



VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY
FOUNDATION

2022-2023

ANNUAL REPORT



INSIDE:
*Celebrating How You
Connect & Uplift the Community*

From the Board Chair and Executive Director



Olin Anton
Board Chair

Over the last year, we've been delighted to see more and more people returning to in-person activities at VPL. **Foot traffic to branches increased from 2.8M to over 4M** as community members visited their Libraries to borrow materials, attend programs, and make the informal, face-to-face connections that we missed acutely as the pandemic stretched on.

When the Library was ready to welcome the community back with a full suite of live programming, **the Foundation was there with the assistance of our generous donors.** Your support provided continued funding for beloved signature programs such as Teen Writing and Book Camp, Mother Goose, Man in the Moon, and Alligator Pie, along with support to expand offerings like Language Fun Storytime (*more about this on page #4*). Program participation rose from 91,393 in 2021 to 134,420 in 2022 and continues to rise through 2023.

Meanwhile, the shift toward remote work saw thousands of locals rediscovering Library spaces. **Activity on Levels 8 and 9 of Central Library, funded by donors and opened in 2018, increases daily.** Every branch is livelier than ever with remote workers, students, and creators like Larissa (*featured on page #6*) making use of VPL's free Wi-Fi, computers, specialized software, databases, and other resources to boost their productivity, level-up their skills, and connect with colleagues and peers.

The renewed enthusiasm for in-person events and experiences comes at a time when loneliness, across the globe, is reaching an all-time high. In 2021, a survey by Statistics Canada found that more than 40 percent of Canadians feel lonely some or all the time, and with that comes significantly increased risk for several health conditions, decreased lifespan, reduced productivity in the workplace, worsened performance in school, and diminished civic engagement. **Vancouver Public Library – and Libraries all around the world – provide many kinds of social infrastructure to help address this growing challenge.**

Here at the VPL Foundation, we saw an opportunity to **build social connections through giving back with an accessible and celebratory event series** hosted in Central Library's upper level and rooftop garden. Library enthusiasts and long-standing supporters came together to connect through a fun atmosphere, shared passion for books, and desire to discover and support an inspiring place (*more about this on page #9*). The Rooftop Remix series raised funds for new soundproof work pods – which will give Vancouverites more places to meet, work, and connect – all while we enjoyed three fantastic evenings together.

We hope you enjoy reading about how your generosity made a difference in our 2022/23 Annual Report.

With Gratitude,

Olin Anton, Board Chair

Jenny Marsh, Executive Director

Coming Soon: Spectacular Transformation at Children's Library

Almost three decades after VPL's Central Library first opened its doors, **we are thrilled to share some exciting news about the Children's Library!** This initiative will not only update and enhance, but also expand a beloved public space that has been a beacon of learning and discovery for thousands of Vancouver families.

Fostering literacy and a love of learning begins in infancy and is a strong predictor of lifelong happiness and success. VPL is dedicated to offering innovative programs and services that align with the latest research in child development, ensuring that young readers and learners have the very best environment to grow and thrive. This project will help families connect within our community while addressing the crucial need for accessible indoor spaces in the heart of downtown Vancouver.



The Children's Library Revitalization Project is poised to transform the lower level of Central Library into a vibrant hub for young readers and their families. **Imagine a place where children – from newborns to tweens – can embark on immersive journeys of reading, writing, playing, singing, and talking – all for free.**

Here are some exciting elements of this new public space:

- A hands-on programming room that will host over **1,000 children's programs** every year, reaching more than **35,000 participants**.
- For VPL's youngest patrons, aged 0-6, an early learning space filled with **interactive play elements that will spark their curiosity and imaginations**.
- A **dedicated space for children with sensory needs** and hidden nooks for reading to provide a calm and welcoming environment.
- **Multi-level play structures** for children to engage in full-body play, where adventures await around every corner!
- **Expanded activity areas** for families and children **ages 6-12** to explore STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) activities.
- A comfortable **parents' room for caregivers** to feed and care for VPL's youngest visitors.

