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Friends of the Library, Montgomery County • www.folmc.org

3 Traits that Make Nonprofits Great

Pam Saussy and Ari Z. Brooks, MSW

Not long ago, Avis, the car rental company, ran a series of TV ads with the tagline “what drives you?” They asked prominent CEOs and Hollywood executives to describe how their relentless passions resulted in everything from comfortable footwear to popular television shows.

Passion is an important part of *any* job, but when it comes to running a nonprofit, having passion is simply not enough. Fulfilling our social mission is just as important; we’re different than for-profit corporations in that we exist to benefit the public good. Nonprofit organizations are, by definition, on a mission. And in order to succeed in the complex and constantly changing landscape that is “the new normal,” we must remain stable, relevant, and resilient. There are several characteristics that are shared by all healthy nonprofits—qualities FOLMC has demonstrated, time and again.

Healthy Nonprofits Are Change Agents

Change is never easy, especially for organizations that have been around for decades. It might seem easier to do things “the way they’ve always been done” rather than learn to innovate, but a healthy nonprofit is a change agent; things are different as a result of their work.

When FOLMC saw the paradigm shift in the early 2000s, it knew it needed to support changing technologies. It provided supplemental funding to create a digital media lab at Long Branch, giving young people access to the skills they would need to be competitive in the 21st Century workforce.

During the Financial Crisis of 2007-2008, Montgomery County budget cuts paralyzed the library’s collections. In response, FOLMC funded MCPL’s collections needs over that period through our Library Lifesavers program, raising \$25,000 just for collections, which added new books and digital resources that the community would not otherwise have had.

When young people needed a place to go after school for free, FOLMC did something as simple and yet as life-changing as

providing funding for board games and chess sets. MCPL’s after-school clubs created a place to be safe at the library, because after school ends, kids left on their own can get into trouble. With our help, they did not.

FOLMC has also been committed to social justice and human rights activism, funding LGBTQIA+ resources for the library collection, hosting social justice-focused programming, and presenting events featuring BIPOC authors.

“THE FUTURE DEPENDS ON WHAT
WE DO IN THE PRESENT.”

— MAHATMA GANDHI

The library experience is fundamentally different as a result of FOLMC’s financial support; we wouldn’t have it any other way.

Healthy Nonprofits Carefully Assess Risk

The basic things every organization needs to do to keep the lights on might not be the most glamorous things to talk about, but they are necessary to function. For example, all nonprofits need to have insurance, they need to conduct training for their staff, and they need to have oversight and transparency into their fundraising activities.

Risk assessment helps nonprofits become aware of the opportunities—as well as the challenges—they are facing, so they can have a clear view of the present as well as prioritize for the future. Left unmanaged, risks can result in all sorts of losses, from donor attrition to employee turnover—even the erosion of public support, like grant funding, which can be devastating to operations. After all, having the public’s trust is foundational to any nonprofit’s sustainability.

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3 Traits that Make Nonprofits Great, continued

To this end, the FOLMC Board decided to create a new ONE FOLMC volunteer model to reduce risk that threatened the long-term viability of our entire organization. The model was designed to create a more unified, efficient, and streamlined organization, one that strengthens FOLMC's oversight and stewardship of publicly donated assets intended to benefit MCPL, because we all share the same goal—to support MCPL.

Healthy Nonprofits Are Mission-Driven

When a nonprofit creates a mission statement, it establishes an identity, but in order to thrive, its mission must reflect a clear statement of its core purpose.

FOLMC's efforts have supported MCPL since 1982. Because we are so firmly mission-driven, we have been able to deploy our resources effectively through both good times and bad, during strong economies and global crises—even pandemics, because, as we say, our mission doesn't change in a crisis, it only grows stronger.

Forty years ago, FOLMC was formed by a group of citizens who believed in the power of libraries. From day one, our mission has revolved around the belief that a core group of passionate people can make a major impact. Our mission is clear. It is well-

focused: FOLMC supports MCPL. It guides all major decisions, it informs our programming and projects, and in essence, it drives us forward.

The success of FOLMC's mission depends on the support of members and donors like you. As we continue our evolution, we hope we can count on you to amplify our efforts to support

FOLMC's mission is to strengthen, promote, and champion Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL), for it to better serve the learning interests and needs of the diverse and changing communities of the County.

MCPL so that it can keep providing the knowledge, resources, meaning, *and inspiration* to all in our community, not just today, but for generations to come. Because, together, we are stronger.

Check the Status on FOLMC Events

As we begin to resume our in-person lives, we might notice, as One Direction's Harry Styles says in his newest hit, "Nothing's the same as it was."

