

**KIDS'
BOOK
BANK**

10 Years

Share the Magic!

Impact Report

2016 - 2025
Celebrating Our First 10 Years





Mission

To foster literacy and a love of reading by distributing free books to children in collaboration with community partners.

Vision

A world where every child unlocks their full potential through the magic of reading.

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friend,

This year we celebrate a milestone that feels both extraordinary and, in many ways, just the beginning, 10 years of the Cleveland Kids' Book Bank. Ten years and **over 5,000,000** books emphasize the simple but powerful idea that books change the narrative!

Books spark imagination, build confidence, and open doors to new possibilities.

But the real magic is how this community comes together to make that happen. It's in the energy of volunteers filling our space with purpose and laughter, in the care behind every book sorted and shared, and in the moments when a child discovers a story that feels like it was meant just for them.

Our story began 10 years ago, and every one of those 10 chapters has been incredible.

I am continually inspired by the generosity, creativity, and commitment of our staff, our board, and this community.

You are the reason we're able to put books into the hands and homes of children - and in doing so, help them see new possibilities for themselves.

As we turn the page to what's next, I feel a deep sense of excitement. There are more stories to share, more barriers to break down, and more children to reach.

Together, we will continue to change the narrative. Thank you for being part of this story.

To be continued...

Natalie Friedl



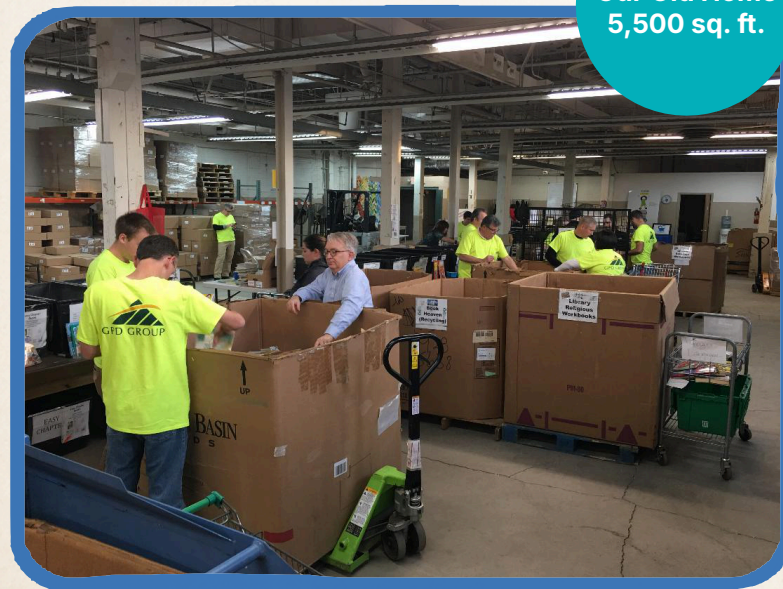
Natalie Friedl

Once Upon a Time

We couldn't be 10 without you! What began as a grassroots effort to install and stock Little Free Libraries at Cleveland elementary schools quickly grew.

Before we launched, Business Advisors of Cleveland advised us to Think Big, Start Small, and Scale Up. So we leased a 5,500-square-foot space in MidTown that we thought we would never outgrow!

But with outsized demand for books and volunteer shifts... the community needed the Next Chapter.



In October 2025, with the generous support of the community, the Kids' Book Bank completed its \$2 million Next Chapter Capital Campaign and began operating out of a welcoming and accessible 24,000-square-foot warehouse, designed to support our growing impact.



A Note From Our Co-Founders

Dear Friends,

Our dream today, just as it was 10 years ago, is for every child to discover a love of reading - because reading sparks curiosity, fuels the imagination, and opens kids' eyes to worlds they might otherwise never know.

Just one magical book that a child selects and gets to keep can be transformative.

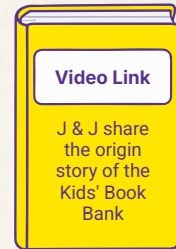
We are very proud to have played a small part in making books available to all children in our community who need them. What makes us even more proud is to know that our community shares our vision and that together we've made it into the reality it is today.

