



# TREEHOUSE

BOOKS



## 2019: Deepening Our Roots

### Annual Report

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# From the Board:

As the new Board Chair for Tree House Books, I'd love to take the time to introduce myself. I first heard about Tree House Books in 2011 when I was in a lecture at Temple University. I was immediately excited about the mission. I walked into Tree House Books for my volunteer interview, and it's been my home-away-from-home ever since.



I spent a few years volunteering at Tree House as a Literacy Coach, Lead Art Teacher, and spent most of my free time there before graduating and starting my career full time. Through circumstances that can only be described as kismet, I found my way back to Tree House a couple of years ago. I joined the board and am so proud to have rejoined this community.

In addition to chairing the board, I am the Head of Impact at Saxbys - a fast-growing hospitality company that runs cafés as a way to enact social change. My role oversees anything related to impact for the brand. Through our various workforce development initiatives we create opportunities and expand workplace education for young people. As some of my most formative moments were spent at Tree House, it's no surprise that my career took this turn.

Tree House Books has always viewed literacy as the building block to a lifelong love of learning. I'm so proud to see the fruit of these values in the children that participate in our programs, the volunteers and staff who work with us, and our community as a whole. Last year, we had a transformative year where we were able to elevate our mission and culture. We were excited to bring on Michael Brix as our new Executive Director, and refocus our commitment to North Philadelphia. Below, I've highlighted three areas that we will continue to focus on in 2020, with your help!

- **Looking at Strategic Growth:** After a strong 2019, our leadership is committed to laying the foundation for a Tree House Books that can grow and serve both deeper and wider. This strategic thinking will allow us to be nimble in the face of funding, responsive to emerging needs and current literacy scholarship, as well as grounded in our identity.
- **Building an Active, Engaged, and Diverse Board:** It was through the dedication and sweat equity of our board that our 2018 to 2019 transition was even possible! This year saw four new members come on board and we look to continue to build a board that actively leads, engages wholly, and reflects the diversity of our community.
- **Celebrating our 15th Year:** Happy Birthday Tree House! It was 15 years ago that our doors opened and we began giving away books! We are planning many opportunities to connect alumni volunteers, kids, families, and staff. Please keep checking in to see those announcements!

I am thankful for everyone who contributed to the amazing progress we saw in 2019, detailed in this report. There's still a lot of work to be done and I want to see last year's success as a runway to soar higher. I'm positive that with your continued support and the support of others like you, Tree House Books will proceed to do this important and life changing work to grow the next generation of readers, writers, and thinkers.

Thank you,

Grace Manning  
Board Chair, Tree House Books

# By the Numbers



88,436

Books given away

2,165

New library members  
(5,824 total members!)



7,414

Library visits



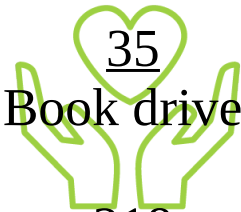
576

Kids served with  
literacy programs



35

Book drives



218

Volunteers

3,260

Volunteer hours



# Our amazing board, advisory board, & staff

## **Board of Directors**

Grace Manning, Board Chair  
Kristin Kiser, Vice Chair  
Jennifer Liharik, Board Secretary  
Yuliya Ostapenko, Treasurer  
Melissa Ash  
Bob Borenstein  
Brett Cohen  
Lula Defersha  
John Fleming  
Kathy Hastings  
Tre Johnson  
Aliya Johnson-Roberts  
Cassandra Poland



## **Advisory Board**

Jon Weiss, Chair  
Cass Bailey, Chair Emeritus  
State Rep, Donna Bullock  
Council President, Darrell Clarke  
Scott Edelman  
Jennifer Egmont  
Gwyn Finnell  
Michel Gilbert  
Eli Goldblatt  
Charles Ireland  
Rabbi Daniel Levitt  
Star Bocasan Little  
Kathryn Lyons  
Christopher McGill  
Pastor Lewis Nash  
Brian Phillips  
Ellen Lissy Rosenberg  
Nyseem Smith  
Andrew Starfield  
Senator Sharif Street  
Andrea Swan  
Ted Swenson  
Anna Welsh  
Bonnie Young

