

*Improving Lives Through the
Power of Literacy*



BARBARA BUSH
HOUSTON LITERACY FOUNDATION



2021 Performance Report

Dear Friends and Supporters,

The Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation continued to make an impact in 2021, channeling the same spirit of grit and determination, as well as a relentless focus on literacy empowerment, and as that of our namesake, Barbara Bush. We are pleased to share with you this performance report, which articulates our financial health, the investments we made in high-quality programs and services, and our progress and achievements. It also provides the transparency and confirmation you deserve that your contributions – whether time, talent, or treasure – are making a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve throughout the greater Houston community.

Last year we commissioned the development of a first of its kind, citywide strategic plan to boost adult literacy rates, called *Houston's Adult Literacy Blueprint*, in partnership with Mayor's Office for Adult Literacy. Also, we celebrated a remarkable milestone with the distribution of a home library to our 100,000th child and launch of a third Curiosity Cruiser mobile library to meet the growing educational needs of underserved children, among many other important accomplishments. Additionally, our signature fundraisers returned, including *A Celebration of Reading*, the *Power of Literacy Luncheon*, and the *Storybook Gala*, and several of our volunteer activities restarted and are beginning to regain momentum for the coming school year. More work is yet to be done, but we can and must do it!

As we look to what lies ahead to advance and propel of our vision of literacy for all, the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation remains steadfast and focused on building upon our community coalition and expanding existing or spawning new programs to empower more children and adults in our city with the transformational literacy skills they need to be successful in school, in the workplace, in their families, and in life. We are counting on your continued support to accelerate our progress and deepen our impact.

We invite you to learn more about the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation's commitment to the literacy cause in Houston through the impact detailed in this annual performance report. Together, we can assure for a brighter future and better life for everyone who calls Houston 'home' and a more vibrant and prosperous city.

Sincerely,



Maria and Neil Bush, and Julie Baker Finck, Ph.D.

Maria & Neil Bush
Co-Chairs

Julie Baker Finck, Ph.D.
President & CEO

Donor Recognition

\$500,000+



\$100,000 – 499,000

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P2 Energy
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Eric Romero

Scholastic, Inc.
Anthony Tarantino



About the Foundation

OUR VISION

It is impossible for the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation to single-handedly address the pervasive issue of low literacy rates that plagues our city. Rather, what we can do is considerably grow and build on the great work we have been pursuing for the past eight years: establishing coalitions of community partners, raising awareness and financial resources, and investing in evidenced-based literacy programs, materials, and services that yield results. To do this, we focus on five strategic imperatives that we believe will help us achieve Barbara Bush's grand vision of literacy for all.



First Lady Barbara Bush reads to a classroom for Read Across the Globe Day in 2015.

Barbara Bush had a grand vision of literacy for all.

KEY IMPERATIVES

1
imperative

Parents will be empowered to be their child's first and most important teachers.

2
imperative

Every child in Houston will have access to books of his or her choice in the home.

3
imperative

Every child in Houston will have access to an expansive network of reading volunteers.

4
imperative

Every child in Houston will have access to high-quality out-of-school time learning programs.

5
imperative

Raise awareness of and galvanize communities to address and solve the systemic crisis of adult literacy.

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 five 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. We thank you for your ongoing commitment to this bold vision and working with us to ensure success for our children, prosperity of our families, and the vitality of our city.



Foundation Board of Directors and Staff

2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Lindsey Hennigan

Program Manager

Monique Aguilar

Program & Partnerships Coordinator

Taylor Marron

Communications Coordinator

Financials

\$5.48 MILLION
IN REVENUE

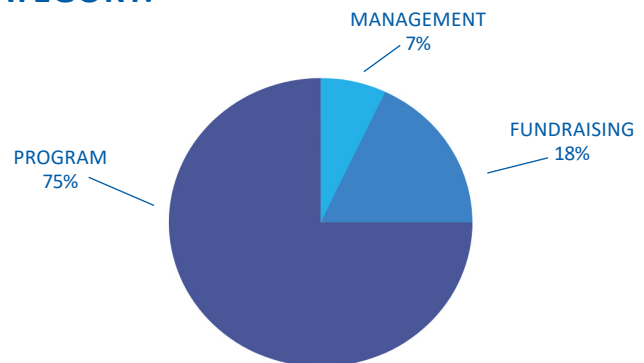
\$1.39 MILLION
GRANTS TO LITERACY ORGANIZATIONS

