



# ANNUAL REPORT 2021 – 2022





**Mission**  
 Adding to quality of life by creating a learning environment and experiences that foster personal growth and development.

**Vision**  
 Where you engage in amazing experiences and opportunities to learn, explore and create the best you.

**Values**  
 Promote learning to improve the lives of those in the Community. Empower and foster creativity and collaboration. Deliver outstanding service to external and internal customers. Demonstrate respect, integrity and excellence.

Zora Neale Hurston scholar, Rae Chesny, reads from her book *Zora's Garden* at Eatonville Branch

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# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



To say that 2021-2022 was a period of great transition for Orange County Library System would be a tremendous understatement. In late 2021, we were just beginning to heal from the damage COVID inflicted on our community and preparing ourselves for a return to in-person programs and increased foot traffic at all locations.

We were also preparing for the retirement of longtime Library Director/CEO Mary Anne Hodel, who led our library system for 20 years. We knew it was going to take a pretty impressive person to fill her shoes.

When Mary Anne left in January 2022, the Board of Trustees embarked on a nationwide search to find her successor. But we learned after multiple interviews with candidates that the right person was in our midst.

In August 2022, we officially hired Interim Library Director and Chief Operating Officer Steve Powell to become our permanent Library Director/CEO. During the time he served as interim, he proved to us that he was dedicated to being a forward-thinking leader and a changemaker, which is something our community needs if we're going to keep up with all of the growth and development around us.

Before Steve even had the job, he was hard at work making improvements to what we do and how we do it. From eliminating barriers to service, to planning for the library's 100 Year Celebration, to working with staff to form a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Committee, he has already made changes that are going to have a big impact on how we serve people for years to come.

As you read through this Annual Report, I hope you'll join me not only in celebrating our past accomplishments, but also in looking forward to a future full of exciting developments. From the reintroduction of bookmobiles to the county, thanks to a partnership with Sorosis of Orlando Woman's Club, to the plans for bringing two new libraries to the communities of Horizon West and Lake Nona, big things are on the horizon for OCLS.

Sincerely,

**Crockett Bohannon**  
*President*  
*Board of Trustees*  
*Orange County Library System*

# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

When I joined Orange County Library System in 2007, I didn't envision myself at the head of the organization, leading it not only into its 100th year, but also into its next century of service.

Over the time I've worked for this library system, I've served in several roles – first as service manager, later as the head of the Facilities and Operations Department, and eventually, as Chief Operating Officer and Interim Director. These are all very different jobs that have given me insight into how the library operates. In every position I've held here, though, one thing has always been absolutely clear to me – we need the community as much as the community needs us.

You rely on us to provide the best a library can offer – not just books, but also activities and events, a website full of tools for learning and research, access to social workers and so much more. We rely on you to come in our doors, check out our books, take advantage of our online offerings and give us feedback about how we're doing, so we can remain vital and relevant. So, as Library Director/CEO, I'm making it my mission to keep you, our customer, at the heart of everything we do.

Since I've been in this role, I've made it a point to take a hard look at how we operate and find opportunities to better serve our customers and deliver services that make a difference in the community. We've made some changes already, some of which you can read about in the following pages, but we

have more on the way – in late 2022, which is outside the scope of this Annual Report, we joined a whole host of other large library systems in eliminating fines for overdue materials. Fines, the data has told us, hurt libraries more than they help them and create barriers to service that keep people away. Remember what I said about us needing you as much as you need us?

We're also looking at bringing back mobile library services, via book bicycles, a bookmobile and a new focus on community engagement. We've signed leases for two new libraries – one in Horizon West and one in Lake Nona – that will give two of the fastest-growing areas of our county the in-person library experience they've been requesting for years.

Like I said, there was a point in my career when I wouldn't have envisioned myself in this position. But now, I really can't imagine myself anywhere else.