## **Tree House Staff**

Michael Brix, Executive Director  
Leonard Chester, Outreach Manager  
Emma Goldstein, Access to Books Director  
Sabriaya Shipley, Program Director  
Khalil Taylor, Maintenance

Also pictured above:  
Emily Scott, Library Volunteer  
Ciara Langford, Library Volunteer



*Many thanks to our volunteers, without whom,  
the work we do would not be possible!*

# Program Highlights

## Books in Every Home

In 2019 we partnered with Chris Long and the United Way in his First Quarter for Literacy initiative to give away new books to grades K-3 in 7 schools in North Philly.

## Giving Library

Hundreds of quality, constantly rotating stock of books for anybody to take free of charge. Moreover - this is a place where community members come to read, hang out, make a phone call, and find a friendly ear in an inclusive safe space.

## Visits to the Tree House

This program brings in classrooms for an engaging, customized field trip experience that includes activities like storytime, author visits, music, arts & crafts, and more.

## Summer Book Camp

Our program revival! Camp was an 8 week fun-filled jaunt with educational opportunities, field trips, games, and (of course) a featured book of the week!

## Tree House After School Studio

A blend of homework help, instructional literacy, arts-based lessons, and self-empowerment – led by Program Director Sabriaya Shipley, we have seen this program grow until full averaging over 18 kids a day. A 2019 highlight was our fall Harvest Festival and potluck!

## Words on Wheels

WoW delivers books to families throughout our neighborhood to help create and grow take home libraries. This year we were able to track the books to the interest of each participant and even sneak in a few books for grown-ups as well!

## Sprouts

In 2019, we partnered with local daycares Miracle Moments, Young With Options, and Savvy, who visited the giving library regularly for Kindergarten-readiness literacy lessons.

## Seeds for Teens

The newest part of Tree House, a program for young teens. This year we ran a pilot program for 8 weeks, featuring over 15 black professional speakers. A powerful moment of this program was a parent circle, which started the program by building community and trust.



# Special Events



## Philadelphia Literacy Day

Featuring Brittney Shipp, Meteorologist at NBC10, and Peter Brown of the Wild Robot series, Philadelphia Literacy Day was a blast! This year we decided to host the event right in front of the Giving Library doors to further connect to our North Philadelphia community. The festival featured food, live music, author signings and readings, and the largest free book swap in Philadelphia.

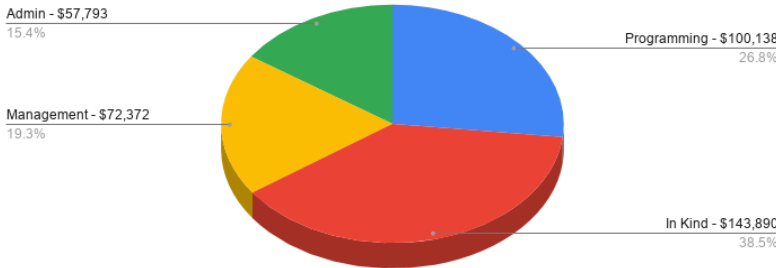


## Champions Of Literacy

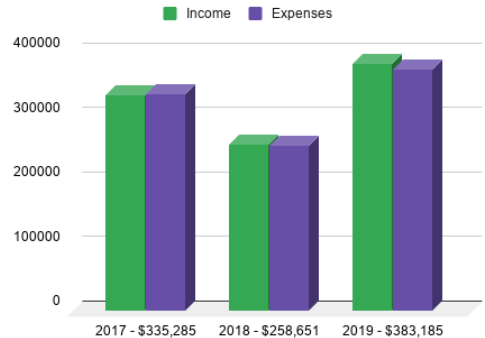
This year we honored Rep. Donna Bullock as our 2019 "Champion of Literacy" and Temple University Safety Dept as our "Partners of the Year." Saxbys, our wonderful partners, hosted a night of catered food and drinks, live music, an auction of unique items, and of course, wholesome fun and socializing all while raising money for our literacy programs.

