

friends

HELPING
LIBRARIES REACH
NEW HEIGHTS

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

This is a special edition of our FOLMC newsletter.

Although all library branches and FOLMC Bookstores remain closed until further notice, our community is active. Read on for ways you can connect with our online programming, access digital library resources, and shop FOLMC.

We thank you, now more than ever, for your continued support.

A Message from Ari Z. Brooks, Executive Director



I miss the library. I really miss the library. I miss it because it's a staple in my family's life – it's how we get our books, how we get homework help, how we learn, and how we play. It's more than my job; it's my mainstay. I miss the parents with their kids who can't wait to push the button to open the automatic doors and run to the

children's section. I miss the retired businessmen in their button-down shirts reading *The Wall Street Journal*.

I know other people miss it just as much, if not more, than I do—the people I see every day from the Rockville men's shelter getting online to stay in touch with people through library computers. The women and children from the family shelter seeking social resources. The businessperson having daily conference calls in the meeting room. The folks timidly walking in to discover the building for the first time, and the others who boldly come in, saying, "I am here

"I miss walking thru the stacks and having a book (cover) choose me!" – RM

for my conversation class; I am learning to speak English." Not to mention all of our volunteers, because libraries for older people are a vital part of their social well-being and an important way for them to connect.

People count on libraries not just for books but for *things* they can check out—in some neighboring systems they can check out measuring cups, shovels and power tools. In MCPL's Library of Music, they can even choose bongos, tabla drums, and guitars. I'm sure people are missing the ability to be able to simply explore. People miss our bookstores and the way they could spend a few hours browsing the aisles and leave with an armful of treasures.





Fundraising Success

Thanks to your help, in March, we quickly met—and then exceeded—our COVID-19 relief fundraising goal of \$10,000. In total, we raised **\$14,487.76**.

These funds provide emergency relief to FOLMC so we can shift to a new, virtual environment including:

- Purchasing multi-channel inventory software so that our bookstore inventory is accessible online and can facilitate online purchases.
- Continuing to pay salaries throughout the closure, so that no employee loses their job.
- Training our staff on new software and equipment to meet new needs as they develop.
- Obtaining equipment to create virtual interactive programming, such as video cameras, microphones, and lighting equipment.

We thank the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County and Montgomery County Government for their matching support.



“My kids and I miss hanging out there and our classes. My daughter is missing her Girls Who Code class just about this time. Can’t wait to go back!”

– MK



FOLMC is supported in part by funding from the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County.

Not having the physical space of a library makes me acutely aware of its loss. This space, this *void*, demonstrates how much more libraries are than books. They are anchors in our community. They are places of refuge. They’re a light in the darkness.

But amidst the Coronavirus crisis, even without accessing the building, libraries are coming to us virtually by providing resources, knowledge, enlightenment, and entertainment. Our physical branches may be closed, but MCPL Branches are offering a wealth of completely free digital content.

All you need is a library card. If you don’t already have one, you can sign up for a Digital Library Card: mcpl.link/DigitalCard.

“I miss getting emails that my library holds are ready for pickup – and so many other things .” – DN

When you visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/library/, you have access to:

- Millions of E/Audiobooks, streaming services, learning platforms and research tools available 24/7 in the cloud library.
- Interactive video classes on an array of subjects, including Arts & Crafts, Music Lessons, and Wellness Programs, to name a few.
- Educational resources, for both students and teachers, through programs like Explora.
- Many of the branch programs that you know and love have migrated online. Simply check out the Calendar for Virtual Storytimes, bookclubs, and Chinese, Spanish, English, and American Sign language classes, to list a few. Like to dance? Take an online dance class. Play Dungeons and Dragons? Join the online group. There are knitting classes, financial literacy programs, Poetry, Tai Chi, and Yoga programs—and so much more.



How is this programming even possible? We funded a Zoom license for MCPL, which uses it to host these programs. When doing their research they discovered that other video platforms did not provide the level of interaction that is needed in libraries. Most importantly, they also don’t give people the level of privacy that libraries will always protect.

MCPL has always embraced technology—and FOLMC has been there to help fund it. From our GoKits with Samsung Galaxy Tablets with apps for young readers, to our Early Literacy Computer Stations, to the MCPL’s Digital Media Lab, we’ve been ahead of the curve to make libraries digitally accessible. The need is greater now than ever before, and we’re proud to be coming up with creative ways to serve county residents.



A Note from Anita Vassallo, MCPL Director

Our buildings are closed, but the libraries are very much open for business. We are still here to provide information, recreation and education to our community, and we’ve taken significant steps to increase that service in the face of this health crisis.

Our New Reality

It's a sobering wake-up call. History has proven, from the Great Depression all the way through the Financial Crisis of 2008-2009, that during times of recession, library usage has increased. That's because patrons seek out libraries in response to economic pressures as they look for resources to cope with job loss, home foreclosure, and worse.

