



2024

Annual Report

cincinnati
public
library

Hamilton County
Ky





Our Library: Where Our Community Connects

Our Library: 41 Vibrant Community Hubs

In 2024, the Cincinnati & Hamilton County Public Library unveiled the re-envisioned Downtown Main Library, an exciting space for Minds of All Kinds. The electrifying reopening weekend reinforced what we do every day: welcome people to meet, read, work, learn, create, and connect at our 41 locations.

The Forest Park, Hyde Park, and Mt. Healthy branches also opened fresh public spaces as part of our Building the Next Generation Library initiative. We know these improvements are important to our community: overall, CHPL in-person visits are up 15% over 2023. And it is, of course, CHPL's dedicated staff, who ensure community members find books and materials, build their workforce, education, and technology skills, and can access support for their small businesses and entrepreneurial endeavors. Our staff members work every day to provide life-long learning opportunities to everyone for learning and enjoyment.

While the Library continues to evolve with the needs of our community, one thing will never change: our commitment to helping young Ohioans build early literacy skills. We host thousands of storytimes each year and deliver collections of books to dozens of schools and daycares, all designed to help kids discover a love for reading.

I want to thank our community members, staff, Trustees, partners, volunteers, and donors who support the Library's pursuit of gathering spaces for all to connect, relax, learn, and thrive. We greatly appreciate your support and hope you'll read further to discover all the ways we served and supported our community in 2024!



Paula Brehm-Heeger
Eva Jane Romaine Coombe Library Director



A Place for Minds of All Kinds

Throughout this report, read about the ways we connect with the community through our Strategic Priorities. [CHPL.org/strategic-framework](https://chpl.org/strategic-framework)

From the Board President

It has been an honor to lead the Library's Board of Trustees in 2024! Nineteen of our 41 library branches (four of those in 2024) have now received improvements thanks to CHPL's Building the Next Generation Library initiative. We have a lot to celebrate thanks to taxpayers in Hamilton County. Local funding, such as the 10-year 1.5 mil levy passed by voters in 2023, is critical to continue providing excellent library spaces, services, and resources to all ages.

We carefully manage costs, operating dollars, and finances to ensure the high-quality experience community members expect. This stewardship includes monitoring spending on print and digital materials to address increased costs and reduce wait times and prioritizing staff training and market-aligned compensation to foster a workplace that best serves the community. In 2024, the Library was recognized for excellence in financial reporting by the Ohio Auditor of State's Award of Distinction and the Government Finance Officers Association's Certificate of Achievement.

Together, we play an important role in Hamilton County: ensuring that the Library continues to be a welcoming, essential resource now and for future generations. Thanks for joining me in your enthusiasm for this incredible resource.



Gregory W. Olson, President
Cincinnati & Hamilton County Public Library
Board of Trustees



Ways You Connected with Us



19,113,162
Items borrowed



4,960,910
Books and items in CHPL's collection



4,155,258
Customer visits
(in person, drive-thru, curbside, and holds lockers)



6,372,663
Digital items borrowed
(eBook, eAudiobook, streaming music, and other digital items)



395,096
Library cardholders



3,504,457
eBooks and eAudiobooks in CHPL's collection



397,001

Attendees at CHPL events

2,930,606

Research database sessions

1,771,950

On-hold items filled

23,409

Equipment uses at Library MakerSpaces

1,408,541

WiFi sessions at branch libraries

69,147

Meeting and study room reservations

202,976

Documents faxed and scanned for free



Connecting to Useful Resources

Responding to a Greater Need for Government Resources

CHPL connects more than 1,000 people each month to **vital government resources** like free JFS faxing, public computers with WiFi, employment support, social security benefits, passport renewals, and much more. Because need is increasing in these areas, visits to library branches by Hamilton County's 513 Relief Bus are also a welcome sight.

"I am astounded that my family and I can so easily connect with so many services without waiting for a long time," said a grateful mom at the Green Township Branch, who received assistance through the resources on the 513 Relief Bus. "I've been so stressed and now I'm relieved."



"A customer from our job help events told me that they started a new position. With this position, they said they will be able to get back on their feet and provide for their family!"

– Price Hill Branch staff member Anya Olsen-Brunot



Read more: [CHPL.org/government-resources](https://chpl.org/government-resources)



"During our Freestore Foodbank Produce Pop Up, a mother came to us almost in tears. She had recently lost her husband, had three teenagers to feed, and was having trouble getting her SNAP food benefits application approved. She said that she was so grateful that the Library and our resources existed."

