



ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2020

July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020

THE FREE
LIBRARY OF
PHILADELPHIA
ADVANCES
LITERACY,
GUIDES
LEARNING,
AND INSPIRES
CURIOSITY.



Please note that images on the following pages of individuals without masks on were taken before the COVID-19 pandemic.

LEADERSHIP MESSAGE	5
THE YEAR IN REVIEW	6
ADVANCING LITERACY	8
GUIDING LEARNING	14
INSPIRING CURIOSITY	20
FINANCIALS	26
BOARDS AND EXECUTIVE STAFF	30
FREE LIBRARY LOCATIONS	31

Reading Captains help assemble and share 3,000 Summer Literacy Kits.



A Free Library patron visits Logan Library's outside pickup during the COVID-19 pandemic.

LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

Fiscal year 2020 has been a time of resilience and reflection for the Free Library of Philadelphia. From the COVID-19 pandemic that changed the way that the Library—and indeed the world—operates to our long-due reckoning with systemic racism, the Free Library and the communities we serve have faced extreme change and uncertainty. Now, more than ever, we are committed to ensuring our patrons can depend on us in times of hardship and to creating a just and inclusive library system that is respectful and responsive to the needs of our staff and of all the people we serve.



As one of Philadelphia's most beloved and critical institutions whose impact is deeply felt across all neighborhoods of our city, the Free Library has risen to the many challenges this year has brought. We viewed them as opportunities to better serve our community and the hundreds of thousands of Philadelphians who use the Free Library's many resources every day. The strong public-private partnership between the Free Library and the Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation has underpinned our system's many accomplishments this year.

In the first half of fiscal year 2020, the Free Library achieved incredible things. We eliminated overdue fines in an effort to create a more equitable and accessible system for all of our cardholders. We opened the Languages and Learning Center which provides adult learners with the support they need to reach their individual literacy and learning goals. And we served thousands of young people through our Literacy in Early Learning Spaces Program, the Field Teen Center, and our system-wide Literacy Enrichment Afterschool Program (LEAP), which grew 35 percent from September 2019 through February 2020, alone.

When the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to close our buildings, our dedicated Library staff worked tirelessly to meet the needs of our community in dynamic and innovative ways. The monumental shift to virtual services included not only the live-streaming of our popular storytimes and cooking tutorial programs, but also included organizing virtual programs that responded directly to the crisis. We added key resources to our digital offerings, and we established a new call center, 1-833-TALK-FLP, that patrons can call to get information and assistance from our expert staff.

Like any institution, the Free Library is not without its challenges, and we are on a journey of healing and growth to become better versions of ourselves. We are committed to meeting the needs and wants of the Library staff and the Library community as we strive to guide the way to a brighter future for all Philadelphians.

Leslie M. Walker
Interim Director

Barbara Sutherland
Chair, Board of Directors

Pamela P. Dembe
Chair, Board of Trustees

RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



2,240
Virtual Programs

attended by
209,793 people

401%
increase
in videos views for the
Author Events Series



69.3% rise in use of
digital databases

like Homework Help online
and Lynda.com

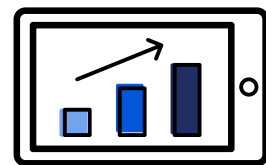


17.2% rise in use of
digital materials,

including ebooks, digital audiobooks
and streaming movies and music



114.1% more preschool program
attendees over the same period in FY19



14.8% more
followers on social media

INCREASED THE SIZE OF OUR DIGITAL COLLECTION BY **23.8%**

PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES*



840,052
cardholders

47.4% of Philadelphians
have a Library card

3,814,395 IN-PERSON LIBRARY VISITS



1,024,789
WiFi sessions



6,099,144
website visits

5,207,069
materials
borrowed
system-wide

*The Free Library system was closed for in-person use from March through June 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic

COLLECTIONS



2,361,756
books
(adult and children's)

26,647
audiobooks

203,047
DVDs
and Blu-Rays

54,645
CDs

409
journals,
magazines,
and newspapers

686,359
ebooks
(adult and children's)

147,057
digital audiobooks

31,178
streaming movies
and videos

352,911
streaming music
albums

11,892
digital journals,
magazines,
and newspapers



Top Streaming
Music Album
Hamilton



Top Children's Fiction
Wonder
by R.J. Palacio

4,205,393 materials borrowed system-wide this fiscal year

“LITERACY
IS A BRIDGE
FROM MISERY
TO HOPE. IT IS
A TOOL FOR
DAILY LIFE
IN MODERN
SOCIETY.”

