

# A Year of Transition for the Library and the Foundation



ANNUAL REPORT: JULY 1, 2023 – JUNE 30, 2024

## Fighting Book Bans...Celebrating Local Heroes...And Adding To Our Library's Important Resources

2024 marks a year of new leadership, as we bid farewell to Tom Geoffino, the Library's Director for the last 18 years and our partner in making essential changes happen at our Library. Under Tom's leadership, the NRPL secured over 2 million dollars in competitive state grants, making possible major improvements and upgrades to the main branch as well as the Huguenot Children's Library. Matched by Foundation dollars, improvements included extensive renovations to the Ossie Davis Theater; a totally refurbished Main Library lobby and entryway, with augmented security and self-check-out equipment; extensively renovated second and third floors, including a new state-of-the-art Teen Room, expanded study rooms, laptop bars, and much more. The Huguenot Children's Library program spaces were fully renovated, and substantial infrastructure improvements have made this community gem safer and a more functional and welcoming environment.

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Honoree Nancy Paulsen with son Sam and husband David Friend.



Author Jaqueline Woodson with Foundation officers Lynn Green and Chris Selin.



Emma Straub (far right) with Gala guests.



Honorees Donna and Bob Young (center) with family.

On the Foundation side, we also welcome new leadership, with new Co-Presidents Stephanie Tomei and Rod Rolett helping the Foundation's operations and charting a future course to raise vital resources. We celebrated Chris Selin's extraordinary dedication over the last nine years at our May Guardian Gala, and while we are sad to see her step down as President, we are delighted that she will continue to play a key role on our Foundation Board.

The Guardian Gala in May not only raised funding essential in meeting the community match required to secure state grants (funding ongoing improvements to our Library's facilities)...

but importantly also focused attention on a critical national issue: the growing trend of book banning in schools and libraries across our country. Three valiant crusaders in this fight were honored: Publisher Nancy Paulsen of Penguin Putnam Random House; Award-winning children's book author Jacqueline Woodson; and author/bookstore owner Emma Straub. In addition, the Foundation honored Bob and Donna Young and the Young Companies, philanthropists dedicated to providing opportunities for the children of New Rochelle and longtime supporters of the Huguenot Children's Library.



**Without you, our donors, the NRPL would be a very different place. Tax dollars are limited and fund only the very basics: staff, utilities, the purchase of books etc. Your donated dollars make the critical difference between a barebones operation and a community treasure we can all take pride in.** A community resource that offers rich programming for our residents...one that levels the playing field with state-of-the-arts computer equipment, free access to area museums and employment counseling....and a library that welcomes everyone in our diverse community and opens the door to opportunity.

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- Susan Nagib, *Creative Consultant*



**NRPLFoundation.org**  
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## The Foundation Granted \$150,000 to the NRPL This Year

### Here are a some of the initiatives funded:

- ✓ The Noise Abatement Project to reduce the noise level throughout every floor of the New Rochelle Public Library. The installation of sound absorbing panels in the lobby atrium spaces and teen room will significantly reduce noise reverberation in the building.
- ✓ New Signage and Wayfinding
- ✓ STEAM Teen programming
- ✓ Teen Room Video Equipment
- ✓ New Computers and Equipment for the Bliss Music Center
- ✓ The Family Museum Pass Program
- ✓ New Computers for the Children's Room
- ✓ Enhanced technology providing reliable and efficient storage solutions that help streamline data management, improve workflow efficiency, and enhance data security.
- ✓ Improved security through a Surveillance Camera System Upgrade
- ✓ Talking Signage to assist individuals with visual disabilities.
- ✓ Creation of a Tween Services Area enhancing offerings for upper elementary school-aged children, otherwise known as "tweens."
- ✓ Improvements to the Huguenot Children's Library facility including a 2 new restrooms and funding for enhanced programs
- ✓ Library Communications Outreach including a greatly improved Website

## Thank you to all who donated this past fiscal year, July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024

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