

2022 ANNUAL REPORT ON

# Donor Impact



The library has always been a trusted place of learning and sharing, where we expand our knowledge and strengthen our connections.

But public libraries face new demands and new challenges. What it means to provide free access for everyone is changing rapidly.

Community support is more important than ever. And in 2022, our community stepped up to help The Seattle Public Library remain vital, adaptable, and accessible.

The Foundation was proud to provide \$4.5 million in grants for the books, materials, and programs that enrich our city. You helped meet our fundraising goals in campaigns and events and raised your voices as supporters and advocates for the library.

We hope this report provides a sense of the scale and sweep that your support makes possible. Thanks to you, the library's programs and collections engage our imagination through storytelling. They retain their place as our cathedrals of learning. They bring us closer together, at the branches or from home, strengthening the fabric of our society.

Thank you for supporting the stories, knowledge, and connections that inspire our community at the library every day.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Justo G. González". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J".

Justo G. González  
Board President, 2022-23





Storyteller Sondra Segundo (Haida and Katzie First Nations) and the Raven Clan Singers and Dancers (Haida Roots) performed at Daybreak Star. (Photo courtesy of Mai Takahashi)

# Sharing our stories

The library drives storytelling in our community – through reading, programming, and elevating voices. These stories improve literacy, enrich lives, and represent diverse perspectives. More people have more opportunities to learn, and to express their own stories and hear from others.

## Centering Indigenous stories

Storytelling and dancing are central components of Native culture and education. But they aren't always thought of as essential for early literacy. For the second year in a row, the library helped host a public event to spotlight Indigenous stories and traditions for children. Co-designed with Daybreak Star Preschool, the event encouraged families to share personal, family, and cultural stories with confidence and power.

Experiencing stories and dances from Native artists and elders was new for some, and a chance for others to see their culture on a public platform. More than 70 people attended, uniting neighbors from the preschool and the Magnolia area. "This was a great way for healing with our community," said one attendee. "It's critical to have this space."

## Helping an industry diversify

Writers and entrepreneurs of color are not equitably represented in the publishing industry. The Business of Books, a new series of workshops at the library, aimed to address that disparity.

The series inspires budding BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) authors and publishers. Sessions at the Beacon Hill, Columbia, and Douglass-Truth branches highlighted how to find financing for a book or start a publishing business. Local book industry leaders held deep-dive roundtables with participants. More than 50 attendees came away with new insights into spreading the stories from their communities.



Participants filled the Beacon Hill Branch for the Business of Books workshop. (Photo courtesy of Stesha Brandon)

"It was powerful to see folks together sharing their knowledge to help other people," said Stesha Brandon, the library's Literature & Humanities program manager. "It truly felt like a family in the room."



Members of the South Park Senior Center's Spanish Book Club met Urrera at his public event, presented in Spanish. (Photo courtesy of South Park Senior Center)

House of Broken Angels" / "La casa de los ángeles Rotos" by Luis Alberto Urrera. The author appeared at public events in English at the Central Library and Lake City Branch, and in Spanish at Centilia Cultural Center. Books were widely available in both languages at the library.

Local Latinx arts group La Sala helped select the book. Other partners, such as Seattle Escribe and El Centro de la Raza, found fun ways to engage the community through youth programs and book groups.

The story brought together a cross-section of readers, who could see themselves represented or be exposed to new ideas. And it proved popular in many forms: "The House of Broken Angels" was the library's most checked-out digital novel of the year.

## Engaging all readers

Since 1998, the Seattle Reads program has brought our city together around the same story. In 2022, readers shared the experience across languages as well.

More than 9,000 read or joined events around "The



"Eragon" was a recent ROOTS book club read.

## Building teen readers

Librarians promote storytelling in many ways, beyond recommending books to patrons. When community members identify ways the library can help them access stories, librarians jump into action.

Teen Services librarians recently responded to community requests to start youth book clubs. ROOTS Young Adult Shelter let staff at the University Branch know that some of the books their guests wanted were often checked out. East African Community Services reached out to staff at the Beacon Hill Branch about a book club for middle and high school students.

Foundation resources allowed the library to provide

several titles for both partner organizations. Now young people have permanent access to the books they want to read and discuss.

And sharing stories with each other has had other benefits. Some youth got to experience playing the role of librarian for their community. "This has given several of our guests a sense of purpose as their book choices make it into the hands of their peers," ROOTS reported.

**YOUR GIFT TO THE FOUNDATION** provides thousands of books and endless experiences for Seattle students, older adults, and residents of all ages. Visit [supportspl.org](https://supportspl.org) to help spread storytelling for all.