Through summer, 2022, FOLMC programs will remain virtual, and our plans are to host hybrid (in person + virtual) events this fall. Currently MCPL is hosting both virtual and hybrid events—be sure to stay in tune with the latest developments by checking out our social media pages, which are updated daily:



Now Hiring!

FOLMC is now accepting applications for a newly created staff position.

Volunteer Manager



The Volunteer Manager will be responsible for developing the volunteer infrastructures of FOLMC, including heading up ONE FOLMC, a unified volunteer program. The person in this position will recruit, train, and supervise volunteers and related administrative activities. This position will ensure appropriate visibility of FOLMC to the community and lead various marketing efforts and outreaches. **Learn more at www.folmc.org.**

Keep Calm & Go to the Library: A Virtual Teen Mental Health Event

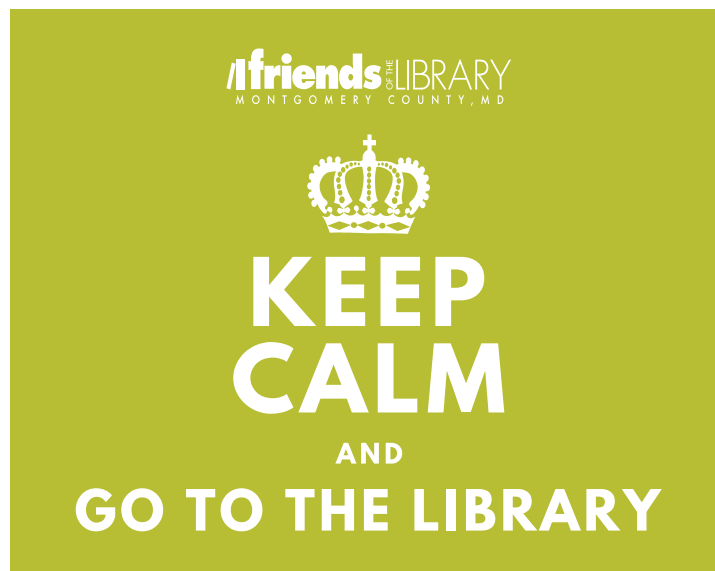
Everyone experienced fear and isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, but teens had an especially difficult time, facing disruption from school, stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues. As a way to raise awareness and foster healing, FOLMC, in partnership with Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL), hosted Keep Calm & Go to the Library, a special Virtual Teen Mental Health event held on May 26, 2022.

Speakers included:

- Deborah Takahashi, Librarian, Author, and Youth Mental Health Advocate
- Diana Chao, Founder/Executive Director of Letters to Strangers
- Jeffrey Donald, MCPS Mindfulness Coordinator

It was a powerful and positive discussion. "When I was diagnosed with bipolar disorder, I felt a lot of shame. I felt like it was my fault," Chao said, "So I started writing. *Letters to Strangers* made a difference, because I was enunciating my feelings but there was a listener on the other side. Letter writing helped me discover my voice and through that I learned that I could help other people as well."

The presenters discussed how literature has helped destigmatize mental illness and shared how libraries have helped them personally find solace through times of suffering. "It's critical that we learn not only how to care but also how to listen," Takahashi said. They also provided recommendations to students looking to communicate deeper issues and shared tips to graduating seniors so they don't feel stressed out as they



begin college. Donald concluded the program with a brief, but powerful mindfulness exercise.

The event was moderated by FOLMC's two Student Representatives to the Board of Trustees, Corinne Nicholls, a senior at Albert Einstein High School, and Boshra Nouraie, a junior at Winston Churchill High School, both of whom felt it was important to raise awareness of the youth mental health crisis. "This is one of the most meaningful things I've done in high school," Nicholls said.

Shop Wheaton Bookstore 7 Days a Week

Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL) has expanded hours of branch service to include Sundays. That means great news for patrons of our FOLMC Wheaton Bookstore, which is now open Sundays from noon-6:00 PM. Our Rockville Bookstore is also open on Sunday.

Visit www.folmc.org/bookstores for the complete list of Bookstore hours and locations.

Have books to donate? FOLMC accepts new and gently used books, current magazines, movies, video games, CDs, and more at our two bookstores. Items must be in good, clean condition. Drop off during normal business hours. Donation receipts are available.

For frequently asked questions and shopping guidelines, visit www.folmc.org/bookstores

The FOLMC Wheaton Bookstore Is Now Open Sundays!

New Hours
Sunday 12 - 6 PM
Mon-Fri: 12 - 6 PM
Saturday: 10 AM - 6 PM

Thank You for Contributing to Our Friends Fund



Fran Kaplan @ Wheaton conducting a Sensory Storytime.

