



## OECU Sponsors Young Voices Writing Contest Prizes

**NOBLE, OK (August 11, 2017)** -- Invisible Young Voices, Inc. has been awarded a \$500 grant by the Oklahoma Educators Credit Union to sponsor the four \$100 first place prizes and the \$50 prizes for the Education and Fresh Voices categories of the first annual Young Voices Writing Contest.

“OECU’s grant will not only help Oklahoma educators encourage their students to write well, but also will help our hidden young writers see the value in sharing their stories,” said IYV Founder and President Michelle Waters. “This is the only Oklahoma-based, state-wide youth writing contest that offers a monetary prize. I want students to see that they can earn money from their writing, that it is as valuable as performing or playing sports.”

The OECU Teacher Grant Committee selected the IYV project from a pool of almost 100 applicants, who requested more than \$66,000, according to Cindy White, President and CEO of OECU. Waters was one of 63 Oklahoma teachers who received a grant this year.

The Young Voices Writing Contest is open to any Oklahoma middle or high school student enrolled in a public school or alternative education program. IYV will begin accepting entries in January 2018. Teachers will have the opportunity to download resources for teaching young writers in September.

Waters is an Oklahoma Writing Project Teacher Consultant and a National Board Certified Teacher candidate with six years experience teaching in Oklahoma middle and high school classrooms. She has taught at both urban and rural schools. IYV board members include Matthew Baker, a middle school teacher and OWP Teacher Consultant with Noble Public Schools and Amanda Smith, a fifth grade teacher in Moore Public Schools.

### **About Invisible Young Voices, Inc.**

Invisible Young Voices, Inc. is an Oklahoma-based non profit organization dedicating to helping teachers discover, nurture, and provide publication opportunities to hidden young writers in their classrooms. IYV provides teachers with curriculum, strategies, and tools they need to unlock student voices, including the annual Young Voices Writing Contest to showcase student talent. IYV collaborates with educators to embolden hidden young writers, which will revitalize student lives, schools, and communities.

**Media Contact**

Michelle Waters

Invisible Young Voices, Inc.

[michelle.waters@invisibleyoungvoices.com](mailto:michelle.waters@invisibleyoungvoices.com)

(405) 30WRITE