Sincerely,

**Steve Powell**  
*Library Director/CEO*  
*Orange County Library System*







## GETTING TO KNOW OUR NEW LIBRARY DIRECTOR/CEO

On August 26, after eight months of searching, Interim Director/CEO and Chief Operating Officer Steve Powell was selected as the new Library Director/CEO of Orange County Library System.

Steve has been with Orange County Library System since 2007, when he was hired to take the role of Service Manager. He was promoted to Facilities and Operations Department Head in 2011, and in 2018, he was named the library's Chief Operating Officer. He was appointed to the role of Interim Director/CEO in January 2022, upon the retirement of longtime Library Director/CEO Mary Anne Hodel.

Steve was selected from among three finalists for the position, all of whom had impressive backgrounds in library service.

“What made Steve stand apart from the other candidates was the institutional knowledge he brings to the role, and the initiative he has taken over during his time as Interim Director,” said Crockett Bohannon, President of the library's Board of Trustees. “He worked hard to not just keep things running smoothly at the library, but to keep things moving forward while waiting for a new director to be selected. Steve's commitment to Orange County Library System and his fresh approach to how we serve our community is inspiring.”

During 2022, Steve was responsible for finalizing leases for new branches in both the Lake Nona and Horizon West communities; making changes that allow farmworkers and kids living in foster homes to have access to library services; and extending automatic renewals for library materials. He also introduced a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Committee to help the library cultivate an environment in which everyone in the community and on staff feels like they belong.

Once he was named Library Director/CEO, he extended the effort to make the library more accessible by working with the Board of Trustees to eliminate overdue fines, a move that allows Orange County Library

System to join major library systems across the state and nation in acknowledging that overdue fines are costly to recoup, reduce library usage and hurt the people who need libraries most.

Looking ahead, Steve says, library users can expect to see a focus on accessibility – both inside and outside the library's walls. For example, the library now lends Wi-Fi hotspots to cardholders, making it possible for more people to access digital library materials, as well as anything else they might need online. The library is also bringing programming out into the community, so people who can't make it to a physical library location can still take advantage of what the library has to offer.

Steve says a strong library is “in the hearts and minds of the community.” He wants to see Orange County Library System improve the lives of people who live here by offering education, cultural, recreational and informational services that create a stronger Orange County.

“Public libraries are a welcoming and safe space for everyone to enter and explore the endless world of information online, and in digital and physical forms,” he says. “A public library card, on its own, opens doors to literacy and learning that other cards in your pocket cannot. And it's free.”

# BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

If Orange County Library System had a theme for 2022, it was breaking down barriers to service.

In February 2022, Orange County Mayor Jerry Demings' office asked the library to connect with the Farmworkers Association of Florida and RCMA Zellwood Child Development Center, organizations that provide services to migrant workers in northwest Orange County. One of the problems that population faced is that they are not full-time residents of the county, and signing up for a library card required them to show ID with proof of local residency. To solve this problem, we began to accept Farmworkers Association of Florida membership cards for library card registration purposes, opening up a multitude of library services to this community.

Since then, staff from the North Orange Branch visit the Farmworkers Association regularly to share information about the library, promote card registration and offer storytimes for families.

Other ways the library has broken down barriers during this fiscal year?

In May, we instated automatic renewals on physical items, including borrowed books and movies, to reduce the likelihood that people would rack up overdue fines they couldn't afford. The move was met with overwhelming support on social media. "I love our library!" one Facebook user wrote to us. "Thanks for thinking of all the overworked, busy people out there!"

In June, we introduced a new group home card for minors who live in shelters or group foster homes. Previously, kids in foster care faced challenges in accessing library resources because they might not have a designated parent/guardian who could take responsibility for their library account. Great Oaks Village foster home was the first recipient of a group home card, and on June 2, representatives and residents visited Orlando Public Library for a tour.

Great Oaks Village Education Residential Services Supervisor Chasmin Hill says that she's hopeful the library's many resources will help kids develop their research skills, providing them with "motivation to believe that they can succeed."



