

Improving Lives Through  
the Power Of Literacy



BARBARA BUSH  
HOUSTON LITERACY FOUNDATION



2020  
Performance Report

# About the Foundation

Dear Friends and Supporters,

For the past eight years, we have advanced Barbara Bush's literacy legacy in her hometown, our nation's most diverse and fourth largest city. During this time, we have learned much about our community and the people who call Houston "home." We learned quickly that we have a systemic crisis, with far too many adults and children lacking vital literacy skills to participate in our competitive, global economy and engage fully in our society. We learned that this perpetual, generational cycle is a root cause to many of the problems we continue to face, including higher dropout and unemployment rates, and widening of gaps and inequities among class and race.

Yet, we also learned that through a focused, calculated strategy supported by passionate individuals like you, we can face these adversities and expand opportunities that provide more Houstonians a chance to achieve their hopes and dreams and assure our city remains a vibrant place to live and work. Amid the coronavirus pandemic, we learned even more. We learned that we are stronger than we imagined, more resilient than we thought possible and more creative and committed than ever before to rewrite the life stories of those who have long remained in the shadows and to change the literacy landscape in Houston.

All the best,



Julie Baker Finck, Ph.D., President



Maria & Neil Bush, Co-Chairs

While 2020 will forever be most notably remembered by the unprecedented pandemic, we will choose to look fondly and gratefully upon the leadership and commitment of generous donors, our auxiliary groups, volunteers, corporate and community partners, and staff, who immediately answered the call to support children, families, and school districts in vastly different, yet significant ways. Our work going forward remains even more vital now than ever before.



We invite you to take time to read this Performance Report of the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation and hope that you will find meaning, purpose and pride in all that has been accomplished with your involvement and support.

Admittedly, we have much more work to do to realize Barbara Bush's vision of literacy for all. With your continued support, we can make it a reality for everyone who calls Houston "home."



## Honoring the Living Legacy of Barbara Bush

Over 30 years ago, Barbara Bush pioneered a literacy movement across America to raise awareness of the literacy crisis and promote increased access to adult and family literacy programs. Known fondly as the "First Lady of Literacy", she believed that literacy is a fundamental human right and used her time in the White House to advance the cause to the nation's forefront. She played a significant role in advocating for the passage of the National Literacy Act of 1991 and remained a passionate proponent for volunteerism and the literacy cause throughout her life. The Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation's mission is rooted in her belief, "If you help a person to read, then their opportunities in life will be endless." Her vision of literacy for all continues to inspire us and countless others to help people reach their fullest potential through the power of literacy – the ability to read, write, think critically, compute and communicate.

# Our Strategy

Improving literacy across one of the largest and most diverse cities in the country is a massive undertaking, but with a focus on executing these four imperatives, we will make a demonstrable impact in helping more people learn to read.

Our aspiration is for Houston to become a model for other cities and to ignite a literacy movement across our nation.

1 imperative	Parents will be empowered to be their child’s first and most important teachers.	3 imperative	Every child in Houston will have access to an expansive network of reading volunteers.
2 imperative	Every child in Houston will have access to books of his or her choice in the home.	4 imperative	Every child in Houston will have access to high-quality summer learning programs.

## Our Vision

*We envision Houston will be a thriving, model city in which everyone possesses the literacy skills needed to reach his or her full potential in life and engage fully in our economy and society. It is our hope that our programs and services, coupled with the generous support of our growing list of dedicated partners, sponsors, and volunteers, will break the generational cycle of low literacy and poverty. As we establish coalitions of community partners, raise awareness and financial resources, and invest in evidence-based literacy programs, we at the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation remain steadfast in our mission to improve lives through the power of literacy and realize Barbara Bush’s vision of literacy for all.*

## Board of Directors and Staff

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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<p><b>Julie Baker Finck, Ph.D.</b> President &amp; CEO</p> <hr/> <p><b>José Paulo Calvillo</b> Chief Operations Officer</p> <hr/> <p><b>Allan R. Marshall, M.Ed.</b> Chief Development Officer</p> <hr/> <p><b>Kime Smith</b> Chief Strategic Partnerships &amp; Programs Officer</p> <hr/>
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### STAFF

<p><b>Alexa Bode</b> Marketing &amp; Communications Manager</p> <hr/> <p><b>Ashley Monic</b> Outreach &amp; Engagement Manager</p> <hr/> <p><b>Maria Leija</b> Operations Coordinator</p> <hr/> <p><b>Eileen Lynch</b> Staff Writer and Development Coordinator</p> <hr/>
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# 2020 Key Initiatives

