



Foundation

MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY

WINTER 2022-23

A newsletter from
Madison Public
Library Foundation

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Executive
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Moran Selected to Become Executive Director

Foundation Bids Farewell to Jeffress

Madison Public Library Foundation said goodbye to longtime Executive Director Jenni Jeffress earlier this month and welcomed Conor Moran, formerly the Wisconsin Book Festival Director, to the organization’s leading position.

Jeffress joined the foundation in 2010 at the beginning of its highly successful capital campaign for a new Central Library. Additionally, she led capital campaigns for Meadowridge and Pinney libraries. Under her guidance, the foundation nearly quadrupled its endowment, from \$2.27 million to \$8.74 million. She also started two annual fundraisers, Lunch for Libraries and Ex Libris, both of which have a recurring, dedicated corps of guests; and she worked with Madison Public Library to bring the Wisconsin Book Festival — previously run by the Wisconsin Humanities Council — under joint foundation-library operation.

Moran grew up in Oconomowoc, Wis. He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Iowa, where he majored in English and French, and his law degree from UW-Madison. Prior to directing the Book Festival, he organized author events at Politics & Prose in Washington, D.C., gained Development experience at REAP Food Group and Gathering Waters, and served on several National Endowment for the Arts committees.

Moran was chosen for his background with leading and nurturing the Wisconsin Book Festival for nearly 10 years, combined with his passion for learning, books



Conor Moran (above), took over as the foundation’s Executive Director in early December. He succeeds Jenni Jeffress (below), who held the position since 2010.



and connecting people with libraries, said foundation board President Heather Clefisch. Under Moran’s leadership, the Wisconsin Book Festival transitioned from an annual fall weekend into a year-round event series, with a substantial increase in attendance. Additionally, he significantly expanded representation of diverse authors and books.

“We were impressed with the many ways Conor’s success in leading the Wisconsin Book Festival could translate to leading Madison Public Library Foundation,” Clefisch said. “His deep knowledge of the library, the community, and his ability to connect foundation supporters with evolving and diverse community needs — especially focused around the new Reindahl Park Imagination Center library project — became very apparent.”

The foundation conducted an extensive eight-week Executive Director search this fall in partnership with a recruiting consultant. Several rounds of interviews with the Search Committee reduced the 52-candidate pool to two finalists, who were invited to meet the board, staff and library leaders. The board voted unanimously to offer Moran the position.

“Throughout my career, building and nurturing relationships has been at the heart of it all,” Moran said. “I’m thrilled to further these skills by leading a highly respected Madison nonprofit organization that ensures equal access to the robust Madison Public Library system and its treasured resources.”

Get a Sneak Preview of the 2023 Library Takeover Teams

Library Takeover is an opportunity to support communities to make their ideas happen at the library. Every year, Madison Public Library opens its doors to three teams of three to four people who take their ideas from the planning phase to execution. The teams participate in an event planning bootcamp in the fall of 2022, where they learn about everything from logistics, budgeting, permitting, marketing and more to help them prepare for their events. The experience culminates in a public event hosted in a library space during the spring of 2023.

With support from Madison Public Library Foundation, the library is able to provide space, time and resources for community members to host these events. A CUNA Mutual Foundation gift secured by the foundation makes it possible to provide each team with a \$2,000 event budget, as well as a \$400 stipend for each team member. In the end, the library not only gains unique and exciting events; the experience also sets the stage for future library programming that involves and reflects all of Madison.

This year’s participating teams are:



The Kichwa Collaborative Learning Team will share historical insight into the indigenous Kichwa diaspora from South America to Wisconsin.

TEAM 1: Kichwa Collaborative Learning

Members: Tatiana Sarango, Nina Amaguana, Cayana Amaguana Cachiguango, Jay Lema

This team will focus on themes of migration and identity, while sharing historical insight into the indigenous Kichwa diaspora from South America to Wisconsin, where they live on stolen Ho-Chunk territory. Kichwa as a term broadly refers to the indigenous communities of northern and southern Ecuador, as well as the language spoken in those regions. Through a series of interactive activities, storytelling and music, this event invites community members to invoke critical thinking and question Western notions of migration as a tool of resistance. This event is designed to elevate the lived experiences of the Kichwa diaspora in Wisconsin from a first-person perspective, and provide a collaborative learning experience for all who attend.



The Parent Event Team is comprised of parents whose kids attend Nuestro Mundo Community School.

