

Reading Is Fundamental **Pittsburgh**

Reading Is FUNdamental

Pittsburgh



2014 - 2015 Annual Report

"They have all of the books that I love to read. It makes me happy."







Dear Friends,

I can't wait to share with you Reading Is FUNdamental (RIF) Pittsburgh's Annual Report!

Wow, there is so much to celebrate about this past year at RIF Pittsburgh. We continued to add depth and breadth to our services by impacting the lives of more than 22,000 children and families. **We provided more than 91,000 books to kids for whom book ownership means the world.** As always, we also had a ton of fun along the way!

Each day, we hear from educators whose once-empty classroom libraries are now filled with our Storymobile library books. We hear from Reading Buddy pairs in our Everybody Wins! program about the transformative power of mentoring. We hear from parents whose sons and daughters eagerly open the books they receive from Books for Keeps. And we hear, more than anything else, about the joy our programs and books provide for the children in our community. **The continuous support from people just like you is truly helping to change lives.**

The literacy gap that exists in the City of Pittsburgh, as evidenced by findings in the 2015 A+ Schools Report, is unacceptable. With our new Storymobile, new initiatives, and an arsenal of experience and enthusiasm, we are addressing this gap at its earliest, and most critical, stage. We are working to ensure that economically disadvantaged children and families in our communities start their formal education on the path to academic success, and gain a love of reading that will follow them throughout their lives.

I hope you enjoy reading about our accomplishments. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for joining in our mission to inspire a life-long love of reading in the children and families that we serve.

Warmly,

Florri Ladov

Executive Director



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2015, the National Center for Education Statistics' "Reading Report" stated that 31 percent of all fourth graders in the United States cannot read at even the basic level. Further, the NCES also reports that nearly two-thirds of economically disadvantaged children do not have books in their homes.

Here in Pittsburgh, the situation is no different. According to A+ Schools' 2015 Report to the Community, a significant literacy gap exists for economically disadvantaged students in Pittsburgh, placing thousands of our city's children at risk of academic failure. This report shows that more than 50% of the children in Pittsburgh public elementary schools cannot read at grade level. These numbers are staggering, especially when one remembers that these are not just statistics—they are real children. Without vital interventions, thousands of these children will get left behind.

At Reading Is FUNdamental (RIF) Pittsburgh, we know that every child has the potential to be a life-long reader. To help this dream become a reality, we provide consistent, high-quality educational programming for more than 22,000 at-risk kids and families in Pittsburgh and the surrounding communities. Our web of literacy programs work in tandem to bridge the local literacy and achievement gaps. By bringing these services to early childcare centers, schools, community centers, afterschool programs, and housing communities, we are providing much-needed access on a large scale. Additionally, last year we participated in 99 events throughout the city, helping to ensure that we reach these children over and over again!

Last year we put more than 91,000 self-selected books into the hands, hearts, and homes of the children and families who need them the most. Going forward, we will continue to saturate our targeted neighborhoods with as many of our programs as possible, exposing "RIF Kids" to programs from birth through their teenage years.

*Please note, our program figures are for our program year 2014-2015 (school year 2014-15 and summer 2015)

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"I REALLY
APPRECIATE THE
BOOKS MY CHILD
GOT THIS YEAR.
BOOKS CAN CHANGE
A CHILD'S LIFE AND
GIVE THEM
MEMORIES THAT
CAN LAST A
LIFETIME."

Parent of a student at Pittsburgh Arlington

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

WE SERVE....

- More than 22,000 economically disadvantaged children and families in Pittsburgh and the surrounding communities through our programs and an additional 8,000 through community events
- More than 175 sites
- Seven targeted neighborhoods: East Liberty, Hazelwood, Hill District, Homewood, Northside, South Side, and Wilkinsburg

Our core programs:

- Bring innovative, high-quality literacy experiences to children and families
- Support students as they build literacy skills and work to develop a life-long love of reading
- Provide more than 91,000 books each year to the children who need them the most

NORTHSIDE Books for Keeps, Everybody Wins! and Storymobile programs 7.540 Children Served 38 Sites Visited 18,036 Books Given 1,811 Books Loaned 92 Mentors Recruited **SOUTH SIDE** Books for Keeps, Read to Your Family, Everybody Wins! and Storymobile programs 3,893 Children Served 23 Sites Visited 10,350 Books Given 2.267 Books Loaned 37 Mentors Recruited

