



Reading Is
Fundamental
Pittsburgh

Reading Is **FUN**damental

Pittsburgh



2017- 2018 Annual Report

6/1/17 - 5/31/18



Dear Friends,

Every year, in assembling our annual report, I am thrilled to recognize yet again the magic of synergy: that just as our network of layered programming has greater cumulative power than the individual reach of each program, so too does our RIF family of partners have a more resounding impact than could any of us alone.

At the same time, the literacy and achievement gaps we are working so hard to mitigate are larger than the individual children whose futures are at stake. When children are at risk, the future of our neighborhoods, the future of our whole city, is at risk.

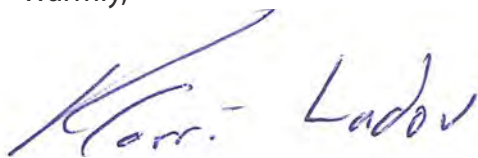
That's the big picture behind RIF Pittsburgh's mission, to lessen the steep challenges facing children in households, communities and schools with few resources. Your ongoing support shows that you, too, want to be part of our vision. In that vein, I'm delighted to share in this report some notable successes you've helped us achieve.

Inside, you'll read about the exciting debut of our pilot program, RIF Readers, which combines the academic benefits of literacy mentoring with the personal empowerment of giving youngsters a seat in a prominent corporate office. The program developed in partnership with Eckert Seamans has been so well-received that for 2018-19, we've doubled the number of Manchester Academic Charter School students matched with Reading Buddies at the law firm, and welcomed a new corporate partner, PNC, whose employees are paired with children from Training Wheels Childcare Center to read at PNC Tower.

Across our programs, we continue to increase our use of technology to extend our reach into RIF kids' homes. Texting and Facebook are proving to be powerful tools to connect with families and encourage the support so critical to developing literacy. At the same time, we constantly innovate ways to focus on summer reading, including devising fun literacy challenges for children to complete, to earn cool RIF merit badges. Finally, we are continuing to crank up STEAM throughout RIF, recognizing that literacy must go beyond reading to encompass facility with math and science skills for children to be prepared to succeed – in the workforce and in life – in our rapidly changing world.

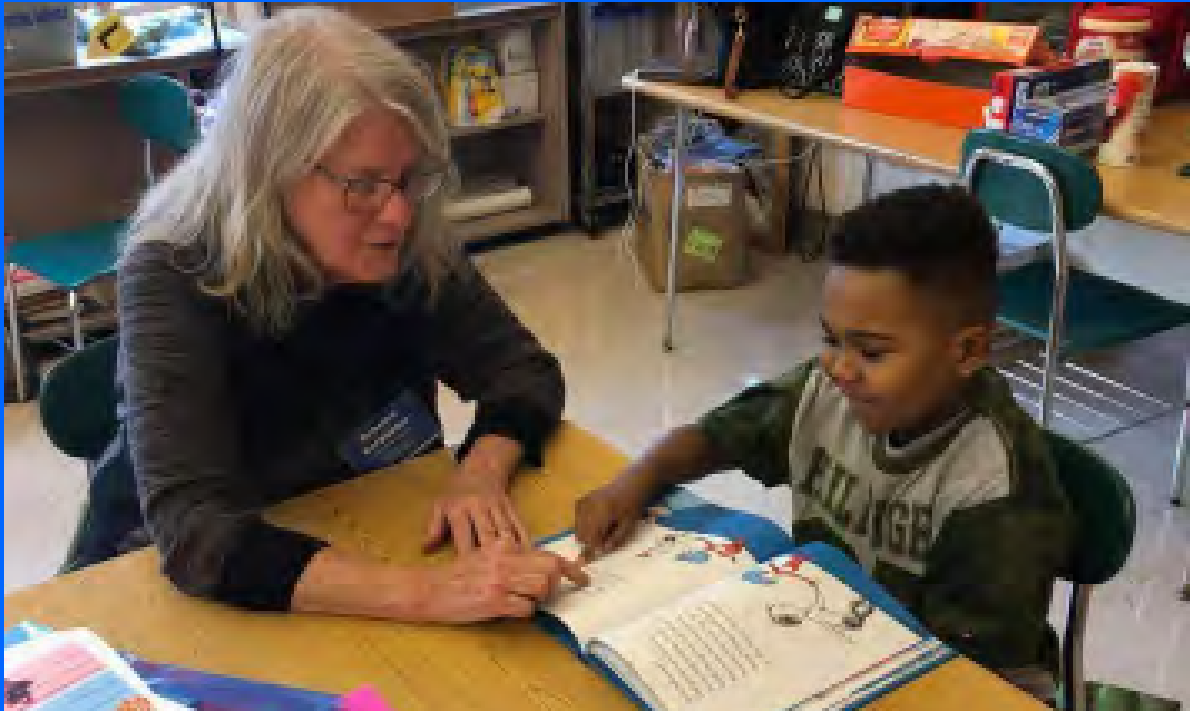
It's valuable work that we can't do alone, and we feel privileged to count you as a partner! Together, we are building opportunities for Pittsburgh's children.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Florri Ladov". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Florri Ladov
Executive Director