– Covedale Branch staff member MaryBeth Westermeyer





150+

Job seekers at CHPL career fairs
(partners included Cincinnati Works, OhioMeansJobs, Preservation of Affordable Housing, and Supply Chain OKI)



97,242

Free meals and snacks for youth
(funded by the USDA's Child Nutrition Program with snack support by The Library Foundation)



500+

People helped at 513 Relief Bus visits to CHPL branch libraries



\$1,078,785

Refunds claimed as a result of free tax prep



4,230

Discovery Pass visits to local attractions



715

Community members registered to vote



16

CHPL branch libraries served as polling locations



1,499

People received passport renewal service at 5 CHPL locations



667

Attendees at CHPL grants resource classes



15,293

Homework help sessions



Encouraging Limitless Learning

Building Early Literacy Year-Round

Weekly library storytimes at CHPL's 41 locations are filled with giggling kids, great books, and energetic, knowledgeable Youth Librarians. Below the surface, they're an important way to practice counting, make new friends, and develop early literacy skills.

By including concepts from **Science of Reading**, CHPL storytimes also provide exposure to **social skills and literacy tools and concepts**. And, because the Science of Reading is part of Ohio's school curriculum, kids get a jumpstart for success in the classroom.



**Find a
Library Storytime:**
Library Babies Toddler Storytime
Movers and Shakers
Preschool Storytime
KinderBridge
[CHPL.org/storytime](https://chpl.org/storytime)



"It is so wonderful to see my little granddaughter, Delilah, get the chance to enjoy the fun stories and songs. It's also so enriching for her to meet and make friends with other babies and kiddos who are part of our local Down syndrome family."

– Harry Donnermeyer, regarding CHPL's storytimes in partnership with the Down Syndrome Association of Greater Cincinnati





“

"I loved that she brought a guitar and did such fun songs. Can't wait to see her again. Thanks for being such fabulous libraries!"

– Parent after a Walnut Hills Branch storytime

”



179,057

Children and caregivers at Library storytimes



5,791

Library storytimes



1,059

Educators served through Teacher Collections



24,513

STEM event attendees



4,874

Adult Education and Workforce Development class attendees



5,394

Senior event attendees

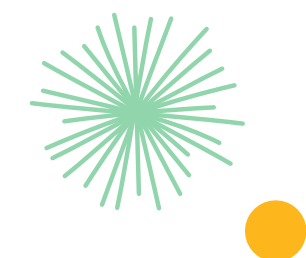
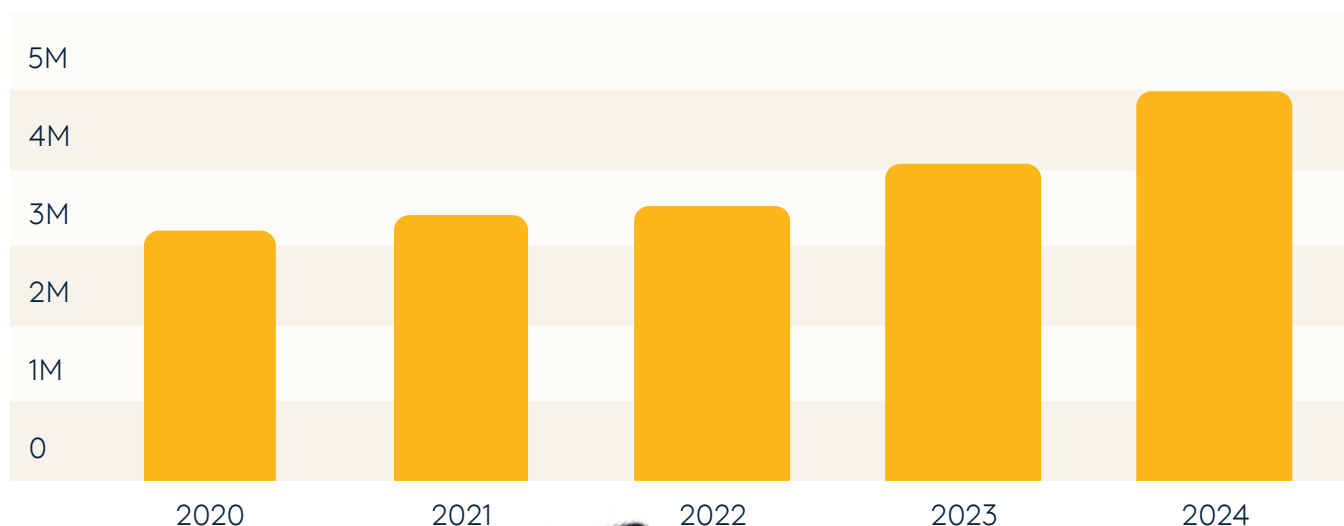


