Raising A Reader Massachusetts

Opening Doors by Opening Books

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

STATE LITERACY AWARD WINNER 2021 LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

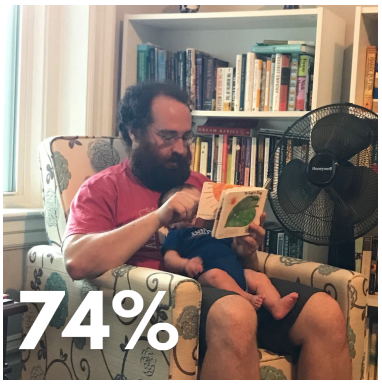
GUIDESTAR PLATINUM TRANSPARENCY 2021

CHARITY NAVIGATOR 100 OUT OF 100 GIVE WITH CONFIDENCE

MAKING AN IMPACT

Our Mission

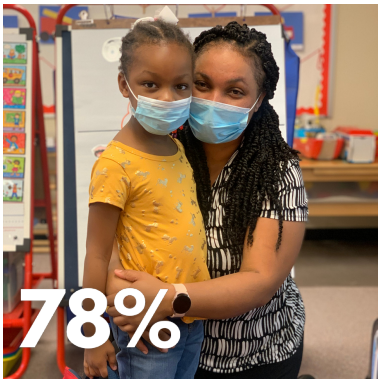
Our mission is to close the literacy opportunity gap among children birth to age six in under-resourced communities by helping families develop and practice shared home reading habits.



of families reported increased reading frequency.*

*Percentage representative of families initially reading less than 3 times per week

of families use 3 or more dialogic reading strategies after RAR-MA.



of partners share that children showed a greater interest in books and reading

Data based on returned partner and matched family surveys, FY20-FY21 and FY17-FY19 averages respectively.

3,000

Titles in Rotation

4,850

Children Served

97

Active Partners

FROM A FAMILY

""The pandemic was a drastic change to the normal way of doing things. There was anxiety and exhaustion along the way. 'All about feelings' was was our book to help [my son] understand that his feelings are valid – difficult feelings are not permanent and it's ok to talk about it and ask for help."

- Mother, Malden

FROM A PARTNER

""Reading allows kids to create new worlds beyond the bounds of the one they live in. I believe reading is key in helping children grow to be kind people."

-Implementer Liaison, Dorchester Family Engagement Network Playgroup & The Boys and Girls Club of Dorchester

DEAR READERS

Thank you from the leadership!

Dear Readers,

Imagine not having any books in your home, not being able to dive into a story with a loved one. Moving into a second year of navigating the coronavirus pandemic when schools moved to virtual environments and libraries and other community resources closed, we are committed to our goal: to provide critical literacy support to end the cycle of low literacy among young children in their foundational years. Thank you for your support of our important work to eliminate the literacy opportunity gap in Massachusetts.

Our staff, partners, supporters, and families have demonstrated incredible resilience and ingenuity. The pandemic has revealed further socio-economic inequities and demonstrated even more the need for early literacy resources to build the critical foundation for a lifetime of opportunity.

I am proud of our innovation in rebuilding our signature Red Book Bag program, reaffirming our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, and expanding the reach of our Community Ambassador Program, our program champions. We are especially excited about the addition of Social Emotional Learning and Science Technology Engineering & Math topics to prepare the leaders and critical thinkers of tomorrow.

Celebrating our 15th year in Massachusetts, I am so grateful for the strong relationships we've cultivated with Board members, supporters, partners, implementers, and families who continue to amaze me with their resourcefulness, generosity, and strength. With your help, we are addressing the systemic inequities of low literacy so that all children can find the joy and success that comes from reading, the foundation of all learning.

With gratitude,

Christine Ward

Christine Ward, Executive Director

Dear Readers,

Thank you for your continued generosity to support our goal to end the literacy opportunity gap. I continue to be impressed with and thankful for the work we do and the families we support. We could not do this important and ambitious work without your help. Our success is thanks to the strength of our inclusive dual intervention program model, dedicated staff, committed program partners and generous donors. Despite the unique challenges of this past year, we have maintained the majority of our program partners and we are grateful for their unwavering commitment to our mission.

