

**free**  
LIBRARY OF  
PHILADELPHIA

FY20  
DEVELOPMENT  
REPORT





<b>MESSAGE FROM BARBARA SUTHERLAND, CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA FOUNDATION</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>MESSAGE FROM LESLIE WALKER, INTERIM DIRECTOR, FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>LOOKING BACK: A YEAR IN REVIEW</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>FUNDRAISING ACHIEVEMENTS</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>LEADERSHIP</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>MIRIAM SPECTOR ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>SUPPORTING THE FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>DEVOTED VOLUNTEERS</b> .....	<b>31</b>
<b>MEETING THE MOMENT</b> .....	<b>32</b>

MESSAGE  
FROM BOARD  
OF DIRECTORS  
CHAIR



**DEAR FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA SUPPORTERS,**

**THIS YEAR HAS BEEN ONE OF EXTREME CHANGE FOR PHILADELPHIA, AND THE COUNTRY.**

One can argue that our institutions were long overdue for some disruption, while also arguing that those key fixtures of our community are needed more than ever.

The Free Library of Philadelphia is one of the most important educational and cultural institutions in Philadelphia. Since 2012, I have proudly served as a member of the Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation Board of Directors, and I have spent the last two years as Chair. My colleagues on the board are committed to ensuring that our Free Library is the strongest asset it can be for the Library's staff, for the neighborhoods that the Library system serves, and for our city as a whole. Our libraries matter, and we know that you agree.

Where many see the challenges of 2020, the Free Library and the Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation continue to see opportunity. The City of Philadelphia provides public funds for the operations of the Free Library, but it is through the generosity of private funding from individuals, foundations, and corporations that the Free Library Foundation is able to enhance the Library's ability to be nimble and innovative. Many of the Library's transformative programs and activities that advance literacy, guide learning, inspire curiosity throughout the region, and help deliver on the promise of an equitable future for all of Philadelphia's children, families, and communities, are made possible by your support.

In 2020, the importance of our Library system and our greatest areas of impact—literacy, digital literacy, workforce development, and cultural and civic engagement—have never been more evident. It is because of your support that the Library has been able to produce these programs through a lens of inclusion and with a commitment to ensuring every Philadelphian has access to the tools and resources needed to thrive.

As we look back on the successes of our last fiscal year (and there are many!), we join you in looking towards a future in which we continue the work of supporting a just and inclusive library system for all Philadelphians. We celebrate our wins and we thank you for your continued support, but we know that this is not a time for business as usual. With you working alongside us, we have the opportunity to rethink how we serve the Library community. The Foundation and its Board are committed to meeting this moment with optimism and action.

Thank you for your generous support. Together we will strive to guide the way to a brighter future for all Philadelphians.

In hope and with deepest thanks,

Barbara Sutherland  
**CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA FOUNDATION**

MESSAGE  
FROM  
INTERIM  
DIRECTOR



**GREETINGS FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA SUPPORTERS,**

**YOU, THE DONORS, HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE GROWTH OF THE FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA, AND FOR THIS YOU SHOULD BE PROUD.** Hand in hand with the Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation, you have helped us build a dynamic library system for Philadelphia. We thank you for your continued support and dedication.

As with any institution, the Free Library is not without its challenges, and we are on a journey of healing and growth to become better versions of ourselves. We are committed to meeting the needs and wants of the Library staff and the Library community.

In the first half of fiscal year 2020, your support helped power critical in-person programs. Young learners, their families, and educators were supported in growing numbers through our Literacy in Early Spaces Program and our delivery of 25,000 books to children across the city. More than 80 programs were offered monthly to teens in the Field Teen Center. Our system-wide Literacy Enrichment Afterschool Program (LEAP) grew 35% from September 2019 through February 2020, alone. We served more than 3.6 million visitors in our libraries, powered by our incredible staff and nearly 8,000 volunteers. Then, earlier this year, as our city experienced the effects of a global health pandemic and faced a reckoning with systemic racism, we paused. Then we pivoted.