- KOFI ANNAN

advancing literacy



Languages and Learning Center

In September 2019, the Free Library unveiled the Languages and Learning Center, a new, unique center designed to support adult learners with their individual literacy and learning goals through programming, outreach, and access to specialized resources.

The Languages and Learning Center (LLC) leads with a commitment to community engagement and strives to provide exceptional service to adult learners in a welcoming, accessible environment. Located in the Education, Philosophy, and Religion Department at Parkway Central Library, the LLC offers relevant and engaging programs and resources for adult basic education, English-language learning, world languages, digital literacy, and workforce development.

The Center hosts English-language classes and conversation groups for adults, as well as learning circles in languages like Spanish, French, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, and more. In addition, the LLC hosts the popular Edible Alphabet program through the Culinary Literacy Center,

in which participants learn English through cooking, and offers one-on-one tutoring and small group instruction for high school equivalence exam prep.

“I have lived my entire life without being able to read, and it has been hard,” said one participant in Leamos, the LLC literacy course that teaches Spanish-speaking adults to read and write in Spanish. “Leamos has helped me read and fill out forms at the doctor’s office. Now, for the first time, I’m able to recognize the mail that comes to my house.”

While the LLC is housed at Parkway Central, staff are dedicated to ensuring that neighborhood libraries throughout the city are also able to host LLC programming, making its critical resources accessible to all. In the wake of COVID-19, the LLC has continued to offer a robust slate of digital programming, including online conversation groups, writing classes, Edible Alphabet, an online suite of courses in GED and HiSET, and more. ♦



Free Library patrons in a Spanish-language conversation group.



A tutoring session at Parkway Central Library.



A Free Library patron browsing for materials.



Judi Moore a Library Supervisor at McPherson Square Library.

Fine-Free Library

In February 2020, the Free Library gave a valentine to the city of Philadelphia and went fine free, eliminating overdue charges and removing historic fines in an effort to create a more equitable and accessible system for all of our cardholders. In eliminating overdue fines, the Free Library joined the ranks of more than 400 other libraries nationwide who have done the same and, as a result, saw noticeable increases in circulation, turnstile, and registration statistics, as well as greater returns on materials previously marked lost or long overdue.

“Eliminating fines moves us from a punitive system to one that’s more embracing and welcoming to every community and neighborhood we serve,” said librarian Nate Eddy, who managed the Fine-Free Library initiative alongside a team of hardworking staff from across the system. “It allows us to re-engage with a number of former users who may have ‘left’ the library due to an inability to pay fines or feeling of shame in having overdue materials.”

The Fine-Free Library initiative was nearly two years in the making, as the Library

studied the impact of fines within its system and data from other library systems that have already eliminated fines. The research found that **eliminating fines as a barrier to library use would allow thousands more Philadelphians to take advantage of library resources**, while having no significant impact on the return rate of checked-out materials. The Fine-Free initiative was championed by Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney and 9th District Councilmember and Majority Leader Cherelle Parker.

“I commend the Free Library of Philadelphia Board of Trustees for making the bold decision to eliminate regressive fines and outstanding debts. This policy change will lead to greater return rates, and more importantly, help more Philadelphians access the wonderful resources the Free Library has to offer,” said Parker.

By going fine free and removing a significant barrier to access, the Free Library is more equitably serving the hundreds of thousands of Philadelphians who use the Free Library’s programs and resources daily. ♦



A patron at Kingsessing Library shows off the receipt of all their forgiven fines.

“THE
BEAUTIFUL
THING
ABOUT
LEARNING
IS THAT
NOBODY
CAN TAKE IT
AWAY FROM
YOU.”