## My Home Library

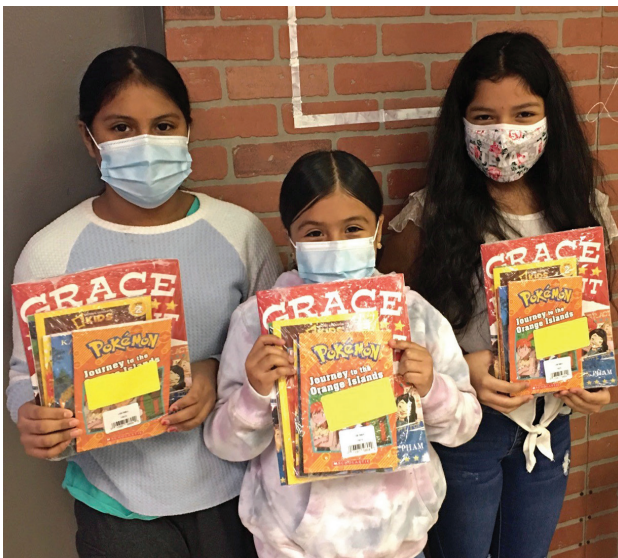
Access to books in the home is a key strategy to boost childhood literacy achievement rates and foster a life-long love of reading. With schools and libraries vastly impacted due to the pandemic, causing widespread closures and disrupting critical instruction and wrap-around services to children and families, we recognized that providing students with access to books to read at home was paramount. Our team, working alongside partner school districts and community organizations distributed nearly 200,000 brand-new books to children of low-income families through our My Home Library program. Children received age-appropriate book bundles through their classrooms and via contactless processes, ensuring the continuation of our program during a time of critical need. We also partnered with community organizations to provide books alongside food distributions and at-home educational materials.

**“Hollibrook Elementary is more than thankful for the literacy support you provided this year. Students were very excited. We heard many of them share their plans to get home and read. We also saw many students that couldn’t wait to get home and were reading while waiting for their parents to pick them up. You could see the excitement in every corner of the school, in every little face, and in the many words of appreciation from parents. Again, thank you. You have changed the lives of many and supported our district and school literacy goals.”**

**Anabel Taylor, Principal**

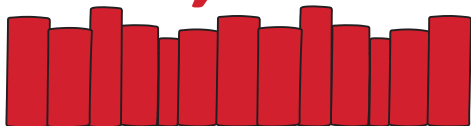


My Home Library



2020

# 196,075



My Home Library Books Distributed

# 42

Organizations Served

# 27

Elementary Schools

# 4

Pre-Schools

# 11

Special Programs

# 2020 Key Initiatives

## Curiosity Cruiser

The Curiosity Cruisers are state-of-the-art, super libraries on wheels that serve Houston's most vulnerable children by providing free books and engaging, weekly hands-on educational programming.

An initiative of the Ladies for Literacy Guild in partnership with Harris County Public Library (HCPL), the Cruisers are stocked with beautiful new books to foster a life-time love of reading and help children build their own home libraries. HCPL staff provide children with innovative and engaging programming focused on science, technology, engineering and math, with team-based activities and reading clubs to foster literacy skills and social development. Music and visual arts programs, such as photography and digital media, help children learn self-expression, while critical thinking and problem-solving skills are fostered through the creative exploration of LEGO® sets, 3D printers, robotics and more. Mascots Owlbotron and Northtale encourage active imaginations, creativity and building confidence through the everyday power of reading.

Although the pandemic disrupted the provision of hands-on educational programming, the Cruisers continued to provide a bright literacy light to children and families and support at-home learning, traveling over 4,000 miles throughout Houston. In partnership with Harris County precincts, the Cruisers visited over 11,000 at-risk children, distributing over 11,000 books through pop-up libraries at parks and community centers as well as food distribution sites, encouraging children to actively read while schools and libraries were closed.

The first Curiosity Cruiser was made possible through the vision of the Ladies for Literacy Guild and our generous sponsors Citgo, The Lester & Sue Smith Foundation and Phillips 66. In 2019, Houston Children's Charity joined Citgo and the Ladies for Literacy Guild to launch a second Curiosity Cruiser. In 2020, a third Curiosity Cruiser was funded by a generous anonymous donor and will join the growing fleet in early 2021.



