Connecting authors, illustrators and their books with Washington, DC-area students to build equitable access and nurture a lifelong love of reading.
An Open Book Foundation has been a critical partner for our school for many years. Despite the challenges we are all facing, you found a way to continue to promote your mission of getting books to students in need. We are most grateful for your support and look forward to our continued efforts to foster a love of reading.

—elementary school librarian
Dear Members of the AOB Community,

Every school year presents unique challenges, but the 2019-20 school year was unlike any we’d experienced. Despite formidable obstacles, our team at An Open Book met each new challenge with flexibility, resourcefulness, creativity and deep reflection. In mid-March, when the global pandemic forced schools to shift to distance learning, we retooled our existing programs and initiated a few new ones to support the community we serve and continue to fulfill AOB’s mission. Throughout the remainder of the school year, we continued to connect students with authors, illustrators, and their books with video visits. When violent racial incidents at the end of May sparked nationwide protests, we reaffirmed AOB’s commitment to antiracist work, and with the July issue of the AOB newsletter began sharing details of our ongoing efforts towards educational justice.

In addition to providing program statistics for the entire 2019-20 school year, this annual report divides the year into the period before and after school buildings closed in mid-March. Over the course of the entire 2019-20 school year, 100 authors and illustrators generously waived their speaking fees to participate in 133 visits to 91 schools and community service organizations where they made 202 presentations to 10,772 students, and nearly 12,000 books were added to home, classroom, and school libraries. We stocked Little Free Libraries at six schools allowing students and their families to select and keep 752 additional books. AOB’s education coordinator or our nonprofit partner FoodPrints led extension activities for 12 classes at elementary schools across DC. Finally, our education coordinator facilitated 5th grade book groups at two DC public schools.

The first section of this annual report features highlights from our busy fall semester. The second section focuses on the Silver Linings that AOB and our inspiring partners—authors, illustrators, educators, and local nonprofits—discovered in a difficult situation. In the third section, we share the ongoing Reflections of the AOB team and board about the work we do with our community partners to build educational justice.
In the 2020-21 school year, we will celebrate a milestone—our 10th anniversary. Ten years of exciting author and illustrator visits, engaging books, and enriching programming including writing and art workshops, and music and movement activities. Ten years of conversations, ranging from silly to sincere, between book creators and students. Ten years of rewarding partnerships with generous authors and illustrators, dedicated educators, and area nonprofits.

Now more than ever, it is imperative that An Open Book provide DC-area students with meaningful programs and engaging books. We are confident that your ongoing support and generosity will ensure our success.

We are proud to be a part of the DC area's strong network of nonprofit organizations that work each day to support our community. We remain committed to building equity and remain hopeful that brighter days are ahead.
Our fall calendar was full of meaningful author and illustrator visits, partnered events, extension activities and book group meetings. Between September and mid-March, 79 authors and illustrators visited 85 schools where they gave 166 presentations to 6,452 students. AOB gave 8,099 books to those students, and their classroom and school libraries.

In addition, 268 students from six DC elementary schools participated in 12 extension activities where they engaged in a range of projects from preparing and eating a meal to transforming a piece of their own writing into another form, such as a skit or performance poetry, an illustration or a diorama, to making and putting on a play with shadow puppets.

We started our second 5th grade book group (Book Acquisition Team, or BAT) whose 12 members researched which books they wanted to read and wrote grants to AOB for copies for themselves and their library. Students gained advocacy, writing, and public speaking skills.
Other long-term projects we were working on in the fall included updating our strategic plan, exploring ways to further develop our extension activity program with pre- and post-event activities to enhance the impact of AOB visits, and developing additional ways to measure the impact of our program by collaborating with librarians on displays and evaluation of circulation data, as well as student and teacher surveys following selected presentations.

“Not only did it get them interested in reading the book, it made them realize that writing is possible too. I am excited to let you know that every single one of my students asked me if we could start reading the book on Monday. I have never had this level of excitement over reading a book before.”

—8th grade teacher
In mid-March, the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to cancel our remaining events and work from home. Every day, our team met virtually to brainstorm creative ways to modify our programming. By the end of March, schools in the DC metro area had instituted distance learning. We continued to serve students with two new initiatives: book deliveries and an online educators’ resource guide. Between mid-March and June, we delivered 5,621 carefully curated books to 39 of our partner schools for distribution during meal and packet pick-up. We also compiled a spreadsheet of online resources for educators which we continue to maintain. Our events program resumed in May, virtually, as we tackled technology logistics alongside educators, authors and illustrators. By the end of the school year we had successfully coordinated 36 virtual author and illustrator visits and a virtual book group meeting.

Committed to connecting with students but unable to travel, authors and illustrators from across the country agreed to pre-record their presentations, which they often tailored to the students and the school. In some
cases, we submitted students’ questions for the authors and illustrators to answer as part of their pre-recorded presentations. As always, AOB purchased copies of the featured title to give to every student and a set of the author’s/illustrator’s titles for the school and classroom libraries. Some librarians were able to coordinate book deliveries, but we plan to deliver most of the books directly to the schools when they reopen.

Every semester, AOB’s education coordinator collaborates with a school librarian or a teacher to jump-start a book group that the librarian, teacher or students will sustain independently. Although school buildings were closed, our education coordinator met with the spring semester’s book group virtually. Students selected the book they wanted to read and An Open Book
provided each member of the newly formed book group with their own copy of that book. The students diligently researched titles and advocated for their choices.

