students.

We expect many of the students we served to form the basis of a larger community of learners this fall. Over half expressed interest in participating in our tutoring center. **86.7%** said they would recommend ABC programs to a friend.



Our **field trip** to the Blanton Museum and the offices of Texas Monthly was often cited as a favorite event of the week.



Testimonials

[ABC is] fun and they make me more confident in sharing my work, even if I don't like it. —a student

I was pleased to see that [my son] was speaking randomly about objects. It would seem he learned how to brainstorm and begin gathering/vocalizing his thoughts. He seldom speaks what comes to his mind. I imagine he gained confidence in his speaking and articulation abilities.—a parent

The volunteers had as much fun as the kids, I'm sure! [I liked the] organized but still flexible activities.—a volunteer

We did receive a few **constructive suggestions**—from younger students who preferred not to spend so much time listening to the work of their peers, from parents who want longer programs and programs in August, and from volunteers with great ideas for integrating more active exercises into our lesson plans. We're working on it!

New This Fall

Starting a new school year in our own space allows us to begin some exciting new programs and dramatically expand others.

- **After-school tutoring**

We believe, as evidenced by **826Valencia**, our model, that great leaps in learning can happen with one-on-one attention. We are now kicking off the service that we see as the long-term cornerstone of ABC—after-school one-on-one tutoring with homework and fun creative projects.

This fall, we are offering **free tutoring to all** from 3:30-5:30 PM, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Simultaneously, we are building our after-school community around a smaller **mentoring** program of **economically disadvantaged** or at-risk students, who will meet with the same tutor at the same time each week for the entire fall. In the spring, we will increase our after-school services to four days/week and expand our mentoring program.



- **Expanded calendar of workshops**

This fall, we'll offer the same brand of creative and engaging workshops that we've become known for—we'll just offer more of them.

"Filmmaking/Screenwriting," in partnership with **Austin Film Festival**, will be one highlight. Each student will get an AFF pass and shoot and edit on AFF equipment. **"Hip Hop Poetry"** is also in the works, featuring the music production technology of the CWRL computer lab at UT. We'll also offer workshops on the **college essay**, and, looking ahead, **TAKS** and the **SAT**.

- **Off-site programs**

As underserved populations are pushed further from the city center, ABC is going off-site to reach the students who need us most. We're starting a pilot program with low-income housing non-profit **Foundation Communities**, contributing workshops to a pre-existing teen program.

How You Can Help

Austin Bat Cave is a 501(c)3 non-profit and would not exist without the support of generous individuals. If you can't volunteer, please consider making a donation.

Financial Information

We are small organization but growing fast. For June 2008- June 2009, our budget is the following:

<i>Admin & Salary</i>	\$33,880
<i>Workshops & Programs</i>	\$12,340
<i>Writing Space</i>	\$10,160
<i>Other</i>	\$5,345
Total	\$61,725

Service Data

This year, we expect to serve about **250 students**, working one on one, and in many cases beginning relationships that we will see through until college. At least half will qualify for free/reduced school lunch.

We are able to keep overhead low by utilizing a corps of energetic volunteers, **75 strong** and growing.



Our Partners

Grants from **City of Austin** and **Bread for the Journey** made our site renovation and after-school program possible. **Decoder Ring Design Concern** has built us a great visual brand, and is currently working on a beautiful new website. **Dalton Publishing** continues to publish our student anthologies free of charge. **Austin Film Society** has now helped coordinate two successful fundraisers. **The Blanton** and **Texas Monthly** look forward to helping with future programs. **826National** remains a strong friend and a source of occasional logistical guidance.

Future Goals

New funding will help ABC realize the following goals:

- Produce more and higher-quality **student publications**.
- Open an **826-style store** and writing center in a commercial zone within walking distance of schools.
- Invest in **computers and print capacity** for student use.
- Provide **transportation** for students, addressing a limitation of site-based programming in Austin.