## CURIOSITY CRUISER DATA

**11,000+**

Books

**11,000+**

Children Served

**4,000+**

Miles Traveled



# 2020 Key Initiatives

## AmeriCorps VISTA

We are proud to have a long-standing partnership with OneStar Foundation and the Corporation for National and Community Service. Their support since our inception has allowed us to assemble cohorts of passionate, service-minded Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) to build capacity and sustainable systems for our operations, programs and engagement with the community. In 2020, the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation received a new, three-year grant to host six AmeriCorps VISTA members each year for the next three years. VISTA CORPS dedicate their year of service supporting school and community partnerships, growth and engagement of our Ladies for Literacy Guild and Young Professionals Group, and boost our data management infrastructure. We are thankful to each of them for their hard work and commitment to increase literacy rates and reduce poverty rates in our city.

## Third Ward Schools Initiative

The Third Ward Schools Initiative is a multi-year strategic partnership among the Houston Independent School District, the University of Houston's Advancing Community Engagement and Service (ACES) Institute, the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation and community organizations. Through this partnership, students attending Third Ward elementary schools receive evidence-based enrichment programs, including support from the UH Cougar Literacy Corps. The UH Cougar Literacy Corps are deployed to serve as literacy tutors, working with students individually or in small group settings using, in part, Read Houston Read and Reading Roundup lesson guides. Amid the pandemic, the Corps continued delivering exemplary literacy services virtually via Microsoft Teams providing 1,100 students with over 24,000 hours of tutoring.

## Camp Adventure!

A highly-anticipated annual event for hundreds of HISD students, Camp Adventure! is a summer learning experience infusing S.T.E.A.M curriculum (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) with reading activities designed to mitigate the effects of the "summer learning slide." In response to the pandemic, partners at the Children's Museum of Houston converted the experience into Virtual Camp Adventure! Volunteers assembled 625 kits for contactless distribution, complete with books and materials for at-home, hands-on learning experiences. Each day, campers tuned in virtually to watch camp counselors engage in live science experiments, songs and movement extensions. Read alouds were uploaded to YouTube and featured pre-recorded videos of volunteers reading the selected texts and demonstrating the day's learning activities. Camp Adventure! 2020 was funded in partnership with Houston Independent School District, the Astros Foundation, CEMEX, Crestwood, EOG Resources, JPMorgan Chase, Kinder Morgan, KPMG, Marathon Oil, Phillips 66, Smart Financial, Target and the Young Professionals Group.



## Literacy Partner Network

The Literacy Partner Network (LPN) was formed in 2014 to develop and support a coalition of organizations who share in our literacy vision. The Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation plays a central role in convening representatives from nearly 50 local member organizations, including faith-based, civic, district, government and other non-profit organizations. As a champion of the literacy cause, the Foundation facilitates the network, providing professional development, networking opportunities, and thought-leadership.

# 2020 Key Initiatives

## Reading RoundUp/Read Houston Read

Reading Roundup, funded through a generous grant from the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo, is a volunteer-led, classroom read-aloud program providing first through third grade students at participating schools with valuable literacy skill-building and mentorship opportunities. In 2020, volunteers provided over 300 hours of service, transitioning to a virtual Reading Roundup experience at 15 schools using specially curated books and lesson guides designed to foster comprehension, group discussion, vocabulary development, critical thinking skills and socio-emotional learning.



Read Houston Read is a volunteer program in HISD co-developed in partnership with the Foundation and Children’s Museum of Houston five years ago that is designed to ensure that students read at or above grade level by third grade. Each volunteer is paired with one or two first-grade students to mentor for the duration of the academic year. Following a brief hiatus early in 2020, Read Houston Read returned with virtual volunteer and mentorship opportunities, with volunteers contributing over 450 hours of service.

## We Read/We Read Español

In March 2020, just as the schoolhouse doors closed and school districts and families across our city began to navigate the uncharted virtual teaching and learning environment, the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation, in collaboration with the Ladies for Literacy Guild and Mayor Sylvester Turner’s office, launched the #WeRead initiative on all major social media platforms. This virtual read aloud program features special appearances by members of the Bush family, sports professionals, community leaders, and dedicated volunteers from our corporate and community partners. The #WeRead videos on the Foundation’s You Tube channel boasts more than 180 read aloud videos in multiple languages, inviting children and families to share in the joy of reading.