We can't wait to unveil this heartwarming project, and anticipate its completion by 2025. **This project is made possible by generous donations from the Dilawri Foundation and the Nicola Family Foundation, alongside individual donors and with City of Vancouver support.**

Together, we're creating a brighter future for our young readers and their families. Stay tuned for more updates as we embark on this incredible journey of love and learning!

Lifting Little Voices

The Simon K.Y. Lee Foundation Brings More Language Fun to Local Families

Have you ever struggled to express your ideas and feelings? Or felt the frustration and disconnect that comes with not feeling heard? Can you imagine only having a couple of words and signs to convey your emotions and navigate a newly discovered world?

Now, imagine the difference that stringing together two words, pointing to a favorite picture book, or singing snippets of a beloved song can make. **For toddlers and their families facing communication challenges, improving these abilities can be a profound game-changer.**

Every child is unique, and there’s immense variability in what 3-5 year-olds can communicate. **This is where a special program offered by the Vancouver Public Library (VPL) steps in, providing invaluable support to Vancouver families** in nurturing the building blocks of communication and pre-literacy for their little ones.

In the heart of Vancouver, a transformative program known as Language Fun Storytime has been making



a significant impact on children and families for nearly 15 years. This unique collaboration between Speech and Language Pathologists (SLPs) and VPL is an initiative aimed at providing tailored storytime support for children aged 3 to 5 who are already receiving speech therapy through Vancouver Coastal Health.

Thanks to the generous support of the **Simon K.Y. Lee Foundation**, this innovative program has made a lasting, positive impact on young lives and reached countless local families.

Language Fun Storytime isn't just a program; it's a sanctuary of growth, learning, and understanding for children who face communication challenges. What sets this program apart is the personalized attention each child receives and the supportive environment it offers to both children and their caregivers. With a limited group size of eight children, SLPs and children's Librarians collaborate to provide individualized guidance and one-on-one support to each child.

Traditional large storytimes can be overwhelming for children with behavioural or communication challenges. The intimate environment of Language Fun offers them a safe haven where they can relax and thrive. In the judgment-free atmosphere carefully cultivated by the Librarian and SLP duo, children are empowered to engage with the stories and move their bodies as needed.

Rhea Lazar, co-developer of the program and a practicing Speech and Language Pathologist for over 37 years, emphasizes the importance of this acceptance and community for caregivers as well.

She explains, "The parents feel great relief because we've given them permission to just be. For some of them, it is their first time experiencing a warm welcome in the community space."

This opportunity for connection is vital for the whole family. Rhea has witnessed the loneliness that caregivers often feel before they join the program: "The parents often feel isolated and think they're the only ones with a child facing these challenges. Then, in Language Fun, they support each other in a beautiful way." This support can range from friendly greetings and helping with baby siblings to sharing therapies and activities that have worked for their family, and arranging follow-up playdates after the 8-week program concludes.

This sense of community also boosts the children's confidence. Rhea shares a magical moment from Language Fun when a little boy, initially speaking only one word at a time, suddenly burst forth with two words during one of the later sessions. The whole group cheered for him, celebrating his achievement and witnessing his palpable pride.

Thanks to community support, this program bestows lifelong gifts upon the children and their families. It nurtures communication skills that they will use every day and promotes a love of reading and storytelling that will aid in learning, exploration, and discovery beyond these formative years. It also establishes a vital connection to the local Library and its Librarians that can benefit them throughout their lives.

Rhea believes that "books can change the world," and that the right book can draw in any child. She finds that stories inspire children and can truly captivate them. Identifying the children's interests and what excites them through books plays a pivotal role in elevating their communication skills.

