



Foundation

MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY

SUMMER 2024

A newsletter from
Madison Public
Library Foundation

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Longtime Library Employee Elias Becomes Director

Tana Elias, a Madison Public Library staff member with 31 years of experience working for the library, became Director on May 12.

She spent the last 13 years as the library's Digital Services and Marketing Manager, which included rebranding and strategic planning efforts, managing staff and community engagement initiatives, and implementing innovative services and programs.

Elias holds a master's degree in Library and Information Science from UW-Madison, is an active member of several professional associations, and serves on the Literacy Network board. She is also a dedicated Madison Public Library Foundation donor.

Her immediate plans are to work on the library's city budget allocation and use her deep knowledge of the library to increase efficiency. She will also work to complete the library's new strategic plan.

“Every day I see first-hand how libraries change lives, and I look forward to my role in ensuring that Madison Public Library remains a strong and innovative library system, and continues to provide opportunity and inspiration for all of Madison’s residents.”

— Tana Elias, Madison Public Library Director



Elias



Ellie Braun, Goodman South Madison Library



Kati Fernandez-Lambert, Central Library



Renee Gavigan, Pinney Library



Lashay The Artist!, Meadowridge Library



Elias Mittelstadt, Lakeview Library



Poornima Moorthy, Monroe Street Library



Meghan Rosing, Sequoya Library



Rita Salm, Alicia Ashman Library



Savannah Starlin, Hawthorne Library

Libraries to Host WE READ Bubbler Artists-in-Residence

Madison Public Library is bringing together two of its favorite programs for the WE READ Bubbler Artists-in-Residence program and welcoming new artists to its summer schedule! Nine local teaching artists will be joining the Bubbler in the libraries from June to August.

The Bubbler connects artists to the community through hands-on, free events and exhibitions. WE READ is the library's year-round celebration of reading.

Each artist will have a summer residency at one of the nine neighborhood libraries, where they will repeatedly interact with the community while pursuing creative art projects. The artists work in various media, from painting and drawing to textiles and 3D printing.

See the names and photos of each artist at left.

Visit madpl.org/weread for kickoff event dates, drop-in activities, and more information about each artist.

The WE READ Bubbler Artists-in-Residence program is funded by Madison Public Library Foundation, Friends of Madison Public Library, Friends of Monroe Street Library, and Friends of Sequoya Library.

Wisconsin Book Festival Celebrates a Successful Spring

The Wisconsin Book Festival had a record-breaking spring season, made possible only by the unwavering support of sponsors, festival members, and other donors. Your contributions to our work ensure that our programming stays world-class, and that we're able to host events to our community's delight!

From school visits to larger-scale off-site evenings, the festival held 23 events this spring, bringing in more than 5,500 attendees across the board. Featured writers ranged from international best-selling authors like Valeria Luiselli and Ijeoma Oluo, all the way to local stars and debut artists like Terese Allen and Mylo Choy. This spring, the festival hosted the biggest event in its history, with Amor Towles drawing almost 1,400 book lovers to The Orpheum Theater to hear about and receive a free copy of his new short story collection, *Table for Two!*

There's nothing quite like seeing people's faces after receiving a much-anticipated free book, and it's thanks to donor support that we're able to make this magic happen on such a large



Amor Towles (right) discusses *Table for Two*, his short story collection, with Madison author Christina Clancy at The Orpheum Theater.

scale. But even beyond these bursts of joy, we're honored to be able to present authors who instill a sense of hope in our community. "Wonderful speaker and content," wrote an attendee of Trish O'Kane's *Birding to Change the World* event in her survey response. "[I] left touched and excited

about our relationship with the future, however it plays out."

The Wisconsin Book Festival has accomplished so much this past year, and our sights are set even higher for the 2024 Fall Celebration and the year ahead.

Meet the Wisconsin Book Festival's Behind-the-Scenes Volunteer Coordinator

Cynthia Schuster has been an active member of Madison's creative community for decades. For the last 15 years, she has served as the Wisconsin Book Festival's Volunteer Coordinator.

