

Advance

•*Advocacy* •*Resources* •*Stewardship*

Indianapolis-Marion County
Public Library Foundation
State of Indiana

Strategic Plan: 2009-2013

February 2009

INTRODUCTION

For many years, the Public Library in Indianapolis benefited from a gift fund that consisted primarily of memorial gifts and special donations used for the purchase of books and other library materials. When Harold Sander became Director of Public Libraries for Indianapolis in 1956, he brought with him the hope of establishing a foundation to encourage gifts, bequests, and endowments to the Public Library. It was not until the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library was established in 1968, following the separation of the Indianapolis Public Library as an entity of the Indianapolis Board of School Commissioners, that Mr. Sander could proceed with his plan to establish a public library foundation.

Planning and organization for the foundation began in 1968, and on February 25, 1969, the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library Foundation was officially established as a not-for-profit corporation. Today, the Foundation provides funding for a wide array of library programs including children's outreach efforts, lectures, and diversity programming. The Foundation works closely with the Library to serve the lifelong learning and literacy needs of the Indianapolis community, providing many funding opportunities. For example, the community has placed a high priority on early childhood literacy, which the Library and Foundation can help address. The Library also has a large and diverse user base, which the Foundation hopes to utilize for fundraising efforts.

In February of 2008, the Library's Board of Trustees appointed former Purdue University President, Dr. Martin Jischke, and his wife, Mrs. Patty Jischke, to lead a group of community leaders and draft a plan for the Library's future. This initiative culminated in a comprehensive strategic plan for the Library titled: *Leading a Learning Community*. In the summer of 2008, the Foundation's Board of Directors embarked upon a strategic planning process, to be built upon the Library's new strategic plan to enable the Foundation to provide the resources and assistance the Library needs to make its strategic plan successful.

Through greater *Advocacy*, *Resources*, and *Stewardship* – that undergird the Foundation's strategic plan: "*Advance*" – the Foundation will advance the mission and work of the Library. The Board of Directors and staff of the Foundation look forward to implementing this plan, which will focus on serving the community. More specifically, through Foundation funding and advocacy efforts, the Library will be in a better position to expand its childhood literacy efforts, grow its outreach efforts for lifelong learners, augment its virtual library offerings, and enhance the Library's sense of place that provides a warm, welcoming environment for the Indianapolis community.

MISSION

Promote

The Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library Foundation supports and enhances programs, services, and facilities of the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library, and its partnerships in lifelong learning initiatives that benefit a diverse community.

Key Characteristics:

- Sustained private resources garnered, developed, and deployed with contemporary capacity for programs and services in response to the needs of a diverse learning community.
- Robust private funding support to meet the growing needs of the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library.
- Widely acclaimed Foundation-funded programs and services with a demonstrable and growing community impact.
- Excellent public accountability and transparency that help build public trust.

VISION

Advance

The Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library Foundation will be recognized as an esteemed advocacy and fundraising organization, with outstanding stewardship of private resources, dedicated to the success of the Library and its learning community.

Key Characteristics:

- Attainment of positive public opinion toward the Foundation and the Library, and success in growing community support for the Library to further its mission.
- Sustained success in achieving aggressive fundraising goals and favorable return on investments in support of the Library in ***Leading a Learning Community***.
- Leadership as an innovative foundation in the community, recognized by peers across the nation.
- Recognition for a sustainable business model, with a Board of Directors that represents diverse backgrounds and skills.

GOALS

Goal 1: Advocacy

Advocate the importance of public and private support to the Library and lifelong learning programs serving the community.

Key Characteristics:

- Community ownership of the vital role of the Library and its outreach in advancing learning among diverse populations, and in addressing critical educational concerns.
- Community understanding of the role of the Foundation in promoting, supporting, and advancing the Library and the distinction of this role from that of the Library.
- Public understanding of the impact of the Foundation's support to the Library and other learning programs in advancing a learning community.
- Widespread community understanding of the Library's fiscal needs, and the importance of the partnership of public and private funds to meet these needs.
- Community commitment toward supporting the Library's fiscal needs with public funds as its core support.
- Broad understanding of the Library's advancement needs that selectively require private funding to complement the core public funds in support of programs and services.

Key Strategies:

- Enhance the image and role of the Foundation through brand identity and related message development as the critical support for the Library to complement its core public support.
- Expand communication initiatives, including media relations, to connect with the various constituencies of the Foundation to benefit the Library.
- Undertake constituent market research and focused marketing of the Foundation's mission, vision, and goals that promote the Library to achieve success.
- Forge constructive relationships with community leaders with a view to securing lasting support for the Library's programs and services.
- Develop strategic partnerships with complementary and like-minded organizations to anchor the leadership of the Foundation toward collaborative ventures.

- Promote grassroots advocacy initiatives by engaging community members, and instilling in them a sense of ownership toward the Foundation and the Library.

