



MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY  
& Foundation



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020

## MISSION

Mobilize the Madison community to continuously improve, promote and support Madison Public Library.

## VISION

Equip Madison Public Library with robust resources to deliver outstanding services, facilities and programs that meet the Madison community's needs.



## FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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PRESIDENT

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VICE PRESIDENT

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ASSISTANT TREASURER

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Chris Hughes

Christopher Jaye  
Tom Kuplic

Jillana Peterson  
Rajesh Rajaraman  
Francesca Rodriguez  
Gene Williams

## CORE VALUES

### COMMUNITY

Engage the community as stakeholders for the library system

### INTEGRITY

Demonstrate transparency in how gifts are used to support the library

### ADVOCACY

Champion what is best for the library and the community

### LEADERSHIP

Act as visionaries in advancing the library

## STRATEGIC GOALS

### FUNDRAISING

The foundation provides stable, consistent support to the library for ongoing and new initiatives.

### DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

The foundation is a socially just and antiracist institution, and diversity, equity and inclusion is considered in foundation decision-making.

### PR AND COMMUNICATION

Community members know that the foundation funds and advocates for Madison Public Library.

### PROGRAMMING AND VITAL SERVICES

The foundation provides innovative programming for donors and supports expanded library services.



## MISSION

Madison Public Library provides free and equitable access to cultural and educational experiences. We celebrate ideas, promote creativity, connect people and enrich lives.

## VISION

Madison Public Library: your place to learn, share and create.



## LIBRARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Eve Galanter  
**PRESIDENT**

Alyssa Kenney  
**VICE PRESIDENT**

Cindy Fesemyer  
**SECRETARY/TREASURER**

Ald. Juliana Bennett  
**CITY COUNCIL MEMBER**

Lisa Hempstead  
**MMSD REPRESENTATIVE**

Jair Alvarez

Michael Ford

Jaime Healy-Plotkin  
**IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT**

Jolynne Roorda

## STRATEGIC LENS

**LITERACY** is the ability to interpret and understand. It is our purpose.

**ENGAGEMENT** encompasses how we connect to the community and build relationships. It is how we do business.

**COMMUNITY** includes all of Madison. It is who we serve.

**EQUITY** refers to the measures we take to help the people in our community realize their full potential. It is how we serve.

**ACCOUNTABILITY** means we take responsibility for our actions and produce results. It is our promise.



## OUR CORE VALUES

- Learning in all forms
- Diverse perspectives
- Intellectual freedom
- Customer experience
- Collaboration
- Innovation
- Making a difference



Grants to library  
**\$684,163**

Artists engaged through the Bubbler  
**44**



Loyal Friends giving 5+ years  
**295**

Digital collection funds raised  
**\$128,920**

Book Festival members and benefactors  
**171**

Bequests  
**\$194,394**

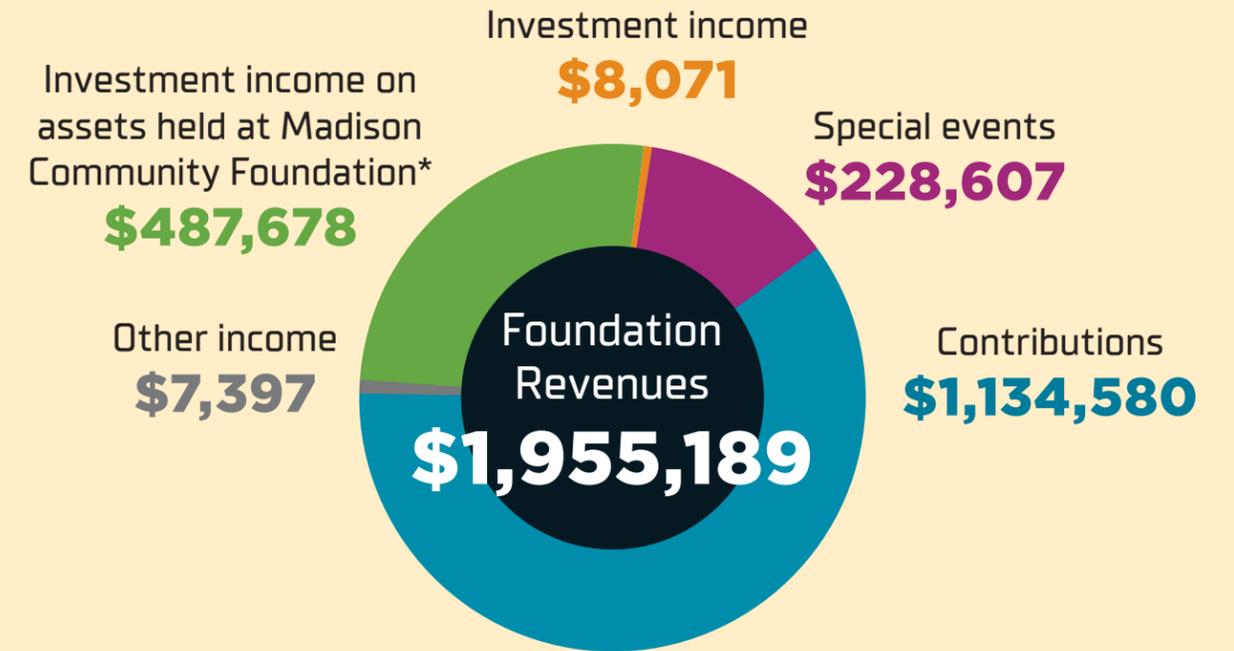
Endowment balance  
**\$7,484,363**  
a 10.18% increase over 2019