We remain steadfast in our work to address inequities by adding resources for our constituents while maintaining the core of our program model through our family engagement workshops and the rotating library of high-quality, age appropriate and culturally relevant books. We continue to build our diverse board and add resources, including a DEI task force, to address important issues around representation, inclusion & social justice - and how our mission relates to these challenging topics within our communities.

I am proud to be a part of this organization and your partnership and continued support is instrumental to our impact on the literacy opportunity gap.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Gregg Dooling

Gregg Dooling, Board Chair

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

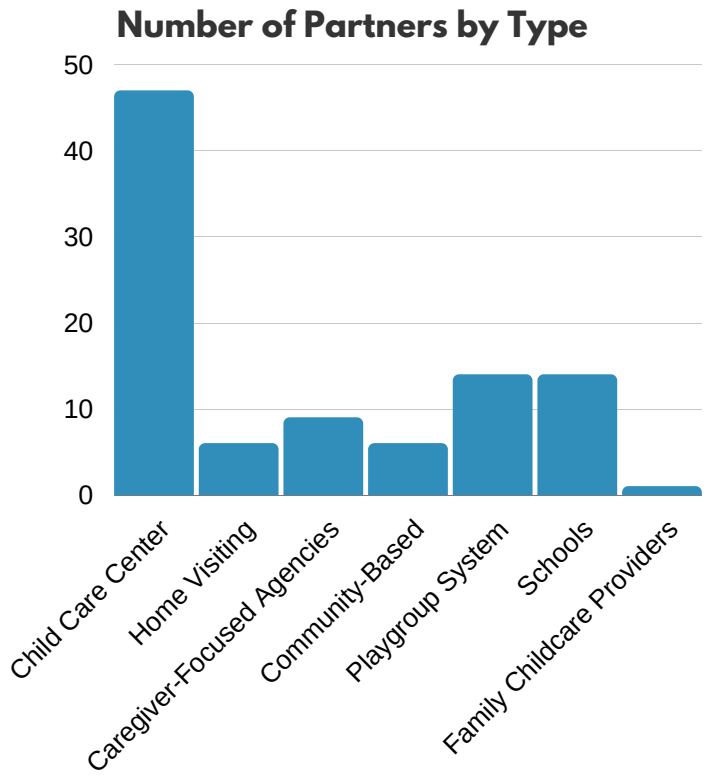
Chair - Gregg Dooling
Managing Director, CFO, Amundi US
Vice Chair - Francine Rosenzweig
Former Attorney
Treasurer - Heather Dickinson (through 9/20)
Managing Director, Deloitte & Touche, LLC
Treasurer - Jill Quinby
Audit & Assurance Partner, Deloitte & Touche, LLC
Secretary - Daryl Andrews
Partner, Andrews DeValerio, LLP

