

BOOKS ARE WINGS



ANNUAL REPORT



2022



BOOKS
ARE
WINGS



OUR MISSION:

Putting free books in the hands of children.

OUR VISION:

We believe the power of literacy transforms the lives of children, their families and communities for the better.

Books Are Wings (BAW) seeks to provide every child with regular access to books. BAW works to engage students in their classrooms, at school functions, community events, and playgrounds. We believe that offering books to children in different environments instills a consistent message that reading is not just school work - it's a way of life!

BOARD OFFICERS FY 2022:

- **Chair, John Geysen**, Product Marketing Manager for HMI Performance Incentives
- **Vice-Chair, Nancy Serpa**, IT Program Manager, M&A Integrations, Sensata Technologies (*Incoming Board Chair)
- **Treasurer, Amy Gerhard**, Communications and Marketing Professional

BOARD MEMBERS

- **Carlene Fonseca**, Associate Director of Feinstein School of Public Service at Providence College
- **Dora Garcia**, Sr. Business Manager, Cox Communications (*Incoming Vice Chair)
- **Jill Glickman**, Consultant, Project Manager, Outreach and Community Engagement
- **Mary Halpin**, SVP Human Resources, Centreville Bank
- **Jessica Krywosa**, Vice President, Digital Strategy, Bristol County Savings Bank
- **Linda Lulli**, HR Consultant and Leadership Coach
- **Pamela Vogel**, Past Board Chair



Owing to internal transitions in leadership you will see different time periods represented in this report. All donor lists reflect the fiscal year 2022, which is July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. Reporting data from programs reflect the calendar year 2022, and you will hear from staff and leadership on the school year 2022 to 2023 to reflect staffing changes. Thank you for support as we move towards a new season of our organization.

A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As the new Director of Books Are Wings, joining in January of 2023, it has been an honor to get to know the BAW community. From our amazing staff and dedicated Board members, our enthusiastic volunteers, our tireless educational and community partners, and the wonderful children and families we serve – a love of books and the empowerment that literacy can provide has shone through. It has been incredibly moving to see how our communities have carried Books Are Wings and our mission forward for over 20 years, sharing the love of reading from one child to another through access to books and book ownership.

I brought with me to this position a love of books and reading, and a passion for equity and education. As a child, books were my best friends and tickets to faraway places and unknown experiences. As a parent, I have experienced the bond and the developmental benefits of reading with my child from an early age, and seen that grow into a zest for reading and exploring the world around us. It has been a privilege to work with people who have dedicated so much of their lives working toward a world where all children can have these opportunities.

Since I have been here, our community supported Books Are Wings with our most successful 401Gives campaign ever. Our largest book drive of the year, the Children's Book Drive with United Way and Women United, collected an unprecedented 36,248 books, sorted by 111 volunteers on the Day of Action in June -

JEN JOINED BOOKS ARE WINGS IN JANUARY 2023.

more than any other year. Companies and organizations have volunteered their time to sort books and pack them for events, repair and reinstall our Book Spots, and record read-aloud videos in multiple languages for our community of young readers. Individual volunteers have accompanied our incredible staff to dozens of programs at schools and in the community. None of this would have been possible without YOU, our Books Are Wings community.

As many of you may know, 61% of children from under-resourced households have no books at all in their homes. Books Are Wings addresses this by building the home libraries of children in Rhode Island communities. The need is great, but if we can do this one thing well, we can make a huge impact for Rhode Island's children. I have been inspired by the many ways the Books Are Wings community has come together to transform the lives of children and their families for the better through the power of literacy. I am looking forward to seeing all that we can accomplish together in the coming year!

SINCERELY,



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BOOKS ARE WINGS



A LETTER FROM OUR INCOMING BOARD CHAIR

I am incredibly honored for the opportunity to serve as Books Are Wings' incoming Board Chair after two decades of involvement with the organization. Our mission of providing free access to books for Rhode Island children is vital to a child's education, self-esteem and success in life. The latest 2023 Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Factbook shows that only 37% of Rhode Island third graders are meeting expectations for reading proficiency. These proficiency statistics are significantly lower at just 18% in the four core cities that Books Are Wings directly serves: Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence and Woonsocket*. Books Are Wings is heavily engaged in these communities, at schools, summer camps and community events to help foster a love of reading, imagination and the curiosity to learn.

My first exposure to Books Are Wings was in the early-2000s at a Veazie Street Elementary School distribution and storyteller event. It was so much fun to help a child pick out books to build their own home library. Since then, through my work with Women United, I became more involved with the United Way of RI annual book drive, organizing drives across various schools and companies, and sorting at the Day of Action. As a Sensata Technologies employee, I have helped organize volunteer events such as building Book Spots, book drives, Spanish language book read aloud videos and support at school distribution events. It has been a wonderful experience volunteering with our staff and volunteers to help fulfill our mission.