REST OF CITY

Books for Keeps and Read to Your Family programs

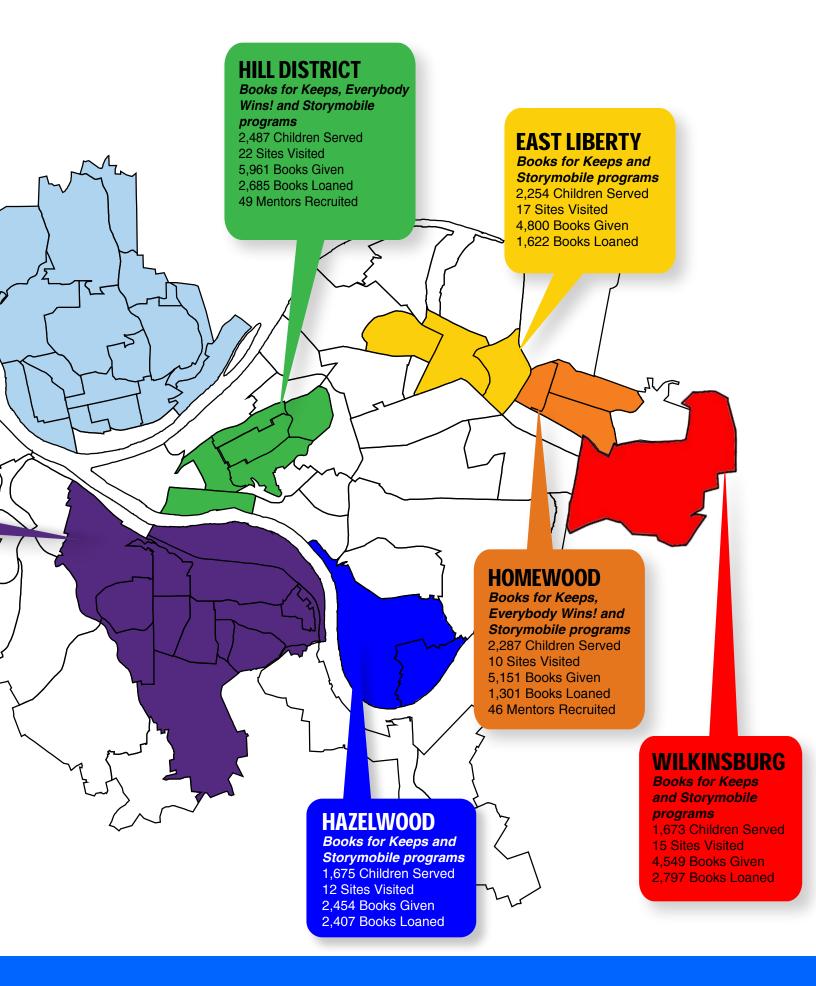
7,830 Children Served 36 Sites Visited 21,619 Books Given

OUTSIDE OF CITY

Books for Keeps program

904 Children Served 3 Sites Visited 2.992 Books Given

*Program Year 9/14 - 8/15





BOOKS FOR KEEPS

Our longest-running and largest program, Books for Keeps, engages children in 3-5 Reading Celebrations each year. Designed to captivate children with the joy of reading and learning, Reading Celebrations pair story times with fun, motivational activities such as crafts, games, and even science experiments! At the end of the Celebrations, each child selects a book of their very own to take home and keep!

By combining literature with dance, music, creative writing, and STEAM themes, RIF Pittsburgh works to ignite a passion for reading and learning that will follow children throughout their lives.

In the 2014-15 program year, Books for Keeps:

- Partnered with 100 sites, including early childhood centers, schools, afterschool programs, and community centers
- Served more than 17,000 economically disadvantaged children in Pittsburgh and the surrounding communities
- Provided more than 57,000 new, high-quality books for children to take home and keep through Celebrations and events
- Served all 15 Be a Middle School Mentor sites



"[The students] really value the books that they pick during each visit and read them everyday."

MATH AND SCIENCE

Our Books for Keeps Math and Science Program is a hit with both our students and educators! This program delivers the latest STEAM-focused books and activities into the classrooms of the kids who are most in need. By combining subjects like plant science, engineering, and robotic technology with literacy, this program helps students to better engage with what they're reading. Science brings the stories to life! As we infuse our regular Reading Celebrations with STEAM, we encourage curiosity and a passion for discovery, and help to plant the first seeds for a life-long love of learning. This impactful program introduces children to innovative technologies, hands-on projects, potential careers, and, of course, new books that explore the world through the lens of math and science.

In the 2014-15 program year, our Books for Keeps Math and Science Program:

- Provided high-quality STEAM educational experiences to more than 2,840 children at 27 sites
- Introduced children to challenging subject matter in a way that they could embrace and enjoy, helping to support broader academic goals
- Brought special guests, like ALCOSAN, Open Up Pittsburgh, and the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden, to help with fun experiments and talk to the children about careers in STEAM-fields



EVERYBODY WINS!

Everybody Wins! is a lunchtime literacy mentoring program that pairs 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade students with a caring adult to build a meaningful relationship while sharing conversation, good books, and literacy-related activities for one hour a week. These consistent, one-on-one experiences increase a child's opportunity for success, both academically and throughout his or her life.

Formal evaluations of Everybody Wins! have shown the program to be one of the very few programs to effectively impact low-income students in reading comprehension, motivation, and achievement, as well as overall academic performance, classroom behavior, self-confidence, and social skills. In the 2014-15 program year, Everybody Wins!

- Facilitated ten reading sessions each week at four Pittsburgh Public Schools elementary schools (Faison, King, Phillips, and Weil)
- Matched 221 children with 224 corporate and community volunteers
- Supported our students and mentors as they read more than 4,150 books together
- Brought special guests, like local author Betty Howard, to reading sessions to talk with students about writing books



"My reading buddy became more comfortable in reading more difficult books and reading aloud as the year progressed."