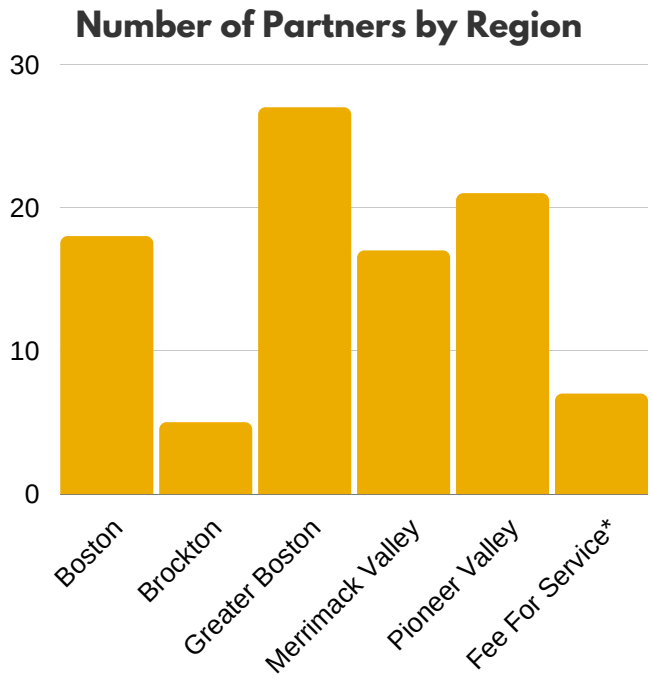
Melissa Alexander - IT Director, Foundation Medicine
Bill Barke - Senior Advisor, Open Scholar
Brandon Burns - Corporate Audit Vice President, State Street
Camille Carlstrom - Managing Director of Research, Fidelity Management & Research Company
Mercedes Dahar - Executive Director of Customer Success, athenahealth
Dale Dowdie - CEO/Founder of BlackFacts.com, Intellitech Consulting Enterprises Assurance
Ola Friday - Executive Director, Early Educator Investment Collaborative
Aria Glasgow - Associate Partner, AON/Radford Advisory
Susan Houston - Founding Executive Director, MassEcon
Jonathan Slawsby - Owner & COO, Madison Food Corp.
Shelley Wilson - Marketing Director, PwC
Jonathan Nesbit - (through 1/21) Managing Director, State Street Global Exchange

OUR PARTNERS

Convenience in a trusted setting.

We reach families including parents, caregivers, and their children through trusted community partners In total, we work with 97 partners in under-resourced communities.



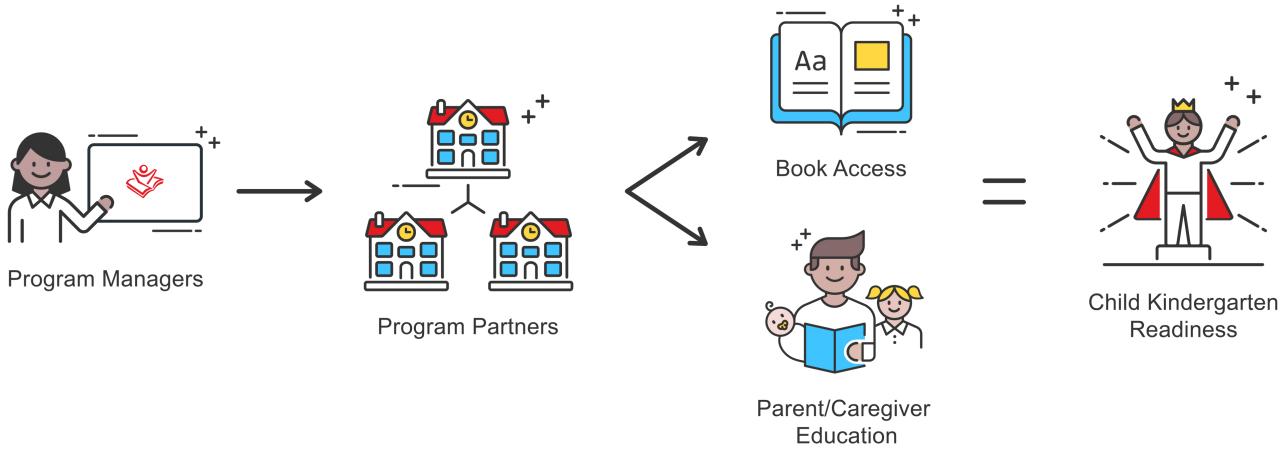


*Fee for service programs (satellite, workplace, and professional development only) not in our direct service communities

OUR DIFFERENTIATOR

More than a book donation program.

We teach families dialogic reading strategies to effectively engage children in interactive reading that supports healthy brain development, and provide age-appropriate and culturally relevant books through our rotating library.



OUR FAMILIES

We are proud of the diversity of the families we serve.

RAR-MA families speak many languages at home, including Arabic, Cape Verdean-Creole, English, Haitian-Creole, Khmer, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese languages, and others.

Data from the last three years shows that:

18% of parents/caregivers have less than a high school education, and **33.7%** have a high school diploma as the highest education level.

47% of parents/caregivers report that English is not the primary household language.

