

A Report to Our Community: 2015 - 2016



THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION
OF MARTIN COUNTY, INC.



BLAKE LIBRARY
Martin County Library System
2351



THE LIBRARY FOUNDATION OF MARTIN COUNTY, INC.

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The mission of The Library Foundation of Martin County, Inc. is to acquire and administer funds to enrich library services and facilities not met by public funding and to endow the library system for future generations.

President's Message



Dear Friends,

Libraries remain an essential component of our civic life. As centers for learning, they provide young and old alike opportunities to gain knowledge and acquire new

skills. They are also important inclusive centers for cultural enrichment through lectures, musical concerts and continuing education classes. We are fortunate to have one of the finest library systems in the state. With over 96,000 cardholders, the Library is much beloved and a cherished community asset. Membership in the Foundation has steadily increased and now totals nearly 1,000 supporters.

We are pleased to share an overview of our activities from October 2014 to September 2016. The integrated partnership between the Library Foundation and Martin County Library System yields a continuing evolution of vital programs and services for everyone.

There were several exciting new Foundation


initiatives launched over the last two years. The Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties provided a three-year grant to create the Gateway to the Arts Project, an arts-based literacy program that targets Stuart's culturally diverse Golden Gate neighborhood as part of a larger community revitalization effort. The program is free to the public and has been a very effective community outreach initiative. The Foundation developed a partnership with the Martin County School District to establish the Young Literary Leaders Awards Program to honor two students at each of the county's 12 elementary schools and recognize exceptional reading achievements. Each student received a certificate and a Barnes & Noble gift card. We also collaborated with The Lyric Theatre to present featured speaker Jessica Fellowes, noted author of several *Downton Abbey* books. We continue to reach out to other organizations in Martin County to enhance our name recognition and to bring educational opportunities to a broader audience.

The Foundation continues to support a variety of Library initiatives, including: an Adult Literacy Program that provides literacy services and GED preparatory classes

throughout the community, including the Golden Gate neighborhood and the Martin County Jail; the Homework Help Program that provides tutorial sessions for students in grades K-12; and the Summer Reading Program that reaches nearly 6,000 children, teens and adults. Several of these programs are made possible through a donation from our longtime and loyal supporter Elisabeth Lahti, who also sponsors the annual Elisabeth Lahti Music Series.

These programs and services and more are made possible through the generous support from individuals, foundations and companies in our caring community. I also want to recognize and thank my fellow board members and others within our larger Library family – the Friends of Martin County Library System and the Library Board of Trustees - whose dedication and volunteer service have made all the difference.

This year marks the Foundation's 25th Anniversary. We have planned a number of exciting events to celebrate this milestone achievement and hope to see you there. Thank you for your support!


Noreen Q. Fisher, President

Board of Directors and Former Presidents

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Dennis Fruitt, Executive Director
Maryann Atkins, Program Assistant



A meeting of the Library Foundation Board of Directors in the John F. (Jack) and Rita M. Armstrong Wing at the Blake Library.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: *BookMania!*

Funded **\$35,360** in 2015

Funded **\$11,381** in 2016

A perennial favorite for residents and snowbirds alike, *BookMania!* is the most visible and admired program that the Foundation sponsors.

In 2015 and 2016, reading enthusiasts filled the Jensen Beach High School theatre to listen to the authors, purchase books from our outstanding partnership with Barnes & Noble, meet the authors and have their books signed. The annual audience attendance was approximately 700 people.

In 2016, the Foundation was awarded a \$10,500 grant from the Florida Division of Cultural Affairs to add a young adult author workshop to *BookMania!* 2017. Author Paul Griffin (*Burning Blue*) will meet high school students for a presentation. Jay Asher (*Thirteen Reasons Why*) will join Mr. Griffin for the young adult panel during *BookMania!* The grant funds author stipends, copies of books for the students, and promotions.

The one-day free event with presentations by individual authors, category panels with moderators and an active Q & A is an evolving format that underscores the successful collaboration of the Library System and the Foundation.



