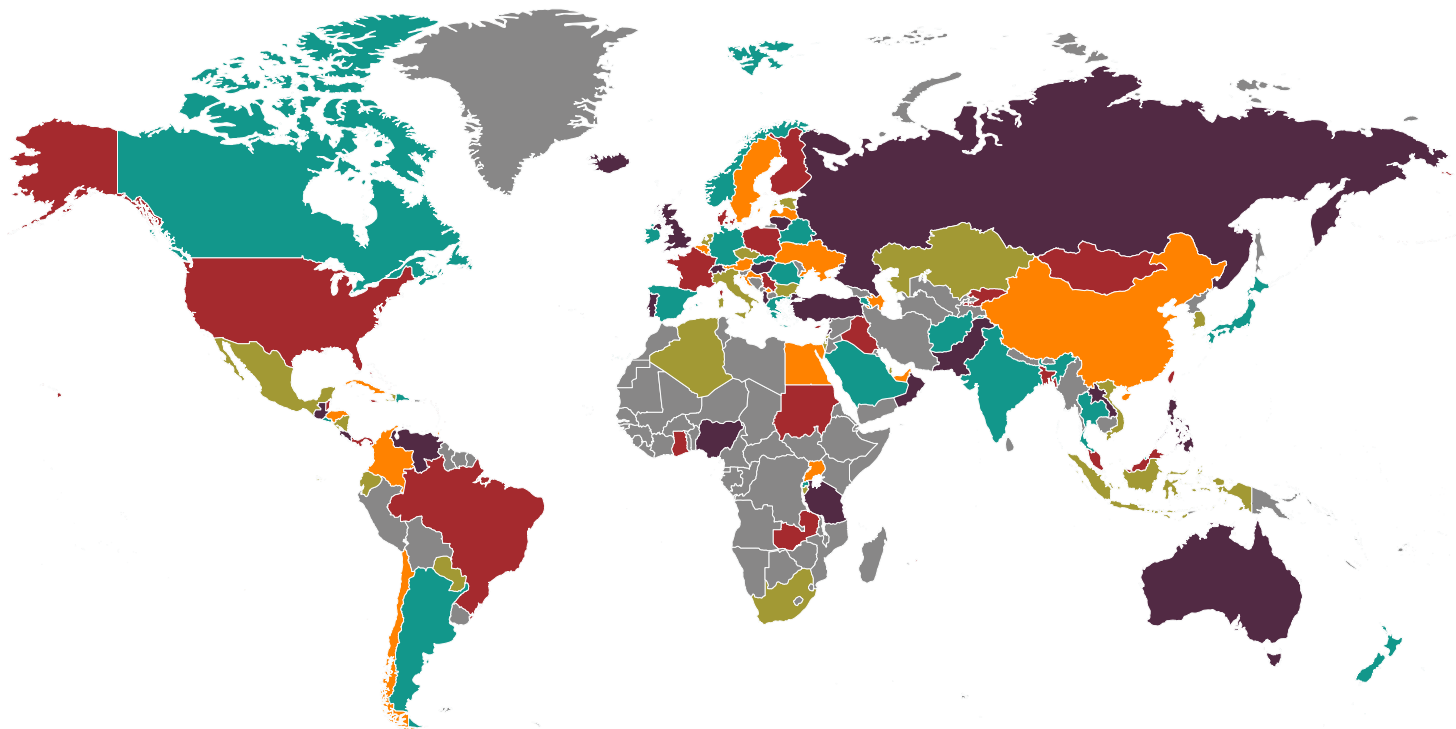




LITTLE FREE LIBRARY.ORG®  
TAKE A BOOK • SHARE A BOOK

## 2019 Annual Report



**Global Network as of April 2020** · Afghanistan · Albania · Algeria · Argentina · Armenia · Azerbaijan · Aruba · Australia · Austria · Bahamas · Bahrain · Bangladesh · Barbados · Belarus · Belgium · Belize · Bermuda · Brazil · Brunei · Bulgaria · Burundi · Canada · Chile · China · Colombia · Costa Rica · Croatia · Cuba · Cyprus · Czech Republic · Denmark · Dominica · Dominican Republic · Ecuador · Egypt · El Salvador · Estonia · Finland · France · Germany · Ghana · Greece · Grenada · Guatemala · Haiti · Honduras · Hungary · Iceland · India · Indonesia · Iraq · Ireland · Israel · Italy · Jamaica · Japan · Kazakhstan · Kosovo · Kyrgyzstan · Laos · Latvia · Lebanon · Lithuania · Luxembourg · Malaysia · Marshall Islands · Mauritius · Mexico · Micronesia · Monaco · Mongolia · Netherlands · New Zealand · Nicaragua · Nigeria · Norway · Oman · Pakistan · Panama · Paraguay · Philippines · Poland · Portugal · Qatar · Romania · Russia · Rwanda · Saudi Arabia · Serbia · Singapore · Slovakia · Slovenia · South Africa · South Korea · Spain · Sudan · Sweden · Switzerland · Taiwan · Tanzania · Thailand · Trinidad and Tobago · Turkey · Tuvalu · Uganda · Ukraine · United Arab Emirates · United Kingdom · United States · Venezuela · Vietnam · Zambia



## Dear Friends of Little Free Library,

As this is written, we sit amidst a global pandemic and newfound energy in the fight for social equity. We hope your family is well, and we'd like to share an update about Little Free Library.