34% of parents/caregivers report household income of less than $25,000.*

*All data captured through parent/caregiver surveys. Parents that did not respond to these questions were not included in the total.

Books in the RAR-MA rotation are available in 13 different languages:

- Arabic
- Burmese
- Chinese
- English
- French
- Japanese
- American Sign Language
- Nepali
- Portuguese
- Somali
- Spanish
- Vietnamese
- Braille

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOTS

BROCKTON

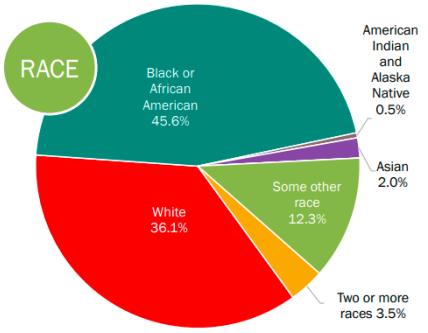
14 thousand households with children under 6 (~43%)

TOP LANGUAGES

61% English (only)
15% Portuguese or Portuguese Creole
11% French Creole
8% Spanish or Spanish Creole

11.1% of Hispanic or Latino descent

Data: American Community Survey 2015 & 2019 5-YR Estimates



MERRIMACK VALLEY

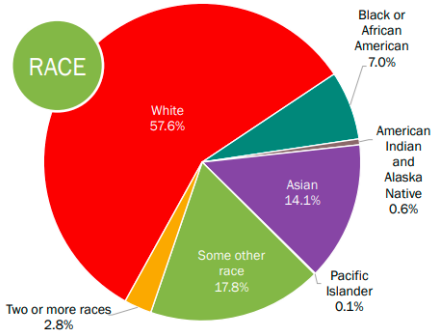
30 thousand households with children under 6 (~45%)

TOP LANGUAGES

43% English (only)
38% Spanish or Spanish Creole
8% Mon-Khmer, Cambodian
3% Portuguese or Portuguese Creole

44.2% of Hispanic or Latino descent

Data: American Community Survey 2015 & 2019 5-YR Estimates



GREATER BOSTON

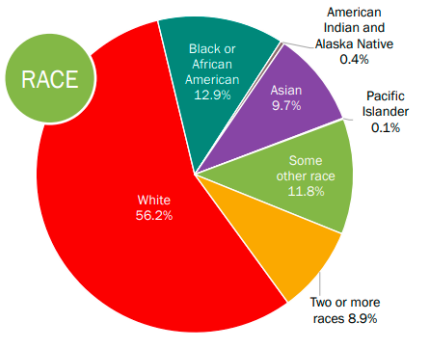
48 thousand households with children under 6 (~46%)

TOP LANGUAGES

47% English (only)
27% Spanish or Spanish Creole
5% Portuguese or Portuguese Creole

35.0% of Hispanic or Latino descent

Data: American Community Survey 2015 & 2019 5-YR Estimates

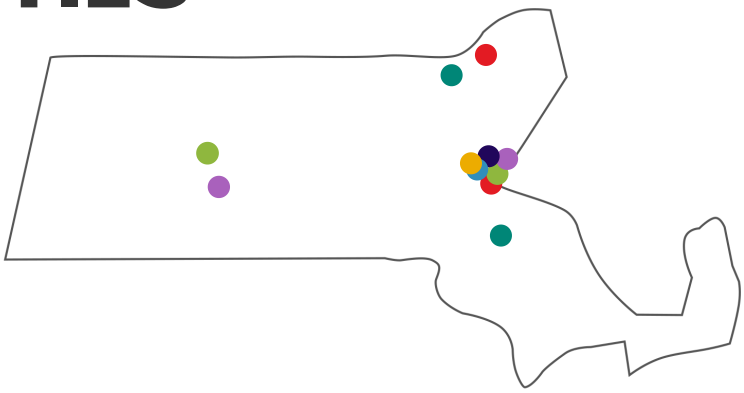


FROM OUR DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS

"STEM are complex topics. Our diverse STEM book titles and family engagement workshops help demystify these subjects into acts of thinking, doing, and measuring - and in doing so spark children's natural curiosity," said Katee Duffy, our Director of Programs. "The youngest learners of today are the critical thinkers of the future. I imagine the next generation of Raising A Reader Massachusetts alumni will be leaders solving climate change and preventing global pandemics. It is a pleasure and a privilege to create opportunities for that path of exploration through books."

