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*Life's persistent
and most urgent
question is,
what are you
doing for others?*

— ” —

— Martin Luther King, Jr.



**SNO-ISLE LIBRARIES
FOUNDATION**

2021 IMPACT REPORT



sno-islefoundation.org

Table of Contents

Letter from the Board Chair, Luke Distelhorst	3
The Importance of Philanthropy	4
Now is the Time to Reimagine, Rebuild & Grow	5
2021 Financials	6
Foundation Highlights	7
Thank you to our Supporters	9
Trudy Sundberg Lecture Series	10
A Final Note from the Board and Staff	11

Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation

Mission

Our mission is to mobilize people and resources to expand the reach of library services, promote civic engagement, and foster a lifetime of learning.

Vision

Our vision is to have everyone in our community connected to their library.

Core Values

Our values are community, equity, inclusion, respect, learning, and a welcoming environment.

Connecting with Our Communities



Luke Distelhorst

Luke Distelhorst

Board President

I'm honored to share my first official message with you as President of the Foundation's Board of Directors! We have some exciting updates and are bringing a bold vision forward for the future.

We started 2022 off with the hiring of our new Executive Director, Christina Kourteva. Christina brings a proven set of fundraising skills and history in our area and is a lifelong library user. With Christina on board leading the Foundation, during the first half of 2022, we focused our efforts on improving the organization's infrastructure to set the Foundation up for greater success in the future. These efforts included completing two successful fundraising campaigns – Library Giving Day in April and GiveBIG in May, migrating to a state-of-the-art donor database that will enable us to better engage our supporters, and recruiting new Foundation Board members to expand the amazing skills and talent we already have on our Board and position the Foundation for future growth and success, just to name a few.

As we forge ahead into the Foundation's next chapter, we are also most proud of all that we accomplished last year. In 2021, we had an increased focus on supporting Sno-Isle's core value of "Inspiring Spaces." For our Mariner and Lakewood-Smokey Point Demonstration Libraries, this meant continuing to provide funds for their annual leases to ensure that residents of these areas maintain access to information, resources, and programming in their immediate community.

Other examples of the Foundation supporting Inspiring Spaces include raising matching funds for a state grant to remodel the Darrington Library in northeast Snohomish County and using funds bequeathed to the Foundation for critical improvements at the Arlington Library beginning with a brand-new roof.

The funding for each of these projects was significant and each contributes in its own unique way to making sure our residents have access to safe, usable, and inspiring library spaces. If you would like to be involved in any of these exciting projects, please stay tuned for more information or reach out to Foundation staff to learn more about how we can partner together.

As our libraries have restarted activities like in-person programming and opening more community meeting spaces, the Foundation is also looking at resuming fundraising events and activities and making new investments that had been put on hold. Central to our vision is reconnecting with you, our donors, and seeking out new partnerships and fundraising opportunities as we embark on ambitious upgrades to our community libraries.

I am also thrilled to share that starting this fall, we will be launching a quarterly Foundation newsletter to help us stay connected with you – our supporters, and keep you informed about what's new and exciting at the Foundation. I am personally looking forward to connecting the Foundation with our communities in support of Sno-Isle Libraries. I hope you will join us!

Sincerely,
Luke Distelhorst

The Importance of Library Foundations and Philanthropy for Public Libraries

Library Foundations are growing in importance and increasing their impact as visionary communities across the country are looking toward securing the future of their libraries. Library Foundations have become increasingly valuable resources for public libraries to build community support and enhance fiscal health by raising funds to supplement, leverage, and stretch public dollars. And the opportunities that strategic fundraising make possible are crucial as libraries continue to broaden and deepen their role as an essential community resource.

Library Foundations support Library Goals! As a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization established to help secure the future of the public library through systematic and strategic fundraising, a library foundation serves as an innovation engine to help the library take on new challenges by providing:

- A platform for raising money to support programs and capital projects, and to strengthen the library's long-term financial health
- Investment flexibility to maximize the value of financial contributions
- Eligibility for grants that are open only to qualified nonprofit organizations
- Experienced staff who are dedicated to raising money on a full-time basis and supporting a culture of philanthropy within the library system
- Enhanced visibility for the library through foundation-financed programs and events
- An expanded circle of contributors and increased confidence among donors through offering a variety of tax-deductible financial vehicles

The strategic role of library foundations goes beyond fundraising, and the resources, opportunities, and visibility that a successful foundation brings to the library system are essential to its long-term success.