—B.B. KING

guiding learning



Families learn and share at Smith Playground's *Never Too Young for Justice Storytime and Concert*.

COVID-19 Response

When the world ground to a halt in the face of a global pandemic that altered everyday life for nearly every Philadelphian, we knew that our work in the community would be more critical than ever.

The Free Library had to close our physical doors to the public in March, but our staff worked hard to spread the word about the Library's extensive digital resources and to offer much of our beloved programming—from storytimes for children to financial workshops for adults—in a new, virtual format. **In the first two months of the pandemic alone, almost 11,000 new library cards were issued.** A record number of new users took advantage of Overdrive, our primary ebook and audiobook lending service, and daily checkouts grew significantly. The Library also created a new helpline, 1-833-TALK-FLP, to answer questions

and help connect patrons with the information and resources they needed.

In addition to migrating many of our in-person programs and services online, library staff stepped up to participate in mutual aid fairs, food access drives, census outreach, and more in safe and socially distant ways.

As we continue to navigate these uncertain and precarious times, the Free Library knows that our mission to advance literacy, guide learning, and inspire curiosity is more critical than ever. From students trying to learn outside the traditional classroom to newly unemployed workers searching for a new job, or anyone seeking the solace of a beloved book or marathon-worthy TV series, Philadelphians can continue to connect with the Free Library. ♦



Free Library patrons visit Logan Library during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Making it Count: Census 2020

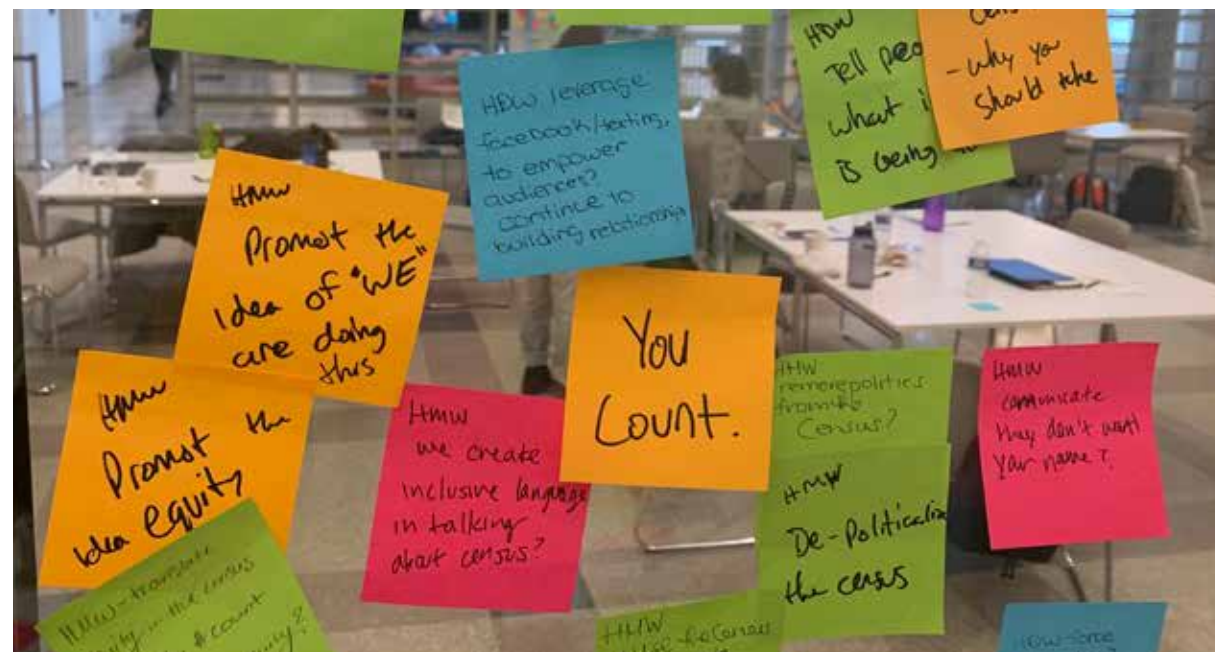
Every 10 years, the United States census counts the country's population which helps the government allocate federal funds to local communities for essential services, including funding for roads, clinics, health services, and education. This year, the Free Library worked hard to spread the word about the census and how important it was for every Philadelphian to fill out the census form and be counted.

