What do you do with a problem?
Dear Friends of the Book Bank,

What a year. As I reflect over 2020, my mind always comes back to the challenges we have all faced. Challenges that affected our families, our schools, our friends, our businesses and of course, our country. Still, we always find a way to survive. We are strong and resilient.

The Maryland Book Bank is no different. We started with a record-setting first quarter. Fresh off the launch of our second Bookmobile, we hit the ground running. We were on pace to give away more books than ever before in 2020.

Then, as we all know, the things we took for granted suddenly disappeared. Classrooms with wonderful teachers. Bustling playgrounds. Visits with grandparents. Festivals and fun. And for many, the sense of safety and security that comes with being able to provide what your family needs.

When your home becomes your world, you quickly realize what's important. Just as they needed food to feed hungry bellies, families needed books to nourish hungry minds and hungry imaginations. Most of the students we see on the Bookmobile have between 2 and 4 books at home. That's simply not enough, especially when schools are closed. Our goal is that every child in Baltimore City will have a home library of at least 20 books, and that didn't change because the world around us did.

As you will read in this report, we didn't miss a beat in continuing our services in new ways. I am so proud of our small team of staff, volunteers, and partners who have worked tirelessly to ensure that children in Baltimore City have books they love during the shutdown. We met families where they were—at home, at resource distribution sites, and through contactless pick-up at our warehouse. We also equipped educators and youth programs across the state with thousands of books to distribute themselves, another way to stay connected during difficult times.

I hope you will look through these pages and see the smiles and hard work and know that you are a part of it. Your support has made this difficult time all the more bearable and all of us here at the Maryland Book Bank appreciate your commitment to our future, our children’s future, and Maryland’s future.

We look forward to the day we can once again welcome you back to the warehouse and see the children’s smiles we miss so much.

With gratitude,

Mark Feiring
Initial Innovations: Book Packs

Our very first pivot was to set up online orders for packs of 10 books that families could pick up through contactless delivery at the warehouse. Order forms included children’s age and interests so that Book Packs could be custom-picked just for them. The Book Bank assigned families a pick-up time, and through a simple drive-through process, they were able to grab bags of books to take home.

Hitting our Stride: Educator Boxes and Story Kits

Educator Boxes

The Maryland Book Bank is the only book bank in the state or region. To support teachers and youth programs in Baltimore City and statewide, we packed boxes of 100 books for educators to pick up and distribute to their students through meal programs, school resource distributions, and reading programs. Some teachers even drove to their students’ houses and put the books in their mailboxes. Others used the books to make their daily virtual read-alongs fresh and exciting.

We distributed nearly 600 educator boxes reaching nearly 16,000 students across Maryland.
Story Kits

Knowing that many families couldn’t make it to the warehouse themselves, we had to come up with new, safe ways of getting books out into every Baltimore neighborhood. One of our most popular new programs, Story Kits, brings the bookstore to the front door. Each Story Kit contains five books hand-selected by Book Bank staff for individual students based on their reading level and interests. The kits are mailed at no cost to the homes of students enrolled in Baltimore City Public Schools. All BCPSS students are eligible to receive a Story Kit.

The Book Bank developed customized packaging and labels that make Story Kits a truly special experience for young people. Story Kits also come with a list of guided questions for family members to ask their children before, during, and after reading to support reading comprehension.

“Story kits were absolutely perfect for his interests!! Thank you so very much!” - Martha F.

Staff Stories

“I loved hearing from the parents how much the Story Kits have been a morale boost in a year of a lot of bad stuff, when parents and kids are struggling. In addition to saying thanks for being a great educational resource, they thanked us for simply giving their children something uplifting when things all around them don’t feel good.”

– Kim Tabb, Program Manager

“For our family, books calm even the smallest heart. My daughter has even shared her Story Kit with her new babysister in the NICU. Thank You!” - Briana D.

“Thank you so much for the books. My kids enjoy reading them and they are amazing books!” - Heidi H.
In 2020, we delivered nearly 9,000 Story Kits totaling nearly 50,000 books into homes.

“My daughter has a small library at home, but they are books she’s read already and I was beginning to fear that her love of reading was declining because she had no interest in the books we had at home. I jumped at the opportunity to get her a Story Kit and she has been enjoying her expanded library ever since. Thank you for all that you and your staff do.” - Andrea K.

Community Organizations
One of our first partners was the Baltimore City Recreation and Parks Department who distributed books at their rec center sites. We delivered 8,000 books total through rec centers alone during the pandemic. We also partnered with the Baltimore Hunger Project to pack up hundreds of books at a time for them to distribute at Baltimore City Public Schools meal sites. We reached more than 9,000 children with 30,000 books at meal sites. Finally, we partnered with Reading Partners to provide Story Kits to over 300 of its students.