It's difficult to find the right words to convey how we feel about what the Kids' Book Bank has become and how it will continue well beyond us.

So it is with hugely grateful hearts that we say thank you to our families and friends and all who have played a role as Kids' Book Bank supporters, partners, volunteers, and staff.

Here's to the next 10 years!

Judi Judy



Honoring Judi & Judy

To honor Judi Kovach's and Judy Payne's important contributions to the literacy landscape in Cleveland, our board created funds that support programs and initiatives close to their hearts.

The **Sparkling Young Readers Fund in Honor of Judi Kovach** expands the Kids' Book Bank's ability to bring books to life through experiences that connect young readers with ideas, authors, and one another.

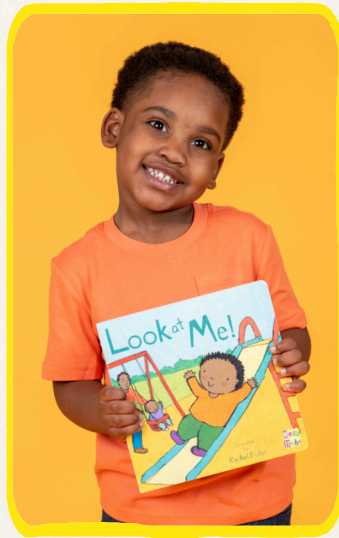
<https://www.kidsbookbank.org/sparking-young-readers-fund>



The **Judy Payne Multicultural Book Fund** ([Books Like Me](#)) allows us to purchase, distribute, and build programs around brand-new, culturally relevant books to augment the wonderful donated books that we receive from the community.

Apollo Bohanon was our original Books Like Me kid. Apollo loved to read. He loved books. The Cleveland Kids' Book Bank loves Apollo. Please help us continue his legacy.

[Click here to learn more.](#)



"I want to send a big thank you to the Kids' Book Bank!!

The "**Books like me**" continue to reach a lot of families as I participate in community outreach events.

They are the most popular books that parents and kids want to get their hands on!!"

Brontie Phillips
Family Connections
Partner since 2016



A Decade of Growth and Transformation

Early Outreach 2016 - 2018

- ◆ Distribution through trusted partners who have a relationship with child and family
- ◆ Focus on early childhood (birth - age 5)
- ◆ Partners work with parents to become first teachers for their children

Expanded Growth 2018 - 2020

- ◆ Birth - grade 12
- ◆ Adding smaller partners
- ◆ Community bookshelves

Covid Response 2020 - 2022

- ◆ Partnering with food distribution organizations
- ◆ Start of our Well Read, Well Fed program
- ◆ Contact-free delivery to preschools and daycares

Growth Expansion 2022 - 2025

- ◆ Partners include a diverse array of organizations
- ◆ Urban little leagues
- ◆ Police departments and individual officers
- ◆ Civic groups
- ◆ Religious organizations
- ◆ Metro Parks
- ◆ Free delivery to partners

Sharing the Magic

"As a Smart Start Home Visitor with The Centers, I have the privilege of bringing the gift of books, storytelling, and imagination into the homes of families I visit, from pregnancy through age five.

I'll never forget Jaiden's mom. She read very little, but after I brought The Little Blue Truck from the Kids' Book Bank, Jaiden loved it so much that he memorized it.

He began "reading" it to his mom — and later, when his baby brother came home from the hospital, he read it to him over and over. That spark of connection through books was pure magic. The Kids' Book Bank has truly been a glimmer in all our worlds.

We always focus on joy — the love of sharing a story, not the lack of books or reading challenges. Those moments of joy, safety, and connection that nurture our minds, bodies, and souls.

These glimmers remind me every day how powerful a simple story can be."

Andrea Luca

Special Services
Assistant. **The Centers**



Jazmyne Lewis. Outreach and Provider
Engagement Director. **PRE4CLE**

"I volunteer with KBB because I deeply believe that access to books is foundational to a child's future. In my work with families and early childhood providers, I see firsthand how early literacy shapes not only school readiness, but confidence, curiosity, and connection.

What I value most about KBB is its commitment to putting books directly into the hands of children and families — meeting them where they are in a tangible, meaningful way.