Pickup lockers at Beacon Hill and four other branches allow access to library materials at any time of day. (Photo by Will Livesley-O'Neill)

# Expanding our knowledge

The library provides free access to trusted information – for everyone, and from everywhere. When knowledge is more available and equitable, whether at a branch or through innovative outreach and technology, more people are able to gain the skills, insights, and experiences that help them thrive.

## Modernizing the collection

The library must always keep up as reading habits and patron needs change. Donor support helps add more than 75,000 books to the library’s collection every year. But the format, focus, and features of the books continue to evolve.

In 2022, Collection Services reallocated some funding from print books to digital audiobooks. This reflected feedback from teens and adults about preferred ways of accessing materials. The pandemic-era trend toward increased borrowing of e-books has continued as well.

The library established collections in new languages, including Dari, Pashto, and Ukrainian. An emphasis on equity led to more acquisitions of titles for traditionally underserved audiences. An ongoing audit process identifies which voices are not adequately represented.

## Modernizing the collection (cont.)

And new technology provides new opportunities to use and access the collection. The library introduced Read-Along books, MP3-enabled picture books that read aloud to children. Pickup lockers are now available at five branches, enabling checkouts 24 hours a day.

## Understanding memory loss

Library resources are increasingly available throughout the community. That includes places like the Memory Hub on First Hill, where families dealing with dementia have a centralized place for information.

“The library has been making an effort to reach community where they are,” said Emily Billow, the library’s Older Adults Program manager. She heard that visitors to the Memory Hub wanted to read more about experiences with memory loss.

Families faced with dementia often have to track down services and guidance from many places. They wanted books for when they were already on site, to take a class, drop off a loved one, or volunteer.

Funding for older adult programming helped provide a wide variety of books. Materials now range from

Foundation donor Linda Cheung uses the pickup locker at the Rainier Beach Branch every few weeks. “What a great service!” she said. “I don’t have to worry about library hours, and it’s much easier to borrow from all the other branches.”

children’s books to guides for caregivers, in English and Spanish. The Memory Hub now has the largest collection of books about dementia in the state of Washington.



Books from the library provide an extensive collection at the Memory Hub. (Photo courtesy of Marigrace Becker)

## Increasing digital literacy



Participants showed an improvement of 15 percentage points on a digital literacy assessment over the course of the program.

Access to technology is only one step to accessing information. Some residents at Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) sites received new laptops through a grant. But they wanted instruction on how to use digital tools to increase their knowledge and skills.

The library was a natural partner. Through the Foundation-supported Job and Life Skills program,

the library provided instructors and lesson plans on basic computer and internet use for SHA residents. Since the majority of students were immigrants and refugees, all instructors spoke second languages including Oromo, Somali, and Tigrinya.

“It was clear that this program had a strong impact on their confidence in being able to use their new device, even something as simple as knowing how to move an icon on their desktop,” said Jennifer Yeung, public instruction and workforce development lead at the library.

As a result of this program, SHA now offers digital literacy skills classes for more residents modeled after the library.

**YOUR GIFT TO THE FOUNDATION** increases resources at the library, online, and through hundreds of local partner organizations. Visit [supportspl.org](https://supportspl.org) to continue expanding access to the books and programs our neighbors need.



TODAY, I AM AN  
**AMERICAN**



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Service



A former citizenship class student at their naturalization ceremony.  
(Photo courtesy of Mckenna Lang)

# Strengthening our connections

The library is a hub for connecting people – with resources, with services, and with each other. These connections are essential for everyone’s sense of belonging, ability to fully participate in society, and civic engagement that sustains a healthy democracy.

## Fostering citizenship

Seattle’s population of foreign-born residents continues to grow. Yet studies show that those with limited English proficiency often struggle to find jobs and integrate into society.

Classes through the library help bridge this gap. Working with Asian Counseling and Referral Service (ACRS), the library held nearly 7,000 hours of citizenship classes in 2022. Students prepare for their naturalization interviews in English, with support in Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese. At least half of last year’s students have become naturalized citizens.

Citizenship improves employment opportunities, and enables voting and democratic participation. Learning about citizenship also forms essential connections for students.

“The classes provide a wonderful international community. We find it can reduce the isolation that some of them experience,” said Mckenna Lang, ACRS lead instructor. “It is powerful to hold the world in our classroom.”

## Welcoming all neighbors

The library is a fundamental resource for people experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity. Library staff go beyond their branches to collaborate with providers, welcome new patrons, and make resources more accessible.

Last year library staff resumed in-person visits to people living in temporary homes at several tiny house villages. These visits have provided books and tools like Wi-Fi hotspots that residents need. They also form relationships between neighbors and library staff.