\$4.69 MILLION
IN EXPENSES

2021

EXPENSES BY FUNCTIONAL CATEGORY:

MANAGEMENT	\$343,415
FUNDRAISING	\$835,391
PROGRAM	\$3,514,896



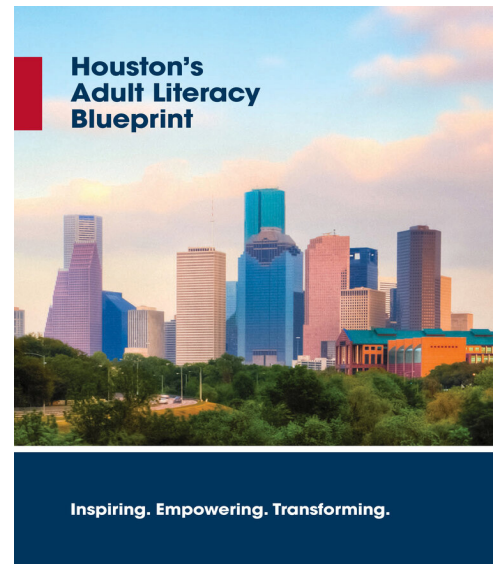
2021 Key Initiatives

Houston's Adult Literacy Blueprint

An alarming 1 in 3 Houston adults is functionally illiterate. Last year, the Foundation and the Mayor's Office for Adult Literacy commissioned and co-developed *Houston's Adult Literacy Blueprint* and a dedicated website with expertise from Deloitte Consulting LLP, insights from cross-sector leaders across our city, and an economic analysis by conducted by Gallup®. The *Blueprint* delineates a first-time strategic and coordinated plan to ensure that more adults across our city receive a second chance in life through the development of strong foundational and digital literacy skills, as well as essential workforce skills needed to thrive in our global economy and society. Specifically, the *Blueprint* outlines data and research on the pervasive low literacy rates among adults and implications on our city's economy and people; articulates goals, strategies, and tactics to combat the adult literacy challenge; and calls upon our city to unite in changing lives and the future of our city through literacy.

Literacy levels are inextricably linked to nearly every community metric including income, crime and recidivism, health, education attainment, civic engagement, generational poverty, and economic vitality. *Houston's Adult Literacy Blueprint* is a comprehensive plan to unite to address Houston's adult literacy challenge and realize this vision: All adults in Houston will have ready, equitable access to high-quality education to gain the literacy skills and knowledge they need to thrive in their families, and in our economy and society.

We invite you to visit www.HoustonAdultLiteracy.org to explore *Houston's Adult Literacy Blueprint* and learn about our city's pervasive adult literacy challenge, its impact on our community, economy and society and our plan for how we all may come together to assure for a vibrant future for our city and everyone who calls Houston "home."



Dr. Rhea Lawson, Executive Director of Houston Public Library, Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, Dr. Julie Baker Finck, President and CEO of the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation, and Federico Salas-Isnardi, Director of Mayor's Office for Adult Literacy.

We are grateful to Phillips 66, EOG Resources and our donors for providing financial support, the nearly 100 leaders for lending thought leadership, and our partners at Deloitte Consulting LLP, the Mayor's Office for Adult Literacy, and Houston Public Library in making *Houston's Adult Literacy Blueprint* a reality.

"While literacy is a fundamental right of every Houstonian, it has not been a reality for many adults in our city. *Houston's Adult Literacy Blueprint* prioritizes literacy for adults, which is critical in strengthening our future workforce, the wellbeing of our neighborhoods, and the next generation of young learners."

- Sylvester Turner, City of Houston Mayor

2021 Key Initiatives

Family Place Libraries

Far too many children are entering kindergarten each year without the essential pre-literacy skills necessary to learn how to read, and many parents lack the knowledge and resources at home to prepare their child for success in school. One key strategy we have employed to help parents be their child's first and most important teacher and increase kindergarten readiness levels is to equip every Houston Public Library (HPL) and Harris County Public Library (HCPL) branch with a George & Barbara Bush Family Place Library by the end of 2025.