Key Metrics:

- Annual survey with Library patrons to assess:
 - Public perception of quality of programs/services
 - Public understanding of Library financing
 - Public understanding of the role of the Foundation
 - Measurement of image with potential donors
- Annual survey with donors to assess:
 - Measurement of image with existing donors
- Number of Foundation-leveraged partnerships
- Number of Foundation-led advocacy efforts and outcomes of those efforts
- Donor retention rates
- Number of meetings with key policymakers

Goal 2: Resources

Secure the financial resources necessary to support the Library, sustain the Foundation, and thus expand learning initiatives within the community.

Key Characteristics:

- Development of resources to meet the expectations of the Library's strategic plan goals, priorities, and investment areas.
- A talented, diverse, community-invested Board of Directors and a management team that cultivate key community relationships to promote the development of public and private resources.
- Increased funding support from the Foundation, leveraged by the core public support for the Library that can be sustained over time.
- An expanded spread of the Friends of the Library, and a growing donor base for private funds and sustained donor satisfaction.
- Successful private fundraising aided by the development of new and creative methods for realizing aggressive goals.
- Partnerships with government agencies, complementary community organizations, and other businesses to acquire resources for programs and lifelong learning services, including workforce development.

Key Strategies:

- Conduct prospect research to identify potential donors of private funds with a view to increasing the donor base of the Foundation.
- Increase the base of the Friends of the Library to enlarge the spread of community support toward private fund development.
- Develop and implement a well-crafted private fundraising plan with the goal to support the programs and services of the Library.
- Seek to raise funds over and above the targets for the Library's annual priorities so as to increase the Foundation's endowment.
- Demonstrate the commitment of the Foundation's Board of Directors through Board members' contributions toward supporting the fundraising plan.
- Continually assess the existing and prospective needs of the Library's programs, services, and facilities to remain abreast of the Foundation's fundraising needs going forward.

Key Metrics:

- Funding requests of Library met (yes/no)
- Private funds raised – annual goals
- Average gift size
- Number of donors
- Donor loyalty and donor satisfaction
- Number of new donors
- Increase in average gift (with existing donors)
- Board contributions
- Board fundraising (amount/number of donors)

Goal 3: Stewardship

Ensure superior stewardship of resources with efficiency and effectiveness of programs responding to community needs and with transparency to stakeholders.

Key Characteristics:

- A strong investment philosophy that demonstrates prudent approaches toward the development and use of donor funds.
- Transparency to the donors and the public about the utilization and stewardship of Foundation funds.

- Effective communication with donors conveying the impact of their gifts on the Library and its learning community.
- Demonstration of collaborative stewardship between the Foundation and the Library.
- Clear accountability of the stewardship of the Foundation that ensures ongoing public trust among various constituencies.
- Demonstrable integrity in all operations of the Foundation, enhancing donor and public confidence and pride in the Foundation as a community asset.

Key Strategies:

- Enhance donor confidence by strengthening donor relations, communications, demonstration of program impact, and appropriate donor involvement in the Library's initiatives.
- Demonstrate public accountability through financial disclosures, reports, audits, and self examinations for continuous improvement.
- Align resource allocations and reallocations with the strategic plan priorities of the Foundation and the Library, driven by assessment of programs and services outcomes.
- Ensure Board of Directors' oversight to maintain the highest standards of integrity throughout the organization.
- Employ and adjust investment strategies so as to optimize the returns of the donor funds for effective utilization and impact.
- Conduct or facilitate regular education and training initiatives to enhance the knowledge, experience, and skills of Board members and staff.

Key Metrics:

- Assessment of programs funded aligned with priorities:
 - Number of people served
 - Cost per person served
 - How well people were served
 - Diversity of people served
 - Match of program provided versus need
- Annual/periodic reports made to the Board of Directors and the stakeholders
 - Alignment of expenditures with donor intent
- Return on investments
- Number and type of education/training programs, and participation rates

BENCHMARKS AND PEERS

The Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library Foundation will assess its success with this strategic plan using the metrics identified with each goal, and a number of benchmarks for comparison with a set of selected peer foundations. These peers are selected based on their success characteristics, reputation, and the best practices they employ. The benchmarks are selected based on the Foundation's intent to measure its progress toward the visionary position to "*Advance*" in leadership as a foundation in key support of the Library.

KEY PRIORITIES AND INVESTMENT AREAS

Achieving the Foundation's quest to "*Advance*" its role and effectiveness in support of the Library to achieve its vision – *Leading A Learning Community* – will require the setting of key priorities, and investment of resources in targeted areas. Revenues from various funding sources will be utilized to achieve the goals of this strategic plan. Many of the strategies described in this plan will be undertaken using existing resources. However, several key priorities will require new or increased investments. The key priorities are summarized as follows:

Key Priorities

- **Funding the Library's new and enhanced programs and initiatives**

Funding the Library's new and enhanced programs and initiatives will be the Foundation's top priority. The Foundation will work carefully with Library leadership to determine the Library's needs and the extent to which they can be met through funding assistance from the Foundation.