The final silver linings of the virtual school year were two partnered summer programs. First, An Open Book worked with Shout Mouse Press (SMP), a local nonprofit writing and publishing program dedicated to amplifying underheard voices. AOB arranged for Mahogany Browne, a prominent poet, author, educator, and organizer to present her work, share her lived experience, and provide a writing prompt as part of SMP’s #ShoutInPlace initiative to collect stories from young people during the pandemic. SMP authors asked questions about her poetry and writing process, and shared their experiences as writers and presenters. Every young person and the SMP library received a copy of her book, Woke, from AOB.

An Open Book also partnered with the local nonprofit FoodPrints and San Francisco-based publisher Readers To Eaters to provide summer enrichment programming for 30 students from five DC public elementary schools in Wards 7 and 8. The program connected students to reading, gardening, and cooking. Students learned about food and nutrition through hands-on experience and stories. They also gained insights into the process of writing and illustrating books. Every week, students received a bag of produce, supplies, and two books delivered directly to their homes. An Open Book had suggested titles and ordered the books, and together with Readers to Eaters coordinated the author and illustrator visits. Students enjoyed daily cooking classes and book club meetings. They had a weekly virtual workshop with the author or illustrator of one of the books they read that week. Students studied the books during their book club meetings and prepared their questions in advance.

By building equitable access to nutritious food, books, and food literacy we had a direct and positive impact on students and their families.

“I really liked being able to talk to an author who has published and is still writing. It helped me to see more what a future as an author would be like, and it also made me more engaged when reading the book because I had met the person who had written it.”

—high school student
Please take a book to read at home!

Brought to you by an open book

one book per student, please

Grades PreK-1

Grades 2-3

Grades 4-5
Over the past 10 years, AOB has refined our mission statement in an effort to reflect our growth and evolution. At the beginning of the 2019-20 school year we began work on the latest modification, and in early June AOB’s board unanimously approved the revised mission statement:

*Connecting authors, illustrators and their books with Washington, DC-area students to build equitable access and nurture a lifelong love of reading.*

As a literacy organization, AOB focuses on equitable access to authors, illustrators, and books for all students. Addressing issues of social and racial justice is inherent to our mission.

The violent racial incidents and subsequent protests in the spring of 2020 prompted us to reflect on our values and the work that we do with the communities we serve. Central to our process of reflection and action is sharing our progress with the AOB community. An Open Book will continue to:

- Amplify the creative voices of Black, Indigenous, and People Of Color.

- Educate ourselves and interrogate our own biases in order to continuously grow, aware that anti-racist work is an ongoing reflective process.

- Actively listen to our BIPOC constituents and integrate their voices as AOB evolves.

Guided by these values, we will continue to connect young readers with authors and illustrators who share stories—everyone’s stories—to nurture a love of reading. We will continue to focus on creators, stories and characters that reflect the world in which we all live, encouraging students to use their written and visual literacy skills to navigate a complex world and define their own futures.

As part of our effort to amplify the voices of BIPOC authors and illustrators, AOB was awarded a grant from the Maurice Sendak Foundation to support a program for these new and emerging artists. The pilot phase of this new program focuses on new and emerging Black authors or illustrators. Furthermore, the grant covers the cost of purchasing books directly from local Black-owned bookstores.
Thanks to contributions from foundations, institutions, community partners and individuals, An Open Book Foundation is able to help children see themselves as readers who can navigate a complex world and define their own futures. We are so grateful for all of AOB’s generous supporters.

### Community Partners
- Barstons Child’s Play
- The Catalogue for Philanthropy
- Edmund Burke School
- FRESHFARM FoodPrints
- Georgetown Day School
- Kramerbooks

### Foundation, Institutional and Organizational Donors

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- DMV Women Writers
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- Turning the Page
- Writers and Artists Across the Country

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*served in the 2018-19 school year
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Support from foundations, institutions and individuals is critical to the ongoing success of An Open Book Foundation.

You can donate by visiting anopenbookfound.org

BECOME A SUPPORTER
# 2019 FINANCIAL STATEMENT
Financial data for the period of January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019

## Unrestricted Income
- Gifts-in-kind*: $253,945
- Individual Contributions: $70,806
- Partnerships: $1,476
- Government Grants: $37,827
- Foundations: $114,000

### Total Unrestricted Income
$478,054

## Other Income
- Fiscal Sponsor: $510
- Dividends & Interest: $15,091
- Investment Income (unrealized gain): $95,139
- Restricted Income: $67,346

### Total Other Income
$178,086

**Total Income**
$656,140

## Expenses
- Author Expenses*: $236,803
- Books-in-kind: $17,142
- Books: $94,296
- Other Event Expenses: $3,984

### Direct Programming Expenses
$98,280

### Operating Expenses
$293,695

**Total Expenses**
$645,920

**Total Net Income**
$10,220

*Forgone author honorariums and per diems
“AOB’s support has meant a lot to me. Today’s presentation was an amazing experience because Dough Boys was for them. I was honored to present the book to them and vocalize that they are seen. The young man who shared [his personal experience] with me stole my heart. Knowing that his experience is likely represented through Simp and Rollie reinforces why this book is special to me. That single moment reinforced why I write.”

—Paula Chase, author