"You can get very, very, very, good books!"



"Reading has become fun to [my son] and he challenges himself more often with bigger books."

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Pittsburgh's struggling neighborhoods, a lack of household and community resources casts a shadow over many children's futures.

Half of economically disadvantaged Pittsburgh Public Schools third-graders read below grade level, according to A+ Schools' 2017 Report to the Community. It's a deficiency that many may never overcome, with a lifelong impact on their jobs, earnings, and health.

These are the children RIF Pittsburgh serves, as we put over 100,000 age-appropriate, culturally relevant books into the hands and homes of more than 21,000 kids a year.

But books are only part of the literacy equation and, as such, only part of our mission. The books come wrapped in programming, and programming means people: RIF's staff and AmeriCorps team, site partners, volunteer mentors; parents, other family members, neighborhood residents; individual and corporate donors and foundations – all essential parts of the RIF village that cares about each of these precious children. Together, we help them to develop literacy skills, expand content knowledge, and build confidence about reading and learning.

What does that confidence look like on a personal level? In true RIF style, let's illustrate with a story:

Our Everybody Wins! director tells of a PPS King third-grader picking out a biography of Michelle Obama to read aloud, pausing to point out pictures of her favorite dresses worn by the former first lady, and being astonished by a photograph of Ms. Obama as a kindergartner. "I asked her if people would be shocked to see her third-grade photo when she became famous, and she looked at me and said, 'How did you know I'm going to be famous?!' "

As you read our annual report, remember that every child served is a very important person bursting with the goals, talents and dreams of youth. Your commitment to RIF's mission – of time, money or both – is a generous boost to help these children launch their life's journey from a firm foundation.

*Please note, our program figures are for our program year 2017-2018 (school year 2017-18 and summer 2018).

Our mission is to provide children with the resources, motivation, and opportunities to develop a life-long love of reading.

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**"THE BEST THING
ABOUT RIF IS TO
GET BOOKS, LEARN
MORE THINGS, AND
SEE HOW SMART I
CAN BE!"**

Student at Pittsburgh Arsenal

"The students feel a real connection to reading-not so much an academic focus, but that reading is fun and really relates to them."



BOOKS FOR KEEPS

Great kids' books are the building blocks of every child's home library, whether that's housed in a shoebox under a table, a bookcase in the hallway, or tucked lovingly between pillows and stuffed animals in bed.

Nurturing literacy by filling these libraries with quality, age-appropriate books is the mission of our oldest and largest program, Books for Keeps. And our BFK team does more than give away books: We visit classrooms across the city 3-5 times a year with Reading Celebrations that get children excited about reading and learning.

A stellar read-aloud is the star of each celebration, paired with an activity that builds on the book and tickles the imagination: learning animal trivia, planning a garden, or thinking collaboratively and creatively in a "hide the stuffed dog" game.

Celebrations inspire kids to want to read more, more, more, and BFK lets them do just that, letting every child choose a brand-new book to take home "for keeps"!

In the 2017-18 program year, Books for Keeps:

- Presented hands-on, exciting Reading Celebrations at more than 85 sites across the city of Pittsburgh
- Interacted with over 15,000 economically disadvantaged students in early childhood centers, schools, and after-school programs
- Provided nearly 50,000 books to children whose homes have few or none
- Partnered with the United Way on the Be A Middle School Mentor program, serving more than 210 pre-teens and their mentors

"The students benefit from that Reading Celebrations because some students don't have access to literature outside of school. This is a great way to get books into their homes."