*2022 RHODE ISLAND KIDS COUNT FACTBOOK, TABLE 46

I am committed to moving the organization forward from a strategic planning, fund development and programmatic perspective. As the needs of the communities we serve evolve, Books Are Wings needs to also adjust our overall approach. We have taken great strides in building a diverse board who directly represent the communities we serve and come from a variety of professional backgrounds. To this end, we are always looking for new board and committee members to ensure we have a strong leadership pipeline in place. Please reach out if you are interested in serving.

In my new role as Board Chair, I will continue to work closely with our Executive Director, Jen, to build our infrastructure to reach more young readers across the state. Thank you for your continued, generous support and collaboration with Books Are Wings. We are grateful to all of our donors, volunteers and community partners who help bring our mission to life.

SINCERELY,



BOARD CHAIR, BOOKS ARE WINGS



THE COMMUNITY THAT CARRIES US

2022 was a year of significant change for our organization. We said goodbye to longstanding senior leadership, and began the search for a new executive director. During that process, our staff team and board was committed to ensuring continuity in our programming - getting books and high quality literacy materials to young people across the state. Our partners in schools, community centers and local leadership also played a key role in keeping students engaged and enrolled in our programs. The deep support of our community allowed us to distribute 53,114 books in calendar year 2022.

INITIATIVES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2022

Read to 100: Launched at the start of the 2021 school year, Read to 100 challenged students to read 100 books as a classroom. If they met this goal, BAW provided a celebration for students. We provided each classroom with all the materials they needed, including books, tracking posters, and prizes to celebrate young readers achievements!

Tale Mail: Our early learning program allowed children ages three to five years to receive a package that included two free books, a literacy activity, and craft materials every other month. We partnered with Early Childhood centers to meet the needs of the youngest community members in under-resourced cities and towns. Geared towards learning outside of school, this program provided families with tangible goals and activities to build a positive family literacy environment at home.

Community Events: At 106 events across Rhode Island, we distributed books to young readers at individual block parties, libraries, summer festivals, back-to-school nights and many more events. Meeting families where they already are, means more books in the hands of local children.

INITIATIVES FOR 2022 CONTINUED

Book Spots: Books Are Wings stocked designated outdoor and indoor structures with children's books all year long. These "Book Spots" were readily available for children and families to use, and contained books to take home to keep. We had 10 Book Spots in our core communities that were open in 2022. These structures and shelving units are hosted and maintained by community organizations throughout Rhode Island that serve families. Book Spots can be found in local parks, community centers and schools.

Books All Year: Books All Year provided children and families access to books throughout the school year in various environments. We worked directly with schools and districts to select our program partners, and served four core cities. We maintained three yearly book events at 30 partner schools across the state of Rhode Island.



Books Are Wings By The Numbers 2022

*Numbers reflect calendar year 2022



10 Books Spots Maintained

From parks, to schools, to community gathering places, we stocked and maintained these free-standing little free libraries with high quality books that are reflective of the communities we serve.



51 Schools Served

From Tale Mail programming at early childhood centers to Books All Year at elementary schools, we partnered with schools across RI to get books into the hands of kids.



53,114 Total Books Distributed

Through all of our programming and partnerships, we delivered thousands of books into communities across RI. Kids who might not have books at home, now have access.



89,880 Books Donated

Our community's generosity kept our programs running and our shelves stocked. Through book drives, donations through our wishlist and more, they showed up for us!



106 Community Programs

When we can meet families where they are, we remove barriers to getting books into the hands of young readers. Through school events, summer learning programs and more we ensured that books were readily available for families.

WHO WE SERVE IN

RHODE ISLAND

Books Are Wings primarily serves children and families in Rhode Island's four core cities; Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence and Woonsocket.

IN CENTRAL FALLS, WE SERVED 713 YOUTH 0-12:

35% of the children live below the poverty threshold.

46% of children are English Language Learners.

7% of 3rd grade Central Falls students are meeting expectations in reading.

IN PAWTUCKET, WE SERVED 2,513 YOUTH 0-12:

22.8% of the children live below the poverty threshold.

18% of children are English Language Learners.

26% of 3rd grade Pawtucket students are meeting expectations in reading.

IN PROVIDENCE, WE SERVED 4,881 YOUTH 0-12 :

30% of children live below the poverty threshold.

35% of children are English Language Learners.

16% of 3rd grade Providence students are meeting expectations in reading.

IN WOONSOCKET, WE SERVED 551 YOUTH 0-12:

29.5% of the children are living below the poverty threshold.

14% of the children are English Language Learners.

19% of 3rd grade Woonsocket students are meeting expectations in reading.