George and Barbara Bush Family Places are modeled after Family Place Libraries™, a national, evidenced-based model in which library staff receive specialized training and become equipped to expand programs specifically for toddlers and their parents. In addition, the specially designed spaces feature interactive materials, early literacy kits, games, toys, music, and multimedia resources, learning stations, and of course, books. Parents have access to workshops during which library staff model effective practices with families and learn how to use the resources to accelerate their child's early learning and development. Family Place builds on the knowledge that good health, early learning, parental involvement, and supportive communities play a critical role in a young child's growth and development.

In 2021, thanks in large part to investments from Phillips 66 and PNC Foundation's Grow Up Great® initiative, six new library branches were renovated with a George & Barbara Family Place, bringing the total number to 12 since the initiative's launch in 2018. A commitment has already been made to design an additional seven by the end of 2022, keeping us on track to meet our overarching goal.



Parent and child engage in Family Place Library.



Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner engages with children at the opening of the George and Barbara Bush Family Place Library located at McGovern-Stella Link Library.

2021 Key Initiatives

My Home Library

We believe that every child deserves to be a book owner and be empowered with access to books in the home to become confident, competent, and life-long readers. With the unprecedented number of children reading behind on grade level due the disruption to teaching and learning caused by the pandemic, equipping students with books to read, share, and love at home has been an essential strategy to getting children back on track academically and address their socio-emotional well-being.



My Home Library

In collaboration with school districts and community-based organizations, and through support from our generous donors, we provided nearly 30,000 Houston children enrolled in more than 70 schools and early childhood centers a home library of six books each through our My Home Library program. In December we celebrated the gifting of our 100,000th home library through My Home Library, an initiative we began just five years ago.

We are grateful to those who have sponsored an entire school, many on an annual basis, since the program's inception, including Presenting Sponsor Phillips 66, Air Liquide, AT&T Foundation, Crestwood, Dollar General Literacy Foundation, Elite MMA, Halliburton, Hess, LyondellBasell, Marathon Oil, Perry Homes, and Reliant, as well as our Ladies for Literacy Guild and Young Professionals Group.

“The value of access to books in the home and independent reading outside of the school day cannot be underscored, especially amidst the continuing impact of COVID-19 on our schools and the students and families we serve.”

-HISD Superintendent Millard House, II



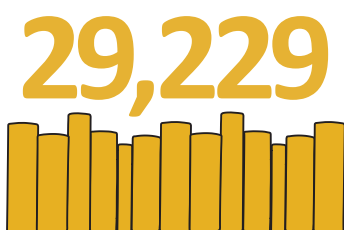
Students at Hilliard Elementary School smile proudly as they receive their My Home Library bundles.



HISD Superintendent Millard House II celebrates the 100,000th Home Library at Scarborough Elementary School.

“ We 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. Teachers are already thinking about book studies, read alouds, and other activities they can do to keep students motivated and engage them in conversations. ”

-Anabel Taylor, Hollibrook Elementary School Principal



children served through My Home Library in 2021.

In 2021, children in 71 organizations were served

56
Elementary
Schools

4
Pre-Schools

11
Special
Programs



2021 Key Initiatives

Curiosity Cruiser

The Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation’s Ladies for Literacy, in partnership with the Harris County Public Library (HCPL), have continued to expand the fleet of Curiosity Cruiser mobile libraries and the number of children served. In fact, a third Curiosity Cruiser mobile library hit the streets of Harris County in 2021 to increase accessibility of after school and summer learning opportunities through high-quality, hands-on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) with reading programs and book distributions.

Although COVID restrictions continued to limit hands-on STEAM programming, the Curiosity Cruiser initiative staff adapted to the ever-changing guidelines. In fact, more books were distributed to children in underserved communities than in prior years of the initiative. Specifically, more than 23,500 children received books and/or programming, and collectively, the fleet hosted 275 outreach events and logged 14,500 miles to serve children in neighborhoods across Harris County.

We are grateful for an anonymous donor for funding the build of a third Curiosity Cruiser and to Citgo, Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo®, PwC, and Reliant, as well as supporters of the Ladies for Literacy Guild’s Power of Literacy Luncheon for providing financial support to fill the Cruiser fleet with books, technology, and STEAM educational resources. Furthermore, thanks to a generous grant awarded in December 2021 by Houston-based energy company, Oxy, a fourth Curiosity Cruiser is set to join the fleet in 2022.