MATH AND SCIENCE

Math and science are natural tools to engage children in robust learning and literacy development. Still, as in any real-life lab, things can get marvelously stinky and sticky during STEAM-based programming!

For younger children, that might mean forming their own hypotheses about the source of a smell in Andrea Beaty's "Ada Twist, Scientist," then testing out their sniffers with a scent challenge aboard the Storymobile. Older students might listen to selections from Roald Dahl's "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," then make their own gummi candy with a Carnegie Science Center educator invited to the school by BFK.

This exciting blend of reading, science and hands-on activities, all mixed together in the big RIF pot,

Reading Celebrations popular and irresistible for kids. The takeaway? School, reading, and learning are FUN!

In the 2017-18 program year, our Math and Science component:

- Engaged children in exploring science, technology, engineering, arts and math through STEAM-centered Reading Celebrations throughout our programs Introduced children to books that examine their world through an analytical lens, encouraging curiosity and a passion for discovery
- Super-charged presentations with cooperation of partners including Snapology and the Carnegie Science Center



"They were so excited, they didn't realize that they had just learned science concepts!"

EVERYBODY WINS!

For Reading Buddies, young and old, spending time together with a book is often a highlight of their week. That simple premise is the basis of our in-school literacy mentoring program, Everybody Wins! (EW!). Children are more excited to come to school on their Everybody Wins! reading day, parents and teachers agree. And mentors return year after year for the joy and fulfillment of sharing books and touching young lives.

That hour a week of one-on-one attention is precious to kids and lets them know they are special and valued. To help extend the magic, we've begun texting EW! families twice a week with motivational messages and reading tips. Caregivers love to hear from us, and many respond with stories about their child's favorite spot to curl up with a book at home or who their child's favorite storybook characters are.

In the 2017-18 program year, Everybody Wins!:

- Hosted weekly one-on-one mentoring sessions at five PPS schools: Allegheny, Arlington, Faison, King and Weil, matching over 200 first-, second- and third-grade students with community volunteers to share great books and conversation
- Supplied kids with a backpack stuffed with six books they'd picked out for summer reading, and mailed them two more during vacation
- Devised a series of literacy challenges EW! kids could complete to earn cool RIF merit badges – and to keep them reading and writing all summer long

Our RIF Readers pilot project was a big hit with students and mentors alike in its debut year! Every Tuesday, buses pulled up outside the US Steel Building in Downtown and a class of Manchester Academic Charter School second-graders from the Northside scrambled out of their seats and lined up on Grant Street, buzzing with the excitement of 8- and 9-year-olds on an epic adventure. Smiles, hugs and books awaited them at their destination, law firm Eckert Seamans' 44th-floor headquarters, where they were met by their Reading Buddies for an hour of reading, literacy-building games and activities, and conversation.

For mentors, that session was a welcome respite that many called "the best hour" of their busy work week. For kids, who took countless positives from the corporate setting back to their school, neighborhoods and families each week, the experience has the potential to be transformative, planting images of a future they might not otherwise have been able to envision for themselves.

This fall, PNC joined RIF Readers as a partner, welcoming our youngest-ever Reading Buddies, a pre-K class from Training Wheels Childhood Center in Northside, to read with volunteers every week in PNC Tower, Downtown. At the same time, response from Eckert Seamans has been so positive that we added a new class of MACS second-graders, who will travel to the law firm's offices along with last year's class, returning as third-graders for another inspiring year with their mentors.



"The relationship that was built between my daughter and her Reading Buddy was special and also the fact that it took place at a law firm introduced her to new possibilities."



STORYMOBILE

Toot toot! Read read! The Storymobile brings literacy to the streets of Pittsburgh – literally.

Our libraries-on-wheels are a familiar sight across the city, making their rounds in Pittsburgh’s most disadvantaged neighborhoods where children face a substantial literacy gap even before kindergarten.

At early childhood development centers, the Storymobile focuses on kindergarten readiness: letter recognition, rhyming, sequencing and retelling, while reinforcing social skills needed for classroom success. For after-school groups and summer day camps, the bus is a rolling rec center, helping to keep kids on track academically with a fun approach to learning. At community time visits or special events, we invite everyone in the neighborhood to step inside and enjoy the Storymobile magic!