Great Oaks Village Foster Home staff Chasmin Hill and Toccara Williams show off their library card.



# THE RETURN OF PRIME TIME FAMILY READING

As Orange County Library System emerged from the pandemic, customers and staff were excited to see a return to in-person programming. One program, in particular, held a special place in the hearts of families.

In 2022, after a two-year hiatus, we relaunched Prime Time Family Reading, a six-week family reading and discussion program featuring three series – one virtual session in winter and two in-person in the summer and fall – and parents couldn't be happier. Since its relaunch, the program has reached 29 families and served 359 attendees. For

customers Sheena and John Allen, participating in Prime Time at the Alafaya Branch with their young daughters Olivia and Grace has helped their household slow down and reengage with reading together, alongside other families. "Children need things outside of school that encourage literacy and encourage reading, but in a way that's fun," Sheena Allen says.

The program uses award-winning children's books to spark thought and conversation among children and families. The program's goals are to increase family bonding and reading time, provide a space

for families to practice critical thinking skills, build a stronger connection to the community and encourage library use. With underwriting assistance from The Friends of the Orange County Library System, program attendees were able to enjoy a meal together as part of each session.

"You also get to make friends and get to learn from other children," Sheena Allen tells us. "And the children get to hear their parents speak as well."

Prime Time offers the opportunity to hear different perspectives and bounce ideas off one another. "For a community to give this to children for free, beyond the school year, is great. It keeps them engaged during the summer," she says.

Young Grace Allen's big take away from the Prime Time program? "I think everybody left with a feeling of 'I'm important, I have some value to myself.'"

Inspired by the program, Grace even wrote and gifted the Alafaya library staff with a book she wrote titled "*The Fossil Hunters and the Unknown Underground Party.*"

Families and caregivers truly see the value in the program. "I don't think libraries are appreciated enough," Sheena says. "Programs like these play a vital role in the community and should really be celebrated and supported."



Storyteller, Crystal Sullivan, reads *Joseph Had a Little Overcoat* for the Prime Time attendees at Alafaya Branch.



The Allen family listens to the story being read before engaging in discussion.