■ The annual *BookMania!* program brings together a diverse selection of authors and hundreds of book fans.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: *BookMania!*

2015 Authors

Marie-Helene Bertino
2 A.M. at the Cat's Pajamas

Cara Black
Murder on the Champ de Mars

Lisa Black
Close to the Bone

Scott Cheshire
High as the Horses' Bridle

Patricia Harman
The Reluctant Midwife

Mira Jacob
Sleepwalker's Guide to Dancing

Joseph Kanon
The Good German

Laura Lippman
Every Secret Thing

Jack Livings
The Dog: Stories

Maria Doria Russell
Epitaph: a Novel of the O.K. Corral

Hampton Sides
In the Kingdom of Ice: The Grand and Terrible Polar Voyage of the USS Jeanette

Peter Swanson
The Girl with a Clock for a Heart

Lis Wiehl
Lethal Beauty

2016 Authors
Kim van Alkemade
Orphan #8

Alafair Burke
The Ex

Meg Waite Clayton
The Race for Paris

Tami Hoag
The Bitter Season

Phillip Margolin
Violent Crimes

Paula McLain
Circling the Sun

Dolen Perkins-Valdez
Balm

Katy Simpson Smith
Free Men

Les Standiford
Water to the Angels

Lisa Unger
Crazy Love You



While at *BookMania!*, attendees purchased children's books for the Martin County School System.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: *A Literary Affair*

A Literary Affair has become a successful fundraiser that supports *BookMania!* and other Foundation programs. The dinner is an evolution of previous events held to welcome the *BookMania!* authors. Sponsors enjoy an opportunity to meet and mingle with the authors in an intimate setting. Guests enjoy a cocktail hour in the courtyard of the Blake Library followed by a seated dinner in the John F. (Jack) and Rita M. Armstrong Wing.

Over the last two years, *A Literary Affair* raised nearly \$137,000.

CO-CHAIRS (2015)

Christine DelVecchio
Noreen Fisher
Carrie Philipbar
May Smyth

CO-CHAIRS (2016)

Noreen Fisher
Alishia Parenteau



James and Lois McGuire, board member, Gary and Christine DelVecchio, board Vice President, and Pete and Carole Kozloski enjoyed the 2016 evening with the authors.



BookMania! authors Les Standiford, Tami Hoag, Alafair Burke, Dolen Perkins-Valez, Katy Simpson Smith, Paula McLain, Meg Waite Clayton, Phillip Margolin and Lisa Unger enjoyed cocktails and dinner with guests.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: *Kiplinger Literacy Award*

After nine years, the annual Kiplinger Literacy Award Luncheon enjoys a sold-out status and is a successful fundraiser. Established in 2009 with an award to literacy volunteer teacher Sandra Kimmelman and a keynote address by Knight Kiplinger, the hallmark event provides an auspicious beginning to the new year.

The award also honors the Kiplinger family whose foresight and leadership have had such a positive and enduring imprint on the Martin County Library System.

In 2015, the late Edward McGowan and his wife Joan were honored for their significant investment in the Library's literacy programs. In 2016, Olene Stuart was recognized for her lifetime of commitment to education and leadership and specifically her guidance in helping to initiate the Library's literacy program.

Other recipients include: Elisabeth Lahti (2014); Bridget Baratta (2013); Patricia Stewart (2012); Charlie Belmont (2011); Betty Mulligan (2010); and Sandra Kimmelman (2009).

Over the last two years, the luncheon raised over \$112,000.



Edward and Joan McGowan were honored at the 2015 luncheon.



Board President Noreen Fisher, honoree Olene Stuart, Knight Kiplinger and event chair Lois McGuire at the 2016 award luncheon.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: *Adult Literacy Services*

Funded **\$58,500** in 2015

Funded **\$61,425** in 2016

The Foundation continues to fund the Adult Literacy program that is successfully fulfilled by the Martin County Library System.

2015: 1,109 literacy tutor sessions, 5 GED student graduates and 750 Life Skills participants.

2016: 1,530 literacy tutor sessions and 580 Life Skills participants.

A variety of free services are provided throughout the community including: Adult Basic Education, Conversation Circles, Citizenship Classes, Career Counseling, Pell Grant Assistance, Career Online High School and Workplace Literacy.

In 2016, 12 students enrolled in a pilot program to earn a high school diploma through online instruction or receive a certificate in a specialty area.

At the Cassidy Community Center, 104 ESOL and GED classes served 2,860 students.

Workplace literacy at Sandhill Cove retirement community provided 35 sessions with a total of 245 attendees.



Donna Musso, Adult Literacy Instructor, presents students with certificates of accomplishment at their graduation ceremony.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: *Homework Help*

Funded **\$18,700** in 2015

Funded **\$19,300** in 2016

Donor: Elisabeth Lahti

The Homework Help program provides much-needed face-to-face tutoring by trained volunteers for children K-12 and the post-secondary level, in our libraries. Students and volunteers also have access to an online program, Tutor.com, as a resource.

