



Funds Distribution Report

Recipient Organization:
The Seattle Public Library Foundation

Address:
1000 4th Ave
Seattle, WA 98104

Contact:
(206) 386-4130
<https://supportspl.org>

Organization's General Goals:
The City of Seattle provides funding for basic library services, but The Seattle Public Library Foundation provides funding for additional resources, programs, and services that take our library system to a new level of excellence. The Foundation funds important enhancements to the library, such as added resources and programs for families, seniors, and those with special needs.

Date of Award:	Level:
2020 Q4	\$2,501 to \$5,000

For more information, please read the attached report from The Seattle Public Library Foundation.

8802 27th Ave NE
Tulalip, WA 98271

TulalipCares.org

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The Seattle Public Library Foundation

December 16, 2021

Tulalip Tribes Charitable Fund
Attn: Marilyn Sheldon
8802 27th Avenue NE
Tulalip, WA 98271

Dear Tulalip Tribes Charitable Fund Trustees,

On behalf of The Seattle Public Library Foundation, I want to thank you for your support of The Seattle Public Library's Raising A Reader program with a grant of [REDACTED] for the 2020-21 year (code Q4 2020 14.2).

The Raising A Reader (RAR) program, a key initiative within The Seattle Public Library's Youth & Family Learning Programs, works with early learning centers and home care providers to support low-income and immigrant families of color in building strong reading practices and cultures in their homes. RAR's mission is to work with low-income families, especially those who do not speak English, to develop pre-reading skills and promote daily "book cuddling" between parents or caregivers and their children.

The program serves as a connector between children and their families and their local library branches. The program encourages attending Library story times, which are offered in English, Spanish, Somali, Chinese, and other world languages. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, story times have been offered virtually, with in-person or hybrid models now starting. In a regular program year, children bring home a red bag each week that is filled with multicultural and developmentally appropriate books. During the program year, families have access to a robust collection of books and receive support for developing skills to support reading readiness.

In the 2020-21 program year, 1,089 children, ages 18 months to 5 years, participated. While the COVID-19 pandemic deeply affected enrollment and the ease with which services could be delivered, most of the annual program goals were still met. Books were put in the hands of children and families, and parents/caregivers participated in reading aloud and virtual story times. Materials were distributed to increase parental knowledge of child development and to share tips on building book sharing routines.

That said, the pandemic had a direct impact on our community partners, and therefore, on enrolled families. The 2020-21 program year saw a decrease in enrollment of approximately 38 percent compared to the previous year (1,089 vs 1,746 children enrolled). Some sites simply did not have the capacity to implement the program due to low staffing levels and focus on direct services to ensure families had access to basic needs.

Programs also reported losing connections with families after closing. The majority of RAR families are BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color), and many participating parents are essential workers, whose children were most likely being cared for by other family members instead of being sent to care centers.

SPL RAR Program Manager CiKeithia Pugh and her team were in frequent communication with community partners to learn what the RAR families needed most. While many families were still struggling with limited access to technology and internet connectivity in their homes, most families stated that their priorities were health and safety, while dealing with the economic impact of COVID-19 on job losses, food and housing insecurity, and the

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social and emotional impacts on their children.

When asked how SPL could best support BIPOC families during this time, the community response again and again was that what was needed most from SPL – and as rapidly as possible – were not online platforms, but physical books.

This led to a shift in the program model where the objective became ensuring program participants had continued access to books and activity materials, while still providing online programs such as virtual story times. SPL worked with families to make sure those with internet access were familiar with the on-demand RAR content available on the website. For those without internet access, SPL worked with community partners to distribute Wi-Fi Hotspots in areas most in need.

In response to community feedback, take-home Family Packs were created, which included 6 high-quality, multicultural books incorporating a variety of genres; 1 wordless and 5 bilingual English and Spanish titles; a Bilingual Family Guide providing 12 weeks of content to reinforce early reading concepts and reading tips; a children's journal and crayons; copies of Highlights/High Five/Bilingue magazines; and instructions on how to access online activity sheets, read alouds, and additional tips and videos at the RAR website.

Once programs began in-person or hybrid services, each participating classroom and home visiting program received a Standard Kit that included: 80 books (foundational, language, and special topics supplements); 1 red bag for each participating child/family; and teacher materials (Implementer Guide, EL activities, pocket chart and materials for tracking book bag rotation). These programs operated under the standard model of rotating books each week. Children receiving in-person services took home a red bag with 4 books each week.

Programs operating over the summer received a Summer Family Pack, which included a bilingual family guide with 6 weeks of daily learning activities; a bilingual Kindergarten Readiness Guide; 4 bilingual books; copies of Highlights/High Five/Bilingue magazines; a reading journal; letters, crayons, and counting manipulatives; a digital book library, and a drawstring book bag.

A participating parent stated: “The red bags with books were so appreciated. It gave us a chance as a family to share reading and other activities together.” A family childcare provider shared: “We have been essential this entire time, and I haven’t had a break during the pandemic. At times it was very scary for us. We were worried not just for ourselves, but also our parents many of whom are essential workers too. It feels good to have something to offer families that resembles some sense of normalcy.”

The program has expanded to serve all Seattle Preschool Program, Seattle Preschool Program Plus, and Head Starts operated by Seattle Public Schools. In fall 2021, SPL’s Youth & Family Learning team added a new Program Coordinator, who will directly manage and support the Southeast Seattle region Raising A Reader sites.

We are most grateful for the Tulalip Tribes Charitable Fund’s generous support as the Library continues serving our community’s youngest readers. If you have further questions about this report, please let me know. Many thanks for your investment in the Library’s Early Literacy Programs!

Sincerely,



Kara McDonald
Director of Philanthropy and Planned Giving
www.supportspl.org (Foundation) / www.spl.org (Library)