Reference: www.urbanlibraries.org

Now is the Time to Reimagine and Grow



Christina Kourteva

Christina Kourteva

Executive Director,
Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation

As we reemerge on the other side of the pandemic and reflect on the challenges and opportunities presented by the last two years, we look forward to reimagining how our new shared experiences can guide us in shaping the future of Sno-Isle Libraries and re-envision the role of the Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation.

In 2021 and throughout the pandemic, Sno-Isle Libraries remained a reliable and trustworthy community resource. Our libraries continue to serve as lifelines to our communities, coming up with creative and innovative ways to address the impacts of COVID-19 all while providing uninterrupted services to our customers.

As the philanthropic arm of the library system, the Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation continued to be a trusted library partner, investing in programs designed to support our customers and communities. From establishing an Equity/Opportunity Fund to help bridge the digital divide for students and families, to providing seed funding for Sno-Isle's pilot Express Lockers to expand library access, to continuing our support of early literacy programs, the Foundation remained grounded in Sno-Isle's mission to create equitable access to knowledge and resources for all.

We extend a heartfelt thank you to you – our donors, community, and business partners. The work of the Foundation would not have been possible without your support, and your generosity in 2021 was a loud and clear testament to your love and appreciation of our public libraries and the cultural, educational, and democratic values they uphold.

Now that we've welcomed our communities back for in-person services, we are excited to once again see our libraries bustling with activity. We are optimistic about what the future holds and energized about the growing role of philanthropy in the future of our libraries. **As we begin to re-envision the role of the Foundation, this is a great time to reimagine what's possible, dream big, and increase the impact of philanthropy throughout our community libraries.**

From supporting educational and outreach programs for youth and adults to investing in essential capital improvements throughout Sno-Isle's 23 libraries, **our library system will benefit tremendously from building a culture of philanthropy** where all of our community members have an opportunity to participate in giving back to their libraries in ways that are meaningful to them.

Whether you choose to support your library by donating to our library programs, supporting a capital project you are passionate about, joining your local Friends of the Library group, or volunteering, we hope you will continue to serve as an outspoken ambassador for public libraries and help us increase the support and impact of the Foundation.

Please stay tuned for updates on some of the exciting new projects the Foundation is working on in 2022 and beyond. In the meantime, we encourage you to stay connected and reach out with questions and suggestions. We are grateful for your generosity and thank you for being our partner in this important work!