As Language Fun Storytime shapes the lives of children and families, it reminds us that transformation can begin with a story, a nurturing environment, and the unwavering support of a community. **The Simon K.Y. Lee Foundation's dedication to this program inspires us, as it affirms that positive change happens when individuals and organizations come together.**



At the core of Language Fun Storytimes is the telling of one story three ways. The first time the story is told by a facilitator who reads the story to the group. The book is read slowly and clearly to give children time to process what they're hearing.

The second time the story is told using felt pieces on a felt board. Children are encouraged to help re-tell the story by taking turns putting felt pieces on the board.

The third time the children take the lead in telling the storytelling. They are given toys and props to play with and to use to re-tell their favourite parts of the story.



Keeping Vancouver Creative

How the Library Empowers Artists in Vancouver

As part of Vancouver’s bustling creative scene, sculptor and artist Larissa faced a dilemma shared by many fellow artists – the ever-worsening housing crisis. Vancouver’s skyrocketing rents and limited spaces have forced countless artists to leave their beloved city, while making it increasingly difficult for new talent to join the vibrant arts community. However, for Larissa, **a workshop at the Vancouver Public Library opened up a world of creative possibilities** and she sees the Library offering a lifeline to artists navigating this challenging landscape.

Larissa’s journey began when she decided to take a **Citizen Journalism** workshop hosted by the **Vancouver Public Library’s Inspiration Lab, which opened in 2015 through the generous support of donors**. Drawn to learning new skills and exploring fresh avenues of self-expression, Larissa sought a creative outlet that didn’t demand the physical space her sculpting work required.

In her quest to share her perspective as a biracial artist through more performance-based mediums, she gravitated towards storytelling through new platforms like podcasting, stand-up comedy, and music.

The Citizen Journalism workshops not only expanded Larissa’s artistic repertoire but also fostered a newfound sense of accessibility to the Lab’s resources. Becoming familiar with the equipment and gaining confidence in her abilities, **Larissa left the workshops with a renewed spirit of empowerment**. She is using the skills she acquired to tell captivating stories through different channels.

Delving into stand-up comedy and music, she admits she has stretched her boundaries and has pushed past her introverted tendencies. “I feel unnatural trying to perform!” she laughs, “In my most natural state, I am a



Larissa’s story goes beyond her personal journey. It’s a testament to the power of public resources, especially for artists grappling with the housing crisis.

pure introvert cozied up in my recliner, admiring my plants and sipping my tea.” Through improv classes and free workshops offered by VPL, she challenged herself in ways she never thought possible.

But Larissa’s story goes beyond her personal journey. **It’s a testament to the power of public resources, especially for artists grappling with affordability challenges.** Larissa is greatly saddened that many of her peers have been pushed out of the city by exorbitant rents.

Larissa believes the Library and our community standing together play a critical role in preserving Vancouver’s creative community. She sees it as a problem that can be solved through collective action and institutions like the Library that create a collective wealth of resources: “I think of it as what can WE do? What can your family, neighbourhood, and community do? We need to work in solidarity with each other so that all of us can benefit from this communal wealth at the Library.”

Larissa emphasizes, “Communities feel strong when everyone has more options and the chance to feel a sense of place. The Library provides that.” The Library offers artists like Larissa a refuge—a safe, welcoming space where they can be inspired, create, connect, and thrive.

As Larissa sees it, VPL is part of a national movement of Libraries choosing to stand alongside artists, offering invaluable resources. **Larissa herself has benefited from drawing tablets, recording studios, editing software, and free, accessible spaces.** This access is more than convenience; it’s a lifeline for artists struggling to find their footing in a city that often seems determined to price them out.

“We need each other,” Larissa mused. It’s a call for solidarity, an acknowledgment that communal resources, like those provided by the Library, should be accessible to all. **In a world where opportunities can seem scarce, the Library is a beacon of hope—a place where artists like Larissa can keep Vancouver’s artistic community going strong.**



Larissa loves to take inspiration from the natural world and then imagine how it could evolve in ways that are fantastical and futuristic. When you look at her work she wants you to see something familiar, but then to take a look again and see something in a new light.

