Dear Mary Smith,

On behalf of the 826michigan Writing Center staff, I would like to thank you for your consideration and attention to our proposal submitted August 14, 2012. We respectfully request your consideration of a proposed grant of the amount of $60,570.00 for the development of a new, progressive literacy workshop for Ann Arbor area students.

In a world in which communication occurs increasingly in digital environments – through email, presentations, video, and websites, to name a few – it is important that youth are becoming familiar with these digital environments. Elementary through high-school aged students, without access to digital tools outside of the classroom, are at an extreme disadvantage in competing in today’s diverse and complex workplace. Digital skills are essential for students to succeed and to be innovators in creative fields in the future.

826michigan impacts Ann Arbor students by helping them develop literacies that will make them successful in both academics and in their future careers. Our creative approaches to teaching writing have helped students become better writers – empowered youth writers who use their skills to make our world a better place.

826michigan has been successful in helping Ann Arbor students to think creatively about writing, but our workshop space is not equipped to help students learn about writing in digital environments. Without access to computers and the Internet at an early age, students cannot begin to experiment and think creatively about how writing happens online, in a variety of mediums and contexts. It is essential that we provide this space to students without computer access after school, in order to allow them to experiment with this type of writing. This exposure will help them flourish and succeed, not only in school, but also in their future professional work. These future innovators will have a large impact in shaping our world.

A grant award of $60,570 would enable us to develop a digitalmedia computer lab at the 826michigan center. This space will be equipped with computers and new, creative software. It will host workshops and creative events, and will help students learn to navigate digital tools from an early age. This exposure will help students to become successful communicators, not only through writing, but also through new digital media.

If you have other questions, or would like to contact us for any other reason, please feel free to call at (517) 231-1282 or email at hawkinsb@826michigan.org. Thank you again for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Brooke Hawkins
826michigan Digital Literacy Lab
A Proposal to The Kellogg Foundation

Submitted by:

826michigan Writing Center
115 East Liberty Street
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104
(517) 231-1282
826michigan is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting students ages 6-18 with their creative and expository writing skills, and to helping teachers inspire their students to write. We are passionate about helping to best impact Ann Arbor area students, in order to help them succeed and achieve their full potential.

There is a need for digital writing workshops for young students in the Ann Arbor area. Many of these students are not getting experience using digital tools outside of the classroom - like computers, new software, or even the Internet. 826michigan has submitted this grant proposal to fund the establishment of a new digitalmedia computer lab at our writing center in Ann Arbor. By establishing this space, we feel we can best meet the needs of Ann Arbor students and provide them with the resources they need to succeed in an increasingly digital world.

This proposed grant for $60,570.00 would cover all expenses to furnish, operate, and maintain a computer lab equipped with 10 computer stations, a printer, scanner, and a staff of full time employees and volunteers. This space will be open to all students within the Ann Arbor area - especially those that do not have access to computers or the Internet outside of school.

A staff of both full time employees and volunteers will keep the lab running throughout the year. They will schedule and plan digitalmedia lab workshops, help recruit students to participate in the lab, work with students one-on-one, and will help teach students about the many ways they can utilize digital tools to communicate creatively and effectively.

All of our current programs are challenging and enjoyable, and ultimately strengthen each student's power to express ideas effectively, creatively, confidently, and in his or her individual voice. And best of all, all 826michigan events and activities are offered completely free of charge. This proposed grant would allow us to continue to provide workshops free of charge, and would allow us to expand our ability to best provide resources to students of Ann Arbor. Our resources are essential to the many students who frequent our current workshops, those who are learning to become better writers, better students, and more confident kids.

We are confident that this space will greatly impact Ann Arbor area students and we are excited about the possibility of partnering with you in developing this innovative space. We appreciate your consideration of this proposal and look forward to the positive outcomes this space will have on our local students.
826 helps young people learn that language can be play, that work can be joyful, and that they themselves can be the inventors and caretakers of their world. I have seen it with my own eyes. 826 is a good thing in a world of bad things, and a good place in a world of hard ones. —Michael Chabon, Pulitzer Prize-winning author and 826 volunteer

Digital literacy workshops are not held regularly for elementary through high school aged students in Ann Arbor. More specifically, the 826michigan chapter in Ann Arbor is unable to meet the needs of its students, as we lack the resources to establish a computer lab. As a space that aims to support students aged 6 to 18 with their creative and expository writing skills, and to help teachers inspire their students to write, we cannot adequately foster creative and expository writing skills in an increasingly digital world without exposing children to digital tools and ways to write in digital spaces.