As the Coronavirus crisis stretches from weeks into months, unemployment is skyrocketing and government aid is exhausted almost as soon as it's offered, it's inevitable that we are entering an economic downturn. Our libraries must be among the front lines of response to this new reality, as people seek out free job resources, interview support, and digital skills training.

Libraries will help the community recover from this trauma, and they will play an important role in bringing us back together. Library resources keep us healthy, safe, and informed with ideas for sleeping, meditating, staying calm, entertaining children, and providing a trusted source of information.

The role that libraries—and librarians—will play as responders to this new reality must not be understated. The community is going to need us, and that's why FOLMC's mission to support libraries remains critical.

And That's Why We Still Need Your Help

We need your help, because MCPL still need us.

Because we've pivoted so quickly, MCPL needs our help to provide continued digital offerings that ensure as many children as possible still receive the benefits of storytimes and online programming, older adults are able to maintain a sense of community, and everyone can access materials for enjoyment and education to make physical distancing easier with ebooks, movies, music, and more.

Nothing is going to be the same anymore.

But our mission doesn't change in a crisis—it only grows stronger.

Help us ensure that MCPL will reach as many people, if not even more, from their homes as it did before. Your support helps us sustain critical lifelong learning in Montgomery County and provide the job seeking resources our community will need to get back out there once the pandemic ends.

You can be the hope that libraries need. Support us by renewing your membership, making a donation on someone's behalf, or joining as a new Friend today.



Due to the inability to access the mail during telework and expedite safe processing of payments, please use our new lockbox information below for **donations and memberships**.

Friends of the Library, Montgomery County
P.O. Box 69307
Baltimore, Maryland 21264-9307



5 Ways to Shop FOLMC

While Our Bookstores Are Closed

1 Shop FOLMC on

Shop from the comfort of home through our Amazon store. Items ship from and are sold by FOLMC. *Our Amazon store name is Friends of the Library, Montgomery County.*

2 Visit Our Store

Shop FOLMC rare and unique texts through our eBay shop. Our eBay stock is updated frequently – so check back daily to see all of our new titles. *Visit [mcfriends on eBay](#) to shop our collection.*

3 Check Out Our Vinyl Collection

Browse our collection of more than 1,500 vinyl records on Discogs by visiting www.discogs.com/user/folmcrockville/collection

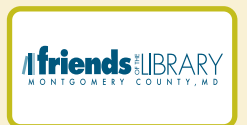
When you're ready to order, simply email bookstores@folmc.org with your selection, and we will process your order.



4 Purchase a Gift Card

Share FOLMC Bookstores with others! Shop anytime, day or night.

Choose from an array of designs and select your amount by visiting: www.folmc.org/bookstores/online-store/.



5 Buy a Book Bundle

Shop FOLMC Bookstore shelves by purchasing a Book Bundle to be shipped straight to your door for just \$30. Each bundle includes 6-8 books in a combination of paperback and hardback format.

You can send Book Bundles as gifts, or donate a Bundle to someone in need by visiting: <https://www.folmc.org/bookstores/book-bundles/>



We thank you for your support!



21 Maryland Avenue
Suite 310
Rockville, Maryland 20850-2389

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Mosaic Awards Ceremony

Congratulations to our Winners and Honorable Mentions

Best in Show

Jacob Felman, *Poem*, Robert Frost Middle School, 8th Grade

6th Grade Winners

Amina Sallman, *Essay*, Benjamin Banneker Middle School

Natalie Pak, *Poem*, Robert Frost Middle School

Vikram Reddy, *Short Story*, Robert Frost Middle School

7th Grade Winners

Kate McDonough, *Essay*, Parkland Middle School

Monica Teran, *Poem*, John Poole Middle School

Hannah You, *Short Story*, Herbert Hoover Middle School

8th Grade Winners

Ashwin Gopaldaswami, *Essay*, Parkland Middle School

Sienna Jackson, *Poem*, Silver Creek Middle School

Megan Cox, *Short Story*, Eastern Middle School

6th Grade Honorable Mentions

Hasan Roumani, *Essay*, Parkland Middle School

Ana Maria Stana, *Essay*, Parkland Middle School

Taziyah Dawkins, *Poem*, Argyle Middle School

Esha Sharma, *Short Story*, Robert Frost Middle School

Idia Ighile, *Short Story*, Parkland Middle School

7th Grade Honorable Mentions

Canaan Bogale, *Essay*, Benjamin Banneker Middle School

Risha Manthini, *Short Story*, John Poole Middle School

Fiorella Trujillo, *Short Story*, Sligo Middle School

8th Grade Honorable Mentions

Andrea Teran, *Essay*, John Poole Middle School

Christina Caggiano, *Poem*, Robert Frost Middle School

Za'Niya Duncan, *Poem*, Montgomery Village Middle School

Abby Nega, *Poem*, Herbert Hoover Middle School

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 [Friends of the Library, Montgomery County](https://www.linkedin.com/company/friends-of-the-library-montgomery-county)