Two Hearts, One Legacy Gift: Flannery & Ryan

Fifteen years ago, in the cozy corner of a dusty bookstore in California, Flannery and Ryan’s love story began. This meeting set the stage for a life filled with a shared passion for books, a love of animals, and a heartfelt commitment to giving back to their community.

They describe the decision to give back to the Vancouver Public Library and make a gift in their will as a “no brainer” for them.

For Flannery, her giving is guided by a simple, yet powerful principle instilled in her from a young age: “If you have enough, you have enough to share.” She firmly believes in the responsibility of individuals to contribute to the collective well-being of society. For Ryan, his motivation to support the Library comes from an aligned value: that the Library provides free access to knowledge and learning to anyone that wants it.

For both Flannery and Ryan, giving back to the Library is about a commitment to their community.

In a rapidly changing world, they appreciate how Libraries have evolved to meet the needs of the community. They trust that the Library will continue to adapt, guided by its commitment to serving everyone. For Ryan, supporting the Library means supporting a place for all, while Flannery takes pride in being part of an enthusiastic community of Library users, eager to enter this invaluable space each day.

Flannery and Ryan both have a deep love for the Library and appreciate what it does for them, their friends, and their neighbours. They want to keep it going well into the future with their gift. **They understand that what they leave behind is an opportunity to ensure that future generations can continue to access the wealth of knowledge and resources the Library provides.**



Flannery and Ryan’s love story, rooted in books, adventure, shared values, and a passionate commitment to their community, shows just how transformative the power of love and giving are. **They exemplify the belief that, while we can’t take our material wealth with us, the impact of our generosity can continue on, creating a brighter future for all.**

Flannery and Ryan both have a deep love for the Library and appreciate what it does for them, their friends, and their neighbours. They want to keep it going well into the future with their gift.

Rooftop Remix: Celebrating Community & Connection!

What does it look like to gather after a pandemic? What can a Library fundraiser look like in a more inclusive format?

In Summer 2022, VPL Foundation was pleased to host our first-ever Rooftop Remix series at Central Library. The primary goal was to bring together people who love and use the Library – to invite connection, joy, and celebration.

It was also an opportunity to raise awareness that Levels 8, 9, and the spectacular rooftop garden exist because of donor support from our community. **These spaces are an excellent example of what is possible when Library lovers come together to give back to their Libraries.**

Part of Rooftop Remix’s magic was that it connected long-standing supporters, who had not attended an in-person event in years, with new folks eager to celebrate and support the Library. Casey Dela Cruz, one of the event organizers, shared his delight in witnessing the diversity of our Library community represented among the attendees.

He said, **“We were proud to see such a diverse group of people coming together. It was like a microcosm for the Library community.”** This diversity is an integral part of what makes both the event and our VPL Foundation community so special.



Jenny Marsh, our Executive Director, shares how the Library space set the tone for the event: “This space is magical. It doesn’t need much dressing up. **We just need to invite people in. I am thrilled the event shines a light on this wonderful place and on what Library supporters can achieve to make our city better, together.”**

Connecting through a fun atmosphere, a shared passion for books – and in an inspiring setting – many of the attendees were reluctant to leave. Jenny was pleased to see so much of our community enjoying themselves and together again. She concluded: “Rooftop Remix felt so celebratory and happy and energizing. It gave us all a renewed sense of shared community.”

Funds raised through the Rooftop Remix will go towards funding **new soundproof work pods**, providing more people with places to meet, connect, and work effectively at Central Library. VPL Foundation extends a heartfelt thank you to our event sponsors: **Deloitte** and **Jarislowsky Fraser**. This year, we were pleased to add **Boyden** and **Odlum Brown** as event sponsors as well.



Board of Directors



Beth Ann Locke

“Growing up, I found fresh worlds to explore every week at my local library. Now libraries are community hubs with portals to learning, entertainment, job resources, and access to opportunities. I joined the VPLF Board to keep building our communities.”