OUR COMMUNITIES

The state of early literacy.



2021 MCAS RESULTS

3rd Graders Partially or Not Meeting Expectations in RAR-MA Communities

Statewide	49%
Boston	67%
Brockton	81%
Chelsea	70%
Everett	75%
Holyoke	85%
Lawrence	80%
Lowell	70%
Lynn	76%
Malden	55%
Methuen	63%
Revere	62%
Springfield	69%

For minority students, this number increases.

Results by Subgroup

English Learners (EL) or Former EL	71%
Economically Disadvantaged	70%
Black	68%
Hispanic/Latino	72%
White	37%

FIGHTING LEARNING LOSS

Discussions of this year's MCAS results highlight dropping scores and inequities exacerbated by the pandemic. "*One of the starkest achievement gaps in Massachusetts was seen on the Grade 3 English/Language Arts exam, on which 32 percent of Black students met or exceeded grade level expectations, down 6 percentage points from 2019. Only 28 percent of Latino students scored that high, down 10 points from two years ago*," says James Vaznis, *Boston Globe* columnist.* The Raising A Reader MA program provides support for families to fill in those gaps during these critical early years.

*https://www.bostonglobe.com/2021/09/21/metro/mcas-scores-plummet-during-pandemic/?p1=Article_Inline_Text_Link

OUR COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS

Advocates within the communities we serve.

Community Ambassadors volunteer within their own communities, connecting prospective participants with our program and offering a personal connection within the community. Our Community Ambassadors are a valuable resource, engaging parents with providers to build relationships and make a difference.

As champions of our program, the Community Ambassadors participated in the virtual workshop pilot, made videos/storytimes to support our COVID-19 response, and provided valuable feedback for the family resource page.

CORONAVIRUS' IMPACT

Innovative solutions to a major crisis.

Moving into a second year of working within the context of the coronavirus pandemic, RAR-MA is proud of the innovations of the last year.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, the resilience of families and Community Ambassadors, and the innovative thinking of our program team, we've been able to rebuild our signature Red Bag Book program– our rotating library of culturally diverse books and resources; hold virtual workshops to meet with families from the comfort of their homes; offer onsite family engagement workshops in safe settings; create a series of story time videos with guest readers; and incorporate elements of science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) and social emotional learning (SEL) into our curriculum.

- Expanded Texting Initiatives
- Robust Multilingual Video Resources
- New Webpage Featuring Tools For Families
- Virtual Workshops
- Enhanced Community Ambassador Outreach To Families
- Shared Resources Concerning Racial Justice

Red Book Bag Rotation Program Update

In March 2020, our signature Red Book Bag Rotation program was suspended to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus. We are happy to announce that our program was reimplemented this year while following the guidance of health and safety experts to ensure families' safety.

OUR DONORS

Over $100K

Boston Children's Collaboration for Community Health

$20K - 60K

Adelaide Breed Bayrd Foundation
Amelia Peabody Foundation
Amundi US
Bancel Foundation
Cabot Family Charitable Trust
Camille & David Carlstrom
Fordham Street Foundation
Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation
John & Susan Simon
Lawrence J. and Anne Rubenstein Charitable Foundation
Liberty Mutual Foundation
Nan Haar Legacy Foundation
Nathaniel and Elizabeth Stevens Foundation
Perpetual Trust for Charitable Giving, Bank of America, N.A., Trustee
PNC Foundation
Reeder Foundation
Stavros Niarchos Foundation
The TJX Companies, Inc.