Fundraising events proceeds  
**\$228,607**

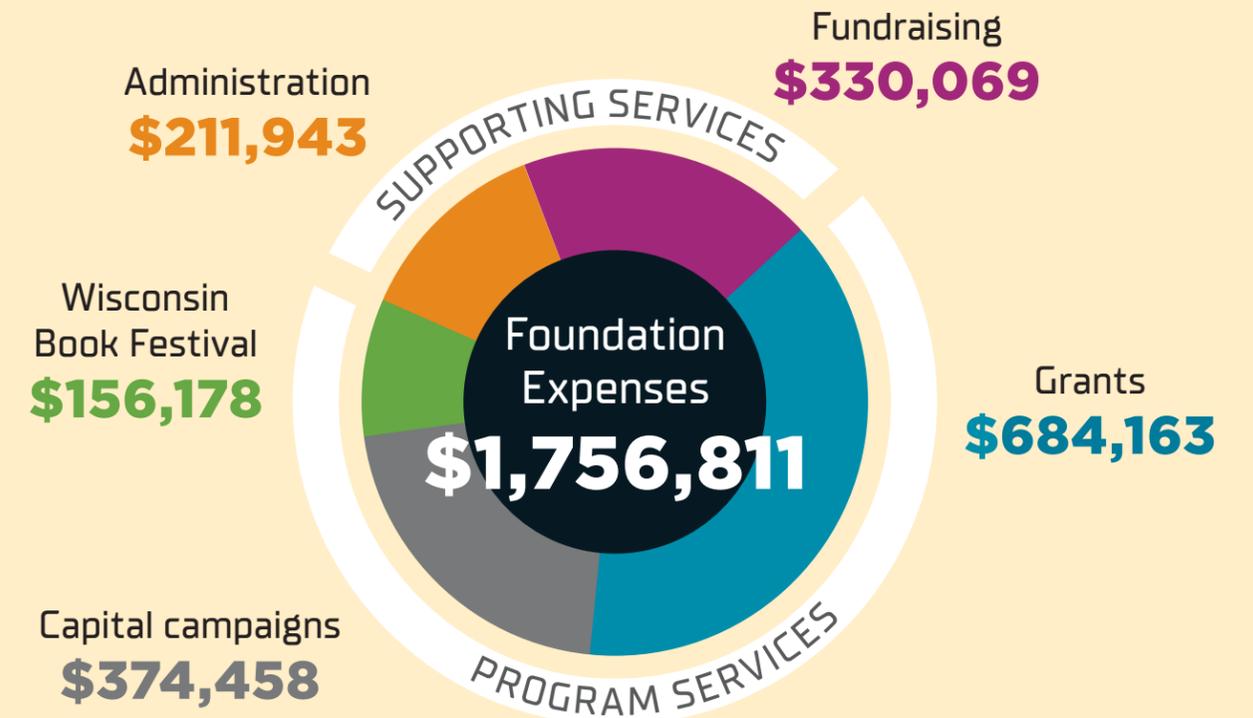
Pinney endowment contributions  
**\$78,350**



# FOUNDATION 2020 FINANCIALS



\*Investment income earned from assets held at Madison Community Foundation increases endowment funds, which annually support library and foundation staff, collections, facilities and program services.





Library cards issued  
**8,141**

Virtual library cards issued  
**3,489**

FINE-FREE EFFORTS  
**3,478** cards unblocked  
**33,503** accounts cleared of fines  
*project completed in April 2021*