Craig Hemer

“I believe that libraries are cornerstones of literacy and windows on the world for all. It is critical that we support libraries which in turn helps to develop a more engaged society.”



Eugene Lee

“I volunteer for VPLF so I can support an organization that helps build vibrant and inclusive communities.”



Grant Conroy

“Libraries, and all the services they provide, are critical for a healthy and flourishing society. They offer education and equality, two values that are important for me. Many famous journeys began in a Library, and so many more are about to begin.”



Greg Oyhenart (Vice-Chair)

“I volunteer for VPLF because we provide the support that helps people from every walk of life to reach their fullest potential.”



Hitesh Kothary, CPA, CA

“I volunteer for VPLF as the library plays a critical role in providing access to literacy and education for all members of society as well as providing a safe gathering space for the community.”



Jaclyn Tsang

“Growing up, the library provided a space to explore, nurture, and satisfy my curious mind. At their core, libraries remain patient, caring, and kind, all while ensuring equality of access. I am committed to ensuring VPL has the resources to continue to thrive and uplift our communities for future generations.”



Jamie Broadhurst

“I volunteer for VPLF because a great city must have a great library system that is accessible for everyone.”



Jason McDaniel

“The library has provided a critical connection to the community for my family. It was a safe and peaceful place to study in my youth and now my four children have all benefited from their many journeys of learning and exploration at our local branch.”



Olin Anton, FCPA, FCA (Chair)

“I benefited from a robust library system when I was growing up, and now have the honour of contributing to the health of today's library system for the benefit of all Vancouverites.”



Raji Mangat

“Libraries are magical places that profoundly shape individuals and communities for today and tomorrow. It's an honour to be a small part of that magic.”



Sean Muggah

“VPL plays such a vital role in supporting and connecting our region's diverse communities – and in providing an open and enriching environment that is accessible to all. I am honoured to have the opportunity to serve and support one of North America's most highly regarded public library systems.”



Terry Salman (Chair Emeritus)

“Libraries offer so much to everyone in our community, regardless of their circumstances. Watching people from so many different backgrounds streaming through the doors of Vancouver's Central Library together inspires me to champion this important cause.”

A Message from VPL

In 2022, VPL saw our community and our staff returning to the activities that make every day at the library meaningful and rewarding.

We welcomed people back to in-person programs and could once again see the joy that comes from connections between people and with the library in our neighbourhoods, including through our new early learning space at Britannia Branch. It was wonderful to bring back our Teen Writing and Book Camp and our Early Learning conference for caregivers, in-person for the first time in three years. Activities like these, along with the storytimes that we deliver nearly every day across the city, bring the library to life.

We welcomed the increasing role of libraries as space for remote workers, demonstrating the importance shared spaces and experiences. At the end of the year, our Accessible Services moved to Level 3 of Central Library, making our services for people living with disabilities more visible and integrated with our other services.

Our continued commitment to lifelong learning programs in 2022 contributed to belonging and connection for people across Vancouver, and beyond. We welcomed adults back to programs that build cultural understanding like “Uplift Asian”; we offered career development support; we enhanced digital



Eden Fine Day
Indigenous Storyteller in Residence

literacy, and we continued our work on advancing Truth and Reconciliation.

We were honoured to have Eden Fine Day as the 2022 Indigenous Storyteller in Residence and were proud

to respond to community needs by developing a new program “Indigenous Considerations for Newcomers” that connected new Canadians with knowledge and context to participate in conversations about Indigenous culture and history.

In the fall of 2022, we undertook a public awareness and attitudes survey, which provided insights that validated the important role that VPL plays in the community and demonstrated that we are making progress on the goals set out in VPL's Strategic Plan. Your feedback will help us plan for the future. This will be supported by work on equity, diversity and inclusion within the organization, as we aim to be a workplace that reflects the diversity of our community and where all our staff feel a sense of belonging.