$10K - 19.9K

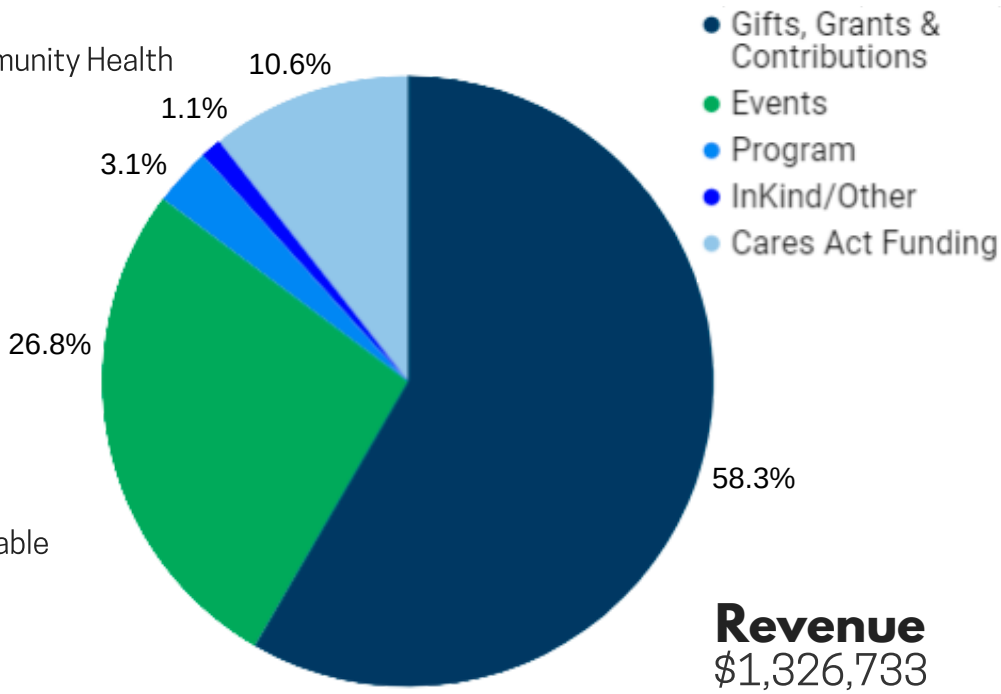
A.C. Ratshesky Foundation (GMA)
Bill Barke
DCU for Kids
Deloitte
Ellen Roy Herzfelder
Francine Rosenzweig & David Davidson
Gregg & Robin Dooling
Hamilton Company Charitable Foundation
Harold Brooks Foundation, Bank of America
Jessica & Josh Lutzker
John & Kelly Carroll
Jonathan & Lisa Slawsby
Kate Enroth & Dana Schmaltz
Rodman Ride for Kids
TD Charitable Foundation
Vertex Foundation
Vertex Pharmaceuticals Inc.

$5K - 9.9K

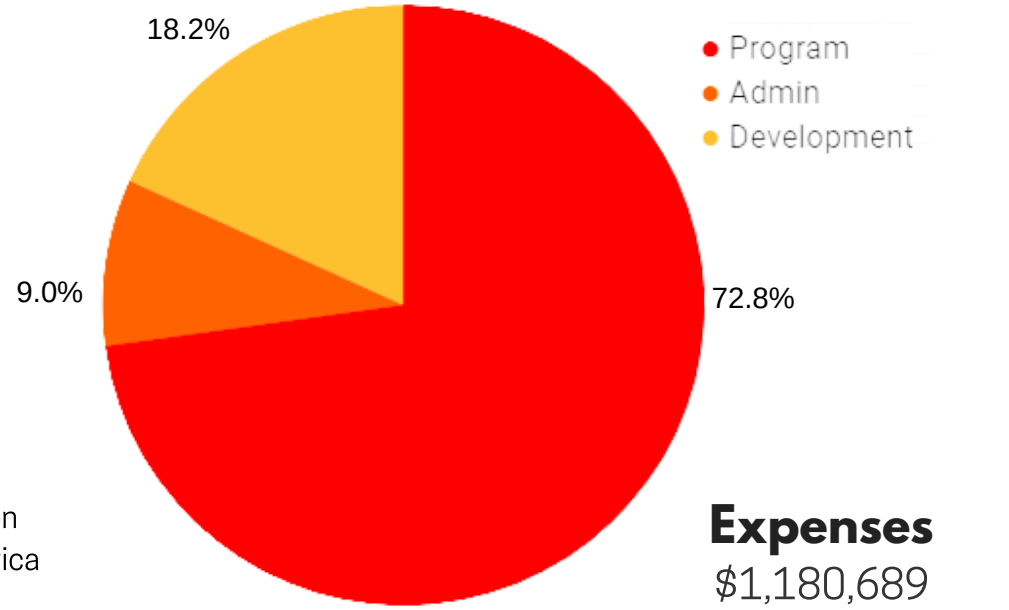
Aria Glasgow
Brian Bell & Rakel Meir
Dan & Sue Farrell