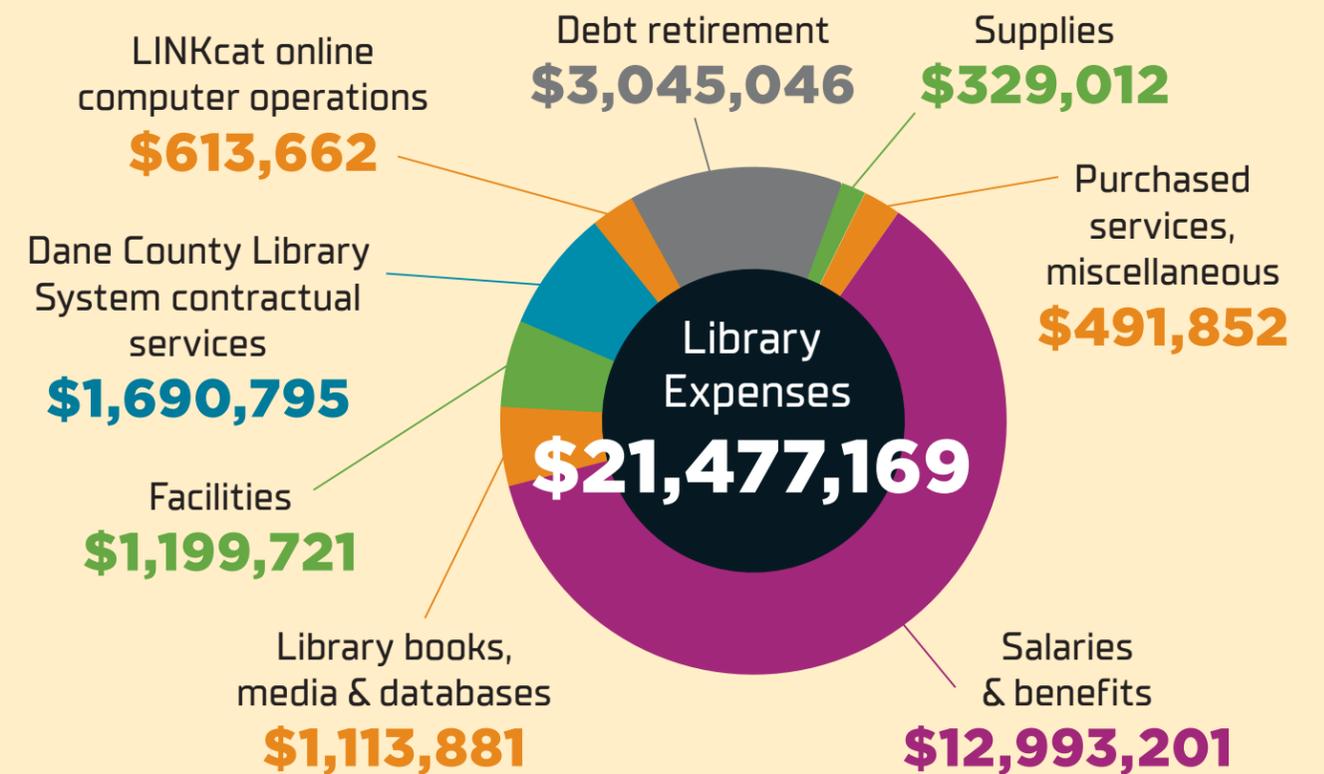
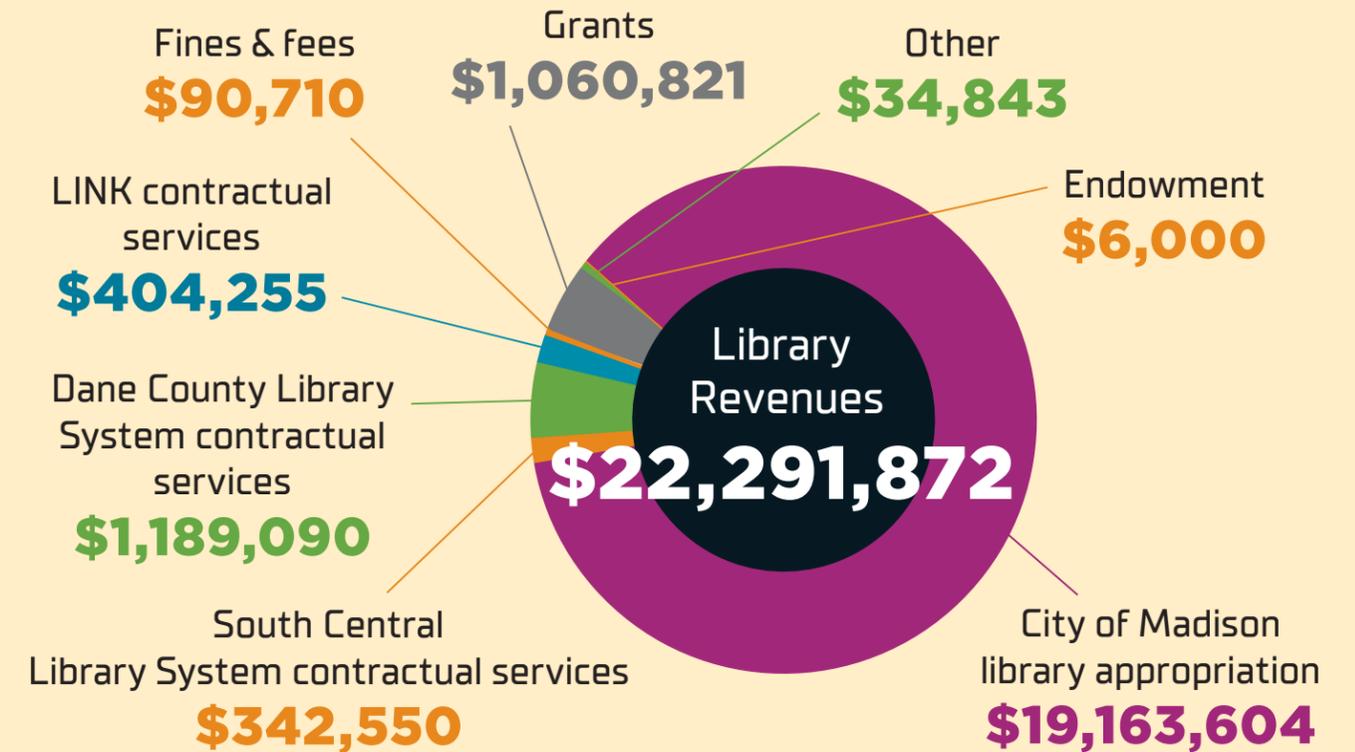
CURBSIDE  
**139,171** appointments  
**508,431** items checked out

Materials checked out  
**1.9 million+**

OverDrive use  
**594,513** checkouts



# LIBRARY 2020 FINANCIALS





# YEAR IN REVIEW

2020 began with a bang — the momentous occasion of Pinney Library’s grand opening and gala. But almost overnight, COVID-19 forced all Madison Public Library locations to close. Although spring was a season of uncertainty and fear for our community and our world, the library staff’s dedication, ingenuity and flexibility kept patrons informed, entertained and hopeful throughout the year. From a phone reference line to curbside service to Bubbler partnerships with artists that helped illustrate and document pandemic experiences, the library adapted and thrived despite the state of flux. The Library Board adopted a fine-free policy in August to boost equity and access even amid a reduced anticipated 2021 budget. Madison Public Library Foundation responded to changing library needs with unique fundraising campaigns, matching gifts and grants to provide vital supplementary funds.



Pinney Library's bicycle pavilion was filled with sturdy, personalized bike racks, thanks to donors who sponsored them through the foundation's Rack Raising campaign.

The libraries played an important role in the elections throughout the year. They served as sites for in-person absentee voting, absentee ballot drop-off and voter registration. Library staff also assisted the City Clerk's Office in processing absentee ballots.



A Sequoya Library staff member answers the phone reference line, which was staffed daily.



Many patrons took advantage of the library's curbside service for their favorite books, movies and other materials.