## Connect4Literacy.org

In 2020, many of us learned the true meaning of connection. Our online volunteer management platform, Connect4Literacy.org, quickly adapted to the times, offering virtual volunteer opportunities benefitting over 100 literacy organizations across Houston. Partner Organizations of Connect4Literacy.org worked diligently to re-imagine volunteer opportunities for the virtual environment, ensuring little interruption in the delivery of high-impact programs and services in support of our literacy vision. More than 750 volunteers in support of the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation gave back to their communities during a time of tremendous need through virtual volunteering, in-person book sorting events, and home-based service projects.



# Auxiliary Groups

## Ladies for Literacy Guild

With more than 400 members strong, the Ladies for Literacy Guild is carrying forth Mrs. Bush's literacy legacy through servant leadership in Houston. The mission of this dynamic group of women is to foster a love of literacy through R.E.A.D.: Rallying members and supporters; Enriching lives in Houston through literacy; Advocating for the importance of literacy; and Devoting time, talent, and resources to ensure success. Despite the pandemic, the Guild continued to advance the literacy cause through online volunteer service, grants to community partners, support for Foundation program implementation, and virtual events to keep members connected, engaged and informed. The Guild's signature event, the Power of Literacy Luncheon, was a visionary success, celebrating our beloved Barbara Bush through stories from close friends and celebrities and raising nearly \$300,000. Supported by Reliant and the Houston Rockets Women's Organization, the annual Community Book Drive pivoted to a "drive-by, drop-off" event with nearly 4,000 books collected to stock the Curiosity Cruiser mobile libraries and share with community partners. At Memorial Elementary School in HISD, a school-wide reading initiative, Best Friend Books, kept children engaged in the joy of reading, in addition to home libraries for every student through the Foundation's My Home Library program. Working alongside community partners, thousands of books were distributed to help children build their own home libraries creating a life-time love of reading.



The First Lady's Book Club joined literacy forces with the Young Professionals Group Book Club and found new, innovative ways to stay connected by introducing virtual book clubs, which

sparked thoughtful discussions on timely issues and topics inspired by bestselling books. From national bestsellers to Pulitzer Prize-winning authors, each virtual book club meeting gathered a sizable group of readers, eager to share their ideas in the company of fellow literacy advocates.





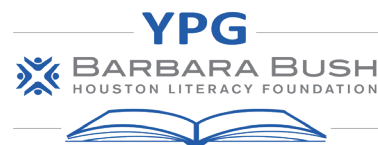
# Auxiliary Groups



## Young Professionals Group

Young Professionals Group (YPG) is a growing coalition of dedicated, service-minded Houstonians with a passion for community literacy outreach. In 2020, the YPG's motto, 'read, lead, serve', took on a new meaning as the auxiliary group found innovative ways to carry out their service and networking activities. The YPG awarded \$25,000 in grants to organizations working to support children and families through the COVID-19 pandemic, including Community Family Centers, Houston Area Women's Center, San Francisco Nativity Academy, and Small Steps Nurturing Center. Grants provided books, tablets/iPads and other resources to support teaching and learning.

The Barbara's Book Boxes project is a community-based literacy initiative promoting the installation of little free libraries in strategic locations throughout Houston. In 2020, the YPG installed four new book boxes to be enjoyed by hundreds of families and park-goers. Implementing a "take a book, leave a book" process, this community-embedded resource expands access in our city's "book desert." As a proud partner of the Houston Parks Board '50/50 Park Partners' initiative, the YPG is committed to expanding literacy resources in our city's underserved parks. Over the next three years, the YPG will work with the Houston Parks Board to install these free community resources in more than 25 parks and other publicly-accessible locations.



# Donor Recognition

## \$500,000+



## \$100,000-499,000

ConocoPhillips  
Deloitte Consulting LLP  
Gail and Greg Garland  
Hess Corporation  
Kathrine McGovern/McGovern Foundation  
Quanex Foundation  
Stephanie and Frank Tsuru

## \$50,000-99,000

CenterPoint Energy  
Consulate General of the State of Qatar  
Cyvia and Melvyn Wolff Family Foundation  
Enbridge  
Janice S. McNair  
Marathon Oil Corporation  
Shell Oil Company  
Susan and Fayez Sarofim

Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo  
Joan P. Camenson Trust  
Light Charitable Trust  
Perry Homes Foundation  
PNC Foundation  
PwC  
Stavis and Cohen Financial  
Limor and Stuart Smith  
Sue Smith  
The Ebel Family Foundation