Schuster started volunteering for the festival in 2007. She became the coordinator in 2009 after the previous coordinator stepped down. As the festival transitioned from a four-day festival to year-round programming, Schuster helped the festival behind the scenes by securing more volunteers to work at events.

As the Volunteer Coordinator, Schuster ensures there are volunteers for every event the Wisconsin Book Festival holds. In 2023, 55 volunteers supported the festival's four-day Fall Celebration; Schuster organized the volunteer schedule and ensured that every aspect was covered, whether it be tabling or setting up an online stream of an event.

"August [or] September is when we start really hitting the ground running: getting myself briefed on what's happening operationally in the festival, and then getting the volunteers trained and oriented to what they need to do," Schuster said.

To Schuster, the friendships and connections

are one of the best aspects of volunteering with the Wisconsin Book Festival.

"Building community among volunteers and cultivating that same enjoyment for what the library is doing — I think that's what I love the most about it," Schuster said. "We're building friendships, we're making memories, and we're enjoying some great authors at the same time."

Schuster also navigates where she is needed most. On some festival event days, she'll work closely with volunteers, and others, she'll work closely with Festival Director Jane Rotonda.

"You won't find a more welcoming group of people than those who run the Wisconsin Book Festival," Schuster said. "Jane Rotonda is not only a warm presence who makes you feel at home, but she curates a lineup that appeals to so many cross-sections of our community. Through that, human connection is built around shared interests."

Community service is a focal point of Schuster's career. She serves as Public Information Officer for the Madison Fire Department, a role she has held since 2015. She also coordinates the department's Occupant Services Unit, which offers assistance to those affected by fires or other disasters.



Festival Volunteer Coordinator Cynthia Schuster (left) and Madison Public Library Marketing Manager Liz Boyd at the 2023 Fall Celebration.

Before joining the Fire Department, she was a producer, talk show host, and announcer for Wisconsin Public Radio. Schuster still has a music show on WSUM, UW-Madison's radio station, and a jazz show on WVMQ, Monona's radio station. Her show on WSUM, *Heavy Petting Zoo*, will mark its 19-year anniversary in June.

Additionally, Schuster volunteers at the Dane County Restorative Court (CRC), Nehemiah, and a local community garden. When she's not working or volunteering, she enjoys reading, gardening, and traveling.

While Schuster enjoys reading nonfiction books — specifically biographies and books about psychology and sociology — her most



SIGNATURE SPONSOR



PLEASANT T. ROWLAND FOUNDATION

2024-25 Signature Sponsor: Pleasant T. Rowland Foundation

The Wisconsin Book Festival and Madison Public Library Foundation are deeply grateful to the Pleasant T. Rowland Foundation for becoming the festival's Signature Sponsor for the 2024-25 season!

Rowland has been a longtime backer of the festival's work through both her own foundation and American Girl's Fund for Children: In fact, both organizations have been sponsors since the very first festival in 2002.

We can't thank the Pleasant T. Rowland Foundation enough for increasing its annual monetary support. With its generosity, the festival can strengthen its program offerings, and continue to be a resource for book lovers in Madison and beyond.

Save the date!

Fall Celebration October 17-20

If you love books and meeting authors, put the weekend of **Thursday, October 17-Sunday, October 20** on your calendar because it's the Wisconsin Book Festival Fall Celebration!

Each fall, the festival brings authors from near and far to Central Library and other partner venues for four days of literary magic. The festival will release the schedule on September 5.

In the meantime, visit wisconsinbookfestival.org to watch past Fall Celebration events and to become a festival member, which includes the benefit of reserved seating at select events.

memorable Wisconsin Book Festival event was when figure skater Adam Rippon spoke about his book, *Beautiful on the Outside: A Memoir*. A figure skating fan herself, Schuster got to watch the event as an audience member rather than work it.