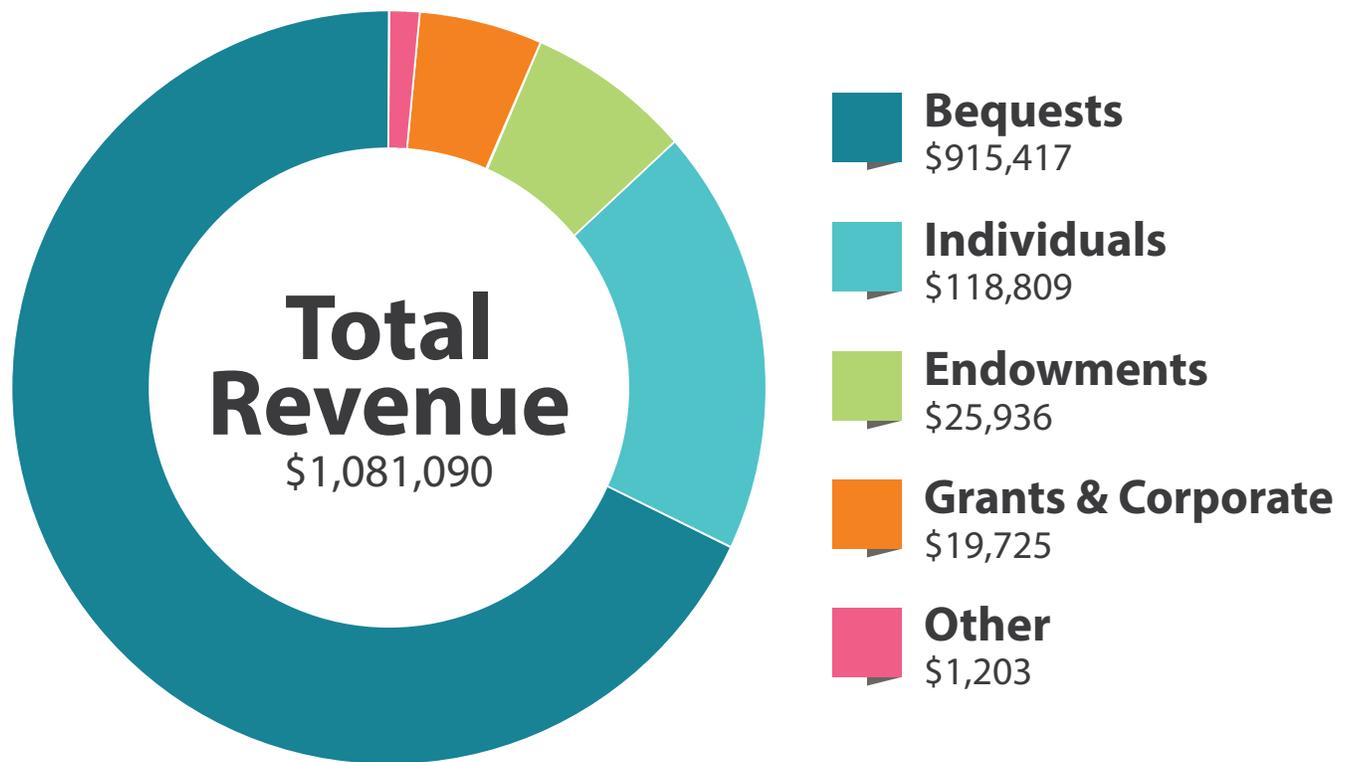


Lois Langer Thompson

Lois Langer Thompson

Executive Director,
Sno-Isle Libraries

Financials



Did You Know?



Support from the Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation helps cover the annual lease expenses for Sno-Isle’s demonstration libraries: Mariner and Lakewood/Smokey Point libraries. Today both libraries provide a full range of library services to their local communities.



The Foundation helps sustain programming that supports library customers year-round, including offering Book Discussion Kits to established and new book groups that provide a welcoming social setting for friends, neighbors, and community members to gather and share ideas.



The Sno-Isle Libraries Bookmobile was purchased with generous past support from Foundation donors. It continues to be a staple in our communities and serves customers who may face barriers to library access.

2021 Foundation Highlights

Increasing library access with Express Lockers

In 2021, the Foundation invested over \$52,000 in the establishment of Sno-Isle Libraries' first-ever Express Lockers at the Monroe and Camano Island Libraries. The goal of this project was to increase access to library materials for customers. Express Lockers enable customers to pick up library materials 24 hours a day, 7 days a week regardless of whether the library is open. The pilot Express Lockers received enthusiastic reviews from customers, and we hope to bring this innovative service to additional locations in the future.



Investing in equitable access to library resources during COVID-19

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance of equity of access for people in the Sno-Isle Libraries communities was starkly highlighted. In response, the Foundation established the Equity/Opportunity Fund to ensure library services are equitably distributed throughout the Library District. The Fund also supports programs that promote inclusion and opportunity in the communities we serve.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our supporters, the Fund raised more than \$185,000 over the course of two years. During this challenging time, we invested funds in two major areas:

Digital Equity & Connectivity. With the purchase of 125 laptop computers and 300 Wi-Fi hotspots, the Foundation helped support economically stressed families and students identified as in need by their school districts.

Literacy. By providing funding for the Home Library Project, the Foundation supported a team of Library staff who worked with social services partners across the library district to distribute over 6,000 books to more than 650 children and their families.