# PINNEY LIBRARY GALA AND GRAND OPENING



On February 29, guests of Love the Library: A Grand Opening Gala for Pinney Library got the first glimpse of the new east side facility. Supporting the event were Presenting Sponsors Monona Bank and Nimick Forbesway Foundation; Sustaining Sponsors Lauer Realty Group, Madison Gas & Electric Foundation, Woodman's Markets and Stephen D. Morton; and numerous other businesses and individuals. The event raised nearly \$92,000 for the new library. An endowment campaign featuring a challenge gift from Madison Community Foundation brought in more than \$78,000 last year.

The Pinney Library Grand Opening took place on March 12 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by city officials, library and foundation staff, and community members. Situated in the Royster Corners development on Cottage Grove Road, the new library includes a large children's area; the PlayLab, an interactive space that supports early literacy through child-directed play; a community room that seats 100; local art and handcrafted seating areas; a bike pavilion; and a drive-through book drop.



Community members walk through the doors of the new Pinney Library at the Grand Opening on March 12.



Kids enjoy child-directed play in the PlayLab



Madison Public Library Foundation board members Gene Williams (left) and Ron Bote (right) with volunteer Seth Braddock at the Pinney gala.

“After more than seven years of community conversations, planning and construction, Madison Public Library celebrated the grand opening of the new Pinney Library. The new, expanded library showcases many special features, including several sustainable elements that make Pinney our ‘greenest’ library. There’s an outdoor space adjacent to our youth area, our first drive-up book return, a dedicated early learning area and diverse installations by local artists. Unfortunately, the community has had to wait to fully explore and enjoy this community resource that they helped inspire. We’re looking forward to the reopening and welcoming everyone back in 2021.”

**- GREG MICKELLS, LIBRARY DIRECTOR**

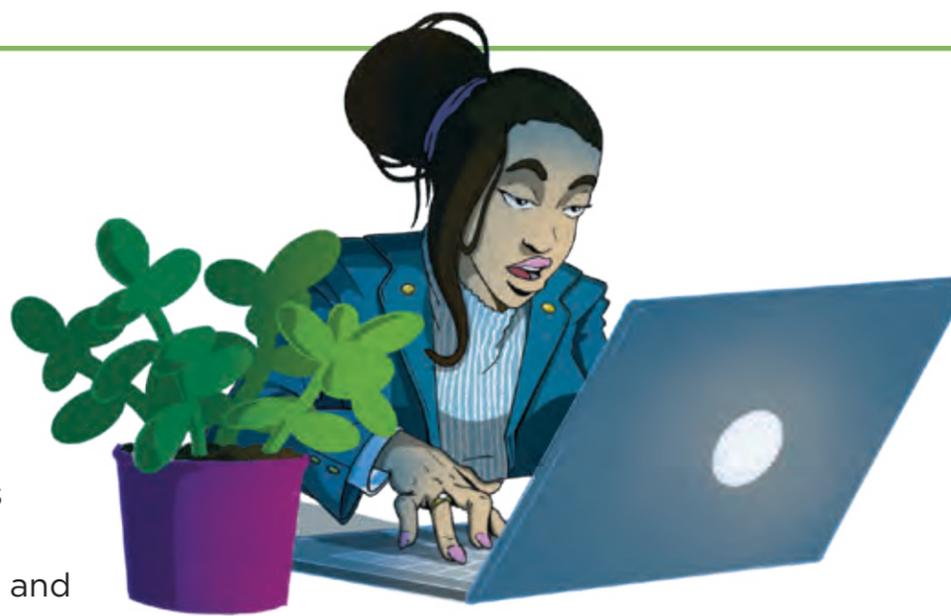


Library Director Greg Mickells and Ald. Barbara Harrington-McKinney, a former Library Board member, at Love the Library: A Grand Opening Gala for Pinney Library.

## LIBRARY @ HOME

Although Madison Public Library locations closed in March, library staff worked hard from their homes to make sure patrons could still access a wide variety of library resources. Almost immediately following Wisconsin's Safer at Home order, the library shifted from a physical collections and programs mindset to digital collections and virtual programming. In late March, the

library launched its **Library @ Home** website resource page. Thanks to a \$128,000 Digital Resources Fund Drive campaign launched by Madison Public Library Foundation in March and an annual fund grant of \$50,000, the library



significantly expanded its eBook and audiobook collections through OverDrive, and added newspaper and magazine subscriptions. David Hall & Marjorie Devereaux, Lau and Bea Christensen, and the foundation's Board of Directors pooled their digital resources gifts for a match of \$45,000.



A patron listens to an audiobook via the Libby app.

“One silver lining to the pandemic was that many more Madisonians discovered our virtual collections as a result of having to close our doors. We’ve seen great increases in checkouts and new users this year, and made even more eBooks, audiobooks, magazines, newspapers and databases available to users at home thanks to \$125,000 in gifts that Madison Public Library Foundation quickly raised at the pandemic’s onset. The digital collection really expands library services right into patrons’ homes whenever they need them.”

– **MOLLY WARREN, LIBRARY COLLECTION MANAGER**

## MPL HELPING HANDS

When Wisconsin's Safer at Home order went into effect, countless library staff at all levels took on a variety of tasks outside their traditional roles in order to serve the Madison community in the most impactful way. Much of this flexibility happened behind the scenes, so in an effort to capture these stories, the Bubbler partnered with local illustrators and posted weekly on the library's social media with the hashtag #MPLHelpingHands. The **MPL Helping Hands** project was paid for with a foundation annual fund grant that allowed the Bubbler to pay artists, many of whom lost income during the pandemic.



Maia Chen created one of the MPL Helping Hands illustrations.

## LOOK FORWARD

The library's Bubbler program and the City of Madison teamed up to launch #LookForwardMadison in March. This arts-fueled social media campaign demonstrated how community members supported each other during the pandemic with an eye toward positivity, inclusion and resilience, and how the community could look forward to a time when people can be together. **Look Forward** was funded with a foundation grant, and collaborators included Madison Arts Commission and Art & Sons.