Providing Reliable Information

Improving Digital Materials Availability

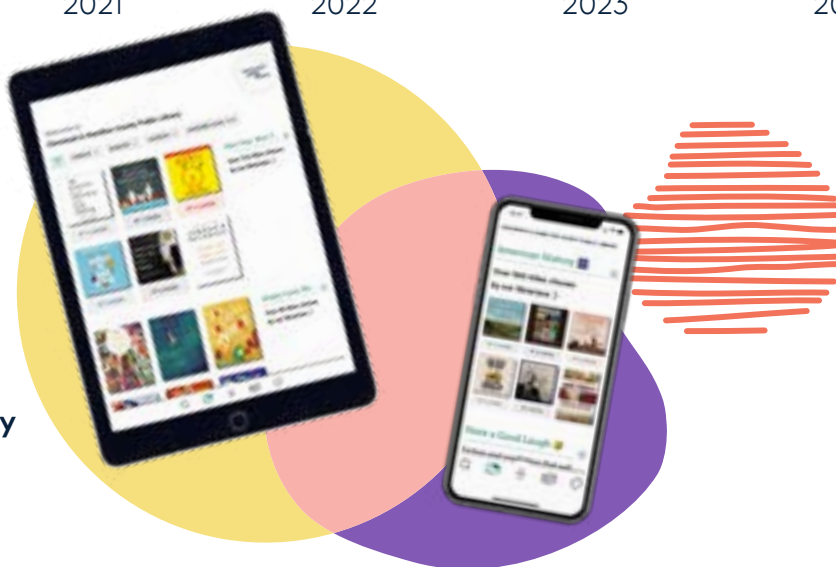
The Library is committed to offering digital materials, which are available to check out anytime, anywhere. To meet the needs of the **165,000+ CHPL customers who borrowed more than 6.4 million eBooks and eAudiobooks** in 2024, the Library manages purchasing strategies to **lower customer wait times** and manage digital cost per circulation.