Funders
The Baltimore philanthropic community mobilized quickly and efficiently to support organizations like the Book Bank during the pandemic. We were so heartened by the collaboration and support of the many large and small funders who jumped in to help with emergency grants and pooled funds. These include the Baltimore Community Foundation, the Bernard Family Foundation and the Lerner Family Foundation. The Jacob and Hilda Blaustein Foundation stepped in with an emergency grant of $10,000 to ensure the Story Kit program was available to city children. The Alvin and Fanny B. Thalheimer and Hirschhorn foundations provided grants of $15,000 and $2,500, respectively, to support the program as well.

Baltimore Collaborative Warehouse
Our co-location with other similar nonprofits proved to be an incredible benefit in 2020. We all faced similar challenges in safely getting resources in the community, so we were able to brainstorm together, share sourcing information for packaging and supplies. Leveling the Playing Field created Sports Kits, much like Story Kits, and Bedtime in a Box told us just who to call for the perfect boxes for our program, bringing in thousands and thousands of goods and staying safe and helping each other. Really the initial idea behind the warehouse.
Dedicated Volunteers

More than ever, our volunteers get the bulk of the credit for our accomplishments this year. In the first quarter, we were able to host many large volunteer groups. With COVID-19 safety precautions, we shifted to virtual volunteer events and limited our in-warehouse volunteers to a very small group of extremely dedicated volunteers who came day after day to thoughtfully sort and pack hundreds of thousands of books. In particular, we owe a debt of gratitude to Susan Cohen and Joanne Wells who came every week and treated their volunteer tasks like a job.

Staff Stories

“It’s been humbling to see the enormous commitment of our community to carrying forward our programs. The Story Kit program has been particularly rewarding. We love hearing from parents about their kids’ interests. It’s a pleasure to get to know them a bit better.”

1,500 Total number of volunteer hours put in by 475 volunteers
Growing our Board of Directors

We worked diligently to expand and diversify our Board in 2020. We added eight new members, four of whom are people of color. While we have yet to achieve all of our Board development goals, our Board now better reflects the racial composition of the communities we serve.

VOLUNTEERS

Organizations
Baltimore Civic Works
CareFirst
Catonville Youth Lacrosse
Central MD Volunteers
College Bound
Friends School
Garrison Forest School
Girl Scouts of Central MD
Green Acres
Hunt Valley Church
Intineris
Johns Hopkins Medical Center
Johns Hopkins University
Carney School of Business
Oldfields
Reading Partners
Repair the World
SIG
St. Peter's Adults Program
St. Timothy's School
Stevenson University
Towson University
University of Pennsylvania
Volunteering Unmapped

Individuals
Ackerman Family
Logan Barfuss
Susan Cohen
Eric Henry
Jessea Gabbin
Debbie Kasper
Koger Family
Jacob Hauron
Laura Knox
Kyle Levy
Nathan McDuffie
McKinell Family
Anna Muher
John Ovelman
Parker Family
Joanna Shang
Jennifer Turner
Helen Walper
Joanne Wells
Kathleen Williams

“Thank you all for the hours you spend doing this!! Our sons love to read now in part to receiving the StoryKits!” - Sara M.

BY THE NUMBERS

“We started with a record-setting first quarter. Fresh off the launch of our second Bookmobile, we hit the ground running. We were on pace to give away more books than ever before in 2020.”
- Mark Feiring

First Quarter 2020
34,607 children | 96,563 books

2020
Book Bank
19,000 children
51,290 books

Bookmobile
5,000 children
45,273 books

Bookmobile

COVID-19 Programming:
- Story Kits: 8,730 kits/children | 48,435 books
- Educator Boxes: 582 teachers | programs served, reaching 15,788 children, 57,950 books
- Book Packs (10 books for pick up): 2,046 books packs/children, 20,460 books
- Meal sites: 9,250 children, 29,950 books

Total: 35,814 children; 156,795 books

Then we changed direction.
Financial Donors

Up to $100
- Adèle Adams
- Kathy Anne
- Freda Allen
- Ellen Bartlett
- Adam Bender
- Kristina Benford
- Seth Berkowitz
- Sabrina Bentzik
- Susan Birken
- Laura Black
- Madison Boris
- Joan Bosley
- Tiffany Camp
- Niqui Catron
- Amy Cohen
- Amy Cometta
- Charlie Davey
- Eric Daveece
- Mariac Dresner
- Polly Dresel
- Ernalyn Farroo-George
- Elizabeth Fields
- Fei Francy
- Meg Gold
- Linda Greenberg
- Mark Hall
- Irene Marxism
- Ferdo Nash
- Eileen Heinrichs
- Ronda Jarvick
- Theresa Kay
- Kurt Kins
- Grace Lecbach
- Harris Levy
- Melissa Louise
- Cheryl Madden
- Laura Makin
- Lisa Malick
- Lena and Lauren Mambler
- Carolyn Mazza
- Jennifer McKinnell
- Katie Meade
- Milt Mackh
- Francesca Montalto
- Anna Muher
- Fergal Mulally
- Lorraine Oken
- Catherine Oehlerting
- Victoria Owens
- Carolyn Philippines
- Michael Philip
- Jennifer Powell