TEAM 2: Parent Event

Members: Aaron Seligman, Mayra M Falcon Pineda, Ashley Inda

Started by parents whose kids attend Nuestro Mundo Community School, this group hopes to provide an opportunity for parents to gather and share knowledge, resources and tips. Parents can propose topics, such as rainy day activities, picky eaters or favorite books — but the actual topics would be up to those who attend. Following the “open space” structure, parents can move to the topics of greatest interest and then change throughout the event. This event will include bilingual discussion groups in English and Spanish. This team is focused on getting parents and caregivers together in a way that is inclusive and community-building for other elementary school-aged families.



The LGBTQIA+ Social Event Team will provide a social connection experience for the Queer BIPOC community.

TEAM 3: LGBTQIA+ Social Event

Members: Renee Reed, Bernice Amos, Tiffany Sneed, nour loren

This team will bring together LGBTQIA+ BIPOC folks for a salon-type experience featuring music, mocktails, spoken word, poetry and more. The goal is to provide a relaxing, joyful space for Queer BIPOC folks to meet, mix and mingle in an alcohol- and drug-free environment that intentionally provides the best space possible for equitable access.

Watch for more details this spring regarding these three events!

Donors Commit \$125,000 Annual Fund Matching Gift

Every Contribution Doubles Through December 31



A group of donors is providing a \$125,000 matching gift — the largest match ever for Madison Public Library Foundation — to encourage contributions to the organization’s annual fund this winter.

The year-end campaign began on Giving Tuesday (November 29) and continues through the end of the year. Offering the match are Jill Ball, Sheila and Kevin Conroy, Rich and Mary Lynch, Jerry and Enid Weygandt, and two who wish to remain anonymous.

The annual fund provides dollars to Madison Public Library in the following core areas:

- the collection
- technology
- programming
- staff training and development
- Equity and Innovation projects
- mini-grants, such as Library Takeover, and the Pride and BIPOC Affinity Groups

The campaign is off to a strong start, but every contribution helps the foundation inch closer to its \$125,000 goal and enables the library to do even more for the community!

Support the annual fund by giving online at mplfoundation.org/donate.

“We donate to the library because it is such a great community resource, supporting Madisonians with books and computers, as well as bringing neighbors together.”

— Jerry & Enid Weygandt, matching gift donors

Hughes, Rajaraman Reflect on Six Years as Board Directors

Two dedicated, longtime Madison Public Library Foundation board members completed their terms this fall.



Christopher Hughes, Partner at Stafford Rosenbaum, served on the board for six years. Stafford Rosenbaum became involved with the foundation during the Central Library capital campaign. Soon after, Hughes joined the foundation board, in large part because of his respect for former foundation Executive Director Jenni Jeffress and Wisconsin Book Festival Director Conor Moran. Hughes got to know Jeffress during the capital campaign and knew Moran from his days as a legal intern at Gathering Waters Conservancy, when Hughes served on the Conservancy’s board.

“The real hook for me is the Wisconsin Book Festival,” Hughes said. “It’s been a great event for the entire state, not just Madison. It’s been fun to see the Book Fest grow and prosper ... the pandemic has almost made it stronger, with the platform to reach people both in person and virtually, locally and across the nation.”

While on the board, Hughes served on two committees: Development; and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. He plans to continue serving on foundation committees and intends to maintain Stafford Rosenbaum’s deep commitment to the foundation.

“I think the reason the foundation is really strong is because there’s a phenomenal staff,” he said. “The board members are great, too; they’re all committed. They all have points of view on different issues and look at things many different ways. Everyone enjoys working together toward the mission.”

Hughes lives in Middleton with his wife, Mary. They have two adult sons, Sam and Noah. When asked what he likes most about the library, he said, “It’s nice to go and just kind of browse and not necessarily go there with any particular idea of what you want to check out.”



Rajesh Rajaraman also served on the board for six years. He had been on the United Way board and was working for Christensen & Associates under Lau Christensen, a loyal foundation supporter, when he got involved with the foundation. He and his wife, Deepika, quickly became Central Library capital campaign donors and got acquainted with Jeffress through Christensen.

“Jenni is a very strong leader and phenomenal fundraiser — just one of the top people in running an organization,” he said. “I’ve really enjoyed my time with the board. This is a very high-functioning board, and every meeting is well organized.

My colleagues are high-quality people and passionate about serving the community.”

Rajaraman, who served on the Finance Committee along with other ad hoc committees, said he put his energy mostly into the simple concept of good stewardship of the community’s investments in the foundation. “They trust us with their money, and I wanted to make sure we were able to guard those assets and utilize them effectively,” he said.

He also scrutinized the foundation’s financial investment policies and suggested ideas to minimize costs.