The Library planned a multifaceted approach to spread the word about completing the census, as well as helped interested people learn more about becoming census workers. Neighborhood libraries throughout the city hosted census job fairs, where patrons could get information about available census jobs and even apply on the spot. Until in-person programming was derailed by the COVID-19 pandemic, library staff had also planned census action days, which were to be large

events hosted for the community during the spring to encourage census participation.

Library staff also undertook special "census champion" training, to ensure they were well-equipped to assist patrons with any and all questions.

In addition to programming, the Free Library also encouraged Philadelphians to complete the census through blog posts, social media, and print materials. The Library created posters and informational brochures in six languages that were distributed to food access centers during the spring, in an effort to reach as many Philadelphians as possible. By encouraging people to stand up and be counted by completing the census, the Free Library worked towards the equitable distribution of funding to our city, which will have a far-reaching impact over the next decade. ♦



A census planning and design charrette with students from the University of the Arts, library professionals across the system, and Philly Counts (the city's main census organizing unit).

“NEVER BE
LIMITED
BY OTHER
PEOPLE’S
LIMITED
IMAGINATIONS.”

—MAE JEMISON

inspiring curiosity



Community members at Paschalville Library's Back to School Night.



Neighborhood Ambassadors at the Woodland Avenue Reunion and cookout.



Paschalville Partnership

When neighborhoods come together to develop their strengths and celebrate their community members, great things happen. We know because we've seen it firsthand through the Paschalville Partnership.

Spearheaded by the Free Library of Philadelphia, the Paschalville Partnership is a collaboration of 11 community-based organizations and city agencies and organizations. The Partnership

works together to support job seekers and creates economic opportunities for residents surrounding the Paschalville Library in Southwest Philadelphia.

Over the past two years, with support in part from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Partnership undertook the Community Catalyst Initiative, which engaged residents to identify and make the neighborhood's strengths visible, leveraging them toward community-driven growth. Through the Initiative, the Paschalville Partnership hosted a variety of community-building events at the Paschalville Library, including more than 120 learning conversations, six themed story circles, five chats with block captains and other community leaders, and six visits to beloved local businesses. And as a result of these varied interactions, the Free Library created unique programming to better meet neighborhood needs, including a festive "let's get loud" Back to School Night and an

Employment Boot Camp that focused on helping people identify their gifts that they could offer back to the community.

"Thanks to the Community Catalyst Initiative, the Partnership has been able to bring residents into the fold and engage with them in a very authentic way that puts them in charge. It's helping to build lasting relationships," says Andrea Lemoins, the Free Library's community organizer for its southwest locations.

At its core, the Paschalville Partnership is centered on the belief that everyone has gifts, everyone has something to contribute, and everyone cares about something that motivates them to act. By building strong community relationships, the Free Library has been able to better serve its Paschalville Library patrons and celebrate the strengths of this unique, creative, and hardworking Philadelphia community. ♦



Job seekers at Paschalville Library



100 years Summer of Wonder

Find your story.



100 Years of Summer of Wonder

The Free Library's flagship Summer of Wonder program celebrated a big birthday this year—it turned 100!

Over the past century, the Library has been enriching the minds and strengthening the reading skills of thousands of school students throughout the city, because we know how crucial it is to keep young minds engaged during the summer months so that they're ready and eager to learn in the classroom.

What's more, for the very first time in FY 2020, the **Summer of Wonder went entirely virtual, with the help of librarians and library staff, camp counselors, teachers, caregivers, activists, and youth from communities across Philadelphia.** This collective effort ensured that our digital Summer of Wonder reached as many participants as possible and provided young Philadelphians with countless ways to stay engaged. When they

were not lost in a good book—logging more than 100,000 reading minutes—children and teens enjoyed everything from art projects to STEAM-centered building workshops, yoga and meditation sessions, and more.