Best of all, every child – and adult – walks off the Storymobile with a great read to borrow or to keep! We are helping to enrich thousands of homes with quality books they will enjoy and share, again and again.

In the 2017-18 program year, our Storymobiles:

- Traveled to more than 110 sites, serving over 5,400 children, in our target communities: East Liberty, Hazelwood, Hill District, Homewood/East Hills, North Side, South Side, and Wilkinsburg
- Helped children self-select more than 16,600 books to keep during our bi-weekly visits in public housing communities and after-school programs, as well as during our Reading Celebrations 3-4 times a year
- Loaned more than 15,200 books to children from our circulating Storymobile collection

“My favorite thing about the Storymobile is the stories because they have the books that I love.”

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

When outside resources are limited, parent involvement becomes even more critical. Yet low-income mothers in particular underestimate how much influence they wield, the National Bureau of Economic Research reported in 2013. Making parents more aware of the power of their impact can change their behavior and improve children's outcomes, the report contends.

Make way for the Storymobile! Our one-stop shop for literacy supports families, schools, and communities, working to fill in gaps in available resources and to keep children from slipping between them.

Our Book Babies initiative invites new and expectant moms, dads and other primary caregivers aboard the Storymobile with their little ones for rollicking story times, dedicated to young families! Tots are greeted in song by name, clap along to rhymes and jingles that teach simple cooperative play, and start learning pre-reading skills such as recognition of shapes, colors, numbers and letters. Parents gain strategies to build literacy and vocabulary in young children, and walk off the Storymobile with quality book collections and other care items to share at home. Best of all, families spend one-on-one time – reading, singing, making crafts together – to help them succeed in raising a healthy and happy young reader.

We also welcome children, adults and families onto the Storymobile during bi-weekly visits to public housing communities and at RIF-attended events throughout the city. Outside, the Storymobiles are mobile billboards that promote literacy; inside, they invite children and adults to read and chat together, choose a book to add to their home libraries, and pick up family literacy resources. These stops provide a safe haven for browsing our collection (for children AND adults), ranging from mysteries to classical literature, cookbooks to self-help books, inspirational titles to nonfiction. They also give us daily opportunities to deliver our message of

the importance of literacy, and the responsibility we have to nurture reading in our homes and communities. We provide an inviting space for readers, and we use it to encourage families to create inviting spaces and regular routines for reading at home.

As social media and its impact evolve, we are engaging with families not only in their physical communities, but online in their technological communities. Through text messaging, phone calls, Facebook groups, and an increased social media presence, we share literacy tips, stress the importance of consistent reading habits, and remind adults of their influence in motivating their children's reading by picking a book to read themselves or to share – crucial steps in helping youngsters to achieve their brightest futures.

Every day, we are in Pittsburgh's streets, schools, playgrounds and community centers, pumping in books, books, and more books – along with resources, motivation and messaging – to build literacy-rich neighborhoods that strengthen individuals, homes and the city as a whole. Our mission is a joint venture, based on relationships that take time, patience and respect. We strive to build authentic relationships, virtually as well as face to face, with children, parents, grandparents, educators and service providers as we all work together toward those brighter futures.



"We are so excited [for Storymobile Book Babies]! I'm ready to connect other children and mothers in the community!"

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Listing includes individuals and organizations who donated between 6/1/17- 5/31/18

Library Level

(\$5,000+)

Perry Colosimo
Nicholas and Cheryl Galizia
Kim and Rick Roadarmel
Francis X. Solano, Jr. M.D.
and Lenette Solano

Collection Level

(\$1,000 - \$4,999)

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James R. Agras and Electra P.
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Kathy and Russ Ayres
Cary Blancett and
Denise Dufour
Hon. and Mrs. David
Cashman
Charles L. Cost, Cost
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Sandy Grote
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Series Level

(\$250 - \$999)

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Donna Ottoviani
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(\$100 - \$249)

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“[Students] can show ownership of their new book and of the acquired new skills that they are developing”

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Laurin Moore
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Marcie Zanich
Ken and Caroline Zenkevich
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Chapter Book Level (\$50 - \$99)

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Carolyn J. Menard
Jeff and Sharon Evans
Margaret Findle
Jane Fleischauer
James T. Frantz

g.” “They are nice and we do fun stuff and we also get more fun books.”