When the Free Library was forced to close to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic in March, our staff adapted quickly to meet the needs of our many neighborhoods in dynamic and thoughtful ways. The monumental shift to virtual services included not only the live-streaming of our popular storytimes and cooking tutorial programs, but also included organizing virtual programs that responded directly to the crisis. In partnership with the Urban Affairs Coalition, we offered a series of financial empowerment workshops along with workshops on landlord-tenant disputes with Pennsylvanians for Modern Courts. We also understood virtual services are not accessible to all, so we creatively partnered with PhillyCAM to broadcast recorded programs on the public access television channel. We were able to be responsive during such an unprecedented time because of you and the work of the Foundation. We thank you.

The Library's strength is our far-reaching presence. We continue to centralize key resources while making sure that libraries in every neighborhood are serving many communities and are a part of the equity delivery system. And while we have created innovative ways to expand our presence, we are looking forward to opening our doors in each neighborhood once again to discover the next chapter in our service to the people of Philadelphia.

Warmly,

Leslie M. Walker  
**INTERIM DIRECTOR**  
**FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA**

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, IN FISCAL YEAR 2020,  
THE FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA . . .

Welcomed more than  
**3,620,878 million**  
in-person visits

to our 54 locations from July 1, 2019,  
through March 16, 2020, and

**over 6 million more**  
to our collections and  
resources online.



Offered

**57 programs in the**  
BRIC Workplace,

including résumé review and free  
professional headshots, and connected

**850 job seekers**

from all walks of life to prospective  
employers at job fairs sponsored  
by Citizens Bank.

Counted

**840,052 cardholders**

Installed

**a new lift at the Philadelphia  
City Institute Library (PCI)  
in Rittenhouse Square.**

The lift will permit patrons in wheelchairs or on walkers, toddlers in strollers, and anyone unable to navigate the stairway to reach the Children's Department and Meeting Room located on the lower level of the library. Kudos to the PCI Friends for leading the fundraising effort and to the many generous donors who made the dream a reality.

**Expanded community  
efforts to advance early  
childhood literacy**

through Literacy in Early  
Learning Spaces, generously  
supported by Vanguard Strong  
Start for Kids Program™.

Welcomed

**3,615 teens**

to a total of

**270 onsite and  
virtual programs.**

The Marie and Joseph Field Teen Center offered more than 80 programs each month to an average of 1,200 teens.

Welcomed

**92,537 student visits**

on site through March 2020  
in the Literacy Enrichment  
Afterschool Program (LEAP) and

**hired more than 130 teens  
as mentors and tutors,**

who gained valuable work experience and provided support to youth during COVID-19 through online learning, personalized mentoring, and homework help. The Free Library was included in a city-wide trend of increased teen programming; we offered

**961 programs**

this year for teens!

**Hosted 7,951 volunteers  
at 41 libraries,**

who provided Philadelphians with language assistance by acting as English Language Facilitators, assisted elders with computer support, shelved materials, and cared for our grounds.

Our volunteer docents who give tours of Parkway Central Library six days a week won the

**Best of Philadelphia  
Cultural Tour Award**

from *Philadelphia Magazine*.



WITH YOUR SUPPORT, IN FISCAL YEAR 2020,  
THE FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA . . .

Held

### 135 *One Book, One Philadelphia* events

attended by over

**3,000 people**

across the city to explore Pulitzer Prize finalist *There There* by Tommy Orange. This year's program began with a kickoff event featuring a performance by the Red Blanket Singers, a Southern Style Native American Drum and Dance Group, representing the Nanticoke, Lenape, Haliwa-Saponi, and Mohawk tribes, and an original work by Curtis Institute of Music composer Elise Arancio, both performed before capacity crowds at Parkway Central Library.



Partnered with

**31 childcare centers and  
98 infant, toddler, and  
preschool classrooms**

to provide

**200 teachers**

serving children from birth to  
5 years of age with

**16 professional  
development workshops**

in the Literacy in Early Learning  
Spaces program sponsored  
by Vanguard Strong Start for  
Kids Program™.

Distributed

**approximately  
25,000 books**

to children across the city in June  
through Read by 4th partners.  
Read by 4th also celebrated the  
launch of ReadingPromise.org to  
increase accessibility to resources  
and information.