## STORIES FROM A DISTANCE

The library led the Stories from a Distance living history project to gather and share peoples' personal pandemic experiences. Sharing stories from community members helped to document the unique and unprecedented time in Madison's history. A foundation annual fund grant partially covered project costs.



Photo by Shanna Wolf/S. Photography

Patrons work on computers during scheduled appointment times at Sequoya Library.

## SERVICE ADAPTATIONS

Madison Public Library services evolved as it became apparent that the pandemic was here to stay for a while. Staff began to field calls on a telephone reference line that was open daily, and a Madison Public Library Foundation annual fund grant covered the cost of Zendesk customer service software that helped staff efficiently handle patron requests. A foundation grant also funded a Zoom software subscription for staff to communicate via video conferencing.

In May, the library began to offer curbside service appointments to get materials safely into borrowers' hands. Materials were quarantined upon their return. Patrons were able to schedule appointments for computer use beginning in early summer.

## ALICIA ASHMAN REMODELING

With the libraries clear of patrons, it was the perfect time to tackle some remodeling projects. Alicia Ashman Library was in need of renovations, which were planned even before COVID-19 surfaced. Improvements included:

- new seating and furniture
- a new teen area
- relocation of the print/copy center
- several repainted areas
- a self-service holds area with self-checkout machines
- newly installed Wi-Fi and other wiring that will allow for future technology upgrades

The renovations were funded in part with Madison Public Library Foundation endowment dollars and Friends of Alicia Ashman Library contributions.

Alicia Ashman Library underwent renovations in the spring and reopened in June.



“Our staff worked hard to pull together so many new services at the beginning of the pandemic, from curbside service to an online library card application. We found new ways of doing things safely while still providing our customers with a steady stream of library books and other materials to support online learning, personal growth and much-needed entertainment.”

**- MARGIE NAVARRE SAAF,  
BORROWER SERVICES MANAGER**

A Pinney Library staff member loads materials into the trunk of a patron's vehicle as part of the library's curbside service program.

## WIRELESS PRINTING

The foundation secured a \$3,500 Alliant Energy Foundation grant that allowed the library to begin offering remote printing services. Library patrons are able to send a print job via the library website or the ePRINTit app to the library location of their choice, where it can be picked up.

“Our patrons have loved the convenience of submitting their documents directly from their own devices, or even remotely from home. This has been especially helpful while we have been closed during the pandemic, with limited staffing and computer availability.”

**- LUCAS SCHNEIDER,  
PROGRAM ASSISTANT**





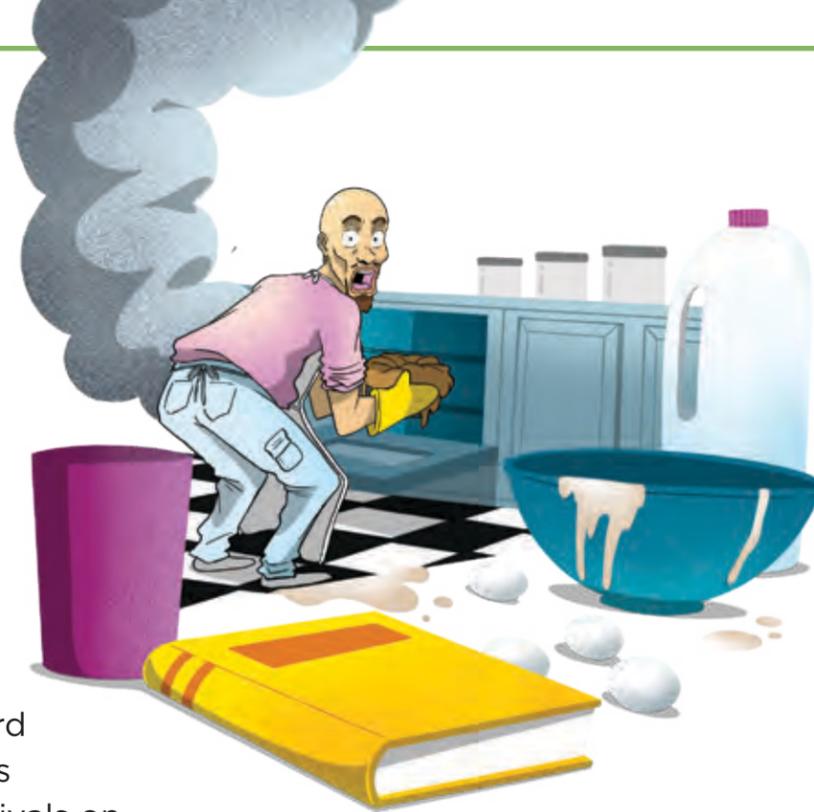
# WISCONSIN BOOK FESTIVAL

In April, the **Wisconsin Book Festival** replaced its in-person author programs with virtual events. Most of the live-streamed events are archived and available to watch anytime on the festival website. Featured authors included many of color, as well as award winners, plus books on important, timely topics like antiracism. Partnering with other book festivals on occasion helped bring even more high-profile authors to the community.

The festival ended 2020 with 70 programs; seven of those were in person at the beginning of the year. More than 11,500 people attended events, with an average of more than 175 attendees per event — a higher average than in-person events typically yield. The three-day celebration in mid-October offered 16 conversations with 20+ authors. The festival also gave away 1,625 books during the year.

*Literary Hub*, a website for book lovers around the world, recently recognized festival Director Conor Moran for providing strong leadership within the book festival industry.

Lead support for the festival comes from Signature Sponsor Marvin J. Levy, Presenting Sponsor Pleasant T. Rowland Foundation, and Festival Sponsors National Endowment for the Arts and American Girl’s Fund for Children.