Ladies for Literacy Guild leaders Trish Morille, Stephanie Tsuru, Ginger Blanton, Betty Hrcir, and Lisa Japel celebrate the arrival of the third Curiosity Cruiser to the fleet with mascots Owbotron and Northtale.



“ In the last year, the Curiosity Cruiser has captured the interest and enthusiasm of children in reading and STEM activities at more than 270 sites throughout Harris County. This partnership with the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation and the Ladies for Literacy Guild has had an invaluable impact on children that cannot be underestimated. With this investment in children, we are developing a community of readers and lifelong learners through exciting and engaging programs that will have a tremendous positive impact on the future of Harris County. ”

-Edward Melton, Director of the Harris County Public Library

2021 IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS



23,572

Children Served

14,683

Miles Traveled

24,278

Books Distributed



2021 Key Initiatives



Ladies for Literacy Guild member Gina Saour reads to children at Clemente Martinez Elementary School as a part of Reading Roundup.

Reading Roundup

Reading Roundup is a classroom-based read aloud program made possible through the generosity of Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo® that equips volunteers to be superstar guest readers in dozens of elementary schools around the city. Through the program, volunteers have access to 50 specially- curated picture books with accompanying lesson guides to build higher-order thinking skills, increase comprehension levels, and boost vocabulary. The program also provides children with another caring role model in their lives. In 2021 we focused on equipping every one of the remaining 200 elementary schools in Houston and Spring Branch Independent School Districts with Reading Roundup kits so that they were prepared to implement the program when their doors reopened to volunteers.

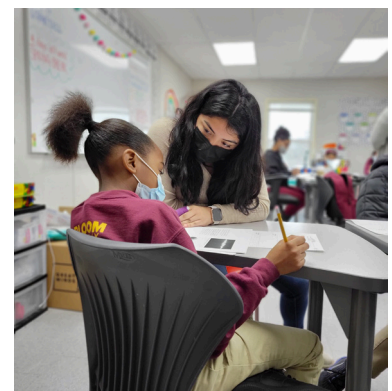
Third Ward Schools Initiative

The UH Third Ward Schools Initiative (TWSI) is a signature program of The University of Houston Advancing Community Engagement and Service Institute (ACES Institute) which is focused on school improvement efforts in Greater Third Ward. The Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation has been a partner and funder of TWSI since its inception, providing program funding to support over 40 UH Cougar Literacy Tutors, program operations, instructional materials, and program evaluation at Blackshear, Foster, Hartsfield, and Thompson Elementary Schools each year. During the 2020-2021 year, UH Cougar Literacy Tutors provided more than 13,000 hours of literacy and academic evidence-based intervention level tutoring to students in kindergarten through 2nd grade who were reading below grade level and/or were at risk of not meeting grade level standards.

Cougar literacy tutors worked with the classroom teachers on individual student learning plans, conducted targeted interventions in small group sessions, collected formative assessment data and worked alongside the classroom teacher to develop continuous improvement plans. The UH Tutors were provided on-going professional development in interventions, instruction, progress monitoring and data collection support and resource management. COVID-19 had a significant impact on program implementation during the start of 2021. However, in partnership with the HISD and the partner schools, the program was adapted to a virtual model with UH Tutors engaging students virtually through Microsoft Teams. All tutors returned to in-person tutoring at the start of summer school and for the Fall 2021 semester.

Despite the disruptions to both delivery of services and data collection methods, results that were obtained showed strong impacts as follows:

- Based on Reading Running Records, the average growth across three of the four campuses was 2.38, meaning that students increased their reading levels on average by over two levels throughout the school year. One school had insufficient student data for analysis. The Running Record employs a read aloud and observation assessment system to determine the level of student literacy strategies and to address student mistakes.
- In grades 1-2 during the 2020-21 school year, the overall average growth in reading levels was 3.41 levels. Among 1st graders working with UH tutors, the average growth was 3.05 levels, and among 2nd graders working with our tutors, the average growth was 3.45 levels.



A UH Cougar Literacy Tutor works with a third grade student at Bloom Academy Charter School.

2021 Key Initiatives

Camp Adventure!

