

Welcome to The Stegner Young Scholars' Writing Institute Magazine

Dear Reader,

You may wonder, “What is The Stegner Young Scholar’s Writing Institute?” This page provides information explaining our work and goals. The Salt Lake City School District (SLCSD) and The University of Utah co-sponsor the annual Stegner Young Scholars’ Writing Institute (The Stegner Institute) each June. This publication, *Our Voices*, is the final product that celebrates SLCSD students as developing writers. The life of Wallace Stegner provides inspiration for the work done through the Stegner Institute: Wallace Stegner is a distinguished writer, past residence of Salt Lake City, and alumnus of East High School.

The purpose of the Stegner Institute is to instruct and encourage student writers to find strength in their voice as a persuasive writer and commit their arguments to paper using evidence, logic, and examples to support their claims. A secondary purpose is to allow teachers of writing to collaboratively hone their teaching skills. To accomplish these goals, The Stegner Institute invites high school students and secondary English Language Arts teachers from the SLCSD to discover the power of writing during a two-week writing institute on The University of Utah campus.

For the 10 days of The Stegner Institute, students and teachers are immersed in writing workshops for 4 hours each day. During the first week, students select a topic of personal interest and research their topic, which includes investigating their topic from different perspectives. During the second week, students focus on supporting their claims with relevant evidence and revising their writing. The end product is a well-supported and researched argumentative essay that is polished and ready for publication.

Our Voices magazine is an annual collection of the essays written by Stegner Institute students. In this collection you will encounter many tender and thought-provoking beliefs and arguments. You may not share all the beliefs represented in the essays: neither does the Stegner Institute faculty nor SLCSD nor The University of Utah. If you read an essay that disturbs you, we encourage you to stop reading it and/or discuss it with a partner, teacher, or friend. Both the student author and Stegner Institute faculty have tried to ensure that the information in the essays is accurate and that the writing is polished. Please remember that these are essays written by developing authors and thinkers, and are published with minimal editing. Publishing student writing encourages the reluctant writer, strengthens students’ self-confidence, rewards interest and careful revisions as well as provides young writers with the opportunity to refine their thinking and express their opinions to a wider audience.

The Stegner Institute is made possible by generous support from the SLCSD, The University of Utah, and The Salt Lake Education Foundation. To learn about how you can support The Stegner Institute, please contact James Yapias-Director of The Salt Lake Education Foundation, at james.yapias@slcschools.org.

Sincerely,

Monica Ferguson (University of Utah) and Laura Scarpulla (Salt Lake City School District): co-directors of the Stegner Institute