Farish Fund  
Sidney and Don Faust  
Harry W. Bass Jr. Foundation  
Betty and John Hrcirc  
ION Geophysical  
Memorial Hermann Health System  
Reliant  
Rob and Ann McKee Family Foundation  
Scholastic  
Scurlock Foundation  
Strake Foundation  
Texas Children's Hospital  
The Carnrite Group  
The Elkins Foundation  
The P. and C. Carroll Foundation  
Wayne Duddlesten Foundation

## \$25,000-49,999

Air Liquide  
Andrew Delaney Foundation  
Cheniere Energy, Inc.  
Crestwood Midstream Partners  
EOG Resources, Inc.  
Elizabeth and Drayton McLane, Jr.  
H-E-B

## \$15,000-24,999

Cabot Oil & Gas Corporation  
Charlene Carroll  
Chevron Phillips Chemical Company, LP  
Cathy and Joe Cleary  
Comcast  
EY

*"We are deeply grateful to our generous donors,  
all of whom make our literacy mission possible."*

**-Neil Bush**

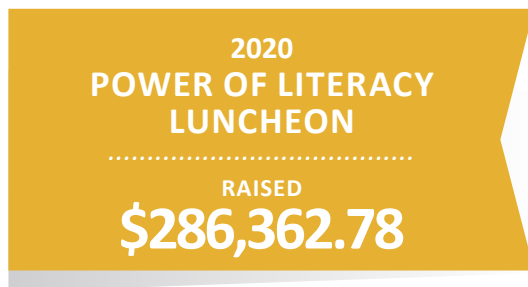
# Signature Events

## Power of Literacy Luncheon

Each year, the Ladies for Literacy Guild hosts the Power of Literacy Luncheon to shine light on the cause former First Lady Barbara Bush championed for nearly 30 years – literacy. The fifth annual event, held in the fall of 2020, was a visionary success, celebrating our beloved Barbara Bush through stories from close friends and celebrities. Since its inception, the Ladies for Literacy Guild has raised nearly \$2 million through the Power of Literacy Luncheons to help support the Guild’s activities and fund local literacy initiatives. The 2020 Power of Literacy Luncheon was chaired by Betty Hrcir and Sidney Faust.

## A Celebration of Reading

Heralded as one of Houston’s most beloved annual charitable events, *A Celebration of Reading 2020* was made available to the entire Houston community thanks to our generous partners at KPRC Channel 2, Title Sponsor Phillips 66, Presenting Sponsor Quanex Foundation and many other generous donors, as well as production experts at Ward & Ames Special Events. This primetime broadcast drew viewership of nearly 10,000 households and featured special appearances from bestselling authors and talented entertainers, while sharing our vital message of the transformative power of literacy. The more than \$1.8 million in funds raised from this event support critical literacy programs at both the local and national level through the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation and the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy.



## Financials

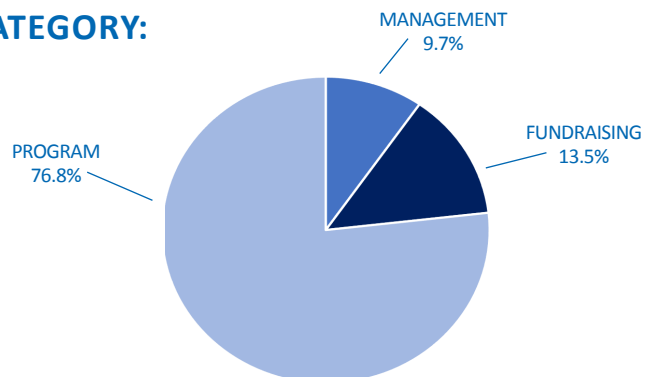
**\$4.47** MILLION  
IN REVENUE

**\$565** THOUSAND  
GRANTS TO LITERACY  
ORGANIZATIONS

**\$3.95** MILLION  
IN EXPENSES

### EXPENSES BY FUNCTIONAL CATEGORY:

MANAGEMENT	<b>\$385,588</b>
FUNDRAISING	<b>\$532,654</b>
PROGRAM	<b>\$3,027,842</b>



**2020**

*A legacy of a  
love for literacy.*



**BARBARA BUSH**  
HOUSTON LITERACY FOUNDATION

7887 San Felipe, Suite 250

Houston, TX 77063

346-212-2310

[BushHoustonLiteracy.org](http://BushHoustonLiteracy.org)

[info@bushhoustonliteracy.org](mailto:info@bushhoustonliteracy.org)