Each year we have partnered with Children’s Museum Houston and HISD to provide Camp Adventure!, a robust summer learning program aimed at mitigating learning loss and providing enrichment activities that focus specifically on teaching children concepts in which they have struggled to learn during the school year. In 2021 we integrated Camp Adventure! into HISD’s traditional summer school session, providing the closing two-hours of programming each day at Atherton Elementary in Fifth Ward and Blackshear Elementary in Third Ward for the more than 300 children in attendance.

STEM educators from Children’s Museum Houston facilitated Camp Adventure! activities virtually using Microsoft Teams with classroom teachers leading the story time and activities onsite with their students. The K-2nd curriculum featured Force and Motion, Astronomy, Adaptations, and Architecture. The 3rd-5th curriculum featured Adaptations, Geology, Chemistry, and Electricity. Camp included hands-on learning activities like DIY lava lamps, crafting solar system flipbooks, making conductive dough, and balloon rockets, and creating journals. Students also received craft time activity kits to extend learning at home, along with back packs filled with books, healthy snacks, and school supplies.

Based on evaluation data, students’ participation had a positive effect on their attitudes toward reading and teachers valued the enthusiasm of students and the chance for them to do things they might otherwise not be able to do. Camp Adventure! was funded in partnership with HISD, Phillips 66, Moody Foundation, Houston Astros Foundation, CenterPoint, Marathon Oil, Reliant, KPMG, Crestwood, Chase, Target, and our Young Professionals Group.



Students from Atherton and Blackshear Elementary Schools participate in hands on Camp Adventure! activities including connecting circuitry, creating slime, and structure building.

“Our students light up when it’s time to explore! They are so deserving of the best opportunities academically, and Camp Adventure! continues to provide the amazing support that energizes our students and teachers alike.”

- Alynthia Curtis, Principal, Atherton Elementary

Auxiliary Groups

Ladies for Literacy

Our Ladies for Literacy Guild is comprised of nearly 400 dynamic women who, in the spirit of service, Rally members and supporters to advance the literacy cause; Enrich lives through literacy programs; Advocate for the importance of literacy; and Devote time, talent and treasure to ensure the success of the Foundation’s mission.

In 2021 many of the volunteer opportunities were suspended due to the coronavirus as restrictions enforced at schools and community organizations prevented volunteer engagement. However, this did not prevent this persistent, passionate, and creative group from making an impact. In fact, the Ladies for Literacy Guild provided support to families through Houston Children’s Charity who were impacted by the winter freeze. Also, members of the Ladies for Literacy Guild funded the creation of and designed a Barbara Bush Children’s Library at the Mabee WholeLife® Service Center – The Women’s Home to enhance educational programming and equip children with books to read, enjoy and share.

In addition, the Ladies for Literacy Guild adopted Clemente Martinez, Young and Issacs Elementary Schools in HISD, providing every student with a home library through the Foundation’s My Home Library program, along with special visits from the Curiosity Cruiser mobile library. Guild members also visited the school regularly to conduct classroom read alouds as part of the Foundation’s Reading Roundup initiative.



Ladies for Literacy Guild members along with representatives from The Women’s Home dedicate the new Family Place Library at the Mabee WholeLife® Service Center.

2021 Power of Literacy Luncheon raised nearly \$430,000.00



Moderator Dominique Sachse and Featured Speaker Kathie Lee Gifford end their fabulous luncheon discussion with confetti and free books for attendees.

Power of Literacy Luncheon

Hosted by the Foundation’s Ladies for Literacy Guild, the sixth annual Power of Literacy Luncheon gathered nearly 500 guests for the autumnal event held at The Post Oak Hotel, aptly themed “Fall in Love with Reading.” KPRC 2’s Dominique Sachse masterfully moderated a conversation with Emmy Award-winning former co-cost of the TODAY Show and author Kathie Lee Gifford who delighted and inspired guests with personal stories about her illustrious, 45-year career in the entertainment industry, as well her reflections on family and faith. Co-chaired by Leisa Holland-Nelson Bowman and Stephanie Tsuru, the luncheon raised nearly \$430,000 for the Guild’s literacy priorities, including the Curiosity Cruiser mobile library initiative. Phillips 66 served as the event’s Title Sponsor.



The 2021 Power of Literacy Luncheon co-chairs Leisa Holland Bowman and Stephanie Tsuru.