"The [Madison] Public Library itself has really done a lot to make some pretty amazing authors, poets, and human beings available to the whole community for free," Schuster said. "You really get to see a wide variety of folks that come into the library to enjoy it and get to be a part of the celebration."

2023 Annual Report Online

Madison Public Library and Madison Public Library Foundation's joint Annual Report is now available online at mplfoundation.org. The report features art by Rita Salm, a queer and non-binary illustrator. Salm is also one of the Bubbler's 2024 WE READ Artists-in-Residence.

Learn more about the library and foundation's work in 2023, with an eye toward celebrating the library's 150th year in 2025.

Highlights include:

- Reports on literacy programs and resources, technology improvements, facility investments, equity efforts, staff support, and more
- Madison Public Library's new mission and vision statements, and strategic priorities
- The continuous loyalty of foundation donors who contributed to *Ex Libris*, *Lunch for Libraries*, Giving Tuesday, and other fundraising efforts to support the library



Visit mplfoundation.org or scan the above QR code to view the report.

WE READ Card Game Returns This Summer

Madison Public Library's WE READ card game has returned to offer families a summer-long reading experience! Every card and deck is fully bilingual in English and Spanish. The two kinds of cards, "read" and "play," offer learning activities and reading-based awards for players.

Children can earn specialty prizes each week by filling out Share Your Voice prompts at library desks. While prizes are not tied to the decks, the card game is a great way to practice reading.

When picking up a WE READ card deck, you can also grab a free WE READ tote bag from any Madison Public Library location or the Dream Bus, and at Parks Alive events.

Madison Public Library offers a walk-through video explaining how to pick up your cards and play the game. Visit madpl.org/weread to watch.

WE READ is made possible thanks to support from Steve Stricker American Family Insurance Foundation, Madison Public Library Foundation, Friends of the Madison Public Library, Dick Goldberg & Lisa Munro, and David Wood & Jane Doughty.



YOU'RE DOING GREAT WORK

AASPIRE Marketing Intern Returns to Library

Madison Public Library is hosting an AASPIRE (Affirmative Action Student Professionals In Residence) intern again as part of a citywide program this summer. A Madison Public Library Foundation grant is paying the intern's salary.

Isabel Chiriboga-Pineda, a junior majoring in sociology at UW-Milwaukee, worked with Madison Public Library staff as a Marketing Intern last summer. By attending community events like Juneteenth and Parks Alive, working on the library's Spanish Facebook page, and listening in on library board meetings, Isabel contributed to the library's goal of equitable access to experiences, ideas, and resources. She also had the opportunity to learn about other city departments such as human resources, transportation, and engineering, and

gained valuable insight into the many roles each department holds.

Additionally, by collaborating with Interim Digital Services and Marketing Manager Liz Boyd and other staff, Isabel developed new skills in graphic design, data analysis, and online communication. This summer, Isabel returned to her position to further her skills.

AASPIRE internships offer under-represented groups on-the-job experience with the City of Madison. The internships are available to current college students from an accredited university, a two-year technical college program, or from the city's Community Partners training program. Students who have graduated within the past two years are also eligible to apply.

Isabel Chiriboga-Pineda is back at Madison Public Library for her second summer as an AASPIRE Marketing Intern.



This paid summer internship lasts for eight to 10 weeks. Interns work on a limited-term, management-level project. City managers provide guidance, mentoring, and a deeper understanding of public service. Interns are eligible for positions limited to city employees for up to six months after completing the internship.

Madison Public Library Foundation is grateful for donor gifts that have made AASPIRE internships possible.



Madison Public Library Foundation Executive Director Conor Moran speaks to library employees at Staff Day on May 31.

Foundation Grant Funds Staff Day

Madison Public Library employees from throughout the city came together on May 31 for Staff Day at Central Library. Madison Public Library Foundation provided a grant to cover the cost of speakers, as well as breakfast and lunch during this day of training and development.