Little Free Library marked its 10th anniversary in May of 2019. From a front yard in Hudson, Wisconsin, a Little Free Library is now in all 50 states and over 100 countries. To celebrate, we

launched the Todd H. Bol Awards for Outstanding Achievement to recognize stewards whose volunteer service is truly exceptional. **To all our stewards, wherever you may be, thank you. You make our progress possible.**

A critical initiative for Little Free Library is our Impact Library Program. Through this grant program, we donate Little Free Library boxes to address book access in high-needs communities. **In 2019, we hit the 1,000 grantee mark since the program's launch.** Our progress would not be possible without key corporate and community partners such as Foresters Financial, Sony Pictures, Goodreads, and regional United Ways, among others.

Finally, as you read this, Little Free Library will have passed another key stage in our journey with **the installation of our 100,000th Little Free Library.** This was an event only made possible with the support of our stewards, donors, and partners.

While the world in which Little Free Library operates has indeed changed, our goals and objectives continue. Engage communities, strengthen literacy skills, and promote equitable book access. Will you join us?

With thanks,



  
M. Greig Metzger  
Executive Director



  
Anita Merina  
National Board Chair

## 2019 Highlights

- We celebrated 10 years of Little Free Library book-sharing boxes.
- Our Impact Library Program granted its 1,000th Little Free Library.
- We honored 10 Little Free Library stewards with the first-ever Todd H. Bol Awards for Outstanding Achievement.
- Little Free Libraries reached more than 100 countries worldwide.



*In November, the Smithsonian's Museum of the American Indian unveiled a Little Free Library honoring Native Americans.*



## Our Mission

Little Free Library is a nonprofit organization that inspires a love of reading, builds community, and sparks creativity by fostering neighborhood book exchanges around the world.



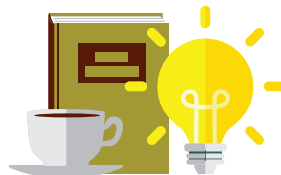


# What We Do



## Little Free Libraries

Offer Little Free Library book-sharing boxes, kits, building plans, and tutorials to make library installations possible in urban, suburban, and rural communities.



## Steward Services

Create and implement integrated systems to ensure our highly engaged volunteer stewards are equipped to have a meaningful impact on their communities.



## Impact Library Program

Provide no-cost Little Free Libraries, books, and launch materials to grantees in high-needs areas who apply for support.



## Action Book Club

Facilitate a national book club for children, adolescents, and adults that combines reading and discussion with community service projects.



## Partnerships

Collaborate with corporate and community partners to champion our programs through library-building events, promotional campaigns, and more.



## Literacy Promotion

Support equitable book access and a love of reading through our communications platforms and the Little Free Library network.



*“Each Little Free Library is a place for people in a neighborhood to find not only stories, but one another...they’re kind of like hope in a box.”*

– Kate DiCamillo,  
bestselling author  
and two-time Newbery  
Award winner



# Why Book Access?

## The Need

Research shows that book access is key to academic performance—especially for children living in low-income areas. In fact, access to books is cited as the number-one predictor of a child's ability to thrive in school. Unfortunately, kids in underserved areas are hit hardest by book scarcity. **Two out of three children living in poverty have no books of their own.** <sup>[1]</sup>

Overall literacy rates in America are equally alarming: 34 percent of children entering kindergarten lack the basic skills needed to learn how to read, and 63 percent of fourth graders read below grade level. <sup>[2]</sup>

## The Action

Adding books to the home environment has a remarkable effect on literacy. A child who comes from a home with just 25 books will, on average, complete two more years of school than a child from a home devoid of books. <sup>[3]</sup>

**A Little Free Library book-sharing box can provide an opportunity to bring book access where there is none,** whether due to a lack of community resources or an inability to utilize them. As many families, schools, public libraries, and other organizations have found, Little Free Library book exchanges are innovative tools that allow for outreach to more readers. With these little libraries, we can work to ensure every child has a book to call their own.