Auxiliary Groups



YPG Chair Grace Gosnell prepares backpacks for students at the annual Tacky Sweater Party benefitting area schools.

Young Professionals Group

The Young Professionals Group (YPG) is a purpose-driven organization of over 100 individuals that is developing new ways of leading literacy through service and dedication in Houston. The YPG has provided financial support for several initiatives including My Home Library at Jefferson Elementary, supplies for Camp Adventure!, and backpacks filled with books and supplies for both San Francisco Nativity Academy and Small Steps Nurturing Center campuses.



The 2021 Storybook Gala co-chairs Nick & Kasey Carnrite and Joselyn Tego & Jeff Carnrite.

Storybook Gala

Nearly 400 guests were transported to "An Evening in Wonderland" at the Hotel Zaza Museum District during the 2021 Storybook Gala, the signature event of the Young Professionals Group. Co-chaired by Nick and Kasey Carnrite, Jeff Carnrite and Joselyn Tego, this "party with a purpose" raised nearly \$270,000 for the YPG's literacy initiatives, including building a library at San Francisco Nativity Academy. Phillips 66 was the bestowed the Childhood Literacy Impact Award and The Carnrite Group served as Title Sponsor of the Gala.

2021 Storybook Gala raised nearly \$270,000.00



Service co-chair Victoria Villarreal and YPG member Michael Perkins celebrate a new Book Box at Gabriela Mistral Center for Early Childhood with some special guests ready to read.

Barbara's Book Boxes

Barbara's Book Boxes is a signature initiative of the YPG with a goal of installing Little Free Libraries® in high-need neighborhoods, community-based organizations, and parks across Harris County to enable children to "take a book, leave a book" for boosting reading at home.



Guests enjoying "An Evening in Wonderland" at the Hotel ZaZa Museum District.

Special Events

A Celebration of Reading

Heralded as one of Houston's premier charity events, *A Celebration of Reading 2021* returned at The Post Oak Hotel before a limited audience of more than 300 guests, yet reached an additional 18,000 households through livestream and a partnership with KPRC 2, who generously broadcasted a one-hour, commercial-free program two weeks after the live event. The stellar program featured best-selling authors President George W. Bush, Elin Hildebrand, Mark Sullivan, husband-wife duo Susan Glasser and Peter Baker, and a virtual appearance from Matthew McConaughey.

Thanks to Title Sponsor Phillips 66, Presenting Sponsors Quanex Foundation and the Honorable Hushang & Shahla Ansary, along with many other generous sponsors and donors, more than \$1.9 million was raised to advance local literacy efforts of the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation, as well as nationally through the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy.



2021
27TH ANNUAL EVENT
.....
RAISED
\$1.9 MILLION

Top left: Houston-area natives and finalists on Season 19 of NBC's *The Voice*, John Holiday and Desz, perform together for the signature annual event.

Top right: Moderator Dominique Sachse sat down with President George W. Bush to discuss his latest book along with Bush Family memories.

Bottom left: Neil & Maria Bush welcome supporters with opening remarks on Barbara Bush's literacy legacy.

Bottom right: The 2021 *A Celebration of Reading* Author lineup included: Peter Baker, Susan B. Glasser, Elin Hilderbrand, and Mark Sullivan.



Special Events

Barbara Bush Literacy Plaza Dedication & Ribbon Cutting

Mayor Turner, the Houston Public Library, and Houston Public Library Foundation, the Bush family and the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation held a grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony for the Barbara Bush Literacy Plaza at the Houston Public Library-Central in September. We are proud to support the development of the Plaza and grateful to Mayor Turner, Houston City Council Members, City of Houston staff and Plaza donors for making the Barbara Bush Literacy Plaza a vibrant space for visitors to have fun, learn, and be inspired.



“On behalf of the entire Bush family, we are deeply grateful to Mayor Turner and the City Council members for honoring Mom in this most special way. It is our desire that the Barbara Bush Literacy Plaza not only serve to pay tribute to her incredible life and legacy, but also that it will foster a love of reading in children and families and encourage others to help someone else receive the life-changing gift of learning how to read.”

-NEIL BUSH



“ *If you help a person to read, then their opportunities in life will be endless.* ”

-FIRST LADY BARBARA BUSH



BARBARA BUSH
HOUSTON LITERACY FOUNDATION

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