Like never before

A love of learning is rooted in connection — in the friends, family, and community who surround us and encourage us to grow. In a year of uncertainty, the importance of these bonds shone bright like never before. Our future is dependent upon our interdependence. Our reliance on one another is a collective strength and a formidable power that gives our future promise.

Multnomah County Library connects hundreds of thousands of Oregonians to the resources they need most. Our library is an anchor for our community, a source of answers, and a place of opportunity for each of us. Last year, gifts to The Library Foundation enabled the library to bring 62,000 books and eleven programs to more than 185,000 people. As we move through the year ahead, the library will be there for each of us at every turn.

25,000 children and parents read together at home, with books available in 20 languages and cultures.

9,000 low-income moms and young children received literacy education at free health clinics.

5,000 newborns and parents went home from the hospital with education about the importance of reading to children from birth.

30,000 children and parents participated in virtual storytimes in English, Chinese, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, French, Somali, and Swahili as well as Black and Native American Cultures.

Early Literacy

Librarians reached children and their families last year with storytimes, workshops for parents on early brain development, and tens of thousands of books in 20 languages and cultures. The library reached families through Head Starts, low-income health clinics, hospitals, teen parent programs, and programs for immigrants and refugees with a crucial message: reading together at home, during this time, will have lifelong benefits for your child.

Charting a course to literacy

At five years old, Kevin has already memorized the route to his neighborhood library. Each week during the pandemic, he eagerly made his way there, hand-in-hand with his mother. His determination is impressive beyond his years. Although he can't yet "read" the books he takes home, he knows the library will help him unlock that magical world, one page at a time.

His mother's childhood was not full of books and reading. Kevin's mother, Hilda, was born in a small, indigenous village in the state of Michoacán. Rising early each day to help her parents farm corn, her childhood was one of survival — very different from the one she is determined to give her children. She knows that Kevin has a bright future ahead of him, full of opportunities that were not available to her. "When you are born here, doors can open easily," She tells us, "But support does not arrive by itself at your house."

A breakthrough in Kevin's path to reading did, in fact, arrive at their home — in the form of a bookbag full of engaging books. Kevin's Head Start participates in Multnomah County Library's Every Child A Reader program. Bilingual librarians partner with Head Starts and home health professionals to reach young children and families facing risk factors for low literacy. Each week during the pandemic, Kevin and his mother made the journey to their neighborhood library to retrieve a bookbag brimming with engaging books chosen for his reading level and interests.

Kevin dutifully reads each new selection with her before exchanging the bookbag for a new one. He frequently reminds her, "Mom, Mom, we need to read a book!" His enthusiasm motivates her, as does the training for parents offered by the library in five languages. Hilda says the program opened her eyes to the importance of learning together, "There should always be time for our children, for sitting down and reading with them."

This fall, when Kevin entered kindergarten, he walked through the door of his classroom with a strong love of reading and learning. And we know he will continue to make his way to the library each week, bookbag in hand.

Over 1.2 million books and materials for kids circulated during Summer Reading — despite the pandemic.

11,500 diverse books and e-books reached families through outreach programs and the library's collections.

12,000 students accessed home learning kits and STEAM kits that engaged children in learning at home.

351 summer sites, including childcare centers, parks, and lunch sites serving vulnerable children, received books and reading incentives delivered by library staff and volunteers.

School Age Success

Tens of thousands of children and teens participated in library programs last year that lay the foundation for academic success. Across our community, librarians delivered books and talked with children and parents about library services at free lunch sites, housing developments, public parks and school parking lots. The goal: keeping kids learning and reading despite school closures.

Your very own neighborhood library

Jabari spends ample time each summer at his local park, tucked into the Rockwood neighborhood of East Portland. This imaginative fourth grader makes good use of every sunny day, playing outside with his two younger siblings for hours. And although Jabari lives just a stone's throw from Rockwood Library, this fan of graphic novels knew little of the books, activities, and inspiration available just around the corner. Then, one July morning, Jabari met a librarian at his playground.

Not every child has the benefit of living within walking distance of a library, and as librarians know, working parents may not have the time to take them. In outlying neighborhoods, especially those with fewer resources and activities available to children, busy families may not be aware of the many library services available to them.

