

Call For Submissions!

Transforming Experience into Words:

The Alicia Cass

Personal Essay Contest

Alicia Cass started college by taking English 105 her freshman year. During her educational journey at LBCC and as a USC transfer student, she discovered the *power of writing* to understand herself, her family, and her community. She learned that she could inspire others with her story of transformation from being in the foster care system, a high school dropout, homeless teenage mother, and gang member, to Long Beach City College student and USC graduate. A social worker and founder of the [Metamorphosis Experience](#), Alicia is the author of the memoir *Metamorphosis: The Butterfly Experience* and a motivational speaker for women, girls, and youth who are at risk of exposure to violence-related trauma stemming from gangs, sexual assault, physical abuse, and domestic violence. Like Alicia, you can transform your experience into words by submitting to the personal essay contest named in her honor.

First Place Award: \$100

Second Place Award: \$50

Third Place Award: \$25

Writing Prompt: *Who are you as a writer today, and how did you get to be this way? Transform your formative experiences as a writer into words. Explain and illustrate your personal writing history.*

Questions to help develop your focus:

- What are your earliest recollections of writing, and how has your writing skill developed over time?
- Have any members of your family or teachers encouraged you to write?
- When and how has writing challenged you to express your ideas, fears, or desires?
- How has writing shaped your understanding of who you are?

Elements to consider as you write the essay:

- Draw on memory. What you have experienced helps define who you are as a writer.
- Tell a story.
- Establish a setting. Locate your readers in a place where they can understand what you have to tell them.
- Use details.
- Use clear and direct language.
- Draw analogies as needed. The central power of metaphor is its ability to express something that is complex, elusive, or abstract in terms of something that is concrete, immediate, and familiar.
- **Visit the Writing and Reading Center for assistance and support with your writing process or draft.**
LAC Campus, room E-09L

Submission Guidelines:

1. Students must be currently enrolled and attending an English 801A, English 105, or English 105AX Fall 2018 semester course.
2. Submit your essay online at creativewritinglbcc.org
3. All essays submitted must include an original title that captures the essence of your transformative experience.
4. Minimum submission length: 750 words - Maximum submission length: 950 words
5. Essay files must be formatted as a Microsoft Word Document, MLA formatted, double spaced, and drafted in 12 point Times New Roman font.
6. **Submission Deadline: 11:55 p.m. PST, Saturday, December 15, 2018.**
7. Each submission will be assessed and judged for its unity, support, coherence, sentence skills, and precision in addressing the writing prompt.
8. Winners will be announced on the Alicia Essay Contest webpage by December 16, 2018. Judges' decisions are final. If no essay submission meets award criteria, no award will be granted.

This contest is sponsored by the LBCC English Department and The Student Equity Initiative.