STORYMOBILE

Our three Storymobiles are lending libraries-on-wheels that take books, resources, activities, (and lots of fun!) to early childhood centers, schools, afterschool programs, housing communities, and events across our city. This program provides vital access to books, bringing literacy resources directly into the communities and sites that are most in need. Bi-weekly visits allow us to build strong relationships and tailor programming to each unique site as we strive to develop our Storymobiles into a welcoming gathering place for the educators, children, and families we serve.

In the 2014-15 program year, our Storymobiles:

- Served over 5,320 children and families at 77 sites in our community
- Loaned nearly 15,000 books and gave away almost 13,000 books to the children and educators at our sites
- Visited 60 community events throughout the city, providing an additional 5,150 books

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

In an effort to bring positive literacy attitudes into the home, **Read to Your Family** engages parents and caregivers in their children's reading. Students are incentivized to increase their reading outside of school, while parents are encouraged to read alongside their children and play an active role in their reading development. This not only increases reading time, it also gives families an opportunity to positively impact their relationships through shared time together.

RIF Pittsburgh works with schools and teachers to provide public recognition, prizes, and educational incentives to reward students when they read at home with their families.



Our **Storymobile STARS** reading incentive program works in partnership with the Beverly Jewel Wall Lovelace (BJWL) afterschool programs in our eight public housing communities. We challenge children to read books on their own and write book reviews, and reward the children each time they reach certain benchmarks. This year, we also expanded the STARS program into our early childhood and afterschool sites, encouraging teachers and students to reach a 250-book goal over the course of the entire school year!

Week after week, students and teachers eagerly anticipate their updated book count. This program, and its competitive aspects, has sites and families racing to reach their reading goals!

Our newest initiative, **Storymobile Book Babies**, connects new and expectant parents with the books, resources, and support needed to raise a child who loves to read. Our New Mommy Meet-Ups provide a celebratory opportunity for reading and learning, as well as fun and fellowship with other families. Storymobile Book Babies is now running in each of the eight public housing communities served by our mobile libraries. We are delighted to extend our programs to serve children at the earliest and most critical stage of life!



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Listing includes individuals who volunteered between 6/14 - 5/15

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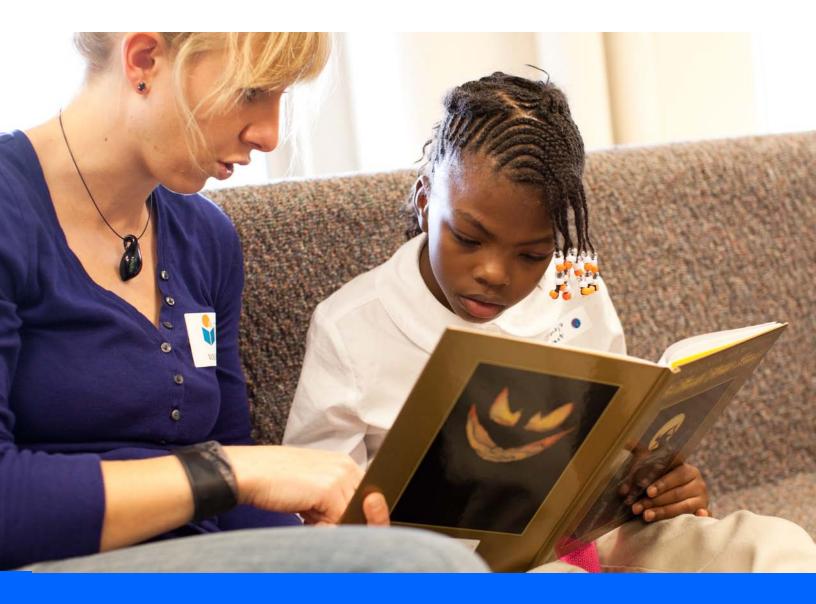
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"Today we had a breakthrough when the words began to flow easier. Today he read five 'Fly Guy' books and was very proud. So was I."

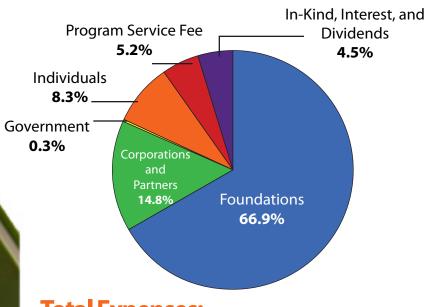
FINANCIALS

Total Revenue:

\$1,208,426

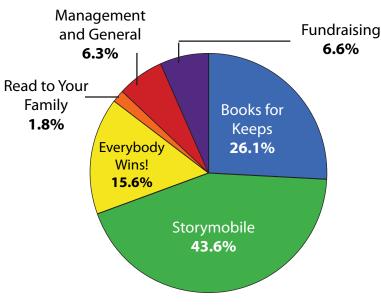
Adjusted Revenue:

\$993,426*



Total Expenses:

\$937,922



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

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"
- or CFC (#78136) contribution to RIF Pittsburgh
- Volunteer for one of our programs
- 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!