$1,000 and above
- Carol Glasser
- George Allen
- Susan Cohen
- Jennifer Drennan
- Amy Contevita
- Amy Cohen
- Naomi Cataldo
- Miranda Mittleman
- Aaron Milstone
- Danica Middlebrook
- Joan McGill
- Kelley McGeehan
- Hilary Matzinger
- Amy Lechmann

$10,000 to $99,999
- Brussels Trust
- David and Barbara Hirschhorn
- Abell Foundation
- Baltimore Children and Youth Fund
- Clayton Baker Trust
- Essexon
- Hirschton Foundation
- State of Maryland
- Robert I. Schattner Foundation
- Baltimore Community Foundation
- Bernard Family Foundation
- COVID Collaborative
- Dikety Lutheran Church
- Lerner Family Foundation
- Ravens Foundation
- Target
- TD Bank
- Ravens Foundation

$100,000 and above
- Abel Foundation
- Christopher Edley
- Robert Seer
- Lynn and Stuart Jonday
- Robert and Marlene Sley
- Doug Woodward
- Metzler Family Foundation
- Up to $1,000
- Elizabeth Handy
- Rebecca Heaton
- Brittany Helmack
- John Howe
- Ridgely Heyt Whibaker
- Nadia Hutchinson
- Kathy Keesey
- Don and Jerry Kilgannon
- Marion Knup
- Amy Lechmann
- Stephen Ludwig and Cynthia Amelin
- Hilary Matzinger
- Kelley McGeehan
- John Bosley
- Tiffany Camp
- Niqui Catron
- Amy Cohen
- Amy Cometta
- Charlie Davey
- Eric Daveece
- Mariac Dresner
- Polly Dresel
- Ernalyn Farroo-George
- Elizabeth Fields
- Fei Francy
- Meg Gold
- Linda Greenberg
- Mark Hall
- Irene Marxism
- Ferdo Nash
- Eileen Heinrichs
- Ronda Jarvick
- Theresa Kay
- Kurt Kins
- Grace Lecbach
- Harris Levy
- Melissa Louise
- Cheryl Madden
- Laura Makin
- Lisa Malick
- Lena and Lauren Mambler
- Carolyn Mazza
- Jennifer McKinnell
- Katie Meade
- Milt Mackh
- Francesca Montalto
- Anna Muher
- Fergal Mulally
- Lorraine Oken
- Catherine Oehlerting
- Victoria Owens
- Carolyn Philippines
- Michael Philip
- Jennifer Powell

“Thank you all for all your dedicated hard work at the Maryland Book Bank! You are transforming lives and reminding folks that ‘Baltimore is the city that reads.’”- Octavia F.

The need has never been greater! Make a financial contribution to the Maryland Book Bank today to give every child a home library of books they love.

Donate
Give your beloved books a second life! Donate your new and gently used books of all kinds to our warehouse, or host a book donation drive at your school, job or place of worship. We’ll provide the materials and make it fun for your community.

Volunteer
Volunteers are the lifeblood of the Maryland Book Bank. Email Kimberly at kcrout@marylandbookbank.org to set up a special volunteer event.
We are grateful to our team of staff and Board of Directors for another year of growth and learning.

Staff
Mark Feiring, Executive Director
Kimberly Crout, Program Manager
Tracey Hipp, Sales Manager
Kia Lewis, Shipping Manager
Kenneth Ford

Program Associates
Olivia Heckel
Kathryn Schmitt
Sarah Bowden
Kenny Williams
Grace Brown

Board of Directors
Board Chair
Lindsay Sullivan, Ph.D., Amplify Education
Treasurer
Sarah Hackney, CPA, Exelon
Programming Committee Chair
Christopher Sperl, Greencastle Elementary School
Development & Marketing Committee Chair
Doug Woodward, TD Wealth Management

Board Members
Brandon Bacote, M&T Bank
Jennifer Bell-Ellwanger, Data Quality Campaign
Madison Boris, Baltimore Collegetown Network
Patrick Buckler, Womble Bond Dickinson
Kristin N. Dodson, T. Rowe Price
Alex Franks, CPA, CohnReznick LLP
Adriana Roane, Constellation Energy
Darian Senn-Carter, Ph.D., Anne Arundel Community College
Stephanie Shack, Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.
Deborah Sharpe, Sharpe Educational Consulting, LLC
Cassandra Sullivan, Baltimore Civic Fund
Tanya Turner, CPA, BGE
Kristin Vint, Educator

Emeritus
Ashley Bell, The Brickman Group, Inc.
Eliza McLaren, Rye Country Day School
Kate Feiring, Roland Park Country School
Mark Smith, World Vision
Mary Turos, Brain Cog
Brian Kasabula, M&T Bank