Annually, the 826 national tutoring centers host 1,537 workshops that serve 29,060 students. These students, though receiving excellent tutoring that helps 95% of helped students perform better in their courses, are missing out on another important type of literacy teaching – digital literacy.

As our world becomes one that is increasingly digitally oriented, it is important to realize how this is impacting our children - particularly the ones we help serve at our writing center. There is a digital divide that exists in households across our nation. Though many households have computers, there is a troublesome divide between those that have Internet access and those that do not. In 2010, just 45 percent of households that earned less than $30,000 a year had broadband in their homes. This lack of interaction at home with the new and innovative types of writing that happen online is leaving a large portion of elementary-aged students at a stark disadvantage in competing in the modern workplace. This is of specific concern to 826michigan, because over 90% of students we serve are from low-income families. A student from the Boston chapter of the 826 national program states:

As a student in my school, sustaining hope can become an arduous labor. We are faced with many obstacles that try to impede us from getting through the day. You could say that we are warriors, because indeed we are. We are all avid warriors, who struggle their way to the top. Our goals are to fight illiteracy [and] discrimination. We'll fight them with scholarship and literacy. We will fight with writing —Valeria Cabrera, student, the English High School and 826 Boston

Her words highlight the issues that face many students in public schools today. In order to fight illiteracy and discrimination in their future endeavors, it is important that all students have access to equal resources, both in and outside of school. Specifically, the lack of access to digital resources will serve as an obstacle for many in their future endeavors – from being successful students to competitive workers in the future.
The 826michigan writing center would like to secure funding to establish a digitalmedia computer lab to best address this need. This lab would include 10 new computers, software, a printer, and a scanner. These tools are helpful for developing technical literacy for students, and important in helping youth to realize their creative and writing potential across a wider variety of mediums.

It is important that 826michigan, as a source for literacy training and student development in the Ann Arbor area, can offer students access to digital tools to best help the many students it serves annually. Without these tools, these students will fail to perform as well as students with access to resources. This lack of access will prevent the 826 national tutoring organizations from achieving its goals in positively teaching and eliminating the limiting factors that weigh on children without proper educational resources.

**Goals and Objectives**

**Goal:** Provide students who do not have access to digital tools outside of school with an environment that will enhance their ability navigate digital environments, succeed alongside with students who do have access to digital tools, and ultimately make them competitive workers in the future job market.

**Objective 1:** At least 25 workshops will be held during the first year of the computer lab’s operation.
   a. At least one full time faculty teacher and one part time teaching assistant will be hired for the lab 3 months before the lab opens
   b. These staff members will plan the workshops – develop a curriculum for the year including the topics of each of the workshops.

**Objective 2:** At least 10 volunteers will be recruited to assist and run digital lab workshops every year
   a. 826michigan’s staff will utilize their web presence to recruit volunteers
   b. 826michigan staff will connect with local schools and universities to recruit volunteers

**Objective 3:** At least 50 Ann Arbor area students will be recruited to participate in at least one digital workshop in the new computer lab.
   a. 826michigan staff will make connections with local public schools, tutoring centers, and private schools to recruit students that are in need of these workshops.
   b. 826michigan staff will manage marketing and communications of this new digital lab – will promote the space by utilizing social media, interaction with other organizations, etc.