The pandemic paved a way for FOLMC to further increase our outreach, and we thank all our supporters who contributed to the Friends Fund for making it possible! Our Friends Fund provided \$8,200, among additional funds, to MCPL so it could purchase tubs of audio-visual equipment, including tripods, digital cameras, video camcorders, tables, and lightning—all in order to successfully make MCPL programming accessible from home.

Donors:

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Congratulations Mosaic Winners

Mosaic is an annual language arts program for middle school students to showcase their creative talents and express their cultural identities.

Winners and Honorable Mentions get their work published in our Mosaic Anthology, which you can order by visiting www.folmc.org.

Join us in congratulating our 2021-2022 Mosaic Winners and Honorable Mentions!

6th Grade Winners

Sahil Patel, Essay, Hallie Wells Middle School

*Rhys Hughes, Poem, Eastern Middle School

Architsai Ramnath, Short Story, Hallie Wells Middle School

7th Grade Winners

Sohum Sen, Essay, Herbert Hoover Middle School

Elana Ernst, Poem, Silver Creek Middle School

Akanksha Rangarajan, Short Story, Hallie Wells Middle School

8th Grade Winners

Katherine Xue, Essay, Herbert Hoover Middle School

Katie Hu, Poem, Herbert Hoover Middle School

Campbell Goldston, Short Story, Newport Mills Middle School

6th Grade Honorable Mentions

Nika Hann, Essay, Ridgeview Middle School

Yamini Gupta, Poem, Ridgeview Middle School

Christabel Lekan-Abioye, Poem, John Poole Middle School

Allison Xu, Poem, John Poole Middle School

Mason Smith, Poem, Eastern Middle School

Sahasra Namburu, Short Story, Hallie Wells Middle School

7th Grade Honorable Mentions

Rosha Rizi, Poem, Thomas W. Pyle Middle School

Anushka Dave, Poem, Ridgeview Middle School

Saida Cruz, Poem, Silver Creek Middle School

Alexandra Weinstein, Short Story, Thomas W. Pyle Middle School

8th Grade Honorable Mention

Belen Hailu, Poem, Sligo Middle School

Caroline McCann, Poem, Thomas W. Pyle Middle School

Maria Elena Martin, Poem, Herbert Hoover Middle School

**Best in Show*

FOLMC Earns Candid's Highest Ranking

FOLMC proudly announces it has been recertified at the platinum level of transparency, the highest level of recognition offered by Candid (formerly GuideStar), the world's largest source of nonprofit information.

Our activities and financials demonstrate our deep commitment to literacy, learning, transparency, and our community. Visit our Nonprofit Profile on Candid to see why we earned this seal: www.candid.org.

Platinum
Transparency
2022

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A Note from MCPL Director Anita Vassallo

2022 Summer Reading Challenge!

Summer 2022 is filled with Oceans of Possibilities at Montgomery County Public Libraries! In alignment

with Montgomery County's Climate Action Plan, and with the support of Friends of the Library, Montgomery County (FOLMC), MCPL's Summer Reading Challenge! is going green. The Challenge runs June 15 through August 31, 2022.

This year, children and teens will work towards a communal goal to make a tangible difference in local conservation efforts by reading books, doing activities, and attending library programs, such as the June 18 county-wide kick-off event at Rockville Memorial Library. As readers complete missions, FOLMC will make contributions on their behalf to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF), which will plant trees along the watershed, plant oysters in the Bay, and clean up animal habitats.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, there are over 23 million metric tons of plastic waste in the world's oceans and waterways. So instead of small plastic prizes, readers will earn e-badges and eco-friendly incentives including a new book; a voucher for two

tickets to a Washington Nationals baseball game; a FOLMC Bookstore voucher; and bookmarks featuring Chesapeake Wildlife Trivia, emphasizing the clean-up measures of the CBF.

Children will add stickers to poster displays at library branches to track their progress, and record their accomplishments on the READsquared online platform. Teens will earn e-affle tickets for themed prize packs loaded with enticing items such as a gaming keyboard, art set, solar cell phone charger, and more.




FOLMC is sponsoring 40 live performer events at library branches. Shark Appreciation Week will feature shark-themed activities and Flat Shark Finley, who kids can take on summer adventures and tag #FlatFinley on social media.

MCPL librarians have updated the suggested reading lists for babies through high school, as well as Spanish language lists through grade 5, so everyone can find books that are just right for them. There are even MCPL video book talks to inspire readers!

All children and teens are invited to join the 2022 Summer Reading Challenge! and dive deep to keep up their reading skills while saving the Bay and exploring the Oceans of Possibilities at MCPL.

**Montgomery County Public Libraries 2022
Summer Reading Challenge!**

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POSSIBILITIES**

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Friends of the Library,
Montgomery County



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We thank you for your help!

This newsletter was sent to print on 6/23/22. For our latest free online events and most up-to-date information, visit our website, www.folmc.org.