Book ownership matters because it creates consistency, familiarity, and a sense of belonging in learning that can't be replicated otherwise.

I also appreciate being part of a community that is intentional about equity and long-term impact.

Through my involvement, I see how something as simple as a book can open doors for children, families, and entire communities."



Partners

At the Kids' Book Bank, our model works because of the trusted relationships our partners already have with children and families.

Whether it is a teacher in a classroom, a pastor at a church, a pediatric provider, or a home visiting specialist sitting on the floor reading with a new parent and baby, these trusted adults help make books meaningful.

They are not simply handing out free books – they are **helping families understand the importance of literacy, modeling reading behaviors, and making reading fun, comforting, and part of everyday life.**

Total Partner Orders

2793
2025

1137
2020

726
2016



Acquisition

Where do our books come from?

This graph represents our book acquisition in 2025.

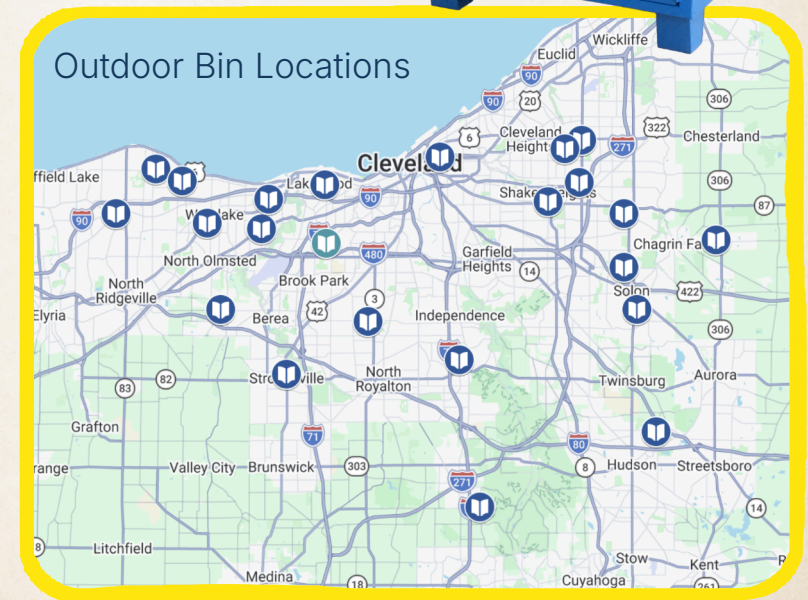


Our sustainable model ensures that books that can't be distributed are recycled and diverted from the landfill.

Book Bins and Book Drives

Since placing our first bins in 2018, we've grown to 23 bins around the Cleveland area by the end of 2025.

More than 1,000,000 books collected from these bins



Distribution

In our first 10 years we have distributed **more than 5,000,000 books**. Our annual distribution reflects the increased demand.



Life Cycle of a Book



\$0.72

Our all-time cost of getting a book into a child's hands

Donate Kids' Books Here

In Kind Support

\$897,887 in goods and services in our first 10 years



Volunteers

Volunteers fuel our mission. **More than 18,000 individuals** have been welcomed since 2016.

Volunteer Ambassadors attend events in the community, giving out free books and spreading the word about the Kids' Book Bank. In 2025, **17 Ambassadors** attended **82 events** across Greater Cleveland, passing out more than **16,000 books**.

2025
8,860
Volunteers

2016
1,707
Volunteers



"This was one of the best volunteer experiences I have ever had. I will be returning for sure!"



\$616,478
contributed
through **17,720**
volunteer hours
in 2025

*"What an absolutely **WONDERFUL** way to spend our Saturday morning. We are so appreciative."*

Interested in learning more?

[Become a volunteer!](#)

Flagship Initiatives

Driving Literacy is one of our newest and most impactful initiatives.

Making its debut appearance in December 2025, the Cavs Book Bus presented by KeyBank makes stops at schools and community events in partnership with the Cavs. Each stop sends home about 1,000 books with eager readers.

Making this and other important operational successes possible is a donated lease by Valley Automotive.



Well Read, Well Fed pairs free books with food distribution, meeting families where they are and supporting other resource-based partners.

Home Visiting Partners bring books into homes and work with parents on the importance of reading with their children.