FINANCIALS

Fiscal Year 2021 - 7/1/20 to 6/30/21



Revenue
$1,326,733



Expenses
$1,180,689

Proud partner of

Ready4K

United Way
United Way of Greater Plymouth County

A Boston Children's Collaboration for Community Health Partner

Rodman for Kids

PNC FOUNDATION

Boston Basics

Eastern Bank Foundation
Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation (EHTF)
EY
FGS Printing
Foundation M
HarborOne Foundation
Heather Murray & Rob Pawliuk
Janet Porter & Jim O'Sullivan
John Cassell & Karin Landry
John Hancock
Katherine Chapman Stemberg
Kelly & Frank Panayotou
Lovett-Woodsum Foundation
Progress Partners
Richard K. and Nancy L. Donahue Charitable Foundation
Susan & Julian Houston
Thomas Anthony Pappas Charitable Foundation
William & Mari-Ann Hogan

$2.5K - 4.9K

Barry Hynes
Carol McKean
CBIZ, Inc.
CHT Foundation
Daryl & Chris Andrews
Gina Dineen
Greater Lowell Community Foundation
Heather Dickinson
Jeanne Blasberg
Jonathan Nesbit & Gillian Meek
Justin & Lydia Hayward
Lisa Jones
Michael & Margaret McDonald
Michael Corrado
Paul and Edith Babson Foundation (GMA)
People's United Community Foundation of Eastern Massachusetts
Robert & Geary Vail
State Street
Stefan Spazek
Stephanie & Brian Spector
TD Bank, N.A.
The Charlotte Home
United Way of Greater Plymouth County
Willard G. McGraw
Woodbury Andrews

$1K - 2.4K

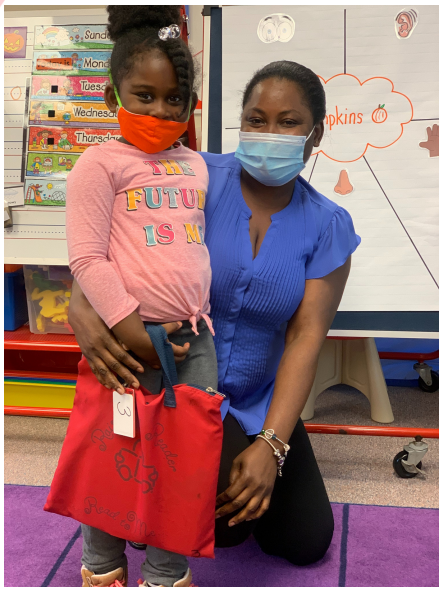
Alexandra White
Anthony Koenig
Aon Service Corp.
Ben & Tonya Mezrich
Birch Hill Investment Advisors
Boston Estate Planning Council
Catherine Donaher
Christopher Perry
Cynthia & Brian Casey
Dale Dowdie
Donna DiFillippo & Michael Ruttner
Elizabeth Fisher
Emily Roman
Gary Blank
Geoffrey Smith
Horace A. Moses Charitable Trust
Heather Trafton
Jason & Heather Lang
Jeannette Hsu
Jeff Davis
Jessica Southam
Jill Quinby
Jim & Ann Marie Ross
Joe Baerlein
John Carey
John Isley
Kathy Sherbrooke
Kelly Newman
Kerry Nelson & Alan Milinazzo
Laura Palmer
Louise Elving
Mary Dooling
Mass Center for the Book
Mass Mutual Life Insurance Co
Mercedes Dahar
Nick MacShane
Nina Hughes
Shelley Wilson
Stefania Mallett
Steve Grossman
Sylvia Hammond
Theresa Beach
Thomas Shapiro