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Patty and Nick Galizia
Clare Gallagher
Ward and Lori Garner
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Colleen Smith
Suzanne Smolin
Mark Staib
Beatrice Vasser
Gregory Weingart
Helen Wigger
Anita Williams
Donna Yohe
Michael and Beth Zak

"I love the activities and books so much that is why I love RIF!"

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Foundation
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Bayer USA Foundation
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Trust of The Pittsburgh
Foundation
Birmingham Foundation
The Burke Foundations
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Pittsburgh Foundation
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Campaign (CFC)
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Dollar Bank Foundation
Dollar General Foundation

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Emerson Charitable Trust
EQT Foundation
FedEx Ground
First Energy
G. Whitney Snyder
Charitable Fund
Gertrude E. Hellerman
Charitable Trust Fund
of The Pittsburgh
Foundation
The Goldstone Family
Foundation
The Grable Foundation
The Heinz Endowments
Highmark
Jack Buncher Foundation
James M. and Lucy K.
Schoonmaker
Foundation

John G. Rangos Sr. Family
Charitable Foundation
Kinder Morgan Foundation
Laurel Foundation
Lee and Myrna Silverman
Fund of The Pittsburgh
Foundation
The Margaret Ritchie R.
Battle Family Charitable
Fund
Massey Charitable Trust
McAuley Ministries
McSwigan Family
Foundation
NOVA Chemicals
The Office of Mayor William
Peduto (CDBG)
Philip Chosky Charitable &
Educational Foundation
The Pittsburgh Foundation
The Pittsburgh Penguins
Foundation
PNC Charitable Trusts

PNC Financial Services
Group
PNC Foundation
Poise Foundation (CDBG)
PPG Industries Foundation
Reed Smith
Shannon Wilson Charitable
Fund of The
Pittsburgh Foundation
Sheetz
Snee-Reinhardt Charitable
Foundation
United Way Of
Southwestern PA
UPMC Health Plan
W.I. Patterson
Charitable Fund
William F. Gauss and Lynn D.
Gauss Foundation
William 'Wil' Matthew
Morrow Memorial
Fund of The
Pittsburgh Foundation

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Allegheny County Early
Literacy Team
Allegheny County Library
Association
Be a Middle School Mentor
Beverly Jewel Wall Lovelace
Afterschool Programs
Big Brothers Big Sisters of
Greater Pittsburgh
Carnegie Library of
Pittsburgh
Children's Museum of
Pittsburgh
Citiparks
Department of Human
Services

Eckert Seamans
Family Foundations Early
Head Start
Family Resources
The Fred Rogers Center
Greater Pittsburgh Literacy
Council
Greater Hazelwood Initiative
Hill District Early Literacy
Project
Hill District Education
Council
Hilltop Family Care
Connections
Homewood Children's
Village
Hosanna House Inc.

Housing Authority of the
City of Pittsburgh
Kappa Kappa Gamma
KEYS Service Corps
Manchester Academic
Charter School
The Mentoring Partnership
of Southwestern
Pennsylvania
Mt. Ararat Childhood
Activity Center
One Northside
The Pittsburgh Project
The Pittsburgh Promise
Pittsburgh Public Schools
Propel Charter Schools

Public Allies Pittsburgh
Read to a Child
Reading Is FUNdamental, Inc.
Rep. Jake Wheatley
Saturday Light Brigade
Snapology
Sprout Fund
Teen ELECT
Trying Together
Union Project
The University of Pittsburgh
Office of Child
Development
Uptown Partners of
Pittsburgh
Urban League of Greater
Pittsburgh

"The students enjoy everything from the singing, reading and listening, to the stories and picking out their own books!"

VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to the hundreds of volunteers who donate their time to
RIF Pittsburgh each year!