Celebrated the discovery of a

### Shakespeare First Folio

housed in the Free Library of Philadelphia's Rare Book Department that is believed to have belonged to English poet John Milton. Of the 750 First Folios that were originally printed in 1623, only 235 remain, and the Free Library's is

**one of about 40 complete  
copies in the world.**

Hosted

**283 events,**

online and in-person,

**with the Languages  
and Learning Center.**

The Free Library began planning a system-wide standardized digital literacy curriculum, sponsored by Comcast, as well as implementing online HiSET, GED, Work Readiness, and computer and financial literacy courses.

Held

**370 Culinary Literacy  
Center events**

attended by

**6,871 people**

and enrolled an additional

**9,786 individuals**

in our online programs. The Free Library celebrated the expansion of Nourishing Literacy, Cooking with Confidence, and Edible Alphabet to our Neighborhood Libraries, using "Kitchen in a Box" and "Culinary Literacy Carts" to reach more learners.

Invited families and children to

**34 family literacy events**

and supplied early childhood  
classroom libraries with over

**3,000 books**

to create brand-new classroom libraries.



FUNDRAISING  
ACHIEVEMENTS

The following figures reflect all non-campaign gifts and pledges made to the Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation during fiscal year 2020 (July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020).

TOTAL FY20 DONORS

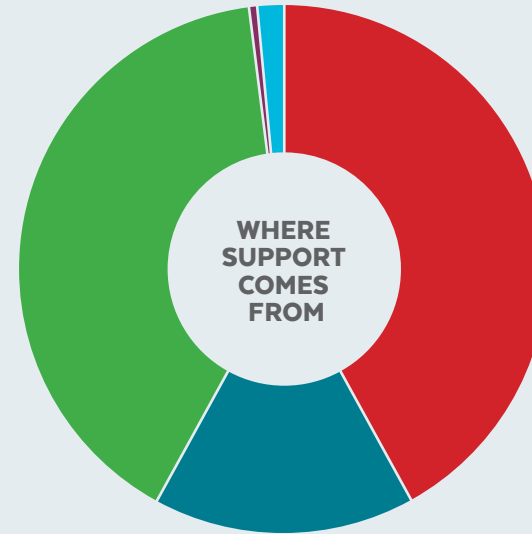
7,017

TOTAL FY20 GIFTS

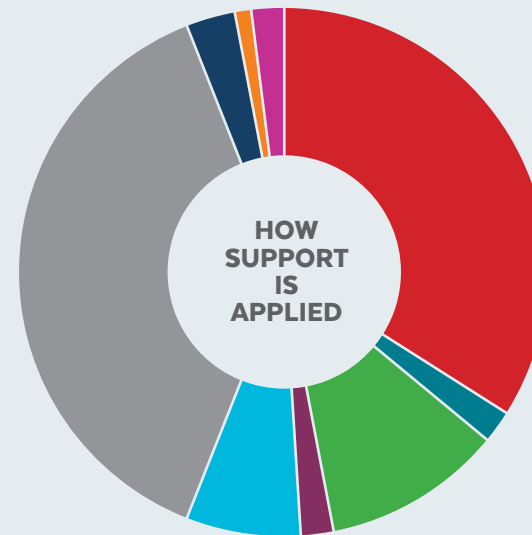
10,223

TOTAL FY20 DOLLARS

\$8,520,778



42% **INDIVIDUALS** \$3,580,265  
 39% **FOUNDATIONS** \$3,379,056  
 16% **CORPORATIONS** \$1,369,671  
 2% **OTHER ORGANIZATIONS** \$147,786  
 1% **GOVERNMENT/PUBLIC ENTITIES** \$44,000



38% **LITERACY PROGRAMMING** \$3,273,954  
 34% **UNRESTRICTED** \$2,913,132  
 11% **CULTURAL AND CIVIC PROGRAMS** \$924,714  
 7% **ENDOWMENT** \$586,745  
 3% **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT** \$252,760  
 2% **CAPITAL PROJECTS** \$184,636  
 2% **OTHER** \$131,768  
 2% **COLLECTIONS AND RESOURCES** \$128,937  
 1% **NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARIES** \$124,132

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\*\* After more than 12 years of service, Siobhan A. Reardon left the Free Library in July 2020.