Increased Digital Checkouts*



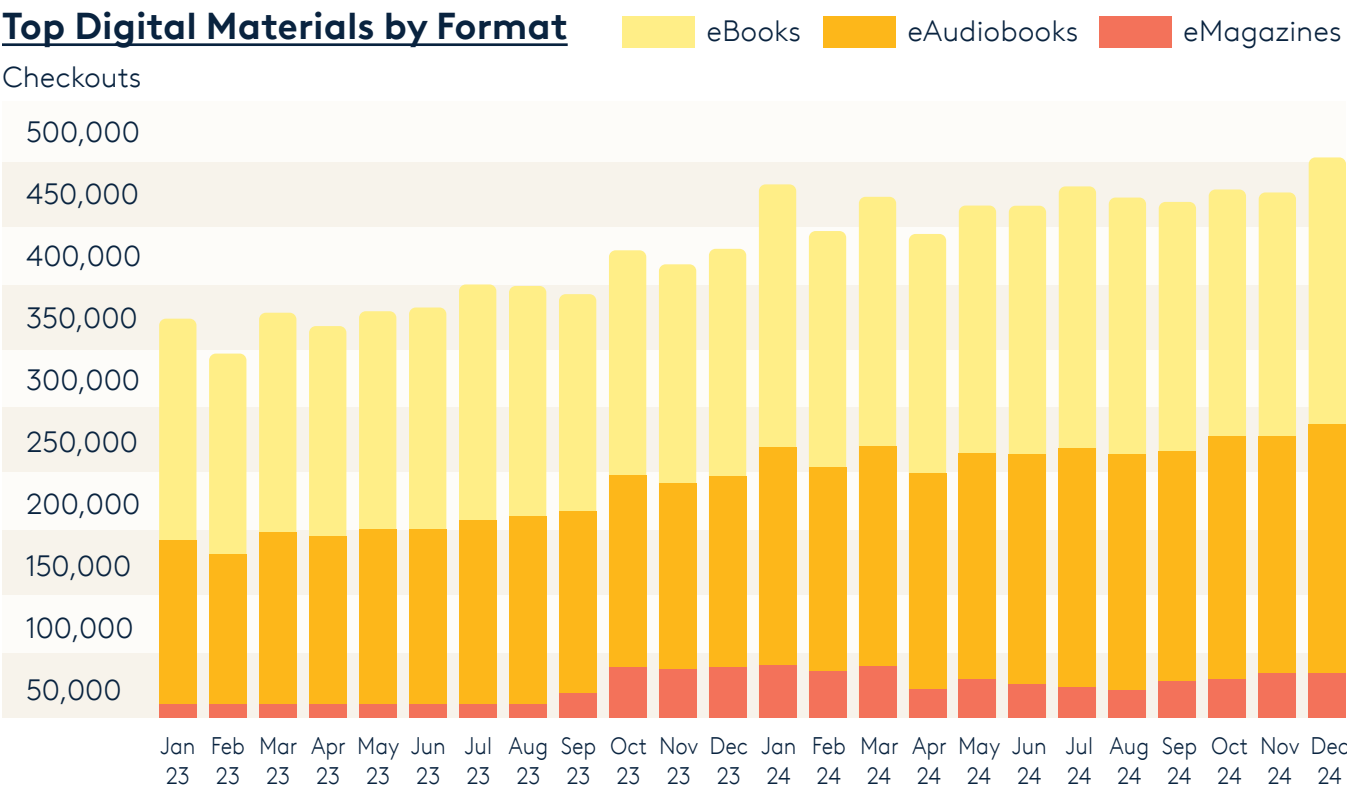
5,000,000
Digital checkouts on Libby

A new CHPL record!



*All charts on this page reflect Libby/OverDrive usage only.

As one of the busiest public libraries in the country, CHPL provides the latest high-quality materials for research and enjoyment. In 2024, **cardholders chose from 3.5 million+ digital materials** like eBooks, audiobooks, music and movies, more than 150 research databases, virtual events to attend from their living room, and more – all free with a library card.



eAudiobooks have started to equal eBooks in popularity.

77,000
CHPL.org pageviews per day

5,741
Catalog searches per day



Fostering a Healthy Culture

Making Connections at Library Branches

Cincinnati & Hamilton County Public Library is committed to serving minds of all kinds during their **4 million visits to CHPL locations each year**. Hamilton County residents tell us that the Library is their community living room, a welcoming a place to connect with others, access resources, and have fun.

Visits to CHPL spaces opened in 2024 have grown 16.7% (compared with the prior year), no surprise given that Ohio is one of the top 3 states in the U.S. for public library visits.*



"Someone came in who said she hadn't been in a library in over 30 years! She seemed a little unsure of everything at first and wasn't clear on how eBooks worked. After showing her one of our apps, Libby, she let me know that she thought our branch was so welcoming and the information I provided was extremely helpful."

– Michael Burgess, staff member at the Monfort Heights Branch



*Public Libraries Survey, FY 2022

“Everyone at Covedale is lovely, helpful, and so kind to me. I feel such warmth when I see your smiling faces when I come to get my books.”

– Customer at the Covedale Branch



Help is always open, just a chat window away. **CHPL's Ask a Librarian service** can help you find materials, access resources, or answer any of your questions.

113,844

Ask a Librarian questions answered



Creating Welcoming Spaces

Meet Me at Main

More than 12,000 people of all ages celebrated the **reopening of the Downtown Main Library**, a re-envisioned space for Hamilton County to connect with others, access resources, and have fun.

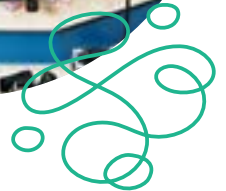
The redesigned meeting rooms, interactive areas for kids and teens, Catherine C. and Thomas E. Huenefeld Story Center, transformed North and South plazas, and the Social Stairs are part of the \$43.4 million project to serve changing community needs.

“

“I’ve been crying because I’m so overwhelmed. I love the Library!”

- Debbie, who is excited to resume her weekend Main Library visits

”



“

“Nothing exemplifies community like the Library,”

- Cincinnati Mayor Aftab Pureval, who proclaimed July 12 ‘Main Library Reopening Day’

”

Read more:
CHPL.org/next



In year six of CHPL's Facility Master Plan implementation, we also invested in these inclusive and accessible spaces so the Library can truly be welcoming to all:



Hyde Park Branch Library saw increased accessibility through a refreshed interior: a larger elevator, redesigned entrances, a level parking lot, and fully accessible restrooms. The modern branch has more natural light, a meeting room, and even a puppet theater.