Listing includes individuals who volunteered between 6/17- 5/18

Patty Alexander	Keith Daniels	Laura Kaminski	Mark Morrision
Laura Ammon	Vanessa Davis	Carmela Kapuscinski	Judy Moser
Geoff Atkinson	Roger Day	Chet Karas	Ryan Neely
Nancy Baime	Alyssa Dervin	Mike Kauffelt	Emily Neff
Amy Bair	Ardeth Devlin	Joanna Kemp	Willie Neiswanger
Harold Balk	Molly Dickerson	Barbara Kengor	Liz Nelson
Christine Balsley	Melissa Dodge	Andrea Ketzell	Kathleen Newmeyer
Marcia Bandes	Pam Dotter	Donna Killmeyer	Rebecca Obley
Elizabeth Barbaro	Sharon Drake	Joan Kimmel	Amy Ogren
Tanya Baronti	Zandy Dudiak	Ann Marie Klipa	Connie Orient
Cynthia Battle	Allison Ebeck	Sonya Koros	Tina Packer
Patty Bauccio	Elyse Eichner	Gosia Kosturek	Sandra (Sam) Palmer
Ellen Baylis	Pam Evans	Winnie Kredell	Michael Pest
Joanne Beckman	Susan Eynon	Mary Adele Krolikowski	Jennifer Petrisek
Peter Belcastro	Colleen Fedor	Audrey Kwak	Ileen Plietz
Rhonda Bennett	Sandra Fennell	Florri Ladov	Nina Plumb
Diane Berman	Peter Fernie	Matthew Lanning	Ann Poliziani
Chastity Bey	Emily Ferri	Meryl Lazar	Deb Pope
Jordan Blask	Peggy Findle	Shannon Lee	Gayle Rabare
Alec Boright	Mary Fine	JoEllen Leech	Hally Ramirez
Mimi Botkin	Roslynn Fitzgerald	Joel Lennen	Jennifer Rawson
Donna Brett	Nick Galizia	Kiely Lewandowski	Kim Reilly
Ed Brett	Anne Marie Gebhardt	Randa Lewis	Abby Resnick
Sherry Bruner	Stephanie Gilles	Bob Linden	Molly Richter
Beth Brunins	Lynn Glorieux	Linda Loar	Carolyn Ristau
Margaret Burley	Tracy Goff	Kathy Lutins	David Rockman
Sydna Burns	Shirley Golden	Karyn Lynch	Laraine Rodney
Jennifer Cairns	Caity Gonano	Lisa Macesich	Leslie Rotstein
Geoffrey Callahan	Cindy Goodman-Leib	Patricia Mahlstedt	Amy Roy
Linda Campbell	Joseph Gregorini	Nicholas Martini	Amber Ruder
Robert Campedel	Matt Groff	Kathy Matesic	Claudia Saitz
Scott Cessar	Sandy Grote	John Matlak	Liz Salisbury
Kimberly Chamberlin	Carla Handyside	Jodi Matovich	Paul Scherrer
Yuliya Charnyshova	Aleita Hermanowski	Matt Mauclair	Cathie Schmidt
Alicia Chatkin	Diane Holohan	Sarah McDaniel	Mary Scott
John Cheng	Kathryn Houchar	Ali McGee	Carol Scott
Denise Clayton	Melvin Hubbard El	Becky Mcghee	Barb Semich
Grant Coffield	Eileen Iorio	John Meck	Suzanne Sheets
Meredith Colaizzi	Mary Robb Jackson	Karen Merrick	Jennifer Shepler
Karen Come	Celeste Janosko	Jim Mesloh	Sheryl Silverman
Michele Cooper	Marge Johnston	Jenny Michaux	Sonja Simonson
Emily Costello	Ed Johnston	Katherine Mills	Timothy Smith
Kate Cromie	Kristin Kalson	Laurin Moore	Ellen Stein

"I will remember my reading buddies because they are awesome."

Jolene Steinmetz
Larry Story
Patricia Stover
Lisa Streiff
Julie Stumpf
Amanda Thomas
Ted Todd
William Tolliver
Danielle Trauth-Jurman

Karel Ulizio
]Katy Vernacchia
Karen Viggiano
Karen Wagner
Camara Watkins
Barbara Welding
Charles (Chip) Wells
Michael Wessell
Ellen Wiczorek

Helen Wigger
Anita Williams
Maureen Willoughby
Mary Wilson
Erica Winstead
Fred Workman
Mark Yost
Michael Zumbo

***Everybody Wins! and RIF Readers Corporate Partners**
Alcoa
Bill Few Associates
BNY Mellon
City of Pittsburgh - Mayor's Mentoring Initiative
Confluence
Eckert Seamans
EQT
Highmark
Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh
Management Science Associates
The Mentoring Partnership
People's Natural Gas
Pittsburgh Public Schools
PPG
RAND Corporation
Reed Smith
SMS Siemag
Tucker Arensburg
UPMC



"My favorite things about RIF Readers are my reading buddies and my favorite book."