**Objective 4:** After 1 year, at least 70 percent of students will report improved understanding of computers and other digital tools found in the lab, and will report higher achievement in school
Objective 5: At least 20% of students who participate in one workshop will participate in another

a. 826michigan staff will log students that utilize the digital lab
b. 826michigan staff will collect data about returning students

Methods

To achieve these goals and objectives, the 826michigan tutoring center will require two months of time to purchase materials, hire staff, and recruit volunteers to begin hosting workshops in the new workspace. This expediency and timeline will help our first objective be easily accomplished. Specifically, after this first month, the new staff will spend the next month planning 25 (at least) workshops for the coming year. This will include scheduling workshops, noting materials needed, and identifying student development needs in the Ann Arbor area.

After these initial three months, our first objective will be realized, with 25 workshops planned and the lab up and running within this specific time frame.

After these steps are complete, new staff along with 826michigan’s current marketing staff will work together to recruit students from the greater Ann Arbor area to participate in the new workshops. Staff will utilize current connections with learning institutions and will continue to reach out to local public schools, tutoring centers, and private schools to notify teachers of this innovative space for students with the most apparent need for help. This will ensure that the tutoring center is reaching the largest variety and amount of students possible in the area, and that they are helping the students that need this type of digital learning most. At least 50 students will be recruited to participate in the new digital workspace.

Progress on these workshops will be monitored throughout the year. Students will fill out questionnaires after each workshop and data will be collected and compiled by 826michigan staff in order to determine the effectiveness of the workshops in helping these students. Questions will ask students to report their own feelings about the quality of the workshops, as well as how helpful they felt the workshops were. By the end of the year, the staff will report their findings. In this way, we aim to meet our 70% goal of students with improved understanding of computers and other digital tools found in the lab. Annually 91% of parents report that their children are performing better in school as a result of attending 826 writing center workshops, a figure averaged across all of our national chapters. In our first year of operation we are confident that meeting our goal of just 70% will be easily achieved, noting our consistent national success.

In addition to this goal, we aim for 20% of students who attend workshops to return. Throughout the year, as the 826michigan staff collects information about the students performance, they will
also collect information about the students who attend each workshop. At the end of the year, out of the 50 students projected to attend the digital lab workshops, we hope that 10 of these students attend more than one of these workshops. This measure will demonstrate the effectiveness of the workshops in engaging and inspiring students. Nationally, 81% of after-school students surveyed report that their writing skills have improved within the academic year because of our services. We are confident that the effectiveness of our workshops in making students confident will urge them to return, making our 20% goal easily realized.

These steps will ensure within the first year of receiving funding that the lab is utilizing the grant award effectively and efficiently and that each of the outlined objectives will be successfully met.

**Evaluation**

The 826michigan tutoring center agrees to participate in a national evaluation of the new digital media tutoring lab. This external evaluator will ensure that the new lab is best utilizing grant monies by effecting students in the most positive and impactful ways.

The external evaluator will seek to answer:

- Are the objectives of the digital lab being met?
- Are the students in the most need of tutoring in the Ann Arbor area being affected by this new workspace?
- Is the grant money being given to the organization being used in the ways as determined by the grant contract?

To answer these questions, the external evaluator will conduct research monthly about the effectiveness of the lab. The 826michigan staff will be compiling self-report surveys from students about their own belief in the effectiveness of the workshops, which will be made available to the evaluator. This information, along with any information the evaluator plans to collect will help them determine how the new digital media lab is meeting its objectives and goals.

The external evaluator, along with utilizing 826 data, will/can conduct interviews, give their own surveys to students, attend workshops, or look at official financial documents of the organization.

The evaluator will compare these results to national data for other 826 tutoring centers nationwide. They may also compare the 826michigan data with other successful tutoring centers who also have established digital media workspaces.

The 826michigan tutoring center will do in-house evaluations of data collected after each workshop. These frequent analysis and compilation of data will ensure that the new digital media lab is meeting its objectives and goals as planned. Staff will conduct these in-house evaluations.
Along with data collected by the external evaluator, these types of analysis will ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the space in utilizing grant monies.

All staff will receive these compiled reports, as well as the grant funder, the 826national board, and will be made available to community members online as well. This feedback will demonstrate to community members precisely how we are benefiting the community, and how we will utilize our awards effectively in order to produce the most benefit to our students.