Forest Park Branch Library moved to a 26,440 square foot facility built from the ground up. The branch now includes a MakerSpace, meeting spaces and study rooms, an interactive play area for kids, an outdoor courtyard, a drive-thru, and ample parking.



Mt. Healthy Branch Library moved to a former CVS pharmacy with 10,000 square feet of accessible space. The new branch has a flexible meeting room, study pods, exciting areas for kids and teens, computers and a laptop kiosk, a drive-thru, and a parking lot.

Facility Master Plan by the Numbers

16.7%

Increase in meeting and study space reservations

(compared with prior year)

5

Drive-thrus added since 2019

20

Completed Facility Master Plan projects

484

New technology items added in 2024

(PCs, self-checks, and more)

10

New MakerSpace equipment added

61

New meeting and study spaces

59,584

Square footage added since 2019

10

Kids' play features added

CHPL's **Facility Master Plan** outlines improvements to our 41 library locations with input from more than 3,000 community members.



Creating Welcoming Spaces

Next Generation Libraries

Under Construction



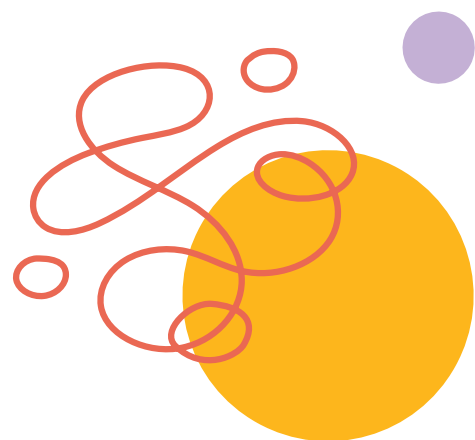
Cheviot

Accessibility Improvements
Spring 2025



Symmes Township

Renovation and
Potential Expansion
Early 2026



In Design/Planning



Avondale

Maintenance and
Interior Updates



Delhi Township

Renovation or
Replacement



Miami Township

Relocation with
New Building



Mt. Washington

Maintenance and
Interior Updates



Main Library

Maintenance – Chillers and
Cooling Towers Replacement



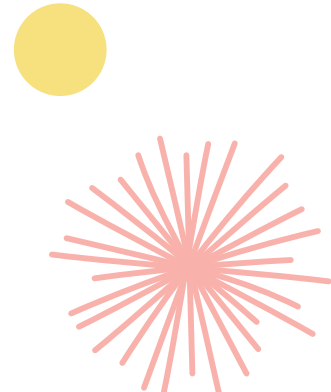
Oakley

Maintenance and
Interior Updates


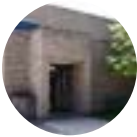




Mariemont

Maintenance and
Interior Updates



Completed County-Wide Improvements

2024	 <p>Main Library South Building and Plaza Renovation</p>	 <p>Forest Park Relocation and New Build</p>	 <p>Hyde Park Improved Accessibility</p>	 <p>Mt. Healthy Relocation with New Building</p>	
2023	 <p>Corryville Maintenance</p>	 <p>Madisonville New Branch</p>	 <p>Pleasant Ridge Maintenance</p>	 <p>Sharonville Interior Update</p>	 <p>West End Renovation</p>
2022	 <p>Green Township Interior Update</p>	 <p>Mariemont Exterior Update</p>	 <p>Walnut Hills Renovation and Expansion</p>		
2021	 <p>Anderson Township Renovation</p>	 <p>Deer Park Relocation and Expansion</p>	 <p>Price Hill Renovation and Expansion</p>		
2020	 <p>College Hill Interior Update</p>	 <p>Elmwood Place March</p>	 <p>Groesbeck Interior Update</p>	 <p>Madeira Interior Update</p>	
2019	 <p>Main Library Energy Retrofit December</p>				



Recognition



American Society for Public
Administration Greater Cincinnati
Chapter Outstanding Public Service
Honor for Building Architecture-
Large Scale and Honor for Interior
Architecture- Large Scale



Society of Ohio Archivists Merit
Award



Workforce Council of Southwest
Ohio Workforce Champion Award



Hamilton County Commission's 513
Relief Bus Commitment Award





Financials

General Fund

2024 REVENUE

Public Library Fund, State of Ohio	48,559,359
Tax Levy	40,594,468
Customer Fees	293,232
Earnings on Investments	3,001,824
Contributions	165,000
Miscellaneous Revenue	1,483,727
	\$94,097,610