Multnomah County Library's school-age outreach literacy team reaches beyond library walls to connect with families where they live, play, and interact with other community resources. They take the library on the road, setting up "pop-up libraries" at public parks, free lunch sites, and neighborhood playgrounds like the one Jabari and his friends frequent. Children can get their very own library card, sign up for Summer Reading, chat with a librarian about their reading interests, and head home with bags brimming with books.

Jabari is now the proud owner of his very first library card. His mother, Crystal, visited the pop-up library, too. She learned about library programs and resources, including online storytimes, children's book groups, and homework help that is designed to help young readers succeed in school and in life.

If you happen by your neighborhood park one day and discover a world of books there, you're seeing the library's school-age outreach team in action — reaching families with books, inspiration, and activities that will keep young minds sharp all summer long.

19,000 teens and adults read and discussed Ross Gay's *Book of Delights* through Everybody Reads.

Thousands of people of all ages participated in free arts, cultural and educational programs throughout the year.

Learning for Life

Multnomah County Library is a cornerstone for community. From meaningful, community-wide conversations centered on a single book, to free arts and cultural programs that celebrate the rich diversity of cultures and traditions in our community, our library connects us to one another, and to worlds beyond our front door.

Finding hope in the pages of a book

It should have been a year to remember. Kai's senior year held the promise of celebration and reward. Instead, her vision of theater rehearsals, lively discussions in AP classes, and outings with friends came to a screeching halt. Everything she had envisioned for her landmark year evaporated into the monotony of Zoom lessons and COVID-19 protocols.

The feelings of isolation and being stuck in time are not unique to Kai. They describe the experiences of a multitude of students in our community. Stuck at home with little social life, navigating school on a screen, students have been uniquely affected by the pandemic.

Multnomah County Library's Everybody Reads Program, and this year's selection of Ross Gay's *Book of Delights*, helped Kai find a renewed sense of hope and direction. Kai's high school literature class participated in Everybody Reads. After discussing the book, each student was asked to write a paper about a life experience that was enriched by what they read. Kai's paper focused on the positive experience of letting herself cry about all she had lost during the pandemic. Her insights from the *Book of Delights* and the discussion in her classroom moved Kai forward. "That small shift in mindset helped me find delight in this routine that has become a blur."

This is not the first time the library has helped Kai through a difficult time. When she was eleven, her family left Oakland to make their home in Portland. The loss of childhood friendships and Oakland's culturally vibrant community made it difficult for her to feel at home. Kai turned to her neighborhood library. Chatting with librarians, and stopping by after school to do her homework, Kai found comfort there while she found her footing in Portland.

This fall, Kai plans to take on the world in a way befitting of her exuberant personality. With a gap year in her plans, Kai hopes to travel and explore a career in film making. "Stories are the avenue with which we can understand each other, form connections, and see ourselves as someone else. It's why we write stories. It is also why we read them."

Beyond library walls

Multnomah County Library is an anchor for many, helping us find a way forward in difficult times. Many library programs take place outside of library walls — from book deliveries to thousands of elderly and homebound individuals to outreach programs for children and families at local parks, community centers, health clinics, school parking lots, immigrant and refugee organizations, and free lunch sites. At every stage of life, our library is is a trusted resource.

Always there for you

Marcia's voice warms with pride as she speaks of her childhood in Portland. One of five adopted children in a blended family, her mother and father had little room for niceties in their household budget. Still, they provided Marcia and her siblings with a wealth of opportunity. These intangible, lifelong gifts — a love of learning and insatiable curiosity — took root during their weekly visits to Multnomah County Library.

"The librarians were like friends, asking about our interests, and greeting us each week with new selections," she remembers vividly. "Our parents didn't have a lot of money, but they taught us to treat those books like gold." So many life lessons revolved around these visits — responsibility, the power of community, and the ability to find answers to life's important questions. The impact of the library would follow Marcia throughout her life, from her first job as a teenager at the Hillsdale Library, to her career as a psychiatric nurse practitioner.