“The 2020 Wisconsin Book Festival was understandably different from any previous iteration. After hosting seven in-person events early in the year, we quickly adapted to the new conditions and launched a robust approach to virtual programming. The virtual setting required us to engage a moderator for each event. We used this as an opportunity to involve many people with Wisconsin connections in order to drive home the festival’s Wisconsin nature.”

**- CONOR MORAN, WISCONSIN BOOK FESTIVAL DIRECTOR**



Wisconsin Democratic Party Chair Ben Wikler moderated a June event with voting rights activist and political leader Stacey Abrams.

The October celebration featured an event with novelists Kiley Reid and Angie Kim.





## THE BUBBLER

In addition to the MPL Helping Hands and Look Forward projects (see page 15), the Bubblr team found creative ways to keep Madisonians and its partner artists engaged. When the Bubblr couldn't host artists-in-residence in the libraries, it fostered conversations with them about the pandemic's impact on their work. These discussions helped inform the Bubblr's engagement process, especially in planning how to reach and support families in need of creative learning outlets.

The Bubblr worked with artist and graduate student Madison Weist for the **Post-It Possibilities** project — a fun, interactive guide of more than 50 art projects that one can do with a stack of Post-Its, and small enough to fit in an envelope so it could be easily mailed. The project was the perfect fit for those staying safer at home and needing an expressive outlet.

Bubblr artist Rebecca Vickers created an **informative zine**, produced in English and Spanish, that outlined the library's available services.

Lead Bubblr funding was provided by Scooter Software, Madison Arts Commission and Dane Arts.



“The relationship-building part is the easier part; my ability to work with kids and connect with them hasn't changed. It's the technical stuff that's harder, like working on a beat. It is hard to coach a kid on writing their rhymes online. But it is all relatively new, and we're learning as we're going.”

- **ROB FRANKLIN, BUBBLER MEDIA INSTRUCTOR**

## MAKING JUSTICE

The Bubblr's **Making Justice** program, led by Teen Services Librarian Jesse Vieau and assisted by Bubblr Media Instructor Rob Franklin (Rob Dz), developed innovative ways to reconnect with incarcerated and at-risk teens in the system who found themselves even more isolated than before. Zoom workshops replaced in-person learning, and over time, participants became more comfortable with the format. Artists Emida Roller and Shiloah Coley worked with teenagers at the Dane County Juvenile Court Shelter Home and the Dane County Juvenile Detention Center in the summer to bring youth ideas and voices to the blank concrete walls surrounding the Shelter Home's driveway.

Madison Public Library Foundation gifts made it possible for Making Justice to pay artists who presented workshops; provide materials and supplies for participants; and offer technology like iPads, computers, webcams and software that wouldn't otherwise be available at places like the Juvenile Detention Center. Making Justice lead donors included Epic Systems, Scooter Software, *The Capital Times* Kids Fund, and the Leila & Mickey Straus Foundation.



Teens work on the mural outside the Shelter Home.

## FINE FREE

Madison Public Library demonstrated its commitment to equity and literacy when its Library Board voted in August to eliminate overdue fines and stop using a collections agency. In 2019, library staff reviewed data on borrowing trends, cardholder trends, use patterns of other fine-free libraries and revenue generated by overdue fines. It became clear

that overdue fines, and the blocked library cards that often result from fines, disproportionately affected libraries serving neighborhoods with lower incomes and higher percentages of residents of color.



“We know that some library customers are unable to check out library materials due to fines, and in keeping with our commitment to equity and access to public libraries, we felt that this was the right time to eliminate overdue fines and the use of a collection agency. We made this decision during a particularly difficult budget discussion, but now more than ever, public libraries are valuable community assets that should be available for all.”

**- JAIME HEALY-PLOTKIN,  
MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD PRESIDENT,  
AUGUST 2020**

“Amazing how interwoven art, spoken word, poetry, and music were throughout the whole Summit — and how the idea of ‘Receiving the wisdom of Black art’ stayed with me. I was awed by Rob’s words and music shared live and posted on his page.”

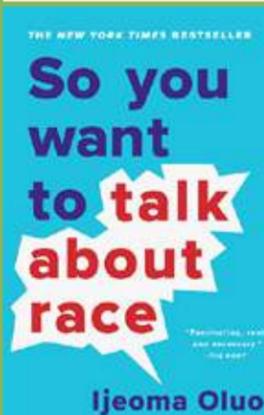
**- YOUTH SERVICES LIBRARIAN  
TRACY MOORE,  
who attended the YWCA Racial Justice Summit**

## RACIAL JUSTICE

Last summer, as the Madison community and beyond demanded change and condemned violence and racism toward people of color, Madison Public Library and Madison Public Library Foundation issued statements about the important role that libraries play in dismantling systemic racism. The library kept patrons informed of educational books and resources in its collection for those wanting to learn more about racial equity, and it used social media and email communications to highlight black authors.

The Wisconsin Book Festival offered many virtual events featuring authors of color and racial equity-themed books. The foundation also provided funding for the library staff to attend virtual professional development training on the topics of racial justice, equity and inclusion.

*So You Want to Talk About Race?*  
by Ijeoma Aluo  
was the most checked-out item from the digital collection in 2020.