Donations will be sought for continued funding of programs the Foundation has typically supported (e.g., Summer Reading Program, November Read Aloud, author lectures, etc.), as well as for the Library's strategic plan priority items. They include conducting annual community assessments; increasing programming and services to promote early childhood literacy, homework assistance, partnerships with community organizations, workforce development, and the Library's sense of place; expanding the Library's online presence; marketing and branding the Library; and professional development for Library staff. To provide adequate resources for new priorities identified by the Library's strategic plan, the Foundation anticipates the need to raise \$3.6 million over the next five years.

This \$3.6 million is *in addition to* what will need to be raised to sustain key annual programs, such as the Summer Reading Program, November Read-Aloud, Marian McFadden Memorial Lecture, Live Homework Help, and Marion County Internet Library.

- **Fundraising – prospect research and fundraising**

Foundation staff members will spend the majority of their time fundraising for current priorities, which include the continued support of initiatives such as the Summer Reading Program, along with funding the priorities outlined in the Library's strategic plan.

To secure the funds, the Foundation will develop a five-year fundraising plan. One part of the plan will focus on annual fundraising (the annual fundraising plan for 2009 has already been developed); the other part will focus on new gifts for the strategic plan priorities. First, staff will conduct prospect research and identify potential donors whose interests align with the mission and vision of the organization. Next, cultivation will take place and donors and potential donors will be informed about the Library's new programs. Finally, with the help of the Board of Directors, solicitations will be made. Gifts will be sought from a few large donors down through the acquisition of many smaller donors. Throughout the process, donors will remain well informed.

To support its fund raising efforts, the Foundation will develop a marketing campaign that will inform potential donors about library programs and raise awareness regarding the existence of the Foundation. It will include advocacy efforts on behalf of the Board of Directors, staff members, friends of the Foundation and Library, and earned media. This work will form a critical foundation for fundraising, particularly with the acquisition of new Foundation donors at the smaller giving levels.

For fundraising to be successful, the Foundation and Library must be forefront in the minds of donors. Potential donors must be well aware of library programs, the importance of the library in today's information-based society, and the key role the Foundation plays.

To complement this branding campaign, the Foundation will also need compelling stories to share with donors. Materials will be developed which will address the characteristics of successful programs, needs met by programs, and how the programs benefit the Indianapolis-Marion County community.

- **Outcomes assessment of the impact of investments**

In order to be excellent stewards of donors' gifts, the Foundation must carefully track the outcomes of the programs and services it funds. The assessments would include aspects such as the impact of a program – intended and realized objectives; populations benefited by the gifts, and cost effectiveness. The Foundation will support the Library in tracking of and reporting on the assessment information. Future funding from the Foundation for Library programs will be guided by these outcomes assessments. Donors will also be kept informed.

- **Competitive Foundation staff – compensation and professional development**

Maintaining a competitive Foundation staff to cover the breadth of functions of the organization will be critical in order to achieve the goals of the strategic plan. This will involve staff compensation and professional development, along with adequacy of staff commensurate with scope of responsibilities to implement the strategic plan.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of this strategic plan will begin upon its approval by the Foundation’s Board of Directors. Based on the goals, strategies, priorities, and recommendations identified, annual plans will be developed by Foundation leadership to work toward the goals of *Advocacy*, *Resources*, and *Stewardship*. These action plans will be approved by the Board of Directors and then implemented by the staff with oversight by the Foundation’s Strategic Planning Committee. The committee will report quarterly to the Board of Directors on the progress, as the entire board will have oversight and accountability.

The Foundation’s 2009 budget was structured to allocate resources toward the plan. In future years, development and annual budgets will be aligned with the priorities of the strategic plan. This will demonstrate the Foundation’s commitment to achieving its goals and the corresponding transparency of resource utilization in the interest of donor stewardship.

The Foundation will conduct annual progress assessments to document the outcomes relating to strategic plan priorities. These assessments will be based on the metrics and benchmarks identified in the plan. The metrics and benchmarks will be defined for specificity and scope, and appropriate timelines and targets to be met. Annual reports will be presented to the Board of Directors, donors, and the community on the progress achieved by the Foundation. Additionally, the Library will report on the outcomes of the programs made possible by the Foundation, thus lending donors and the Board of Directors a synergetic picture of the plan’s success and impact on the community.

With this strategic plan – “*Advance*” – the Foundation has positioned itself as a vital asset in the community to support the Library in its quest for “*Leading a Learning Community*.” The Foundation looks forward to strengthening and expanding community and donor support dedicated to undergird and enhance the Library’s programs and services. It is hoped that the value of this partnership will be resounding throughout the community it serves.

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