In-Kind Consulting

Jay Delaune - (Salesforce)
Mike Hamilton (RAR-MA Website)
Zachary Jacobson (Data Entry)
Goodwin Procter LLP (*Pro Bono* Legal Work)

DWA Gala In-Kind ($500+)

Boston Beer Company
Boston Red Sox
Cabot Cheese
Camille Carlstrom
Capital Grille (Chestnut Hill)
Carol McKean Events
Chatham Thread Works
Core Cardio Fitness
Dan Shaughnessy
Daniela Corte
DePrisco Diamonds
Fran Rosenzweig
Green Mountain Inn
GrubStreet
Hank Phillippi Ryan
Heather & Jason Lang
Jeanne Blasberg
Jessica Lutzker
Karen Mitchell
Kathy Sherbrooke
Shreve, Crump & Low
Steve Smith
The Newbury Boston
The Urban Grape
Total Wine
XV Beacon
1-800 Got Junk



Thank You!

All funding is representative of pledges in FY 2021.

DINNER WITH AN AUTHOR

Our signature fundraising gala for 2021, Dinner with an Author, continued as a virtual event on June 21, 2021. The event provided the opportunity for our supporters to interact with our authors from the comfort of their homes. We are so grateful for the authors, sponsors, supporters and RAR-MA staff who made this wonderful event possible!

"***Stephen King said 'books are a uniquely portable magic'. So that would make the good people at Raising A Reader MA, wondrous magicians. They empower underserved children to free their minds through literacy, and because of that I proudly participated in their virtual Dinner. And to see so many hearts rally to the RAR-MA cause was nothing short of magical."*** -Desmond Hall, Author of Your Corner Dark

Featuring

Ace Atkins
New York Times Best-Selling Author

Alison Wright
Award-Winning National Geographic Photographer and Author

Jessica Meir, PhD
NASA Astronaut

Dinner with an Author
Featured Authors & Guest Speakers

Dr. Jessica Meir
Ace Atkins
Alison Wright
Dan Shaughnessy
Dariel Suarez
Deborah Royce
Desmond Hall
Hadley Douglas
Michelle Wax
William Martin
Hank Phillippi Ryan
Jeanne Blasberg
Jennifer De Leon
Jerald Walker
Katherine Sherbrooke
Marjan Kamali
Melissa Bernstein
Nikki Giovanni
TJ Douglas

EMERGING LEADERS

The Emerging Leaders are an associate board of young professionals who regularly take action to raise awareness and funds for our core mission and develop into future leaders.

Co-chair (CY 2019-21): Emily Leinbach - Keystone Strategy
Co-chair (CY 2021-22): Sarah Canavan - Vynamic
Chapman Leedy - Federal Reserve Bank of Boston
Manusha Chereddy - Free Solo Ventures
Amanda DiMatteo - Peabody & Arnold LLP
Maeve Foley - Raines International
Caroline Greiwe - iBoss
Parker Greiwe - Stryker
Bill Hall - Nightshift Brewery
Arwa Jivani - MGH
Serene Liu - IBM Resilient
Annie O'Connell - MassEcon
Brendan Rice - Magellan Jets
Ian White - Workbar
Joshua Zeff - CarGurus
Bridget Kenneally - Deloitte
George Xu - CareOne Management LLC
Noaem Shurin - Raines International
Mikaela Alioto - The Bowdoin Group
Rowan Steere - Deloitte

Opening Doors by Opening Books

Raising A Reader Massachusetts

Raising A Reader MA is a 501(c)(3) organization with EIN #80-0297898.

Headquartered in the historic Old Corner Bookstore on the Freedom Trail
3 School Street, 3rd Floor
Boston, MA 02108

(617) 292-BOOK | www.raisingareaderma.org