6 WORD MEMOIR

A COMMUNITY WRITING PROJECT

BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
COMMUNITY WRITING HUB
Inspired by Larry Smith's innovative Six-Word Memoir initiative, we asked participants to consider the following: "Tell us the story of your life, share a defining moment, or sum it up in a few major themes. Make us laugh, bare your soul, or anything in between. However you approach this prompt, the only rule is that you must keep it to 6 words or less!"

In the space of a few months, we collected over 150 notecard submissions, each one offering something profound about the lives of individuals in Northwest Ohio. Written with incredible bravery, raw honesty, hope, pain, determination, and delightful senses of humor, this collection of mini-memoirs lends to our ever growing understanding of the human experience with a few key reminders: human beings are resilient in the face of suffering, joyous at the prospect of changing, and hungry to share their stories.

Now as we prepare to launch the 2nd community writing project we are publishing our first, both in print at participating locations and on the BGSU English Department Community Writing Hub website. It is our hope that this project can inspire those who read it to tell their own stories and to never forget all we can learn from one another.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
This project would not have been possible without the collaborative efforts of the BGSU English Department and community partners within Bowling Green who provided the space and time to facilitate the collection of these beautiful mini-memoirs.

We would like to offer a special thank you to Grounds for Thought for continuing to serve the Bowling Green community in countless ways, providing space for collaboration, connection, and of course, coffee.

Additionally, we would like to thank the Wood County District Public Library for their tireless efforts to enhance the literary community in Bowling Green, and encourage literacy and connection through reading and writing for people of all ages.

Finally, we offer our deepest gratitude to the many individuals - students, seniors, children, community members, and Bowling Green visitors for participating in this project. It could not have been done without you and your willingness to trust us with your stories. We truly believe that words have the power to change worlds, and we hope that yours can bring light, life, and understanding to all those who read them.

“We die. That may be the meaning of life. But we do language. That may be the measure of our lives.”
- Toni Morrison

CONSIDERATIONS:
All submissions to the community writing project are represented exactly as submitted to us, with the exception of cards that contained direct contact information for participants. We whited out this information out of respect for the privacy and safety of each individual.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?
Please contact the BGSU English Department at 419-372-7543, OR email project organizer Lena Ziegler at lziegle@bgsu.edu. Be sure to follow the BGSU English Department on Facebook and Twitter @bgsuenglish.
6-WORD MEMOIRS

Donor, not Daddy?
Deception since conception.

- Brenna, 23, Hendersonville, TN

Learning growing,
Seeing, feeling, doing
Living.
Springfield, OH -> BGSU!

My life is full of....
~ Adventure ~

I always end up by myself

Mom and teacher.
No days off.

I am gay and very stupid

Dreams won't work unless you do.

Jaymen, 23, Urbana
Teach me how to be OK.

Have you heard the Good News?!
I fell asleep 20 years ago.

Bottom

My mom equals Satan 😊

Sometimes you just gotta say fugget

Woke up, found out I'm gay

I've never met my Bio father.

He was a druggie
"I like art."
"I like (to) swim."
- WAVE
  to
  H2O VILLE

I came, I saw,
I conquered. 😊 J

under & fly
smacks the
window

#5 is alive!!
Pinky 73
Sylvania
It's very very very very complicated

- [Signature]

"I moved here from Texas."

"Why?"

- Jason Filan

found best job late in life

moved, moved, moved, friends, church, greatness

five states and now back home.

Melissa, 67
Bowling Green
Best life lesson: Take more chances.

Veronica
43
Twinsburg, Ohio

Live Each Day
Before It's Gone.

Dawn Green, Bowling Green

human lovin' hippie
megan, Indiana, 22

A Grateful Graduate
Full OF Wonder

Olivia 18 y/o Blacklick, Oh

Always show love to yourself first.

(michael 22 yrs. 6'2"

Danger, Helped, Loved, Better, In Love!

-Sky Castle

Pretty much down for whatever!
Series of Unfortunate Events Before 20

heart broken and eight years old

Psychological stress erased by corydoras purity

PROCRASTINATED THERE!

Beaten over worked self made Happy!!

I grew up and graduated and….
There was sadness...

Now there is Lena.

She is an amazing star—mine.

Carmen, 38, Toledo, Ohio
AGGRESSIVELY FRIENDLY,
MOM TO ALL, BAND!