## DREAM BUS

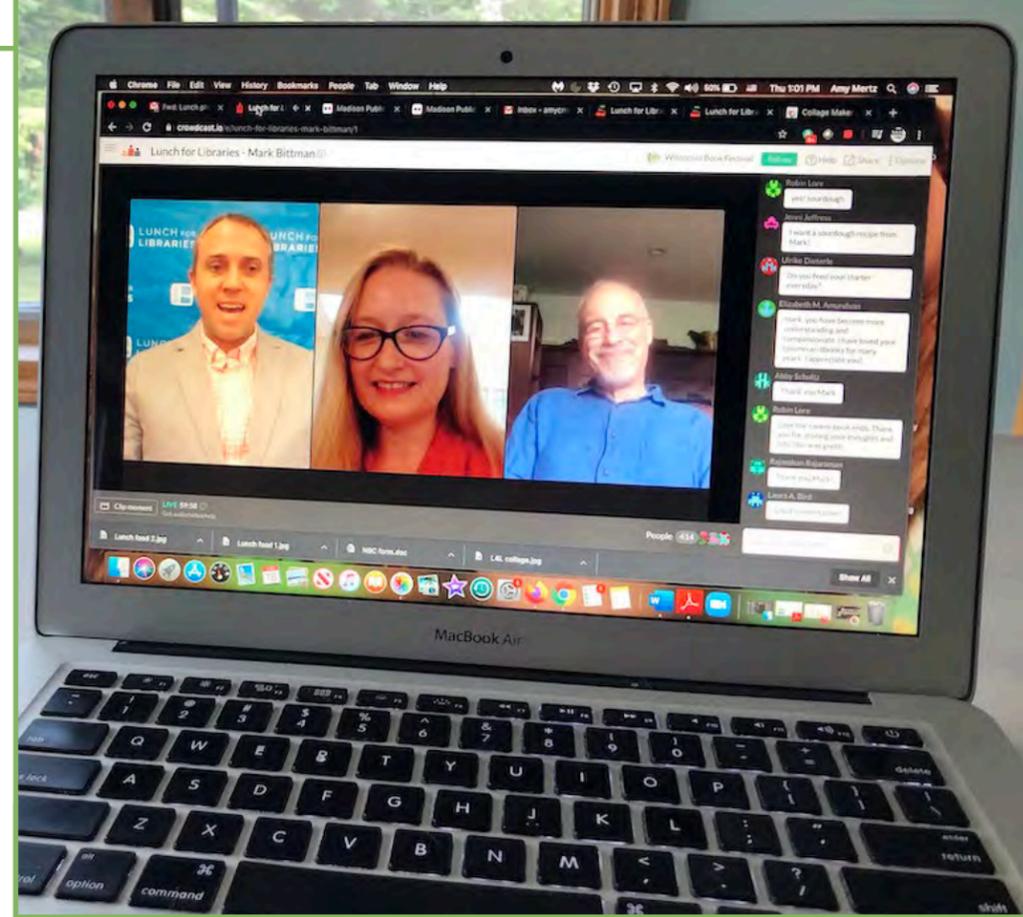
The Dream Bus was instrumental in providing outreach services and library materials during the pandemic. The mobile library — a collaborative effort of Madison Public Library, Madison Public Library Foundation and Dane County Library Service — maintained access to the library collection for populations lacking easy access to a physical library. The bus schedule was coordinated to align with Madison Metropolitan School District’s free lunch pickup sites in five neighborhoods. Although patrons couldn’t board the bus, a rotating crew of librarians stood outside it and distributed library materials — including book-filled We Read summer reading program bags provided by Madison Public Library Foundation and Steve Stricker American Family Insurance Foundation. Dream Bus lead donors included the Irwin A. and Robert D. Goodman Foundation, Pleasant T. Rowland Foundation, Oscar Rennebohm Foundation, Roots & Wings Foundation and Alliant Energy Foundation.

The Dream Bus delivered library free books and other items to five neighborhoods, as well as select community centers.



## LUNCH FOR LIBRARIES

Madison Public Library Foundation’s Lunch for Libraries fundraiser, presented by BMO Harris Bank, transitioned into a live-stream format. Respected cooking authority Mark Bittman discussed his book — *How to Eat: All Your Food and Diet Questions Answered*, co-written with David L. Katz, M.D. — with NPR’s *To the Best of Our Knowledge* Producer Shannon Henry Kleiber. Guests were encouraged to order a takeout lunch to support their favorite local restaurant. Proceeds totaled nearly \$37,000, which went toward free, year-round Wisconsin Book Festival programs and Madison Public Library services.



Guests watched Lunch for Libraries on their computers, tablets and phones.

## EDUCATIONAL SERIES

The foundation’s Educational Series went virtual in 2020, with four free workshops that featured professionals speaking in their area of expertise. The topics were *Your Money & COVID-19*, *Estate Planning 101*, *Women & Wealth*, and *Improving Your Health Literacy*. Foundation supporters who attended the events said they enjoyed the convenience of virtual programming, as well as the question-and-answer format following the presentations. Each event was

recorded and archived on the foundation’s Educational Series page.

Many local professionals, from attorneys to financial advisors, shared their expertise in four Educational Series events.



## EX LIBRIS: BOX SET EDITION

The foundation successfully turned its annual Ex Libris beer and food tasting fundraiser into a to-go format last fall to offer a safe way to support the library. The 400 boxes — which included local beverages, food and drink coupons, food items and other small surprises — sold out quickly. Ex Libris raised nearly \$54,000 to support library collections, technology, services and other efforts. Presenting Sponsor Scooter Software and Sustaining Sponsors Exact Sciences, Group Health Cooperative of South Central Wisconsin, and von Briesen & Roper, s.c. provided financial support to make the event possible. The foundation is grateful to the many silent auction donors, the planning committee, volunteers, and the businesses that contributed beverages and other items to the boxes.

Ex Libris volunteers packed glassware and other goodies into 400 boxes that donors picked up from local beverage providers.