A huge believer in libraries, Rajaraman said he thinks they are a great value for the operating budget that Madison sets. “I’m a big fan of books and having information available to people,” he said. “Libraries are very democratic because they’re accessible to everybody. The resources that they can offer are amazing. They keep you out of trouble. They’re good for community-building. They’re good solutions for people to come together. The library is not just a repository of information ... the value it provides to the community is immense.”

Rajaraman, who has an economics and engineering background and a Ph.D in electrical engineering, runs an investment fund and small startup in the batteries and renewable energy industry. He and Deepika have two adult sons, Amol and Amit.

New Board Members Begin Terms

Madison Public Library Foundation’s board of directors was thrilled to welcome three new members in October: **Brigid Elliott-Boger**, **Ray Mendez** and **Susan Goodwin**.



Elliott-Boger has lived in Madison and worked as an accountant for Baker Tilly US, LLP (formerly Virchow, Krause & Company, LLP) since 1999. She has volunteered for the Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School in Monona and Rooted WI, Inc.

Married with three children whom she took to libraries from a young age, Elliott-Boger understands how essential public libraries can be to early learning. Further, she benefited greatly from the library while growing up without ample money to purchase books.

Her hobbies include spending time outdoors, taking motorcycle rides with her husband and cheering on the Badgers.



Mendez is the co-founder of BBLOQS.ai, a brand-building AI company which he’s continuing to develop. He’s also a partner at Masa&Boz consulting. Currently, Mendez is focusing on developing global reuse standards to eliminate single-use plastic packaging.

Mendez grew up in India and has also lived in New York, Amsterdam and Berlin. As an advocate for equitable and inclusive public education through the lens of neurodiversity, he is committed to making Madison Public Library an attractive force in the increasingly diverse Madison community.



Goodwin retired in 2010 following a 30-year career with the State of Wisconsin. She managed Governor Jim Doyle’s campaign before serving as his chief of staff for eight years. Goodwin was formerly on the Madison Public Schools Foundation board and serves on the Olbrich Botanical Society board.

Her love for libraries goes back to her childhood in Wood River, Illinois, where she and her sister were avid readers and frequent visitors of a modern, new library. A mother of three and grandmother of two, Goodwin enjoys international travel and gardening as well as tennis, golf, yoga, pilates, hiking and cross-country skiing. She said she’s excited to expand the library’s impact on the community.

Book Festival Represented at International Conference

The second Global Association of Literary Festivals (GAOLF) Conference invited and paid for a Wisconsin Book Festival representative to attend its November conference in Lagos, Nigeria, recognizing the festival’s excellence in promoting literature.

Book Festival Communications Associate Haley Borgrud traveled to Lagos and joined 22 other delegates from book festivals around the world. The delegates spent a week sharing their knowledge and experiences regarding social media, fundraising, collaboration and other festival operations.

The conference was hosted by the Ake Arts and Book Festival, which is in its 10th year and has brought more than 1,000 artists — including writers, musicians and filmmakers — together to celebrate creativity.

“It was good to get out there and see all those other festivals,” Borgrud said. “My major takeaway is the focus on connection and collaboration — not



Haley Borgrud (second from right) attended the Global Association of Literary Festivals Conference in Lagos, Nigeria.

only with other festivals, but also with authors, journalists and moderators. That’s something I want to emphasize in the Wisconsin Book Festival.”

Borgrud ran a panel discussion on social media and its crucial role in promoting the Book Festival. “It’s very important to maintain your voice as a book festival,” she said. “You have to keep people engaged, and you have to be creative with it.”

Beyond GAOLF’s scheduled events and discussions, Borgrud had the opportunity to explore the Lagos area, which was a unique, immersive experience for her. “Lagos is wonderful,” she said. “It’s a very proud city, and it’s very culturally rich. They really have an emphasis on literature and the arts.”

Borgrud’s position with the Wisconsin Book Festival is funded with an Artists at Work grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and Madison Arts Commission.

20th Anniversary Was Banner Year for Book Festival



A festival attendee gets a book signed by authors Daniel Khalastchi and Erika Meitner.

The Wisconsin Book Festival closed out the celebration of its 20th anniversary year with more than 60 events, mostly in person plus some virtual. It has been incredible to see the growth of the event in that time, particularly in the 10 years we’ve been hosting it here at Madison Public Library. We were delighted to return to a fully in-person four-day celebration, which saw 50 percent more attendees than the 2021 edition!

We’re already hard at work on the 2023 schedule. Look for a slightly later start date next year, with events beginning in March. We’re looking forward to hosting marquee events with Dr. Evelyn Alsultany for *Broken* (March 15), Rebecca Makkai for *I Have Some Questions for You* (March 23), Michelle Zauner for *Crying in H Mart* (April 7) and Tommy Orange for *There There* (April 24).