When Marcia became disabled at the age of 55, it was a huge loss for her, both physically and emotionally. Often bedridden, she had to relinquish the job she loved, and with it the human and intellectual connection it brought to her life. During this difficult transition, Marcia found that the library was once again in her corner. She began a new chapter in her relationship with the library — this time with Library Outreach Services.

The Library Outreach Services team works outside library walls, delivering tens of thousands of books, audiobooks, and other materials to seniors and disabled individuals across our community. The team facilitates more than just the delivery of materials. They offer human connection, vital information, and resources for those who may be isolated. After 14 years, Marcia knows each member of the Library Outreach Service team by name. They take stock of her budding interests for the next delivery and discuss new selections.

Reference librarians are an asset to Marcia as well, keeping her connected to all she learned in her career. Through Outreach Services, the library continues to feed the thirst for knowledge Marcia's parents instilled in her. "The library opened up the world up to me," she says, "in a way that nothing else ever could."

Today, Tomorrow, Always.

Many of us remember libraries from our childhood as warm places full of stories and books. We turn to our library to educate ourselves about the world. We introduce the library with pride to the children in our lives.

We honor those who have left lasting support for Multnomah County Library. Their planned gifts, large and small, have changed many lives.

PLANNED GIFTS 1995-2021

Nora Jean Abramovitz
Dr. Stephen Acosta
Ruth A. Anderson
Wilna Jean Anderson
Estelle M. Barbur*
Shirley C. Bergman
Dr. Susan Blake
B. Gail Blomquist
Robert Bruce Bowers
Eileen M. Brown
Kenneth and Elsie Butler
Ellen Byrnes
Jean Caldwell*
Virginia Caldwell
Clifford and Doris Carlsen
Eva Carstensen
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William J. Collins
Ralph and Carol Crawshaw*
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Ruth W. Davis
Ronald O. and Beverly DeLong
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James Oliver Elliott
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Edna Epstein
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Elmer Flugam
Karen M. Froman
Yasuko T. Fukano
Gerald and Mary Anne Gage
The Gale Family
Annette Goldschmidt
Peryl Gottesman
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Marian Hallam
Lota M. Heigel
Catharine Heilig
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Kenneth Holfman
Joan and Theodore Hollingsworth
Merriman Holtz, Jr.
Lucile V. Howell
E. Roxie Howlett
Suzanne Itkin
Beverly A. James
Nancy A. Jerome
Eileen Johnson
Laura Jean Jory*
Patricia L. Kahler
Marian V. Kennedy
Jo Anne Klaus
Helen Kroll
Harold and Lorraine W. Kropitzer
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Melinda Littlehales
Gerald Lubofsky
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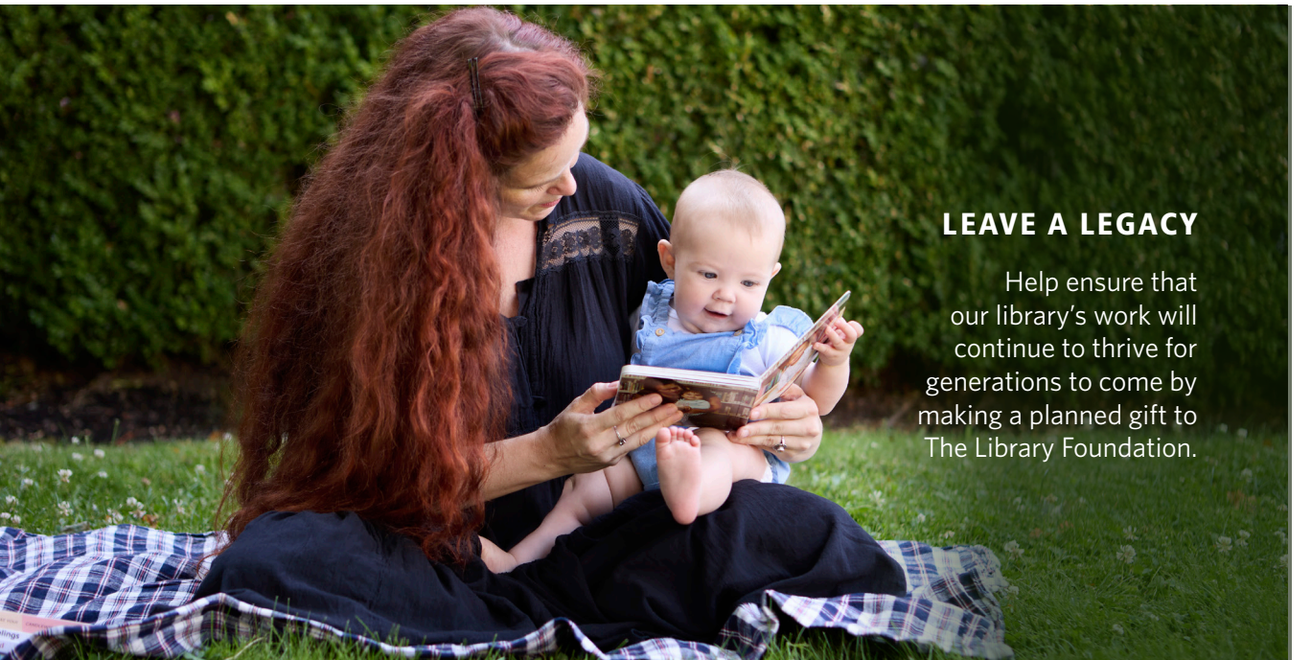
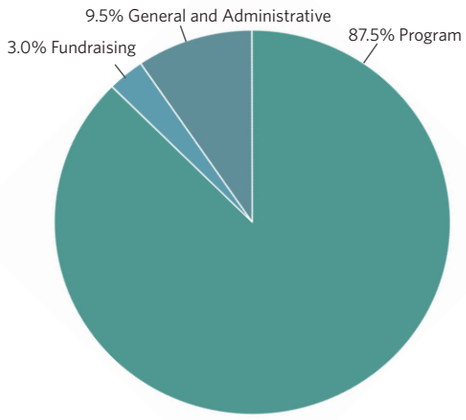
Mary Alice Wilson
Margaret T. Winch
Helen Wittke
Barry E. Wright
Charles E. Wright
Emily Zell*