“I’m incredibly proud of our donors, staff and volunteers who all made 2020 as successful as possible. When we couldn’t have our spring Lunch for Libraries with Mark Bittman in person, our team almost seamlessly transitioned it into a live-stream program. Our volunteers and staff did the same ‘out of the box’ thinking for our fall Ex Libris fundraiser — which, ironically, ended up in a box. We’re so grateful for our thousands of donors who care so deeply about our mission and our libraries.”

– JENNI JEFFRESS, MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY FOUNDATION

# MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY LOCATIONS

## Alicia Ashman Library

733 North High Point Road  
608.824.1780

## Central Library

201 W. Mifflin Street  
608.266.6300

## Goodman South Madison Library

2222 S. Park Street  
608.266.6395

## Hawthorne Library

2707 E. Washington Ave.  
608.246.4548

## Lakeview Library

2845 N. Sherman Ave.  
608.246.4547

## Meadowridge Library

5726 Raymond Road  
608.288.6160

## Monroe Street Library

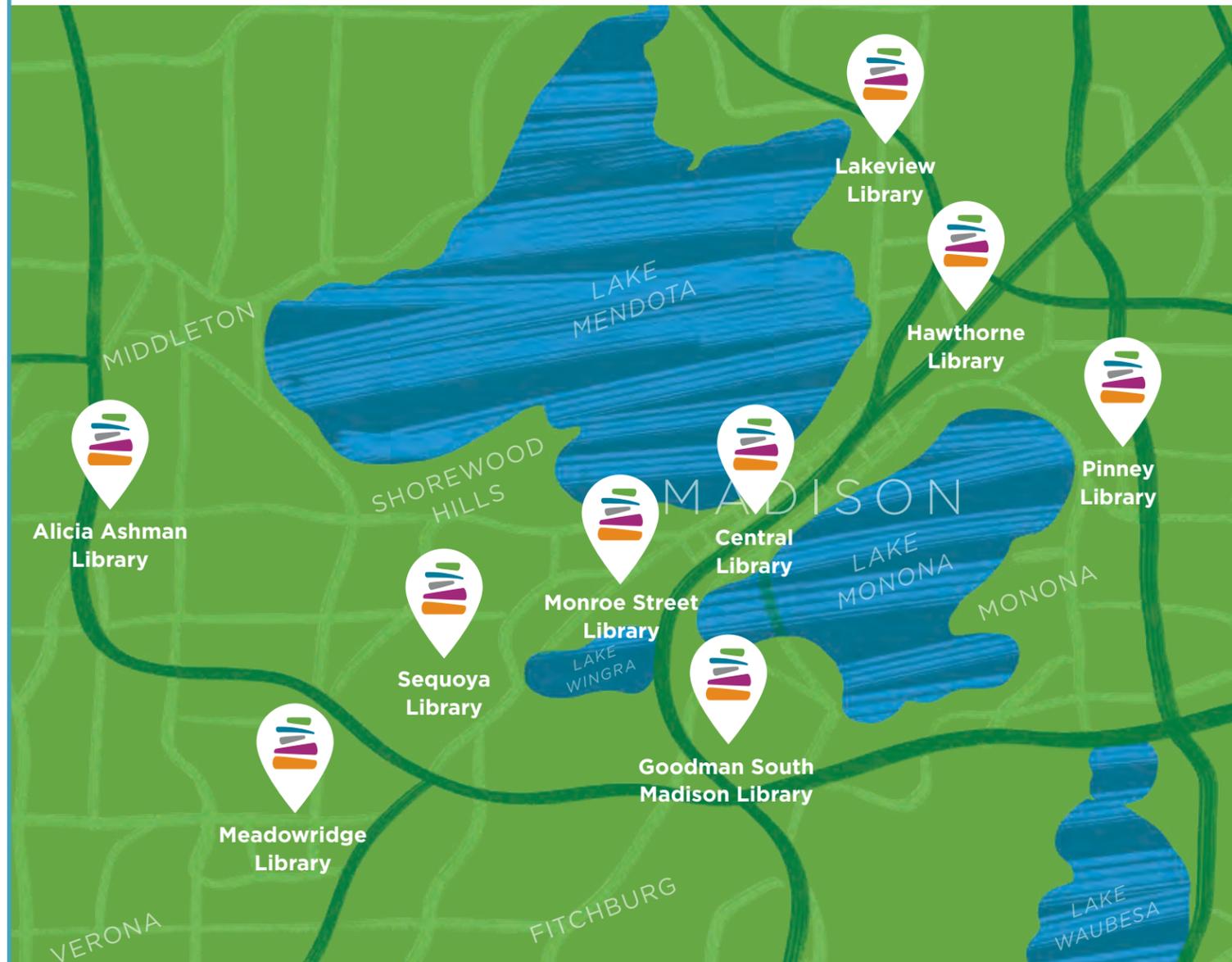
1705 Monroe Street  
608.266.6390

## Pinney Library

516 Cottage Grove Road  
608.224.7100

## Sequoia Library

4340 Tokay Blvd.  
608.266.6385



# GET IN TOUCH



201 W. Mifflin Street  
Madison, WI 53703

phone: 608.266.6300

website: madisonpubliclibrary.org

email: reference@madisonpubliclibrary.org



#madisonpubliclibrary



201 W. Mifflin Street  
Madison, WI 53703

phone: 608.266.6318

website: mplfoundation.org

email: info@mplfoundation.org



#mplfoundation

# DONOR LISTS

Madison Public Library Foundation limits its donor recognition to Tribute gifts made in honor or in memory loved ones. To view Tribute gifts, visit [mplfoundation.org](http://mplfoundation.org).

**ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR** Rodney Lambright II is an animator, illustrator and story artist who currently works as an animator and producer at PBS Wisconsin. He has worked in many different mediums, including animation, documentaries and video games. His main focus is using art as a vehicle to express unique perspectives and experiences through various innovative mediums.

**DESIGN** by Georgia Rucker