Everything we achieve would not be possible without VPL's incredible staff and volunteers. Thank you for all that you do, each day, to make VPL a vital and welcoming part of our community.

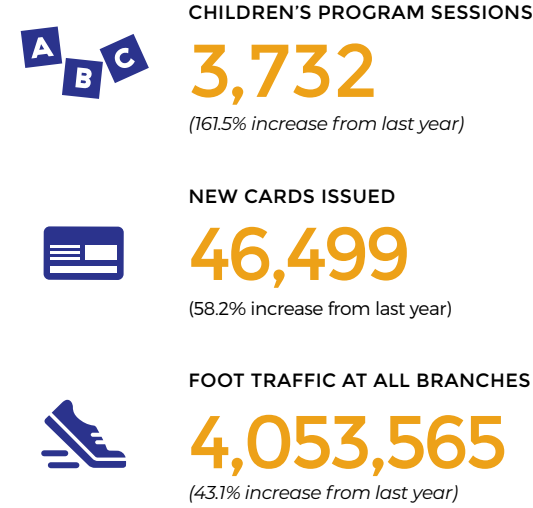
Sincerely,



Christina de Castell
Chief Librarian & CEO



Kevin Lowe
Board Chair

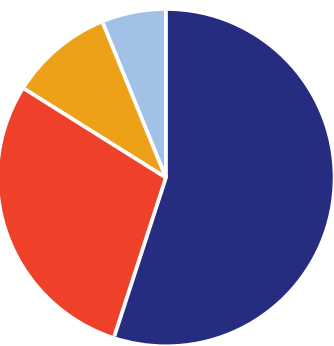


[Click here to read VPL's full 2022 annual report.](#)

Financials

Revenue by Designation

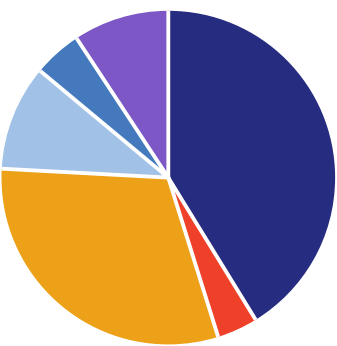
as a percentage of funds raised



Area of Greatest Need	54%
Library Spaces	29%
Collections, Programs & Services	10%
Children and Teens	7%

Revenue by Source

as a percentage of funds raised



Individuals	41%
Monthly Sustainers	4%
Corporations	31%
Gifts in Will	10%
Government of Canada	5%
Investment Income	9%

Expenses



Employee Salaries & Benefits

\$493,128



Administrative Costs

\$152,114



Total Expenses

\$645,242

Total Raised FY 23*



\$2,049,831

*Year ended June 30, 2023

To see full audited financial statements
please visit vpfl.ca/financial-responsibility

Thank You.

Vancouver Public Library and the Vancouver Public Library Foundation thank all those who generously gave their support in 2022-2023.

\$500,000+

Dilawri Group of Companies; The Nicola Family Foundation; The Estate of Anton Stramitz

\$100,000-\$499,999

Richard & Sandra Durrans; Simon K.Y. Lee Foundation; Sun Life Financial

\$10,000-\$99,999

Anonymous; Olin & Suzanne Anton; Diamond Foundation; Employment & Social Development Canada; Essential Needs Foundation; Elizabeth Anne Farmer; Maureen & Larry Lunn; David Morrow; The Reidler Foundation; Ruby Fund, held at Vancouver Foundation; Dr. Linda Siegel; Taylor Taliesin Foundation; TD Bank Group