Fostering a culture of learning with Summer Reading

Supported by the Foundation, Sno-Isle Libraries' Summer Reading program provides a fun and engaging way for kids and teens to maintain and improve their reading skills while on summer break. In 2021, we had 4,094 finishers (compared to 2,525 in 2020) and over 1.5 million minutes read! Our largest numbers of readers were ages 7-9. The Foundation funded Summer Reading prize books for the Brier, Mariner, Monroe, Lakewood/Smokey Point, and Stanwood libraries, Library on Wheels, as well as 14 Boys & Girls Clubs in Snohomish and Island Counties with whom Sno-Isle Libraries has a longstanding partnership.





Serving the Lake Stevens community

The Foundation invested \$32,000 in new furniture, early learning toys, and other kid-friendly equipment for the temporary Lake Stevens Library. This investment contributes to a welcoming and inspiring space for Sno-Isle Libraries' youngest customers while we build a permanent new home for the Lake Stevens Library. In addition, the Foundation provided \$10,600 for the purchase of 942 new books and materials for the Lake Stevens Library collection.

Inspiring early literacy

In 2021, the Foundation was thrilled to continue its support of Sno-Isle Libraries' efforts to promote early literacy. In order to reach as many third graders as possible, the Library created an interim reading program, Third Graders Read Together, for the 2021-2022 school year. This gave us an opportunity to try new things, maintain valued relationships with educators, and continue to foster a love of reading without a large investment of school time, especially as schools transitioned back to full-time in-person learning. The support from the Foundation made it possible to:

- Bring Third Graders Read Together to 99 schools from 15 school districts in Snohomish and Island Counties.
- Purchase 2,500 copies of the two featured books, *Jasmine Toguchi, Mochi Queen* by Debbi Michiko Florence and *Stealing the Sword* by Wendy Mass for the participants in 224 classrooms.
- Host two live virtual author events with approximately 760 third graders and educators.
- Host three highly engaging virtual programs: *Online Family Trivia*, *Magnificent Mochi Making!* with Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community, and *Fencing and Sword Fighting! Oh My!* with Kaizen Academy.

Raising mental health awareness

Since 2007, The Nysether Family Collection, established in honor of Eldon and Shirley Nysether, has played an important role in enhancing the Sno-Isle Libraries collection with exciting new materials. Thanks to the generous support from the Nysether Family Foundation, in 2021 we invested \$9,282 in the purchase of 53 new books with focus on Mental Health Awareness. New acquisitions include *We're All Freaking Out (and Why We Don't Need To)* by David Marvin, *101 Ways to Be Less Stressed* by Dr. Caroline Leaf, *Nerve: Adventures in the Science of Fear* by Eva Holland, *Sit Down to Rise Up: How Radical Self-Care Can Change the World* by Shelly Tygielski, and many others! A complete list of books from the Nysether Family Collection can be found at <https://sno-islefoundation.org/nysether-collection/> and all materials are available to borrow.





Your Support Means the World to Us!

Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation is thankful for your generosity in 2021. From transformational estate gifts and donations to our annual fund to contributions to our Equity/Opportunity Fund during COVID-19, this list signifies your passion for literacy, lifelong learning, and equity. Thank you!

