



ARLINGTON LIBRARIES  
FOUNDATION

2020 Annual Report

## Investing in the libraries we love

Dear Library Supporters,

Our community was transformed this year, and you were right there with us: listening, suggesting, and contributing. Thank you for helping us through this challenging year – and for ensuring that the libraries we love could support Arlington in ways we never would have imagined.

The Robbins Library and the Fox Branch Library are where Arlingtonians learn, connect, and thrive. With a strong foundation and your ongoing support, we have been well-positioned to continue to serve that critical role while creating new ways of meeting the moment:

- Directing additional funds to e-books that ordinarily would have gone to physical materials.
- Adding streaming video services, such as AcornTV, for those who can't afford online subscription platforms.
- Purchasing extra copies of in-demand titles like *How to Be an Antiracist* and *The Dutch House* and *Say Nothing: A True Story of Murder and Memory in Northern Ireland*.
- Keeping families engaged and connected through our librarians' weekly virtual storytimes and craft programs.

Thanks to you and the Arlington Libraries Foundation, this year's annual report offers an uplifting reminder of the impressive accomplishments we made in the face of adversity. Although we still don't know how soon services will be fully restored, we know that with your support, we will be closer to doing just that. Thank you for investing in this important community resource – the libraries we all love.

We look forward to a continuing dialogue.

Karin Barrett  
Chair, Arlington Libraries Foundation

Andrea Nicolay  
Director of Libraries



## PATRONS & CIRCULATION

When the Robbins and Fox Branch Libraries had to close their doors in mid-March for the health and safety of patrons, the dedicated library staff began working behind the scenes to explore creative and innovative ways to ensure continued access to the library's collections.

The library quickly responded with expanded online offerings and enabled patrons to keep any resources they had borrowed. In June, after orchestrating the Big Return of all resources, the libraries introduced Contactless Pickup and followed in August with the Grab Bag program to get materials back into the hands of the community. With just a click of the mouse or a phone call to the reference desk patrons can reserve books, audiobooks, DVDs and more, then schedule a time for pick up. The Grab Bags have been particularly popular! By providing the library staff with an idea of interests, our talented librarians curate a selection of materials that surprise and delight.

With your continued support, programs such as these will be developed and executed to ensure Arlington's wonderful library resources are shared throughout our community.

“I entered in a few titles and genres that my two children liked and received a bag of books that kept them reading all week. I loved that the librarian gave us titles that were new to us and the kids felt so excited that the bag was full of books picked just for them!”

—Maureen Markelz, *library patron since 2008*

Alyssa Pusey using Contactless Pickup to collect new reading materials.

## A RUSH ON BOOKS: the story of Thursday, March 12, 2020

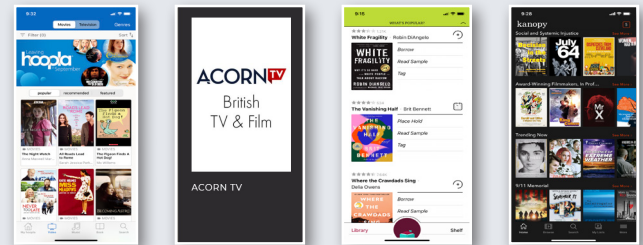
On March 12, the day the shutdown was announced, the Robbins and Fox libraries checked out **5,458 physical items**.

The average number of physical items checked out on a given day in March is 1,300.



## E-CONTENT USAGE

Library patrons checked out **115,881 e-content items** (e-book, audiobooks, magazines, music, film and TV for kids, teens, and adults through the downloadable tools and streaming platforms OverDrive, Kanopy, Hoopla, and Acorn TV) in the first six months of 2020. By comparison 95,388 items were checked out in all of 2019.



## SELF-CHECK STATIONS

**77,537 patrons** used the convenient and speedy self check-out stations at the Robbins and Fox libraries.





# 2020 YOUR GIFTS AT WORK IN OUR COMMUNITY

The library has moved online this year in a way we would never have imagined! Your generous contributions, gifted to the library in a \$56,975 grant, enabled them to respond quickly and efficiently to patron enquiries and demands for an increased level of e-content, resource material, e-books and audiobooks.

## **\$29,000** Downloadable E-books and Audiobooks

Arlington readers have long enjoyed the rich collection of audiobooks and e-books, and the convenience such a collection offers. This year the collection is appreciated more than ever by so many! Using the popular OverDrive Libby app as a portal, Arlington readers consumed almost twice the number of e-books and audiobooks than were downloaded during the same period in 2019. In March and April alone, that amounted to 30,244 e-books and audiobooks.