\$1,000-\$9,999

Anonymous; Anako Foundation; Frank Anfield & Beth Locke; Charlotte Baynes; Beech Foundation; Paul Bennett & Catherine Olsen; Scott Bissillion; Tracy Bond; Marilyn Books; Robert S. Bovaird; Leanne Currie; Deloitte; Neil Duke & Candace Yip; Face the World Foundation; David Fairhall; Shelagh Flaherty; Pamela Francis; Martin Glynn; Andrew & Joan Grant; The Greygates Foundation; Craig & Lori Hemer; Holdstock/Varga Family; Donna Hossack; Hotfusion Communications Inc.; Howes Burley family & Jarislowky Fraser Private Wealth Management; Karen Keilty & Doug Smith; Andrea Carol Hawkes & Hitesh Kothary; CEBE Lee Family Fund held at Vancouver Foundation; Lightburn Family Fund, held at Vancouver Foundation; Hoong Lim (林轰); Lohn Foundation; Love to Sew Podcast; Ian MacKinnon & Karly Cook; Betty & Kelly Mah; The McDaniel family; Deborah Meredith; Margaux Murphy; Muggah &

Shimada Family; Not Just Coffee Fund held at and administered by Vancity Community Foundation; Odlum Brown; Oyhenart Family; Gillian Parlane; Point Grey Village Business Association; Jim Poole; Postmedia Raise-a-Reader, Decoda Literacy Solutions Society & the Province of British Columbia; RBC Global Asset Management; Philip Resnick; Douglas & Sheila Rogers and The Kingfisher Foundation; Terry & Chris Salman; Laurelle Shalagan; Bill Stilwell; Ian & Pear Storrs; Paul & Joan Whitney

\$500-\$999

AK; Anonymous; George & Donna Battye Fund, held at Vancouver Foundation; Mary Lynn Baum & Steve F. Savitt; Bottomer Family; Cheung Family; Dragon Fire Fund, held at Vancouver Foundation; Karen Ericson; Linda Farrell; Deborah & William Gibson; Laura Gordon; Mary Ellen Graham; James Green; Nancy Hill; Terry & Charlene Krepiakevich; Sonia Lam; Nancy & Bruce Lanphear; Vancity Community Foundation - Lepawsky Family Fund; Hugh Lindsay; James Lucas; Richard Lai Yok & Cecilia Sui Ying Ma; Mollie Massie & Hein Poulus; Lisa McIntosh; Shea Miles; Louise & Ian Mummery; Anne Christine Murray; Judith Parker & Donna Kaye; Marion Pearson & Jim Orr Fund, held at the Vancouver Foundation; Dave & Dana Prescott; The Rong Family; Danielle & David Sharp-Bell; Barbara Small; Wendy K. Sutton; Margaux Taveau; Frances Tessier; Ting Ting Jiang Memorial Fund, held at Vancouver Foundation; Donna Wyman

\$200-\$499

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Anonymous; Veronica Aimone; Kim Barry & Simon Jacobs; Joanne Baxter; Nick & Marnie Blom; Catherine Bock; Drew Bodaly; Priscilla Boucher; Russell & Susan Boyd; Bryan & Liz; Joel & Carrie Bradley; Ken Brooks; Dr. William Bruneau; Melody Burton; The Carruthers Family; David Chercover; Pat Christiansen; Mark Clark & Barbara Lindsay; Jacquie Clark; Clodigoose Family; Kay & Jon Collins; Lynn Copeland; Quinn Crosina & Rod Locke; Cull Family Fund; Ashley Curammeng; Natalie Cushing; Richard Dancy; Darras & Morrison Family; Keith & Betty Dawson; Anne-Marie Dekker; Depford Family; Rapti Dietrich; Peter Dodek; David Dowis & Janet Dowis; Lori Driussi; Richard & Danielle Dunn; Joseph Erpenbeck; Duncan & Nota Etches; Catherine Evans; Rob & Maria Faccio; Joanne Fawcett; Dr. Elizabeth Fendley; Marguerite Ford; Marlene Franks; Froese Family; Chie Garcia; Alice Garry; Carole Gerson; Gordon & Kathleen Gray; Paul Greisman;

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