Early Readers Program kicked off in 2024 by our Associate Board and supported by PNC. Volunteers meet with young CMSD scholars in their classrooms for storytime and a fun activity. Students take home their own brand-new book each month.

We complete a lot of home visits in a month and with the help of the Kids' Book Bank we can put books into homes regularly. This helps us with our goal of having the clients read to their children.

Ohio Guidestone

The Story Continues

Because of a community that believes in children, literacy, and the power of stories, the Kids' Book Bank is prepared to grow its impact for the next 10, 20, and 30 years.

Every book shared helps continue a larger story — one that connects families, strengthens communities, supports academic success, and creates economic opportunity. Stories help children see themselves, understand others, and imagine what is possible. When children own books, they build not only literacy skills, but confidence, curiosity, and connection to the world around them.

Because of your generosity, our community has invested more than \$7 million to ensure children can build home libraries and experience the joy and opportunity that reading creates.

Every dollar helps place more books into the hands of children who deserve access to stories that inspire, educate, and empower.

And because of your belief in this mission, the Kids' Book Bank now has both a permanent home and a six-month operating reserve — creating stability that will allow this work to continue for generations to come.

The books are shared. The stories are passed on. The impact grows.

Thanks to you, the story continues.

Books Change the Narrative Strategic Plan 2026-2030

By 2030, the Kids' Book Bank will

1

Scale Our Book Distribution Model

Meet growing demand and ensure every child has access to books at home.

2

Ignite a Culture of Reading

Inspire children, families, and communities to embrace the joy and power of reading.

3

Strengthen the Literacy Ecosystem

Advance collaboration that amplifies impact and improves outcomes for children.

4

Ensure Organizational Excellence

Invest in the infrastructure, talent, and sustainability needed to grow with excellence.

Board*

Judi Kovach

Co-Founder & Chair

Amanda Schaub

Treasurer

Deena Epstein

Secretary

Kate Bishop

Annie Ertle

Katie Lang

Teresa Podracky

Krystle Hayes

Kristen Saada

Nick Schappacher

Quartez Harris

Debbie Joseph

Ellen Mattingly

Angelo Olmeda

Marlon Primes

Kevin Pulte

Melanie Seiser

Directors Emeriti

Judy Payne

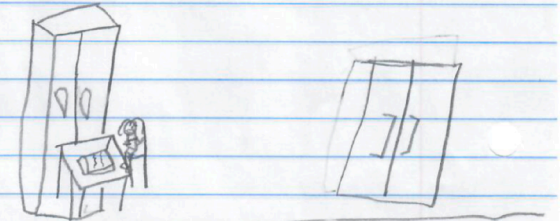
Margaret Bernstein

Financials

FY25 Snapshot

Category	Amount
Operating Revenue	\$1,094,609
Operating Expenses	\$924,032
Operating Surplus	\$170,578

Dear, Kids Book Bank,
Thank you for the
books you donated. I like
them you guys are the
best may you please bring
more books? Hope to see
more. love tiana



* as of December 2025

Engage with Our Mission

Connect

- ◆ Sign up for our newsletter
- ◆ Follow us on social media
- ◆ Introduce us to a friend

Donate Books

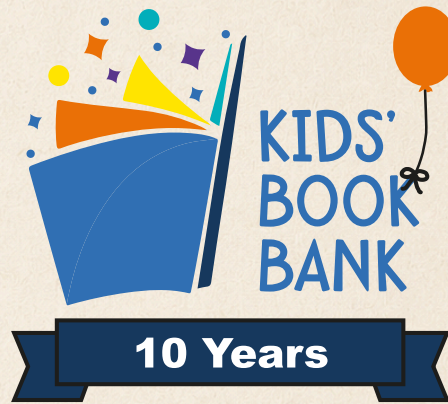
- ◆ Run a book drive
- ◆ Clear off your shelves
- ◆ Find a book bin near you

Make a Donation

- ◆ Individual gifts
- ◆ Corporate partnership
- ◆ Event sponsorship

Volunteer

- ◆ Bring a friend
- ◆ Come with your company
- ◆ Bring kids to a Family Shift



Cleveland Kids' Book Bank

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