Another unique first for the Summer of Wonder's 100th birthday was its artwork: For the very first time, it was created by a teenager, 17-year-old aspiring animator Deyania Sanders, who entered the Library's contest call for artwork from high school students after her art teacher encouraged her to submit. "Art has been a prominent part of my life for as long as I can remember," she says. "I never expected my art to mean so much or reach this kind of scope."

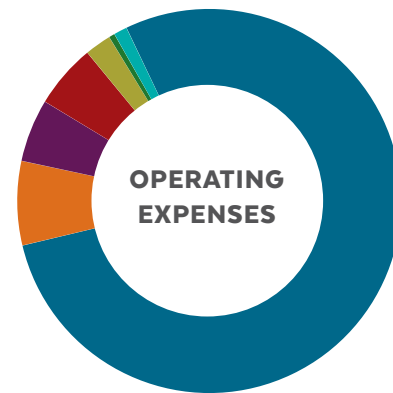
For 100 years, the Free Library has helped countless young Philadelphians thrive and succeed through the Summer of Wonder. We can't wait to see what the next 100 years have in store! ♦

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA | FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2019-JUNE 30, 2020

OPERATING SUPPORT AND REVENUE*

City General Fund	\$46,268,849
State Grant Funds	\$7,820,226
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	\$54,089,075



OPERATING EXPENSES

Salaries and Benefits	\$42,382,820
Library Collections and Materials	\$3,833,912
Facility Leases, Furnishings, and Maintenance	\$2,868,226
Technology Purchases and Support	\$2,913,900
Training and Other Professional Services	\$1,204,897
Office Supplies, Postage, and Printing	\$269,686
Other Expenses	\$615,634
TOTAL	\$54,089,075

*Revenues may include encumbrances and/or appropriations from prior fiscal years, using the modified accrual and cash basis of accounting permitted by municipal accounting standards.

FINANCIAL BACKGROUND

FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA FOUNDATION | FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2019-JUNE 30, 2020

BACKGROUND

The Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation (the Foundation) functions primarily to secure federal, state, city, and private grants and contributions to expend those funds on various Library programs.

Agreement with Board of Trustees of the Free Library of Philadelphia

The Foundation entered into an agreement dated June 19, 1984, with the Board of Trustees of the Free Library of Philadelphia, an independent board of the City of Philadelphia (City or City Library) responsible for securing and expending City appropriations. Under this agreement, the Board of Trustees of the Free Library of Philadelphia maintains care and custody of the collections of the Foundation and makes all necessary operational decisions as to the management of the libraries and the collections of the Foundation. These financial statements reflect only the assets, liabilities, net assets, and changes in net assets of the Foundation and, accordingly, do not include any amount applicable to the financial position or changes in net assets of the City Library.

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Accounting

The financial statements of the Foundation have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America and reflect all significant receivables, payables, and other liabilities.

Basis of Presentation

The Foundation reports information regarding its financial position and activities according to three classes of net assets: unrestricted net assets, temporarily restricted net assets, and permanently restricted net assets. Unrestricted net assets are not subject to donor-imposed stipulations. The Board of Directors may elect to designate such assets for specific purposes or to have them function as endowment. This designation may be removed at the Board's discretion. Temporarily restricted

net assets are subject to donor-imposed stipulations that will be met either by actions of the Foundation or by the passage of time. Permanently restricted net assets are subject to donor-imposed stipulations that require that they be maintained permanently.

The statement of activities distinguishes changes in net assets from operations from other changes in net assets. Operating activity includes revenues and other support, including investment income generated from short-term investments, as well as long-term investment income designated for operations, and all expenses that are available to provide program services and support the administrative functions of the Foundation. Other charges in net assets include permanently restricted contributions and contributions designated for other purposes by the Board, as well as long-term investment income in excess of (or less than) the Foundation's designated spending rate.