HANNAH
24
MARISSVILLE, OH

Despite constant tripping and stuttering;
JOY.

blessed
loving
supportive

Do you wanna go to Grounds?

female
twenty
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Yellow Light means Drive Like Hell
Life is good, fun, creative.
Stressful
follow me on ig @

If only she stayed with me.

Memes help the pain go away.

Nutrition fuels my life choices always.

Tommy, family girl, faithful, willingly adventurous.
My life has twisted upside clown

- Paige, 18, Columbus, OH

Is it time for bed yet?
- Megan, B.G.

I couldn't think of anything funny

My cat got hit by a car.

Nevah 11 & Swanton
Discovering method in the madness, together.

Sisterhood, loss, discovery, meaning, labyrinth, journey

God is the reason I live!

Happy, fun, enjoyable, laughter

I have lived!

Sagastomez
Bowling Green, OH
Fanconi Anemia Sucks
Hope Loves All

He tried the best he could.

Dead to Myself
Alive through Christ
in Abel Cunningham Talent, OH - Gabe

Surrounded by the wrong people

Born
Drown in Debt
DIE

Oldest daughter, likes math now retired.
Daughter dead 33. Hardest thing ever.

Mom died when I was 12.
Maddie Burnison 15
Monroe Michigan

Depressed young girl with cutting scars.

L JaJaysmine, 21, BG

MY LOVE DIED
LIFE IS CRUEL

Riding a bike up the stairs

abused
broken
isolated
held
God's healing

Becky, 58, Perrysburg
Amanda

Birth, Free, Success, Grit, Continuous, Love, violin, moving, family, teaching, love, music

Love, Marriage, Children, Divorce, Career, Jesus

David Forty

Gavin, 22, Bowling Green
Finding joy within growing pains

Knowledge, Siblings, School, God, Art, Life, Trains, family, God, Games, friends.

1. Tragedy
2. Growth
3. Creation
4. Nurture
5. Love

I don’t need six words.

- Brooke

FRIEND/NURSE/WIFE/MOM/RETIRED/GRANDMA!
I get bullied I'm happy!

I woke...

and brewed the tea

SHMILY

See How Much I Love You

Comforter to all those in need

Jack, 26, Napoleon, Ohio

One of a kind. Creative mind.

Joe, 20, from Norton, OH
“Each day, a cloud of uncertainty.”
-Kimberly Boyer

- Warrior
- Mother
- Camaraderie
- Friend
- Gardener
- Musician

Bad Poetry
Dead Friend
Music Parents

Principled Catholic kid
turned principled queer.
- 22 years old
- Merton Co 84

Destined for a sorry, lonesome death

CAT Died. Grew up. Save Cheetahs

Allison 25 Cincinnati
Creative friendly dramatic depressing strange fun filled

I love my mommy and daddy.

Lucky

Age: 3.5 Bowling Green

A smile; my favorite fashion statement.

Andrew, 18, Perryville

Chickens

Love

Alaska

God

Coffee

Janelle, Fowlerville 83

Journeying as a magical fashionista artist

Melanie, Age 166, BG
Not living by the rules

Dog Bite, art
business
charity word,
Violet Grossman
Bowling Green

James U6

Daisy, my best, hoping it's enough.

I haven't done enough just yet.

-Jessica

Lazy Larry
never worked
until retiring
Larry (81) 75-04.
Silly Assholes dictate every day decisions.

Oklahoma Army Brat
Returned to BG
Marissa Bowling Green 32

My addiction does NOT define me.

Look what you did to me.

Days, Emmormental Sciences, awareness, and fun.

-thic MILLER
Under & fly
smackers the
window

Tragic death
creates new life.

Hmm... why
oh god:
who
what
Snatched from hell
Hurled toward heaven.

He's an abuser;
I'm a survivor.

Wake, look around
Ask what da' hell
Gary, Broadview Heights, OH

Look at what I have become
Wild ventures with vigorous wonderful values

What I’ve survived doesn’t define me 😊

Writing to change the world.

Breathe justice for our wounded Earth

Girl hides Boy Lesbian Then Trans
I ate too many pizza rolls.

Had lots of hair, now bald.

Frank M. Ft. Wayne

Why the fa[t]h... my 88 ward

Healing has made me stronger

Bar, Farm, Educated, Love, Reproduce, Farm.
I did the best I could.

Just trying to survive with love.

Will I ever make my Masterpiece?

Start a fight,
Prove you're alive.