Meeting the objectives outlined in this grant will determine our success. We will continue to define success with an increase in student attendance each year, more positive referrals from students, volunteers and community members, and continuing support from funders to keep this workspace running for years to come.

Budget

1. Itemized Budget Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Item</th>
<th>Explanation of Cost</th>
<th>Cash Requested</th>
<th>In Kind Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time Program Coordinator</td>
<td>30,000 first year salary</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time Teaching Assistant</td>
<td>12,000 first year salary</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Leaders - Volunteer</td>
<td>$9 per hour - 5 hours/week (5 volunteers)</td>
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<td>11,250</td>
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<tr>
<td>Survey Researcher</td>
<td>$12 per hour - 2 hours/week (1 volunteer)</td>
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<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Personnel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab Computers</td>
<td>959.00 Education Price (10 Computers)</td>
<td>9.990</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lab Printer</td>
<td>1349.00 (1 unit)</td>
<td>1,349.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab Scanner</td>
<td>349.99 (1 unit)</td>
<td>349.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical Support</td>
<td>Applicable Select Program</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Software</td>
<td>OS Lion (9.99) + 5 programs @ (9.99 each)</td>
<td>59.94</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Costs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td></td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toner and Copy Materials</td>
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<td>225</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Office Supplies (pens, tape, staples)</td>
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<td>1,000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overhead Costs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Amount Requested</td>
<td></td>
<td>60,570</td>
<td>12,150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Justification

The chart above outlines how the requested grant money will be used for the proposed project. Below, a detailed description of each item is given, as well as how the costs were determined.
Personnel
The new digitalmedia lab will require one full-time Program Coordinator to plan workshops, train teaching assistants, and oversee the general operation of the lab. This position will be full time, preferably a recent college graduate student seeking experience in teaching and planning. This position will pay a salary of 30,000 per year.

The lab will also require a part-time Teaching Assistant to assist the Program Coordinator. This task will include assisting with the planning of the workshops to be held in the lab, and will be the lead volunteer trainer for the lab. This part-time position will pay 12,000 per year. This position will be open to current college students, preferably graduate students in Rhetoric, Writing, or a related field with a passion for community writing centers.

Volunteers will be required for the maintenance of the lab as well. Five volunteers will be needed throughout the year, and will be trained by the Teaching Assistant. These students will volunteer their time for valuable experience and networking opportunities. These students will preferably be undergraduate students interested in teaching, Rhetoric and Writing, English, or other related fields. Their time will be donated as an in-kind contribution to the digitalmedia lab.

A Survey Researcher is also required to ensure that the digitalmedia lab is successfully meeting its first year goals as outlined in the objectives section of the grant proposal. This researcher will hand out and collect surveys completed by each workshop participant. This task will only require 2 hours per week throughout the year. This will also be a volunteer position, preferably from an undergraduate student interested in survey research or a related field. Their time will be donated as an in-kind contribution.

Non-Personnel
An integral part of the digitalmedia lab will be the 10 Mac computers that will furnish the workspace. The cost of one computer purchased with an Educator’s discount is $999.99. 10 computers will cost $9,990.

A printer will also be an essential part of the workspace, allowing students to print and publish the digital work they will be doing during workshops. One high-quality office printer will cost $1,349.

A scanner will also be beneficial for students exploring digital art and design during lab workshops. The scanner will allow students to work with a variety of media on computers to create complex and interesting digital pieces. The cost of one lab scanner will be $349.99.

Technical support for the computers will be necessary to purchase in the case of damages or problems with any of the computers. This technical support from Apple will cost $4,796.

Software must be purchased for the computer lab to allow students to work on a variety of creative projects in the lab. Mountain Lion Operating Software will be purchased for each computer, as well
as Garage Band, FinalCut Pro, Adobe InDesign, Adobe Flash, and Adobe Photoshop Lightroom. The licenses for these with an Educator’s discount for 10 computers will be $59.94.

Other Costs
Paper and toner will be important for the lab, for operation of the printer. The cost of paper for the lab for one year will be $300. The cost of toner for the printer will be $225.

Office Supplies will also be important to have in the digitalmedia lab, as students will require these materials for brainstorming, completion of projects, and for finishing their published digital works. The cost of these supplies for one year will be $1,000.