Staff from the Rainier Beach Branch visited the nearby Southend Village. Residents signed up for



Residents of the Southend Tiny House Village connected with the nearby Rainier Beach Branch. (Photo courtesy of the Low Income Housing Institute)

library cards, picked from a multilingual selection of books, and learned about programs. Parents were especially interested in ways the branch could support their children, such as the Homework Help program.



A student and coach work together on reading. (Photo courtesy of Team Read)

## Growing together through reading

The library fuels interactions between cross-sections of our society. Programs provide unique chances for people from different backgrounds to get to know and learn from one another.

## Empowering business leaders

Small businesses and nonprofits are critical to thriving communities. But legal and administrative issues can stand in their way, particularly for leaders with language barriers.

That’s why the library offers free consultations with volunteer attorneys. Patrons with legal questions connect one-on-one with legal experts recruited by the University of Washington Entrepreneurial Law Clinic. Topics include corporate law, real estate, and intellectual property. Almost 200 people received assistance.

Last year, the library began offering consults in Spanish as well. A pilot program with the Latino

Team Read connects elementary students reading below grade level with teen reading coaches. The longtime library partner program sees immediate impacts on literacy. In the 2021-22 school year, the average reader in the program improved by almost a full grade level.

For most of the high school student coaches, Team Read represents their first paid formal job experience. Coaches report increased confidence, leadership skills, and communication after working with younger students.

Students derive clear benefits from connecting with mentors and mentees through the library. Younger readers have someone to look up to – and often go on to become coaches themselves. Coaches gain new abilities as they prepare for adulthood.

Community Fund provided interpretation and outreach to community members seeking assistance.

“The consultations provide a free, confidential and welcoming space,” said Jay Lyman, Library to Business program manager. “The nature of these sessions means they get the information they need, at the level and moment when they need it. Established partnerships help build awareness and trust for community members that might not otherwise participate.”

**YOUR GIFT TO THE FOUNDATION** helps preserve the library as one of the last places where our society connects, free of charge and open to all. Give today at [supportspl.org](https://supportspl.org) to protect and enhance our essential role.

# Our Board

Our Board of Directors is composed of dedicated volunteers who oversee our budget, review grants to the library, spearhead our equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts, and much more. We extend our sincere gratitude to the public servants who made up our Board in 2022:

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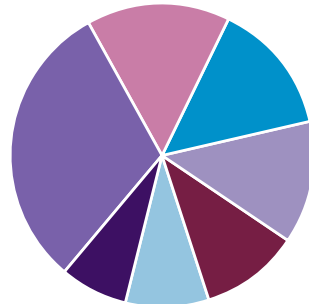
Tom Fay  
Executive Director and Chief Librarian  
The Seattle Public Library

Jay Reich  
Board Liaison  
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# 2022 Impact Information

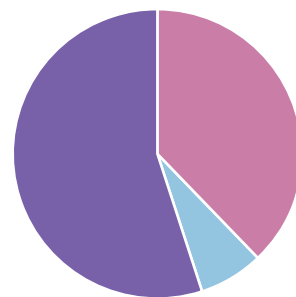
(Year ending December 31, 2022)

## SUPPORT TO THE LIBRARY



<b>31%</b> Collections & Seattle Room	\$ 1,595,000
<b>15%</b> Programs & Advocacy Support	789,000
<b>14%</b> Community Engagement	735,000
<b>13%</b> Technology & Access	668,000
<b>11%</b> Youth & Early Learning	556,000
<b>9%</b> In-Kind Support to the Library	450,000
<b>7%</b> Reimagined Spaces	371,000
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT</b>	<b>\$ 5,164,000</b>
Foundation Operations Costs	1,321,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 6,485,000</b>

## SOURCES OF SUPPORT



<b>55%</b> Contributions	\$ 3,597,000
<b>38%</b> Endowment & Quasi Endowment Payouts	2,470,000
<b>7%</b> In-Kind Contributions	455,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 6,522,000</b>



The Seattle Public Library Foundation has earned a platinum seal of transparency from Candid (GuideStar), the highest honor of financial transparency from a leading independent charity evaluator.



City Councilmember Alex Pedersen joined Foundation supporters at the Northeast Branch in September. (Photo by Will Livesley-O'Neill)

# Advocacy

In addition to fundraising, the Foundation spearheads advocacy on behalf of the library. Increasing public funding is essential to the library's success—advocacy has helped secure and restore more than \$572 million in public dollars over the past 20 years.

Together with Friends of The Seattle Public Library, the Foundation launched the Public Library Action

Network (PLAN) in 2022. Supporters can get updates and take action on policy decisions and funding opportunities that impact The Seattle Public Library at the local, state, and federal levels.

During the City of Seattle budget process, PLAN advocates rallied the Mayor and City Council members in support of library funding. The final budget included the library's full general funding request as well as additional funds for climate resilience upgrades at branches!