# SYSTEMWIDE STATISTICS

**3,371,262**

Items circulated

**2,615,228**

Items downloaded

**435,660**

Items delivered to doorsteps through Books by MAYL

**46,225**

New library card registrations

**340,160**

Number of active library cards

**16,728**

Melrose Center members

**2,587**

People who received assistance from the library's social worker

**10,948**

Library events held

**311,772**

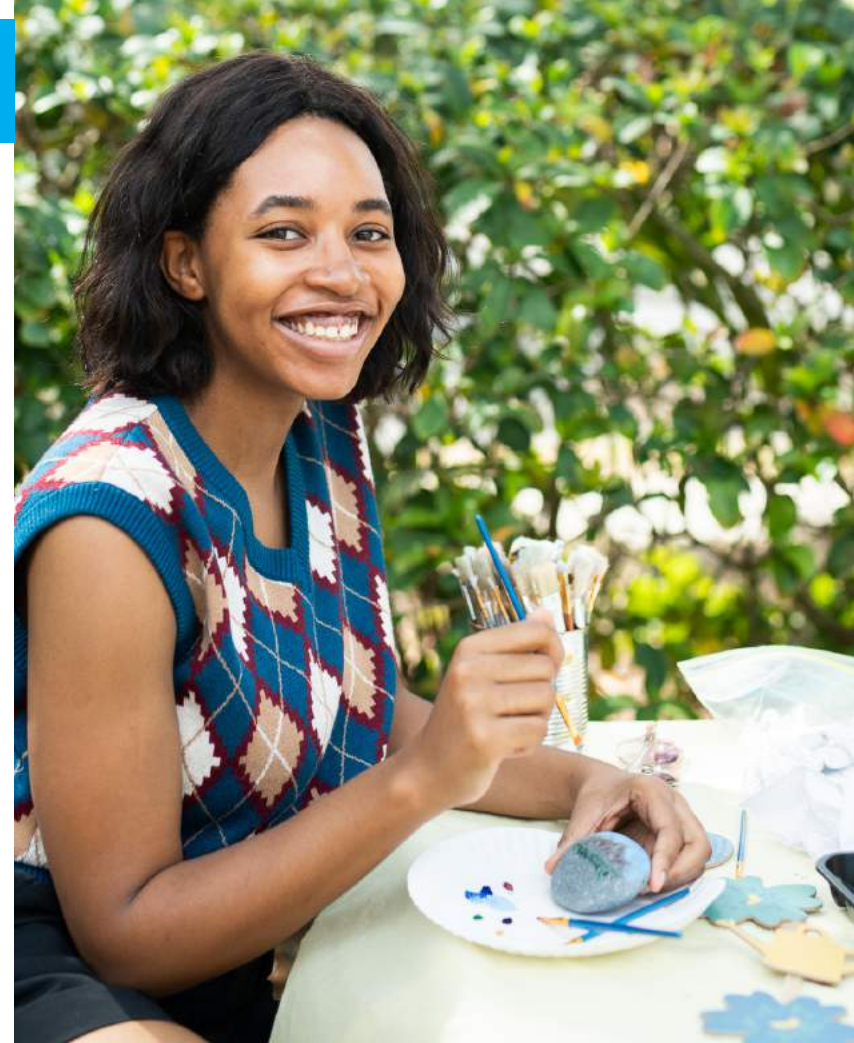
Attendance at library events

**10,005**

Technology classes offered

**27,119**

Attendance at technology classes



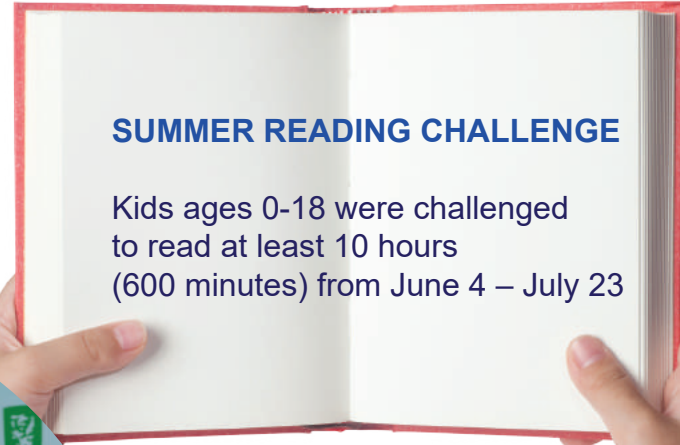


# SUMMER READING PROGRAM 2022



**10,840**

Meals distributed through Orange County Public Schools Mobile Lunch Program during Summer Reading Program



## SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

Kids ages 0-18 were challenged to read at least 10 hours (600 minutes) from June 4 – July 23

In 2022, the Summer Reading Program returned to the library in-person. Readers of all ages participated in the Summer Reading Challenge and over **26,000** youth attended fun, educational events.



**3,235**

Youth actively participated

**2,514**

Youth who completed the challenge



**2,173,362**

Minutes read during Summer 2022

# LOCAL WANDERER



Audubon Center for Birds of Prey

1,392  
Reservations made



\$76,654.22  
Total dollar value  
of tickets distributed

5,204  
Total admissions to  
local attractions

10  
Partner organizations

## LOCAL WANDERER PARTNERS

- Art & History Museums Maitland
- Audubon Center for Birds of Prey
- Central Florida Community Arts
- Central Florida Zoo & Botanical Gardens
- Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts
- Mennello Museum of American Art
- Orange County Regional History Center
- Orlando Museum of Art
- Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra
- Orlando Science Center



TOP ZIP CODES SERVED  
32828, 34787, 32806, 32812, 32825

In November 2021, Orange County Library System received federal funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to support the expansion of the Local Wanderer program, which provides library cardholders free admission to the theatre, museums, concerts and other cultural and educational institutions. The \$50,000 grant allowed OCLS to increase the number of offerings available, directly addressing a lack of accessibility to arts and cultural venues.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's libraries and museums and prides itself on advancing, supporting, and empowering America's museums, libraries, and related organizations through grantmaking, research, and policy development.