Revenue is reported as increases in unrestricted net assets unless use of the related assets is limited by donor-imposed restrictions. Expenses are reported as decreases in unrestricted net assets. Gains and losses on assets or liabilities are reported as increases or decreases in unrestricted net assets unless their use is restricted by explicit donor stipulation or by law. Expirations of temporary restrictions on net assets are reported as net assets released from restrictions.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA FOUNDATION AND SUBSIDIARY | FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2019–JUNE 30, 2020

OPERATING SUPPORT AND REVENUE	W/O DONOR RESTRICTIONS	W/ DONOR RESTRICTIONS	2020 TOTAL	2019 TOTAL
Grants and contributions	\$3,085,819	\$7,762,236	\$10,848,055	\$10,595,382
Federal and state grants and city capital	857,777	43,555	901,332	1,126,984
Contributions: Central Library Campaign	-	1,384,417	1,384,417	6,077,616
Fees and library services	399,187	106,512	505,699	895,969
Fines and lost books	93,401	-	93,401	147,812
Sale of books and publications	155,459	-	155,459	114,580
Program revenue	228,719	-	228,719	219,685
Admissions	21,790	-	21,790	23,225
Other income	347,490	6,320	353,810	611,372
Dividend and interest income	11,530	-	11,530	10,650
Long-term investment return designated for operations	482,003	1,487,140	1,969,143	1,750,723
Net assets released from restriction	10,181,661	(10,181,661)	-	-
TOTAL OPERATING SUPPORT AND REVENUE	15,864,836	608,519	16,473,355	21,573,998
OPERATING EXPENSES				
Programs and library services				
Public programs	7,288,036	-	7,288,036	7,438,457
Collections and preservation	539,778	-	539,778	549,351
Technology	319,269	-	319,269	283,090
Facilities renovation	2,307,085	-	2,307,085	457,677
Central Library capital renovation project	630,748	-	630,748	16,554,606
Total Program Services	11,084,916	-	11,084,916	25,283,181
Supporting services				
Administration	2,077,054	-	2,077,054	1,748,576
Fundraising	2,897,852	-	2,897,852	2,896,550
Total Supporting Services	4,974,906	-	4,974,906	4,645,126
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	16,059,822	-	16,059,822	29,928,307
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS FROM OPERATIONS	(194,986)	608,519	413,533	(8,354,309)
NON-OPERATING SUPPORT AND GAINS (LOSS)				
Grants and contributions to endowment	538,489	2,478,666	3,017,155	321,859
Long-term investment return (loss) in excess of return designated for operations	(222,623)	(517,475)	(740,098)	(152,187)
Collection items purchased	(35,370)	(10,124)	(45,494)	(54,566)
Sale of collection item	20,080	-	20,080	-
TOTAL NON-OPERATING SUPPORT AND GAINS (LOSS)	300,576	1,951,067	2,251,643	115,106
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	105,590	2,559,586	2,665,176	(8,239,203)
NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF YEAR	6,549,748	40,997,607	47,547,355	55,786,558
NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR	\$6,655,338	\$43,557,193	\$50,212,531	\$47,547,355

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL

FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA FOUNDATION AND SUBSIDIARY | FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2019–JUNE 30, 2020

ASSETS	2020	2019
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 3,555,555	\$3,604,738
Grants and contributions receivable, net	15,940,491	14,175,062
Fines and other receivables	2,104,566	904,296
Inventory	79,111	81,495
Prepaid expenses	90,093	102,283
Property and equipment, net	3,614,539	3,693,488
Investments	36,510,434	36,898,680
Beneficial interest in life insurance	40,533	38,936
TOTAL ASSETS	61,935,322	\$59,498,978
LIABILITIES		
Line of credit	\$9,000,000	\$7,995,930
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	522,088	3,392,030
Accrued payroll and related liabilities	651,625	449,376
Split-interest liabilities	110,778	114,287
Refundable advance	1,438,300	-
TOTAL LIABILITIES	11,722,791	\$11,951,623
NET ASSETS		
Without donor restrictions	6,655,338	6,549,748
With donor restrictions	43,557,193	40,997,607
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$50,212,531	\$47,547,355
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$61,935,322	\$59,498,978

EXECUTIVE STAFF

Siobhan A. Reardon†
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†In July 2020, Siobhan A. Reardon stepped aside as President and Director of the Free Library. In September 2020, Leslie M. Walker became Interim Director.
‡John Meier left the Free Library in August 2020.