Staff Day is the one day every year when all library employees can come together to learn and grow in their careers. The day began with a message from new Library Director Tana Elias, who answered questions in a Q&A-style presentation, followed by a presentation on *Navigating Crucial Conversations* by Kenosha Public

Library Assistant Director Brandi Cummings. Cummings discussed leading with empathy, and setting good boundaries both at work and in personal lives.

After a quick lunch break, staff had a movement-focused time slot with options to do chair yoga, take a wellness walk, engage in a scavenger hunt, or play lawn games together before coming back for the *Telling Your Library Story* afternoon session with Madison Public Library Foundation board member and professional marketer Tom Kuplic.

The foundation is grateful for donor contributions that helped to fund Staff Day.

WE READ YOUTH VOICES WRITER'S CONTEST
ACCEPTING SUBMISSIONS APRIL 1 - JUNE 30

Want to be a writer? This is your chance to be published before you turn 18!

Deadline: June 30, 2024

Submit your story at madpl.org/youthvoices

WE READ Youth Voices Contest Deadline June 30

Do you know a young writer with a knack for storytelling? Spread the word about the 2024 WE READ Youth Voices Writers' Contest, a joint project of Madison Public Library and the Wisconsin Book Festival. This year's theme is *Celebrate Small Heroes*.

Youth ages 18 and under can submit a story, song, poem, or written work online through June 30 for the chance to take home the grand prize of \$500 in cash, get recognized on the field at a Forward Madison Flamingos game in August, be featured at the Wisconsin Book Festival Fall Celebration, and be published in the Youth Voices Anthology.

Visit madpl.org/youthvoices for more details or to submit an entry. The contest is funded in part by Madison Public Library Foundation.

EVENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

FRIENDS OF MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY
BIG BOOK SALE
Saturday June 29
Rain or Shine!
9am-3pm
1301 W. Badger Rd

More info at madpl.org/book-sales

Friends of Madison Public Library BIG Book Sale June 29

Join the Friends of Madison Public Library for its BIG Book Sale on **Saturday, June 29** from **9 a.m.-3 p.m.** at the library's Maintenance and Support Center, 1301 W. Badger Road, Madison.

Seven library Friends groups gathered gently used and donated books — most of which are \$1 or \$2, with a \$5 bag sale from 1 to 3 p.m. CDs, DVD, and vinyl will also be sold.

Taquitos Marimar Food Truck will be at the event from 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

All proceeds from the sale benefit Madison Public Library. Check out the available books, and support your local libraries!

Visit madpl.org or Friends of Madison Public Library on Facebook for details.

Save the Date for *Ex Libris XIV: Local Flavor*

Mark your calendar for Madison Public Library Foundation's favorite fall gathering, *Ex Libris XIV: Local Flavor*, on **Friday, November 8** from 7-10 p.m.!

Our annual fundraiser is a fun local tradition that will once again feature an array of craft beverages and bites to benefit Madison Public Library. Dane County restaurants, breweries, vendors, and sponsors provide samples of delicious food and drinks at this evening event, which also includes live music, a DJ, and an online auction.



If you own or work at a business and are interested in sponsoring the event or participating as a food or beverage vendor, email events@mplfoundation.org.

Tickets will go on sale at mplfoundation.org in early September. Watch for more information in our fall newsletter and on the foundation website.



Calliope Ice Cream has been a repeat *Ex Libris* dessert vendor.



Mugs, totes,
T-shirts, hoodies,
and more!

Buy Library Merchandise Online

Madison Public Library Foundation recently set up an online store for Madison Public Library through Bonfire where you can buy library-branded bags, mugs, and apparel.

Not sure what kind of library merch your friends and family want? Gift cards are available as well! And the best part? All purchases support your library!

Shop the new store now at bit.ly/mplmerch or by scanning the QR code.



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MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY

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Pinney 516 Cottage Grove Rd.
Sequoia 4340 Tokay Blvd.
Goodman South 2222 S. Park St.
Central 201 W. Mifflin St.

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