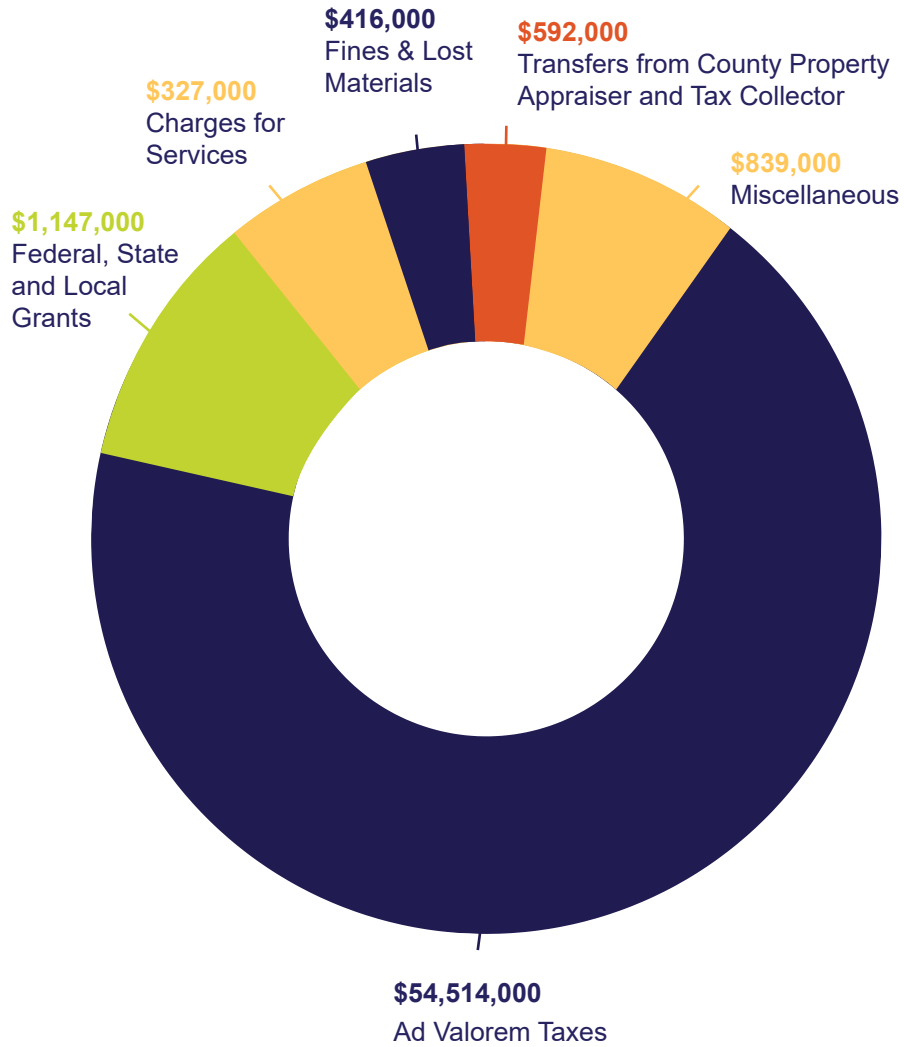


# REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES

## REVENUE

**\$57,835,000**

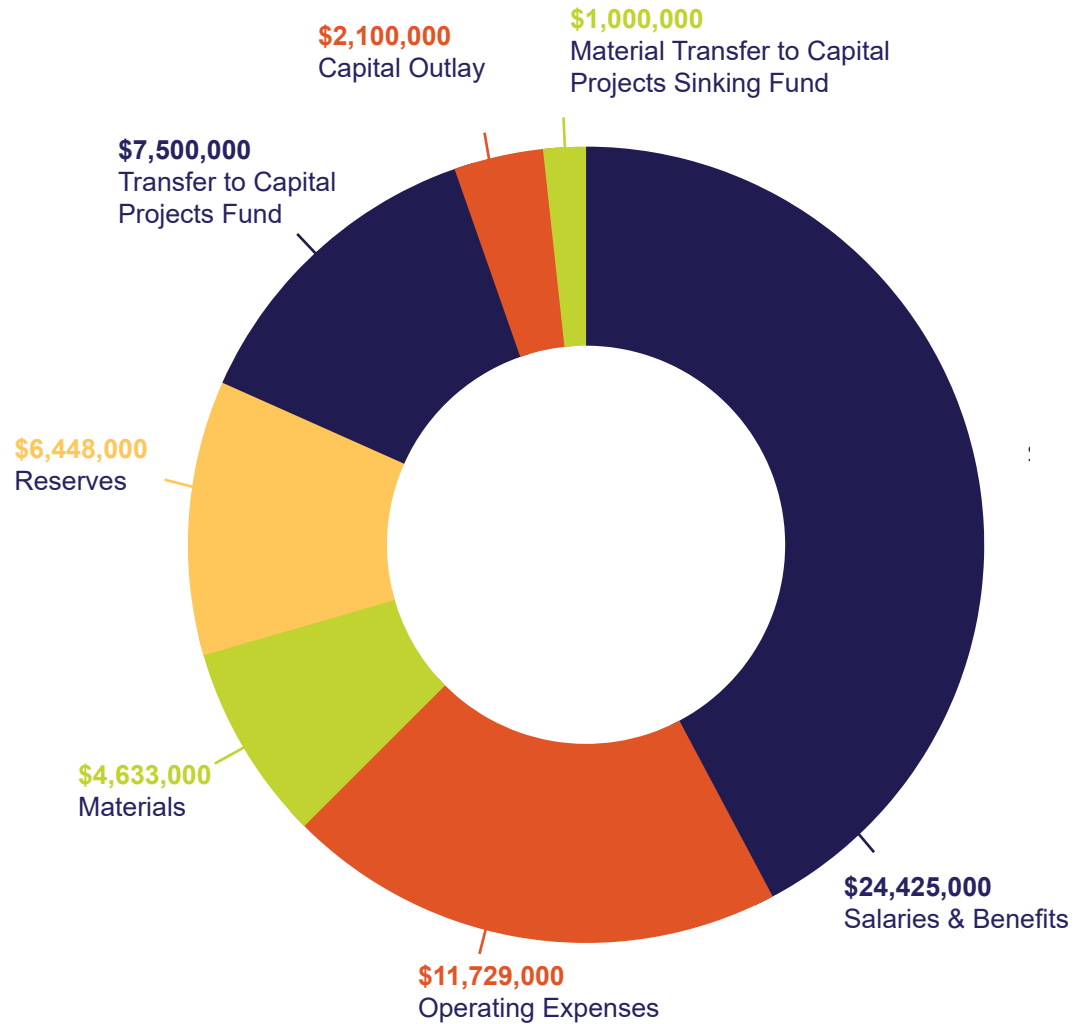
Total Revenue



## EXPENDITURES

**\$57,835,000**

Total Expenditures



# CUSTOMER COMMENTS



“I wanted to say to the staff and librarians at the Orlando Public Library that I really appreciate them helping me out with the internet and learning how to use computers. I am grateful for the patience of the staff at the best public library I have ever seen.”



“My wife and I appreciate all your services, especially home delivery. My wife has some medical issues and limitations. Your services are extremely helpful to her, and she enjoys reading.”



