THE FRIENDS OF THE SAINT PAUL PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Case for The Friends: Supporting Message Menu

We know: Libraries are essential for thriving communities.

The Case for the Library

- Beyond books, libraries are places for everyone to learn, connect, discover, and grow.
- Libraries are critical, democratic "social infrastructure" and technology-rich community centers.
- Libraries support education, workforce development, and social connection. They make it easy to connect with learning, information, and people.
- Libraries are centers for early learning and family learning.
- Libraries are hubs for digital inclusion, providing internet and computer access.
- Libraries reflect and respond to their multicultural communities.
- Libraries provide free, equitable access to learning across a lifetime and contribute to a stronger, more resilient Saint Paul.

The challenge: Public funding isn't enough to provide the resources that residents seek.

- The Saint Paul Public Library is a department of the City of Saint Paul and receives a portion of tax dollars from residents. This funding supports library staff wages, building operations, and library materials (i.e. items that get loaned).

The solution: The Friends invests in the library through fundraising, advocacy, and programming.

- The Friends raises money from thousands of supporters, including individuals, corporations, and foundations.
- Through public advocacy, we engage citizen voices and work with elected officials to ensure strong public investment in the library. The library identifies priorities; The Friends supports them.
- The Library of Congress designated The Friends as our state's Center for the Book. As such, we promote reading, literacy, libraries, and books statewide.
- Our programs connect readers and writers. Our most beloved and visible programs and events are Fireside Reading Series, Minnesota Book Awards, and Opus and Olives.
- Our core work is in and for Saint Paul. We also support libraries, readers, and writers across the state and country which allows us to bring more resources and recognition back to SP.
- We share our expertise to strengthen libraries nationally through our consulting services, Library Strategies.

As a result: Because of The Friends' support, the library can respond better to community needs, so their communities thrive.

The Friends makes these library services possible:

- Homework help and one-on-one tutoring
- Maker spaces for teens with access to technology and creative resources
- Digital literacy training and workforce development, including resume and job search assistance
- Cultural liaisons and programs that engage underrepresented groups of library users
- Multiple, culturally-specific storytimes and play-and-learn spaces
- Trauma-sensitive Library training and social work services
- Ongoing professional development for library staff
- Technology and broadband access, including WiFi hotspots
- Bookmobile services and materials