## **\$6,500** Arlington Reads Together Author Event

On Sunday, March 8, 2020, more than 200 people filled Robbins Memorial Town Hall to hear author Esmeralda Santiago speak on the 2020 Arlington Reads Together selection, *When I Was Puerto Rican*. Arlington Reads Together is a project of the Robbins Library, in partnership with Envision Arlington's Diversity Task Group. The program's main sponsor is the Arlington Libraries Foundation, with additional funding from the Friends of Robbins Library.

## **\$5,400** Robbins Library Books and Audiobooks + **\$1,000** Fox Library Materials

Each year our libraries require additional funding to ensure all library collections are current and relevant to the needs, interests and growth of our ever-evolving community. The Children's collections at Robbins and Fox continue to be updated and expanded with board books, picture books, series books, easy readers, parenting books, world language collections and chapter books, answering the needs of the patrons of this heavily used resource. In the Adult collections the most popular print materials include hot titles in trade paperback and must-have travel, social sciences, self-help and health sciences non-fiction titles.

## **\$5,300** Sunday Children's Librarian

A second Children's Librarian is made available in the Children's Room on Sundays when the Robbins Library is typically open 2:00–5:00 pm, October through May.

## **\$2,600** Acorn TV

Acorn TV became an exciting new service available for Arlington residents wishing to view their favorite British television series. From the April launch to the end of June, 540 patrons checked out 7-day Acorn passes, and residents viewed 4,467 Acorn TV episodes and movies!

## **\$2,000** Public Service Technology

Self-check stations are a wonderful convenience for patrons on the go. In FY20, library self-check stations were used to check out 93,850 items at Arlington's Libraries.

## **\$380** Children's Room Red Rocker Chairs

Who doesn't love to find their own reading nook in the library? The red "rocker" chairs in the Children's Room have a convenient handle on the top so that even kids who are smaller than the chairs themselves are able to drag a red rocker to their favorite spot. These well-loved seating options need occasional replacing to stay clean and comfortable.

**\$4,795** has been set aside for unanticipated needs in FY21. The Arlington Libraries Foundation believes this flexibility will support the libraries ability to meet community needs in highly uncertain times.



# 2020 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

## INSIGHTS

- The majority of the \$111,807 in revenue were designated as Unrestricted Donations. These funds are granted to the Arlington Libraries to support initiatives the library leadership deems most appropriate beyond the municipal allocation.
- In FY2020, expenses were comprised of a \$56,975 grant to the libraries and operating expenses of \$41,523 which were primarily for the design, printing, and fulfillment of marketing materials, marketing investments, software purchases and general business operating expenses. The Foundation operates with a volunteer board.
- In FY2019 and FY2020 the Foundation invested in its website, donor database, financial systems, and email capabilities. Approximately \$18,000 of the expenses described above relate to these essential, upfront infrastructure investments, which will strengthen our capacity to fund our libraries in the coming years.
- Financial assets of the Foundation typically peak at fiscal year-end ahead of the grant made to the Library early in the following fiscal year (i.e., FY2021 grant was completed in September 2020, within the 2021 fiscal year).
- In FY2020, the Foundation's endowed funds, which are invested in a mix of equity and bonds, achieved growth of approximately \$9,000 due to market gains as well as a \$5,000 gift.
- The Foundation keeps a cash reserve above and beyond its grant to the libraries to support strategic investments being made in the Foundation's grantmaking capacity and to enable a capital campaign for renovations of the libraries in the coming years.

## REVENUE

Endowed Funds	\$5,000
Unrestricted Donations	\$102,388
Unrealized Investment Income	\$2,890
Realized Investment Income	\$1,579
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$111,807</b>

## EXPENSES

Grants to Libraries	\$56,975
Misc fees/business expenses	\$5,989
Printing/Mailing	\$11,997
Marketing Investments	\$17,565
Other Marketing	\$5,972
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$98,498</b>

## YEAR END ASSETS

Cash Accounts	\$125,915
Endowed Funds	\$54,529
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$180,444</b>

## SUPPORT OUR LIBRARIES

Make your tax-deductible contribution online via credit card or mail a check to the Foundation directly. Legacy gifts or in-memorium gifts are welcome.

## CONTACT US

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