## THE MIRIAM SPECTOR ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES WAS ESTABLISHED TO HONOR AN INDIVIDUAL WHOSE DEDICATION AND YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA ARE UNPARALLELED.

Miriam believed strongly in the transformative impact that libraries can have within the communities they serve. Based on this conviction and her professional training, she became a dedicated leader and passionate advocate for Philadelphia's public library system. She served for many years as a much-loved Vice Chair and member of the Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation Board of Directors and was a cheerleader for and trusted colleague of countless staff members and volunteers.

The two things that Miriam most forcefully advocated for were the importance of creating endowed funds to undergird the Library's most meaningful programs and services and the need to maintain laser focus on the well-being of our neighborhood libraries. The Miriam Spector Endowment for the Humanities will allow neighborhood librarians to offer special programs organized around humanities disciplines that respond to the unique needs of their neighborhoods.

*"The Miriam Spector Endowment for the Humanities will have a momentous impact on the Free Library of Philadelphia. By providing enduring, significant support for humanities programs in neighborhood libraries, this endowment will fill library spaces with dance, poetry, exhibitions, discussion, inquiry, and collaborative learning.*

*Miriam possessed a wide-ranging curiosity about what makes us human, and she cared deeply about our neighborhood libraries. I could not imagine a more fitting tribute to her than a permanent fund that will make accessible to all Philadelphians a broad array of humanities programs that celebrate the assets of our communities."*

**- ANDREW NURKIN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, ENRICHMENT AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

The Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation sincerely thanks the following donors who have contributed to the Miriam Spector Endowment for the Humanities.

**Janet and Jim Averill**  
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**recommended by Janet and John Haas**  
**Robert and Eileen Kennedy Heim**  
**Arthur Spector**  
**Lenore Steiner and Perry Lerner**  
**Barbara and Fred Sutherland**

**The National Endowment for the Humanities**  
**through a generous grant that matched**  
**contributions made for the purpose of**  
**establishing this Endowment.**

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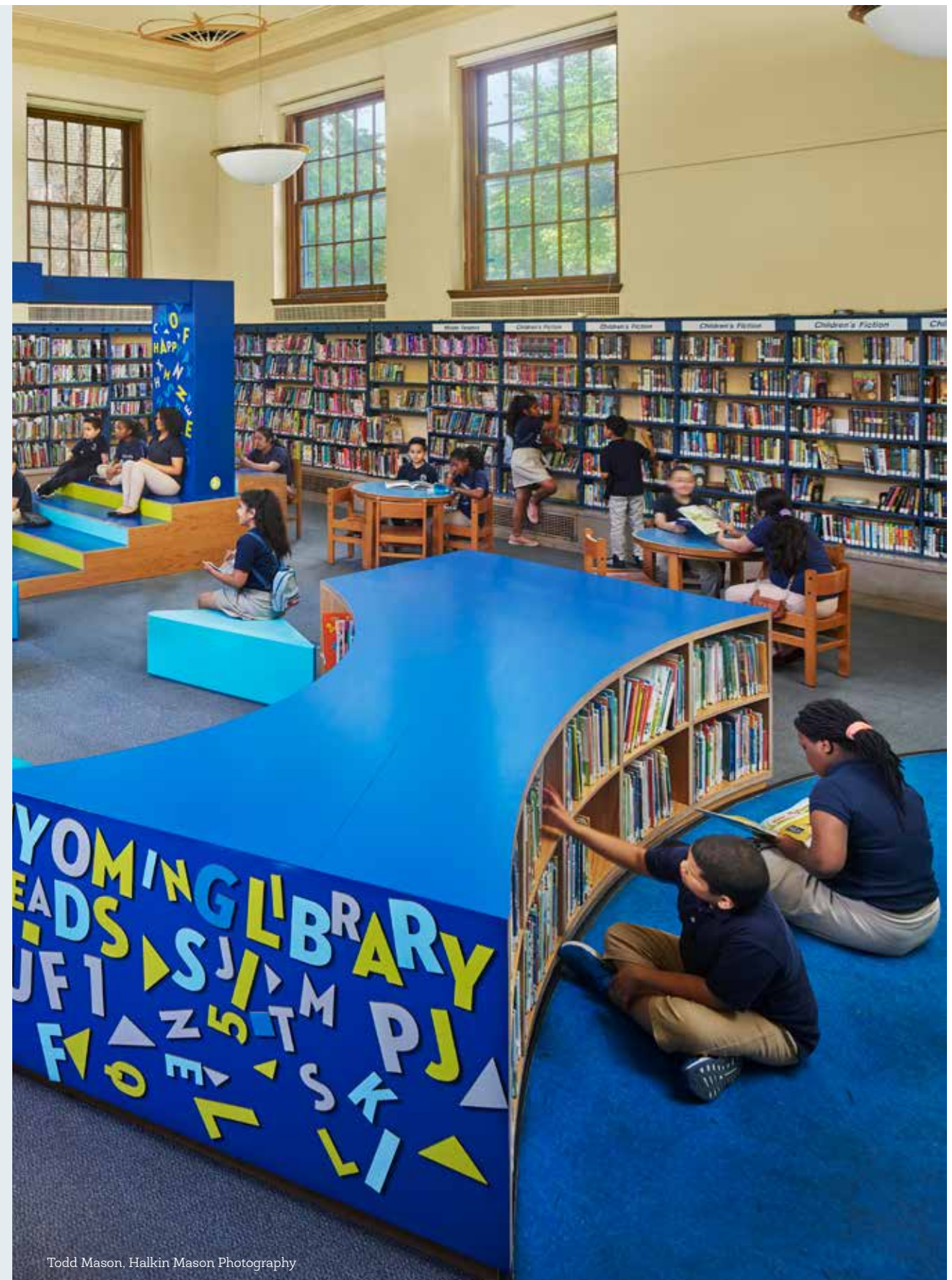
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## 2020 USHERED IN A SEASON OF EXTREME CHANGE FOR PHILADELPHIA AND ALL INDIVIDUALS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