REFERENCES:

All data sourced from *Rhode Island Kids Count Factbook* for the calendar year 2022.

BAW data (youth served) represents calendar year 2022.

OUR GENEROUS DONORS

We are funded by the generosity of individual donors, organizations and foundations. Our work would not be possible without their support.

*Indicates organization and foundation gifts.

Gifts represented are for fiscal year 2022: July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.

<\$100

Angela Abosamra

Jen Amaral

Amazon Smile Donors (Anonymous)

Jason Harry and Meg Robinson

Jon Anderson

Darlene Bell

Jane Berkowitz

Melissa Blackburn

Doreen Blue

Martha Boksenbaum

Dana Bourgeault

Roberta Brady

Larissa Brickach

Karen Brill

Steve Brunero

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Kerri Mulligan
Melissa Muriel
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Raymond Murphy
Linda Nadeau
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Bill, Laurie and Will Nelle
Pam Nelson Erskine
Nancy Nero Panciocco TTEE

Catherine Norteman
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Crystal Parsons
Louise Pastore
Donna Patrick
Marie Paulhus
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Patrick Secor
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Amy Vincenzi
Kaela Walsh
Michael Watkinson
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\$100 TO \$249

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Eylana Goffe
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Jamie Harrower
Roger Hatch
Highlander Charter School*
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Inkfish Books*
Jay and Judith Rosenstein Family Fund*

\$100 TO \$249 CONTINUED

Kelly Kimball Antoniak
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Cathy McElroy
Tricia McKenney
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Monique T Renaud
Martha & David Schwartz
Karen Seiler
Maura Spector
Marlene Spiegel
Linda Sterling
The Neighborhood Nursery*
Lonice Thomas
Pearl Vogel
Jocelynn White
Robert Zamoida

“ I love that I can get new books every week during the summer. When I’m not in school, it’s harder to get to the library, so I love that I can pick out books on things I enjoy from Books Are Wings. ”

-Program participant at
Slater Park Summer Camp



\$250 TO \$499

Anonymous Fund at the Rhode
Island Foundation*

Anna Bianchi

Margaret Bierden

Crown Collision

Dominic Cuce

Christopher Dorr

John Geysen

Jill Glickman

J & K Gratitude Fund*

Loiselle Insurance Agency*

Lynn McCarthy

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Melissa Obstfeld

Teri Ohs

Rhode Island Association for the
Education of Young Children*

Joyce Ruppell

Saladworks*

Barbara & Allen Scott

Nancy Serpa

The Benevity Community Impact Fund*

Denise Thomas

\$500 TO \$999

Bank Newport*

Centerville Bank*

Fuss & O'Neill*

Dora Garcia

Greater Providence Retired

Teachers Association*

Robert Huseby

John and Jessica Pinkos Family Fund*

Suzanne Oppenheimer

Paypal Giving Fund Donors (Anonymous)



\$1,000 +

Elisabeth Carter
David C. Isenberg Family Fund*
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Renamarie and Robert Dimuccio
Mary Halpin
JAJ Restaurant Group LLC*
Tina Peloquin

Providence Rotary Charities
Foundation*
State of Rhode Island*
The Amy Bare Charitable Trust*
The Providence Shelter*
Pamela Vogel

\$2,500 +

Coastal Credit Union*
Elms Foundation*
Facebook Donors (Anonymous)

Ocean State Charities Trust*
Robert D Wray Charitable Trust*
Sensata Technologies Foundation*

\$5,000 +

Bank Rhode Island*
Bristol County Savings
Charitable Foundation*
City of Pawtucket
School Department*
John Clarke Trust*

June Rockwell Levy
Foundation*
The Nordson Corporation
Foundation*
U.S. Charitable Gift Trust*

\$10,000 +

Collette Travel Service Inc.*
MacMillan Family Foundation*

Rhode Island Foundation*
United States Small Business
Association*

\$20,000

Carter Family Charitable Trust*

\$75,000

United Way of Rhode Island*



OUR BOOK DONORS

*Indicates donors that donated more than 100 books.

Please note, we track donations on a fiscal year calendar. The donations below are from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.