*Estate gifts received from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

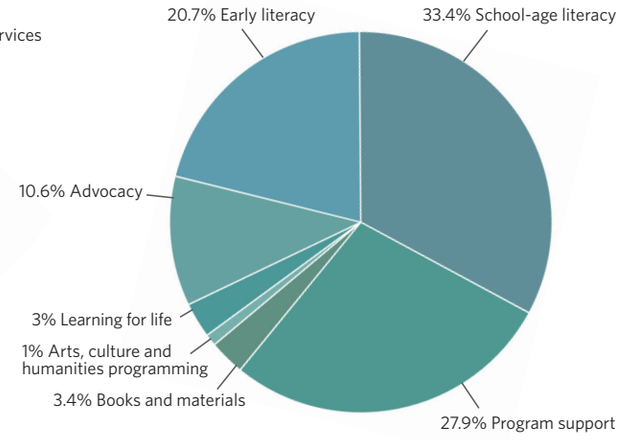


Financials

Expenses
Fundraising costs were 3.2% of dollars raised and 3.0% of dollars spent.



Support for the Library
$2.085 million from The Library Foundation



STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2021

Revenues, gains and other support

Contributions and grants	2,173,434
In-kind contributions	198,216
Interest and dividend income	281,730
Net appreciation, investments	4,286,302
Net increase, irrevocable planned gifts	109,741
Other	355
Total revenues, gains and other support	**7,049,778**

Expenses

Direct support of Multnomah County Library	
Early literacy	432,462
School-age literacy	695,598
Learning for life	62,825
Arts, culture and humanities programming	20,579
Books and materials	71,026
Total cash and in-kind support	**1,282,490**
Program support to Multnomah County Library	581,144
Advocacy	221,425
Total support for Multnomah County Library	**2,085,059**
Management and general	228,099
Fundraising	70,476
Total expenses	**2,383,634**
Change in net assets	4,666,144
Net assets, beginning of year	**19,614,009**
Net assets, end of year	**24,280,153**

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