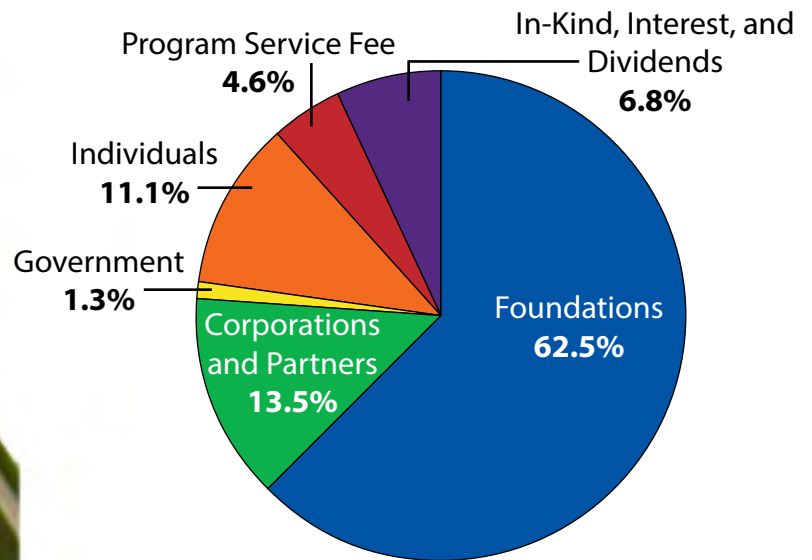
FINANCIALS

Total Revenue:

\$993,159

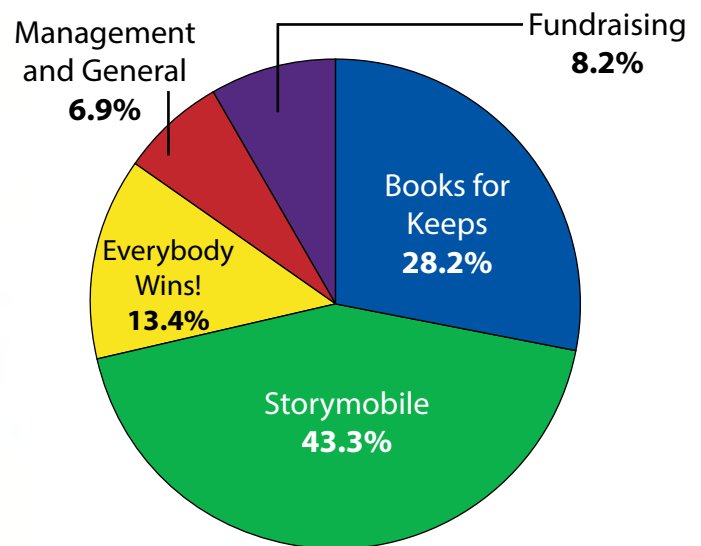
Adjusted Revenue:

\$1,185,659*



Total Expenses:

\$1,121,081



*Less future portions of multi-year grants plus cash receipts from prior multi-year grants

"The books are engaging and have students actively involved, it gets students thinking!"

Be a RIF Pittsburgh Book Hero!



Our programs are supported by foundations, corporations, partners, and individuals who believe that all children should have access to resources and programs designed to foster a life-long love of reading. **YOU** can help a child experience the joy of reading!

- Mail a check to our offices at:
10 Children's Way, Suite 300
Pittsburgh, PA 15212
- Go online to www.rifpittsburgh.org and click on "Donate Now"
- Designate your United Way (#3804) or CFC (#78136) contribution to RIF Pittsburgh
- Volunteer to be a Reading Buddy
- Give us a call at 412-321-8022

Thank you for being part of our mission to inspire a life-long love of reading for the children in our community!



Reading Is
Fundamental
Pittsburgh



Produced and designed by RIF Pittsburgh

10 Children's Way, Suite 300, Pittsburgh, PA 15212 | Phone 412-321-8022 | Fax 412-586-0883 | www.rifpittsburgh.org