# 2019 Financial Overview

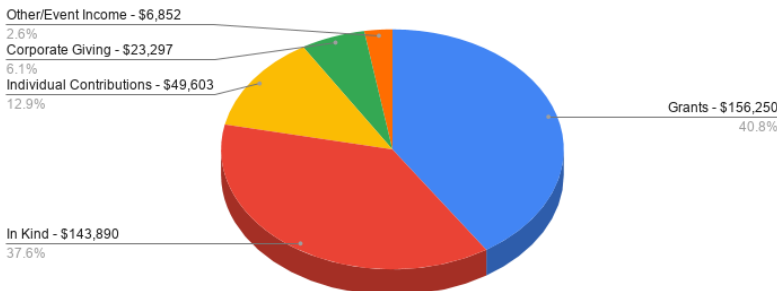
### Expenses \$374,194



### Annual Budget Growth



### Income \$383,185



69% - Increase in grant support from 2018

11% - More individuals gave in 2019

31% - Increase in books given away

Branch Partners (Gifts of \$100 to \$999)

\*Foundation or Grant  
\*\*Business/event sponsor

Aisha Childs  
Alan H Casper  
Allison Cox  
Alpha Delta Mu  
Alyson Harris  
Andorra Pediatrics\*  
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Joy Bernstein  
June Bretz  
Katherine Hovde  
Kenya Bates  
Kevin Moran  
Kim Gilmore  
Kimberle Kennedy  
Kimberly Kushner  
Latisha Walker  
Laura Tucker  
Leslie Stone  
Linda A Zeltner  
Malika Speaks  
Mary Kate Daley  
Matthew Rader  
Maureen McGurk  
Meridith Morrissey  
Micael Navarro Lopez  
Michael & Michelle Brix  
Michael Kawas  
Michelle Hu  
Michelle Scolnick  
Molly Brozell  
Moneka Hewlett  
Monique Haughton

Nayyah Walker  
Network for Good  
New Foundations Charter School  
Nola Greer  
One Day at a Time, Inc./Mel Wells  
Ophelia Thomas  
Patricia McInerney  
Paul Read  
Peter D'Amico  
Priscilla Page  
Raymond James Charitable \*  
Regina Schwillie  
Robert Mongeluzzi & Meredith Seigle  
Rolanda Green  
Ruth Ost  
Sagan Medvec/Brand Llama \*\*  
Samantha E. Guettler  
Samantha Scott  
Sarah Byker James  
Saxbys/Grace Manning \*\*  
Scott Edelman/Edelman Wealth Management \*\*  
Seer Interactive \*\*  
Sharon Turner  
Stephanie Scordia  
Stephen Carafello  
Susan Mudambi  
Tabreena Sinclair  
Tara Rachel Paige  
The Morris Family Fund  
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Thomas O'Brien  
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YourCause LLC  
Anonymous

Hardcover corporate sponsors



# 2019 Donors and Partners

## Evergreen Partners (Gifts of \$10,000 or more)

\*Foundation or Grant  
\*\*Business/Event sponsor

Nonprofit Finance Fund \*  
Temple University/Wieseneck Family  
Templeton Realty/Equinox Management & Construction/Johnathan Weiss \*\*  
Phillies Charities Inc \*  
Vert Charitable Trust \*  
Anonymous Foundation \*  
The Connelly Foundation \*  
Elizabeth & Darren Wilson  
William M. King Foundation \*

## Forest Partners (Gifts of \$5,000 to \$9,999)

Hachette Book Group/Running Press \*\*  
Lawrence Saunders Fund \*  
Quirk Books \*\*  
Rittenhouse Square Flower Market \*  
The Alfred and Mary Douty Foundation \*  
United Way of Greater Philadelphia & Southern NJ \*

## Root Partners (Gifts of \$1,000 to \$4,999)

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Yuliya Ostapenko

(Branch Partners on the inside!)



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