### RAISE YOUR VOICE FOR THE LIBRARY!

Sign up for the Public Library Action Network (PLAN) and join the growing movement to protect and enhance our library. Learn about how you can take action by visiting [bit.ly/PLANsignup](https://bit.ly/PLANsignup) or scan the QR code. Get with the PLAN!

# Equity

The Seattle Public Library and Foundation are actively committed to improving equity across our community. Removing barriers to access and investing in programs that benefit traditionally underserved populations are essential for the library to meet the needs of everyone.

In 2020, the Foundation created the Equity & Access Fund to increase support for programs that reduce barriers caused by systemic racism, poverty, language access, and other factors. Most of the programs currently funded by Foundation donors have a direct equity focus, and the library partners with

hundreds of organizations around the city to engage communities and identify targeted and emerging needs. Many are designed and prioritized by impacted community members.

The Foundation has also made significant internal investments in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Beginning in 2020, the Foundation created an action plan to prioritize equity at every level of the organization. In 2022, Foundation Board members and staff, along with library leadership, completed a combined 547 hours of trainings with DEI consultant Damaris Patterson Price and group work sessions.

While the work is far from complete, the Foundation's internal and external investments reflect the commitment of our Board and staff to creating a more equitable organization, library system, and society.





A mother reads to her son in the children's section of the High Point Branch. (Photo by Will Livesley-O'Neill)

# Honoring our Legacy Society donors

We honor the forward-thinking library lovers who have partnered with us in planning estate gifts to The Seattle Public Library Foundation.

- |   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| Anonymous (81)                              | Vasiliki Dwyer                             | Gary Kunis and<br>Connie Wong              | Julie Peterson                          |
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|   |  |  | Rona Zevin                              |
|   |  |  | Julie Zunker                            |

# Leave a library legacy

Including the Foundation as a beneficiary in your will, retirement asset, or life insurance – or making a gift to an endowment – leaves a generous legacy that helps provide for the long-term vitality of the library.

## A family's tribute

Pamela Dore is a longtime supporter of The Seattle Public Library. She created an endowment to honor her mother, Barbara Edwina Dore, who instilled a love of libraries in the family early on.

“My mother was a lifelong lover of libraries and an enthusiastic volunteer,” Pamela said. “My brother and I knew the Dewey Decimal System before we knew arithmetic. We fell in love with Nancy Drew, the Hardy Boys, Agatha Christie, and National Geographic. We did our homework there. We learned to play chess and read maps. But there was nothing more magical than walking out of the library with a big stack of new discoveries. Oh how the world would open up for us!”

Pamela's endowment honors her mom's legacy and will generate a steady, reliable source of income for the library – forever.

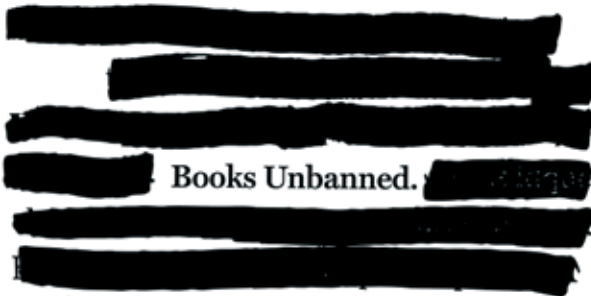


The Seattle Public Library Foundation

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# Promoting the freedom to read



2023 is off to an exciting start for the Foundation. With strong support from our community, The Seattle Public Library launched the “Books Unbanned” e-card for young people facing censorship across the country. Equitable access to knowledge – for everyone – is an essential value of our library and our democracy. Learn more about how you can support the program at [bit.ly/SPLFunbanned](https://bit.ly/SPLFunbanned).

Send us your feedback on this report:  
[surveymonkey.com/r/splfreport22](https://surveymonkey.com/r/splfreport22)

## Estate Gifts

We pay tribute to the memories of those who left generous bequests realized in 2022 to enrich the community through The Seattle Public Library Foundation:

- Estate of Robert D. Adelman
- Estate of Susan Gayle Ash
- Estate of Fam Bayless
- Estate of Daisy J. Beach
- Estate of Nancy Duble Becker
- Estate of Marjorie L. Boetter
- Estate of Margaret Elizabeth Busch
- Estate of Ann W. Dittmar
- Estate of Willis M. Kleinenbroich
- Estate of Margaret Levis
- Estate of Rosal Mangiante
- Estate of Leon Uziel

You can help guarantee the vitality of the library for generations to come with a charitable bequest. For more information on our free estate planning webinars and creating a legacy at the library, contact [foundation@supportspl.org](mailto:foundation@supportspl.org).

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