

A LITERARY LIFT

Writers Educate, Motivate Peers

By Symone C. Skrzycki

Grace W. Wroldson wanted to tell her story – a harrowing one she hoped could protect children growing up in alcoholic homes. That’s how she found Indianapolis-based Author Learning Center (ALC), an online, educational community of writers.

Shortly thereafter, Wroldson published *So You Love an ... Alcoholic?*

“It’s dedicated for the children, but it’s a book for women who want to courageously place themselves at the center of their own life,” she remarks.

Partnering with ALC, “I was able to understand what the publishing world was about because I didn’t have any experience!”

ALC President Keith Ogorek passionately asserts, “Having an idea for writing a book is very, very easy. Starting to write a book is easy. But writing a good book

to the finish and marketing it is one of the more challenging things that any person will take on.”

He characterizes ALC as “the GPS for your publishing journey.”

“We help you start from where you’re at, and we help you create a plan and a path to get you to your end goal of becoming a published author and marketing your book.”

‘Netflix meets LinkedIn meets Fitbit’

Relaunched in 2017 (a beta site was introduced in 2011), ALC has seven employees.

Educational video interviews, podcasts, webinars and articles revolving around writing, editing, publishing and marketing are a click away.

A Book Launch Tool helps authors set deadlines and track progress.

“You set those tasks and start those tasks (e.g., outlining), and we send you content that will help you in that particular phase,” Ogorek shares.

Another resource is the Author Circle, a private collaboration space that “you control. It’s made up of people you think can help you along your journey to provide advice, critique and encouragement.”

Individuals build their circle by inviting fellow members, non-members (who receive full access to the Author Circle) and ALC recommendations.

“If you’re writing a children’s book (for instance), we’d do a search for people who’ve written children’s books and published children’s books and we’d suggest that you might want to invite this person to join the Author Circle,” Ogorek remarks.

“The best way I’ve had someone describe it after looking at it is, ‘This is like Netflix meets LinkedIn meets Fitbit.’ ”

‘Partner in believing’

When do you want to hold a copy of your book? That’s the first question ALC poses to writers. It gives them a clear path and makes them more likely to attain their goal.

“There’s been research that says if you write down your goal, you’re 42% more likely to accomplish your goal. That’s one of the reasons why we have them write down the date they want to hold their book in their hand,” Ogorek offers.



“What the Author Learning Center does is help people do something they’ve dreamed about or had as a goal or aspired to for years and years and years, and never have known how to get it done.”

– Keith Ogorek

“The second thing that’s interesting in that same body of research is (the idea that) if you share that written goal with someone, your chances of accomplishing it increase dramatically because – this is a term in the study – now you have a partner in believing, which is what the Author Learning Center gives you.”

Motivation takes many forms along the way. One example is public kudos. When writers complete their tasks, for example, they’re recognized on ALC’s home page.

“Not only that, but we send you an email on behalf of the Author Learning Center congratulating you,” according to Ogorek. “If you’re involved in an Author Circle, we will send a notification to your Author Circle.”

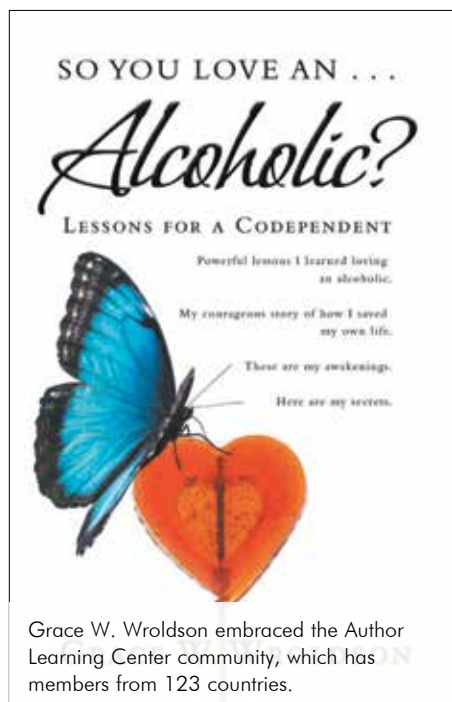
‘Helping authors all over the world’

ALC has members in 123 countries.

“What I think is interesting is, we’re based in Indiana, in Indianapolis,” Ogorek says, “and we’re affecting and helping authors literally all over the world – writers – to get their books done. That’s pretty exciting!”

Genres encompass children’s books, fiction, nonfiction and poetry.

ALC emphasizes that although writing is a solitary exercise, the journey to publication



Grace W. Wroldson embraced the Author Learning Center community, which has members from 123 countries.

doesn't have to be. Wroldson attests to that, recalling, "One of the messages I posted – you can talk to other authors – said, 'I'm done writing the book! I finally finished.' It generated a lot of interest (among members)."

Chuckling, she reflects on the camaraderie and commitment of ALC members. "Someone said it's like a gym membership. That's your club and that's where you work out!"

ALC recently announced its Book in a Year initiative, which takes members through a structured program guaranteed to generate a

published book within one year.

Ogorek imparts a closing thought.

"There is a joy and a sense of accomplishment that comes with being an author that is unlike anything else you can do. What the Author Learning Center does is help people do something they've dreamed about or had as a goal or aspired to for years and years and years, and never have known how to get it done. And that's a pretty good reason to have a business."

RESOURCES: Keith Ogorek, Author Learning Center, at www.authorlearningcenter.com