Funding provides a part-time coordinator to oversee volunteers, coordinate outreach efforts and promote the program. A total of 2,188 students received assistance in 2015 and 2016.

In 2016, new services were added including SAT/ACT Test Preparation, College Scholarship Writing, Financial Literacy, Summer Young Adult Book Clubs, How to Avoid Test Anxiety, and Poetry and Literacy.

In the several years I have been a homework helper, the children I have helped vary from a little boy whose parents felt he wasn't ready for kindergarten, to a college student applying for a scholarship, with many homework assignments in between. I am the beneficiary of those hours as much as the children, maybe more.

*Dorothy Wharton
Volunteer, Homework Help Program*



■ Dorothy Wharton is one of dozens of volunteers who provide one-on-one tutoring to students in grades K-12 throughout the Library System.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: *Summer Reading Program*

Funded **\$17,000** in 2015

Funded **\$30,665** in 2016

Summer reading programs provide a vital link to ensuring that students retain the critical reading and academic skills they learned during the school year. The program continues to grow in popularity. Every year the national Summer Reading Program provides a unified summer reading theme

with professional art and evidence-based materials so member libraries can provide high-quality summer reading programs at the lowest possible cost and play a significant role in literacy initiatives. We are grateful to Elisabeth Lahti and Joan McGowan for their generous support.

CHILDREN – INFANTS TO FIFTH GRADE

2015		2016	
10,653	Attended events	13,028	Attended events
7,485	Books awarded	7,767	Books awarded
2,358	Children participated	2,447	Children participated
636	Completed the program	687	Completed the program

TEENS – SIXTH GRADE TO TWELTH GRADE

2015		2016	
198	Attended events	151	Attended events
562	Teen book reviews submitted	718	Teen book reviews submitted
281	Volunteer hours awarded	359	Volunteer hours awarded

ADULTS – 18 YEARS OLD AND ABOVE

2015		2016	
2,659	Attended events	3,289	Attended events
128	Submitted book reviews	170	Completed Bingo cards



Thousands of children enjoy the variety of activities during the summer reading programs. The entire family, including grandparents, can enjoy time together in a fun, relaxed educational setting.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: *Gateway to the Arts, Dr. Seuss Day and L.E.A.P.*

Funded **\$54,431** in 2015

Funded **\$54,431** in 2016

Donor: A Grant from the Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: *Gateway to the Arts*

In 2015, the Foundation was awarded a three-year grant totaling \$163,293 from the Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties. The Gateway to the Arts project opened in October 2015 in a leased space on Fairmont Street in Stuart's Golden Gate community.

The art studio has been a huge success with 300 attendees per month, exceeding the expectation of 100 per month. An events assistant oversees the program and coordinates the volunteers who make this creative program possible.

This project is providing a hands-on art center in this culturally diverse neighborhood. The center has created a welcome haven that is enjoyed by many residents of all ages in our community.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: *Dr. Seuss Day*

Awarded: \$400 each year, 2015 and 2016
Dr. Seuss Day is a nationwide reading celebration that takes place annually

on March 2, Dr. Seuss's birthday. An enthusiastic team of volunteers read to students in Martin County daycare centers and schools.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: *L.E.A.P.*

A \$10,000 grant from the William and Helen Thomas Charitable Trust established the Library Educational Afterschool Program

(L.E.A.P.) to specifically target childhood obesity, an identified problem in Indiantown. The program provided structured physical activities, technology, environmental science, nutrition classes, arts and crafts and healthy snacks at the Elisabeth Lahti Library in Indiantown. The grant benefited 3,039 children in 2015 and 2016.



■ Artist Julia Kelly painted a large mural and provided instruction to children at the opening of the Gateway to the Arts in 2015.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: *STEM Events*

Funded **\$1,700** in 2015
Funded **\$1,808** in 2016

Donors: Clare and Molly Tyler

Thanks to a generous \$100,000 endowment gift from Clare and Molly Tyler, STEM* events throughout the Library System use a variety of educators, tools and materials with the goal of inspiring students to develop their interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Imaginative presentations, tailored to specific age groups and presented at various libraries, bring the mysteries and wonder of science, math, and chemistry to life.

In 2016, STEM kits were created that provided equipment for programming throughout the Library System. Each kit included ideas that inspired creation, invention, and experimentation for several years worth of STEM programming.