The Free Library and the Foundation have paused and pivoted to help meet the increased needs of the Library staff and community. However, this commitment must continue beyond the current moment. Our work requires a strategic focus and investment in our staff who help bring forth new ideas, programs, and initiatives that meet the needs of every Philadelphian.

The Free Library is one of the most important educational and cultural institutions in Philadelphia. While the City of Philadelphia provides public funds for the operations of the Free Library, it is through the Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation and the generosity of private funding from individuals, foundations, and corporations that the Free Library is able to offer many of the Library's programs and activities that advance literacy, guide learning, inspire curiosity throughout the region, and help deliver on the promise of an equitable future for all of Philadelphia's children, families, and communities.

What does that mean as we move forward? It means:

**Investing in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion** by supporting efforts that promote a safe, inclusive, antiracist environment for our staff. As the philanthropic arm in this Library system, the Foundation will raise contributions in support of educational advancement for Library staff members so that career opportunities are equitably obtainable and DEI becomes an inherent part of the culture at the Free Library. Additional next steps include diversification of the Foundation Board and ongoing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training for board and staff members.

**Investing in Philadelphia's neighborhoods** to further amplify our system's greatest areas of impact: literacy, digital literacy, workforce development, and cultural and civic engagement. As the Library works to safely open neighborhood libraries, the Foundation is shoring up funding for the programs and services that our neighborhoods need most during this time of closed businesses, reduced employment, and increased digital learning.

**Initiating, incubating, and implementing staff-supported programs.** The Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation provides the support needed to propel innovation and the financial support required to allow the Library to be nimble in pushing forward new ideas and programs.

**Supporting the citywide Library ecosystem** because our system's strength lies in the Library's ability to centralize key resources while ensuring that those resources are disseminated across our neighborhood libraries and into every single community of Philadelphia. The funding secured by the Foundation is not just for one; it is for all. It supports the growth and development of the entire Library system, and this funding is essential as we look towards a post-COVID future.

We have much more work to do. With your support, the Foundation will continue to help create an equitable and just future for our Library community and all of Philadelphia.



*Despite our very best efforts, errors may have occurred in the production of this publication. If you have questions, please contact the Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation at [giving@freelibrary.org](mailto:giving@freelibrary.org) or 215-567-7710.*

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