\$100,000 and above

The Estate of Dorothy Stevens

\$50,000 - \$10,000

The Estate of Patricia A. Reeve

Friends of the Lake Stevens Library

Gellerson Memorial Fund

Kendall Automotive Group

Sno-Isle Libraries Circle of Friends Fund

Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation
Endowment

Ulla Britta Larson Memorial Fund

\$9,999 - \$5,000

The Dorothy Koch Family Foundation

James Kudebeh & Catherine Carbone

Nysether Family Fund

Passey/Marshall Fund

Trudy J Sundberg Memorial Fund

Whitsitt Family Fund

\$4,999 - \$1,000

Maria Borella

Robin Boyer & Ferrall Jackson

Deborah Brainerd

Cathy Brown

Oren & Gay Campbell

Jackie & Frank DeFazio

De Spain Family Fund

Dickinson Family Foundation

\$4,999 - \$1,000 *(continued)*

Dunsire Family Foundation

Geraldine Faley

Zia Gipson & Richard Davis

Kathy & Dennis Hutton

Clyde & Sandra Johnson

Patrick Johnson

Mary Hawkins Key & Barry Key

John Klister

Melissa Lafranchise

Tom Mayer & Jeanne Thorsen

Casey & Franny Mead

R. Scott Neely

Rose & Craig Olson

Ted & Teresa Rihn

Gail Sailer

Jennifer Schwegler

Ann Service

Taney Stewart

Joseph Stout

Michael & Linda Sullivan

K.E. Tachikawa

Michael & Doris Taylor

Rico Tessandore
& Anna Goykhman

Jeff & Lois Thompson

Snohomish County Department
of Finance

Sonia Siegel Vexler

The Walker Foundation

Oliver & Caroline Whitehead

Jonalyn Woolf-Ivory

\$999-\$500

Barb Adams

Anonymous

Elizabeth Arand

Linda Arink

Benevity

Dylan Chapin

Martha Clatterbaugh

Friends of the Oak Harbor Library

Lucie Johns

Laura Kellogg

Tressa Kentner

EJ & Susi Krouse

Marianne Le

Kenneth Linder

Kenneth Merideth

Nancy Millione

Thu Nguyen

John & Ingrid Osterhaug

Karen Pasewark

Kristin Piepho

Leigh & Laverne Power

Rield Foundation

Conrad Romberg

Lynn Rowley

Katherine Smargiassi

Michael & Mary Jo Stansbury

Barbara Steller

William Whittemore

Lorraine Wong

This list reflects contributions received between January 1 - December 31, 2021.

2021 Trudy Sundberg Lecture Series: What's In Your Water?



The 2021 Trudy Sundberg Lecture Series presented a virtual conversation with Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha – a renowned pediatrician, professor, and public health advocate whose critical research spearheaded efforts to address the 2014 water crisis in Flint, Michigan. In conversation with award-winning broadcast journalist Enrique Cerna, Dr. Hanna-Attisha discussed her powerful book, *What the Eyes Don't See*, a dramatic firsthand account of the signature environmental disaster of our time and a riveting narrative of personal advocacy. 200 guests attended the evening lecture and 400 participated in a student outreach event.

Presented in collaboration with the Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation, the series honors the legacy of Trudy Sundberg, a beloved Whidbey Island teacher and civic leader who made a profound impact on all who knew her.



“
As a Foundation donor and Board member, I support the Sno-Isle Libraries Foundation because I cannot imagine my life without a public library. They are such a remarkable resource! Libraries are the home for personal growth as well as enriching the entire community. They provide free and equal access of ideas, provide a safe and welcoming place for people of all ages, and inspire lifelong learning. By donating to the Foundation, I help fund key innovations, capital improvements and learning opportunities that keep our incredible library system relevant and responsive to our community interests and needs.

— Sonia Siegel Vexler

A Final Note from the Board and Staff

No matter what challenges and inequities we face as a society, libraries remain a cornerstone of our communities and have an indispensable role in building and strengthening our democracy. We are grateful to have supporters like you – our donors, foundations, businesses, and corporate partners – who recognize the vital role Sno-Isle Libraries plays in the lives of Snohomish and Island County residents by providing access to information and resources, upholding the principles of Intellectual Freedom, and serving as community hubs for civic engagement. Your generosity is essential and provides sustainable revenue that the Foundation immediately invests in much-needed programs and services to support the Library's goal of being welcoming, safe, inclusive, and inspiring for all – now and in the future. We can't thank you enough for supporting the work that we do and for investing in your community libraries.



Foundation Board

Luke Distelhorst, President
Jackie DeFazio, Vice President
Kim Drury, Secretary
Randy Yates, Treasurer
Mary Anderson, Board Member
Heather Croteau, Board Member
Sonia Siegel Vexler, Board Member
Rose Olson, Board of Trustees Liaison

Foundation & Library Staff

2021

Christine Stansfield, Interim Director
Charlie Easterson, Administrative Assistant
Rebecca Loney, Director of Public Services
Lois Langer Thompson, Sno-Isle Libraries
Executive Director

2022

Christina Kourteva, Executive Director
Maddy Robles, Administrative Specialist
Rebecca Loney, Director of Public Services
Lois Langer Thompson, Sno-Isle Libraries
Executive Director

Thank
you
for
your
support!

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