“Thank you for letting me research in your vast Disney collection. The materials I found were integral to my PhD dissertation. It is a collection that contains material useful for enthusiasts and academics.”



# IN-KIND DONORS

Aloma Bowl

Andretti Indoor Karting & Games

Benihana

Caribe Royale

Central Florida Zoo and Botanical Gardens

Cheddar's Scratch Kitchen

Chick-fil-A

Community Health Centers

Congo River Golf

Costco

Crayola Experience

Culver's

Curry's LLC

Disney World

Ethos Vegan Kitchen

Foxtail Coffee

Fun Spot America

GameTime Ocoee

Garden Theatre

Goldfish Swim School

Healthy West Orange

Ivanhoe Park Brewing Company

Kennedy Space Center

Kings Dining & Entertainment

Lazy Moon Pizza

Legoland

Harry P. Leu Gardens

Little Caesars

Lukas Nursery & Butterfly Encounter

Madame Tussauds Orlando & SEA LIFE Aquarium

Main Event

My Central Florida Family

Olive Garden

Orlando City Soccer Club

Orlando Shakes

Panda Express

Pirate's Cove Adventure Golf

Planet Obstacle

Portillo's

Premier Pools of Central Florida

Publix

Rainforest Café

Ripley's Believe It or Not

Starbucks

Sun Insurance Services

Sweet by Holly

Target (Corporate)

Texas Roadhouse

Town of Windermere

Walt Disney World Corporate Citizenship

Wawa

WonderWorks

# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

## **\$50,000-\$100,000**

Friends of the Orange County Library System

Window World of Central Florida

## **\$1,000-\$2,000**

Premier Pools of Central Florida

Allison M. Barksdale

Mark Ackerman

## **\$125-\$500**

Allison M. Barksdale

Kristen Batson

Leah Bayer

Michael Cheatham

Youndy Cook

Church Street District Inc

Gayle Falvey

Clayton Hemphill

Mary L. Higginbotham

Paul Johnson

Susan Coates Kroll

Mike Lambert

Shelia & Carl Musante

Kim Roth

Michael Scheible

Sun Insurance Services INC

Laina Shockley

Haley M. Thomas

## **\$1-\$100**

E. Charlene Abney

Mildred L. Alkire

Susan Ashcraft

Betty Astro

Laird Atkins

Mihaela Balbuena

Sandra E. Bauerschmidt

Lauren Beltz

Patricia Bernardini

Karen Boney

Jenny Boniface

Marie Brandt

Carol J. Calvit

Carolyn Capern

Merrily Carlson

Leslie J. Caster

Milla Chatman

Jack Ciarletto

Nicole Congelossi

Thomas Cooper

Daughters of the American Revolution

Natalie DeSantis

Pushpa Vishandas Devnani

James Dylewski

Shelly Falconer

Theresa Fallon

Ira Fleckman

Lois Gassmann

John Gittings

Halapatiokee Chapter NSDAR

Jamie Hewitt

Jacqueline Heydenrych

Lynell Hodge

Marianne Horton

Sara H. Howard

Kenneth Ingraham

Barbara J. Jarvis

Janice H. Jones

Kristen King

Sarah Kirk

Susan Lambertus

Michael Lyons

Joseph & Ginny Marshall

Rachel Martin

Richard & Kathleen Mauser

Susan Nicholas

Jeff Nolan

Gail Oberly

Laura Odriscoll

Sanam Rai

Doreen Ratigan

Alice Reinhardt

Anna Reinhardt

Meredith Renard

Kurt Scherer

His-Ping Shao

Ann Shea

Joan P. Stanton

Arthur S. Susser

Rev. Liv Trust

Lesli Tauber

Deborah Travis

Jean M. Webber

Anne Wintsch-Reis

Roger Wolf



# THANK YOU FOR A GREAT YEAR