Overhead Costs
The cost of running each of the 10 computers for 10 hours a week over a 1 year period will be about $500 dollars. This cost will also include the price of lighting the lab and purchasing light bulbs. This cost does not include the cost of air-conditioning and heat, or space for the lab, as these costs will be supported by the 826michigan writing center. The space is already available for the lab, yet these resources are needed to transform the space into an operational digitalmedia-learning lab.

Summary
With all volunteer time, the total in-kind contribution to the proposed lab is $12,150. The total amount requested from this grant award is $60,570.

Organizational Background and Qualifications

826michigan is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting students aged 6 to 18 with their creative and expository writing skills, and to helping teachers inspire their students to write. 826 opened its doors in June of 2005. Since then, we have been blessed with students, tutors, and volunteers overflowing with enthusiasm.

826 Valencia was the first of 8 similar writing centers, which started in San Francisco by famed writer and editor Dave Eggers. He decided to start a non-profit organization that focused on mentoring kids in creative writing. This sparked the creation of 826national and subsequently each of the 8 chapters nationwide.

Founded by Ann Arbor writer Steven Gillis, 826michigan is a chapter of that national non-profit organization. Through after school, drop-in tutoring, field trips, workshops, writing rooms, and various other means, 826’s main goal is to inspire young people and foster their creativity. We take kids very seriously in an often not-so-serious way.
We offer all kinds of free after-school and weekend workshops designed to foster creativity, strengthen writing skills, and provide students with a forum for executing projects they might not otherwise have the support to undertake. Workshops range from the playful to the practical, and all are taught by volunteer writers, artists, educators, and publishing professionals.

We have received financial support from many different sources since we opened our doors - 826national, Dave Eggers, and The C.S. Mott Foundation, to name a few. We also receive ongoing support from Thomson-Shore, a book manufacturer based out of Dexter. They have been supportive of us in many meaningful ways - it’s hard to enumerate them all. They’ve sponsored our How To Write Like I Do series of fundraisers, allowing us to work with acclaimed writers like Daniel Alarcon and Rachel DeWoskin to offer writing workshops for the many, many literate adults who tell us, "I wish something like 826 had been around when I was a kid!".

They fielded not one but TWO teams at last year’s Spelling Bee for Honest Cheaters, Mustachioed Heroes, and Dirty Rotten Spellers, raising money for 826michigan and testing their orthography skills against words like "swarf" and "pamproductylous" -- words so obscure that even spell check doesn't acknowledge them!

And, perhaps most importantly, they've printed our last two publications, 20/20: Visions of the [Near] Future and Don't Stay Up So Late. This means more to us than we can really say, because each 826michigan publication represents not only OUR hard work but the hard work of our incredible students. Revealing a new publication to its young authors is always one of the high points of our year.

Last March, we were also featured on NBC’s Nightly News. The national exposure noted our innovative and progressive work, specifically our creative approach to teaching writing to students. We continue to be noticed nationwide for our progressive work, and keep this in mind as we plan new events and workshops every year. We are passionate about the work we do - we aim to continue to be noticed for our innovative and fun approaches, and for our lasting impacts on the students we teach.

**Conclusion**

A grant from the Kellogg Foundation would allow the 826michigan writing center to implement this much needed workspace for Ann Arbor students. A grant award of $60,570 would allow funding to establish, furnish, and maintain this new workshop for an entire year. Specifically, this award would afford full time staff, computer equipment, furniture, and volunteer staff to manage the operations of the digital lab, setting the space for new and progressive workshops to happen in Ann Arbor. This kind of space is unprecedented in the Ann Arbor area, and students will be greatly impacted by the positive effects of this new workspace.

With the Kellogg Foundation’s assistance, the 826michigan chapter could best realize its mission to inspire students to think creatively about writing. Giving students the opportunity to explore
writing in an online setting will help them be successful writers, and more confident communicators as well. Ann Arbor will benefit from fostering the success of its youth, continuing to make the city a vibrant and creative community for all.

Thank you for your consideration.