American Association of
University Women*
Heather Abrams*
Anonymous*
Ashton Elementary School*
BankRI*
Moshe Berman
Melinda Bernardo
Abby Bernier*
Kathryn Berry*
Jennifer Brightman*
Brown University*
Barbara Cesaro*
Molly Clark*
Club Wyndham Long Wharf
Gianna Colonna*
Community Elementary
School*
Congregation Agudas
Achim*
Cumberland Moms Club*
Helena DeFanti*
Julie Douglas*
East Bay Retired Teachers*
East Side Nursery*
Jill Epstein
Sheila Fridovich
Kirstie Fiora
Foundations Academy*
Hilary Friedman*
John Geysen*
School Gordon*
Emma Harrop*

Gloria Hartman*
Bob Huseby*
Immaculate Conception Catholic
Regional School*
Meg Ivatts*
James L. McGuire Elementary*
Katherine King
Meg Kirkpatrick*
Rebecca Krasevic*
Ali L'Heroux*
Jason Leigh*
Loiselle Insurance*
Lauren K.B. Matlach
Mary Lou McCaffrey
Meadowbrook Farms Elementary
School*
Andrea Merrill*
Alicia Monnes*
Patricia Montalvo*
Andrea Munro
Narragansett Elementary School*
Nayatt School*
Pauline Nery*
Heather O'Donnell*
Dave Oppenheimer
Emily Ortrando*
Korben Perry
Pack 12 Boy Scouts - Cumberland*
Yuliana Palacio
Paige Clausius-Parks
Pawtucket Library*
Marieli Pereira*
Maria Pina

OUR BOOK DONORS, CONTINUED

*Indicates donors that donated more than 100 books.

Portsmouth Public Library*
Providence College*
Pure Barre Rhode Island*
Rochambeau Library
Jorge Rosa*
Debra Rosenblum*
Ellen Saideman
Saint Philomena School*
Sensata Technologies*
Riley Sheridan*
Linda Bryant Smith
South Kingstown Recreation Center*
St. Andrew's School*

Sonya Stenovitch*
Dan Steveson
Stillwater Books*
Rosemary Taft
The Wolf School*
United Way of Rhode Island*
AJ Vincelli
Warwick Library*
Women United*
Laura Whiteley
Tara Williams
Kim Zeleznik

“The staff and families are so grateful for Tale Mail. The kits provide a perfect home-school connection and engagement with everyone in the family. Tale Mail is also an excellent opportunity to build their home library. So many of our families are from other countries and do not speak, nor can they read English. The superb selection of books Books Are Wings provides every other month allows a family to learn with their child. Thus, they feel more confident interacting within the community.”

- Jody SW Bernard, Director,
Genesis Early Learning Center



THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

PARTNERS AND NEIGHBORS SUPPORT BOOKS ARE WINGS THROUGH TRANSITIONS

This past year was a testament to the power of community. Though the worst of the pandemic was behind us, The 2022 school year brought many changes to our organization and with that, a few hurdles. With the opportunity to reestablish our robust programs to what they were pre-pandemic, it was especially apparent how much our community was the backbone of Books Are Wings.

To start, we saw local businesses and organizations coming together to sponsor book drives for us and neighbors donating their personal collections, helping us bring in thousands of books to run our programs. The overwhelming generosity that poured in from the community to fulfill our mission to put books in the hands of every child in Rhode Island continued during our annual book drive with United Way and Women United where we received a record-breaking number of books. Similarly, for the first time since I joined Books Are Wings, we were able to host corporate service project events in our office, where teams volunteered to spend hours counting, sorting and packing books. This sense of cohesion came full circle as our school programs approached and our need for volunteers to accompany us grew. With Books All Year and Tale Mail school visits filling up our calendar, an ever-growing list of community members dedicated their time and enthusiasm to read in classrooms and assist at book tables.

During what could have been a very challenging year, our organization thrived and flourished. Our Tale Mail program served approximately 1,000 pre-kindergarten children, almost two times more than the year before. The Read to 100 Challenge, a community effort for classrooms to collectively read 100 books, took off with 23 classrooms enrolled, up from 9 previously. These initiatives, along with our Books All Year program and the various city-sponsored events we attended, helped children around our state build their home libraries and foster a love for reading that they can carry into their futures. That's why we do what we do and why community members like you choose to help us: our own love for reading and wanting to spark that interest in young readers. I tell the children I see at schools that books are wings because they can take you places you could not have gone on your own. I suppose I could also say communities are wings, for it is the spirit of community that makes this all possible.

ALI AGUIAR, OUTREACH COORDINATOR



FY-22: STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

JULY 1, 2021 TO JUNE 30, 2022

Assets	Total \$
Cash	\$94,666
Grants Receivable	\$11,992
Pledges Receivable	\$1,000
Prepaid Expenses	\$572
Inventory	\$20,916
Property and Equipment (Net of related accumulated depreciation)	\$20,510
Total Assets	\$151,271

The financial statements of Books Are Wings are compiled by Golden, Gormly & Company Ltd. A copy of the complete financial statements can be found on our website at www.booksarewings.org

Net Assets	Total \$
Without Donor Restrictions	\$138,771
With Donor Restrictions	\$12,500
Total Net Assets	\$151,271
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$151,271



SUPPORT OUR WORK:



BooksAreWings

Putting **Free Books** in the Hands of Children

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