<sup>[1]</sup> <http://www.rif.org/about-rif/literacy-crisis/>

<sup>[2]</sup> <https://www.rif.org/literacy-network/facts>

<sup>[3]</sup> <http://edublog.scholastic.com/post/what-research-says-books-home#>



*"My community of South Shore has been plagued with all the ills of urban blight: vacant housing stock, blighted commercial corridors, crime, lack of access to healthy food, the works.*

*However we are a close group of neighbors who sit on our porches and read, watch the children play and monarchs land on the milkweed in our gardens.*

*I want to bring back 'intergenerational reading on the porch' to my neighborhood. Reading is healing; it's inspiring and transformative. My community needs this."*

*— Veronica Kyle, Impact Library grantee, Chicago, IL*



# Our Impact



**96,000**  
Little Free Libraries



**50**  
U.S. States Served



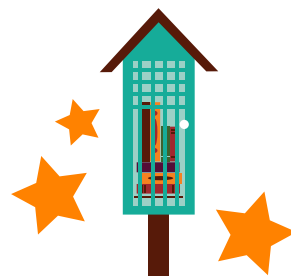
**100**  
Countries Served



**165,000,000**  
Books Shared  
Since 2009



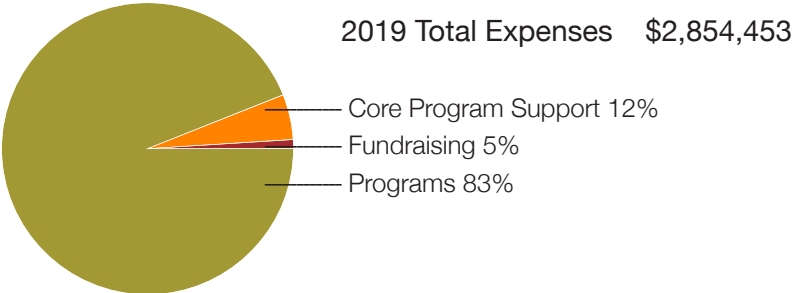
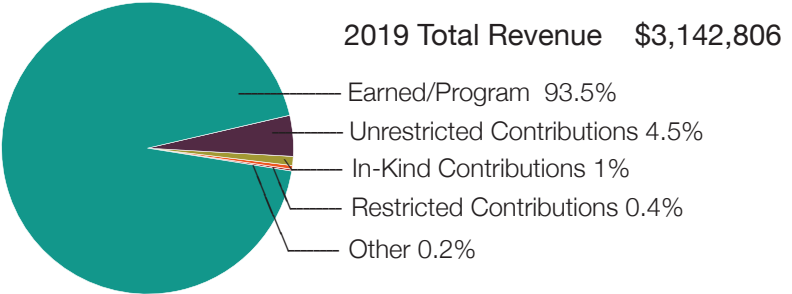
**468**  
Visits Per Library  
Each Year



**1,000**  
Libraries  
Granted

# 2019 Financials

Little Free Library finances continued to strengthen in 2019 with healthy performance in our earned program revenues from both individuals, organizations, and corporate partnerships. While our plan for 2020 continued to build on that trajectory, the pandemic's impact does create some uncertainty. Although some 2020 activities have been put on hold, performance so far is encouraging.



## Board of Directors

(as of May 2020)

Little Free Library's national board of directors serves as our governing body and helps shape the goals that uphold our mission to create equitable book access.

### **Anita Merina, Board Chair**

*National Education Association, Read Across America, Retired*

### **Jake Adams, Vice Chair**

*Chief Development Officer, Southwest Human Development*

### **Margaret Bernstein, Secretary**

*Director of Advocacy & Community Initiatives, WKYC*

### **Bradley Walz, Treasurer**

*Intellectual Property Partner, Barnes & Thornburg*

### **Kenneth Braswell**

*Executive Director, Fathers Incorporated*

### **Deborah Castillero**

*CEO, Goldleaf Limited*

### **Elise Chambers**

*Mediation Program Manager, Conflict Resolution Center*

### **Marisa Creary**

*Director of Partnerships, Heart of America Foundation*

### **Jeremy Hillman**

*Director of Corporate Communications, World Bank*

### **Kenneth Kunz**

*Assistant Professor of Literacy & Language Arts, Monmouth University*

### **Hannah Moore**

*Chief Development Officer, The Jewish Board of Family & Children's Services*

### **Malcolm Persen**

*President, Resolute Performance Contracting*

## Championing Literacy

Little Free Library is the world's largest book-sharing network, providing tens of millions of books to readers of all ages and backgrounds each year. Gifts to Little Free Library support our efforts to improve book access across the country and around the world.

### Give Online

Visit [LittleFreeLibrary.org/donate](https://LittleFreeLibrary.org/donate) for a fast and secure way to support our network.

### Give by Phone or Mail

Gifts in any amount can be made by phone at 715-690-2488 or mailed to Little Free Library, 573 County Road A, Suite 106, Hudson, WI, 54016.

### Honor and Memorial Gifts

Pay tribute to a loved one, teacher, or colleague with a gift in their name. Learn more about our Honor Wall option at [LittleFreeLibrary.org/honor-wall](https://LittleFreeLibrary.org/honor-wall).

### Qualified Charitable Distribution

A QCD is a direct transfer of funds from your IRA custodian to Little Free Library that can be counted toward satisfying your required minimum distribution.

### Foundation Grants

Grants from our foundation partners are immediately put to use supporting Little Free Library's core programs.

### Corporate Partnerships

Our corporate partners not only have a meaningful impact on literacy and book access, they also enjoy connecting with our national network of passionate, engaged volunteers.



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## RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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