The Tyler Endowment Fund was combined with other funding to create 249 events with 6,057 attendees in 2015 and 391 events with 8,375 attendees in 2016.

**Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics*



The Tyler Endowment Fund has provided for multiple STEM programs presented by a variety of educators that make science fun and intriguing.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: *Humanities*

Funded **\$21,500** in 2015

The Foundation provided a substantial grant to the Library System to promote an appreciation and understanding of the humanities and diverse cultures in Martin County. The outcome was extremely positive; 216 events and activities were created that reached a total audience of 10,916 adults and children.

Adults enjoyed live presentations by actors, authors and musicians. Some explored their nascent talents with art classes for beginners.

Children learned about other cultures with multi-cultural folktales and folksongs including stories from Asian American, Latin American, and Native American cultures. Traditional songs and audience participation added to the experience. Children also tried hands-on painting to express themselves.

Another event that amazed and delighted all ages was a juggling and illusion show that blended an incredible journey of magic, music and lights and so much more. The high-energy innovative show used cutting-edge light and laser effects that amazed all ages.



■ Taiko Japanese Drumming piqued the students' interest as they explored the world of Japanese history and tradition, drum design and building, and the history of Samurai warriors.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: *Elisabeth Lahti Concert Series*

Funded **\$9,500** in 2015

Funded **\$8,500** in 2016

Donor: Elisabeth Lahti

A series of afternoon performances at the Peter & Julie Cummings and Blake libraries offered a diverse and eclectic mix of talented performers. The 2015 series opened with Dale Rieth performing a salute to the music of George Gershwin. Pianist Peter Pertis continued his Beauty of Classical Piano series (Part VI) and in February Matthew Sabatella and his Rambling String Band brought a distinctive sound to the afternoon. Thomas Servinsky, the Director/Conductor of Academy Orchestra, performed with pianist Tao Lin.

The Grammy-nominated accordionist, trumpeter and vocalist Alex Meixner and his band rounded out the musical diversity with an afternoon of outrageously energetic polka music, gypsy folk music and unique cover versions of popular American music from the past 70 years.

In 2016, jazz lovers enjoyed Victorya Cole and the B3 Jazz Trio followed by Peter Pertis's presentation of the Beauty of Classical Piano (Part VII) at the Blake Library.

Doc Grober and his Swing Quartet uplifted everyone's spirits with their vibrant music.

The Jureit Musicales Family Musicians delighted everyone with their multitude of vocal and instrumental talents. The Florida native award-winning folk group Ashley Gang entertained with soaring harmonies and witty onstage repartee. And the season concluded with internationally-recognized pianists Tao Lin and Catherine Lan of Duo Beaux Arts, who performed a program of classical romance and dance selections.

World-renowned classical concert pianist Peter Pertis with Betty Lahti, the founder and donor of the concert series.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: *Young Literary Leaders Awards Program & Key Partnerships*

Funded **\$2,500** in 2015

Donor: **Arati Hammond**

In May 2016, the Foundation launched a new annual outreach program to encourage and celebrate the love of reading in elementary students. The Young Literary Leaders Awards Program recognized a pair of students, a girl and a boy, at Martin County's 12 elementary schools. The students were selected by their teachers. Arati Hammond, Realtor® with Keller Williams, sponsored the program. Students were recognized at a school awards program and received a certificate and Barnes & Noble gift card.



■ Board President Noreen Fisher and program sponsor Arati Hammond presented certificates and gift cards to Alyssa Busch and Lawrence Tatum at Citrus Grove Elementary School, with Dennis Fruitt, Executive Director.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: *Jessica Fellowes in partnership with The Lyric Theatre*

The Foundation and The Lyric Theatre partnered to present author Jessica Fellowes on stage on January 28, 2016. Fellowes has written three official companion books on the subject of the MASTERPIECE blockbuster series *Downton Abbey* and is the niece of *Downton Abbey* creator and scriptwriter Julian Fellowes. A private reception with Ms. Fellowes was hosted by Ray and Ellyn Stevenson at their home for premier ticket holders.



■ Author Jessica Fellowes with Ellyn Stevenson and Patty Downing, President of The Lyric, at the private reception hosted by the Stevensons.

Founders Society



The Foundation established the Founders Society in 1992 to recognize those donors who have contributed a cumulative gift of \$10,000 or more to the Foundation. We are very grateful for their loyal investments in our mission.

(*denotes deceased)

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