Visit wisconsinbookfestival.org for select recordings of events you missed!



Give the Gift of Festival Membership

Treat the avid reader in your life with the ultimate holiday gift: a Wisconsin Book Festival membership!

With access to an exclusive season launch party and reserved seating at select in-person events, a membership is the best way to support the Book Festival in 2023.

Members also enjoy discounts on festival books through A Room of One's Own! Purchase a membership for a family member, friend, teacher, coworker or other special person in your life at wisconsinbookfestival.org/give.

EVENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

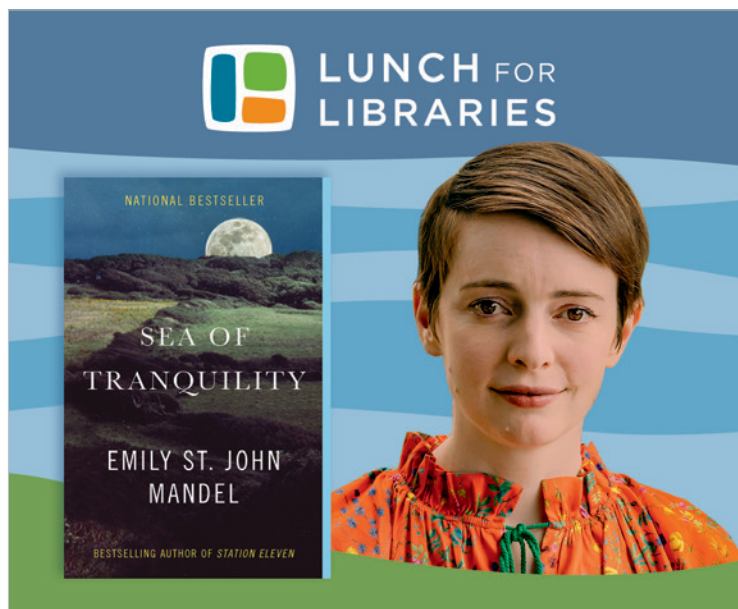
Ex Libris Grosses \$100K for First Time

Ex Libris Vol. XII: New Recipe was an overwhelming success! Madison Public Library Foundation is thankful to everyone — guests, tasting partners, musical performers and volunteers — for filling Central Library to the brim on November 4 for a wonderful night of food, drinks and entertainment. Not to mention the silent auction, which was once again a big hit and sent guests home with a variety of valuable items, gift cards and experiences. Ex Libris wouldn't be possible without Presenting Sponsor Scooter Software or any of the Partner, Advocate or Friend sponsors — the foundation is so grateful for all sponsorships!

The annual fall fundraiser grossed over \$100,000 for the first time this year. Ex Libris proceeds are essential for helping Madison Public Library stock its collection with literature for all ages, outfit its nine locations with the latest technology and well-trained staff, and provide many other services. Community support helps the library promote literacy and education for all ages.

The foundation recognizes these are difficult times in the restaurant industry and for the second year offered a stipend for tasting partners. Supply and staffing expenses shouldn't be a barrier to serving at the event.

Of course, it's never too early to look forward to Ex Libris Vol. XIII: Our 2023 event will be Friday, November 3, so mark your calendar!



Lunch for Libraries 2023 Author: St. John Mandel

Save the date of Monday, April 17, 2023, for Madison Public Library Foundation's 12th annual Lunch for Libraries fundraiser featuring best-selling author Emily St. John Mandel! She'll speak about her latest novel, *Sea of Tranquility*, over lunch at Monona Terrace Convention Center.

Sea of Tranquility takes the reader from Vancouver Island in 1912 to a dark colony on the moon 500 years later, unfurling a story of humanity across centuries and space. Her five previous novels include *The Glass Hotel* and *Station Eleven*, which is the basis for the HBO Max series by the same name.

Lunch for Libraries proceeds support the Wisconsin Book Festival and Madison Public Library youth literacy efforts. To become a table captain or an event sponsor, visit mplfoundation.org or call 608.266.6318.

Shop at Kendra Scott on December 18

Support Madison Public Library Foundation and do your holiday shopping at the same time! Kendra Scott in Hilldale Shopping Center will donate a portion of each sale from 3–5 p.m. Sunday, December 18, to the foundation. Foundation staff will be at the store during that time.

Kendra Scott is a jewelry store that handcrafts its merchandise in Austin, Texas. A portion of its annual proceeds support women's and children's causes that improve lives, advance knowledge and unlock opportunity. Learn more at kendrascott.com.



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