2024 DISBURSEMENTS

Salaries	34,763,124
Benefits	10,719,364
Supplies	1,835,337
Purchased Services	11,442,196
Library Materials and Information	11,949,298
Capital Improvements	1,358,767
Other Objects	889,359
Transfers Out	22,000,000
	\$94,957,445



All Funds

2024 REVENUE

Public Library Fund, State of Ohio	48,559,359
Tax Levy	40,594,468
Customer Fees	293,232
Earnings on Investments	3,497,852
Contributions	3,496,369
Miscellaneous Revenue	1,796,283
	\$98,237,563

2024 DISBURSEMENTS

Salaries	34,763,124
Benefits	10,761,335
Supplies	5,169,112
Purchased Services	14,870,651
Library Materials and Information	12,015,190
Capital Improvements	23,911,123
Other Objects	889,359
	\$102,379,894



The Power of Summer Reading



29,044

Summer Reading participants



60,240

Attendees at 2,036 CHPL summer programs



35,802

New books distributed to kids and teens



16,637

Meals and snacks distributed in June and July

(includes 9,022 funded through the USDA's Child Nutrition Program and 7,615 funded by The Library Foundation)



444

Visits to camps and daycares in summer



Our Sponsors: Friends of the Public Library, H.B., E.W. & F.R. Luther Charitable Foundation, The Library Foundation, Ed and Joann Hubert Foundation, Edelweiss Foundation, Scripps Howard Fund, Turner Construction Foundation, Wohlgemuth Herschede Foundation

In-Kind Support: Cincinnati Reds, FC Cincinnati, Frisch's, IHOP



Foundation, Friends, and ATLA

The Library relies on both public and private support to serve our community. Private support comes to CHPL through the following dedicated organizations.



The Library Foundation

Enabled more than 15,000 in-person homework help and enrichment sessions at select library locations with funding from the Charles H. Dater Foundation and The Library Foundation.

Funded the 2024 Mary S. Stern Lecture with David Grann.



The Friends of the Public Library

Supported Library programs through sales of donated books, DVDs, music, and other materials at the Friends Warehouse shop in Hartwell.



Anderson Township Library Association

Hosted two successful annual book sales. Funds raised by the sales support adult and children's programs for the Anderson and Mt. Washington Branches.





Thank you!

The Library is deeply grateful for the generosity of our community. The following gifts were received between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2024 by the Library and The Library Foundation of Cincinnati & Hamilton County. These donations are essential to ensuring delivery of excellent library services and the availability of the widest possible range of resources for all ages.

For more information about donating to The Library Foundation, visit SupportCHPL.org.

\$50,000+

The Charles H. Dater
Foundation, Inc.

The Estate of Frank J. Dinnie
Susan and Joseph Pichler

Patricia L. and Dennis B.
Worthen, Ph.D.

\$25,000 - \$49,999

Julie Beatty

The David N. & Ann Early
Foundation

The Johnson Foundation

The H.B., E.W. and F. R. Luther
Charitable Foundation

The Scripps Howard Foundation

\$15,000 - \$24,999

Sarah and Tommy Evans

The Gilman Family Fund of the
Greater Cincinnati Foundation

PNC Charitable Trusts

\$10,000 - \$14,999

Hamilton County
Genealogical Society

The LaMacchia Family
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\$1,000 - \$4,999

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 Lora E. and Stephen M. Wolke

\$100 - \$499

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 Ryan Adcock
 Teresa N. Ahrenholz
 Lauren and Anthony Aiello
 Barbara M. and Marc A. Alexander
 Susan S. Allen
 M. Kathleen Allen
 Jeanette Altenau
 Howard Ammons
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 Anonymous (82)
 James Anthony and Sarah
 Corathers
 Sarah Apfeld-Inman
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 Renee and Andrew Arken
 Marcia and Koji Asari
 Matt Auer
 Pamela Badian-Pessot
 Ellen H. Baker
 Karilyn Ball
 Kathleen Balog
 Hannah E. Barker
 and Edward C. Herbers
 Johanna and Ardell Barkley
 Donna Barkley
 Karen Barnes
 Terence Barron
 Holly E. Bartlett
 Leah Bathe
 Robert F. Bauer

Laurel B. and Jeffrey L. Bauer
 Shavonne Bauer
 Mary Jo and Frederick Bazeley
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 Elaine and Donald Bedwell
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