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Celebration of Mission Enablers

Over my more than 15 years on public Library Boards, there have been big changes, both adaptation and growth, and as a result, WLN public libraries are, even more than ever, tried and true resources. I want to make you aware of some regional Foundations and a Trust that have been particularly crucial enablers by virtue of their awards to Libraries, sometimes multi-year, for special growth projects; their attention to community service has been so important.

As a starting point, this is the stated Mission of the Murrysville Community Library (MCL): “To inspire ideas, enrich lives, and create lifelong opportunities for learning, literacy and enjoyment.”

The Mission is not simply to make books available and maintain an orderly means for checking them in and out, although that service, much modernized and broadened over the years, is included in the Mission statement. Educational and fun programming is also part of the Mission statement. Integration of “informal learning” with standards-based scholastic learning in schools, or “formal learning,” is another part of that Mission statement. So is providing access to professional services of all kinds, such as through Power Library [<https://www.powerlibrary.org>]. And, there is much more.

So, thank you to the following regional Foundations and Trust.

The Richard King Mellon Foundation for its lead co-funding to the WLN first in 2007 to launch the 24/7 Polaris Integrated Library System (ILS) that today joins services and resources of 23 sister Libraries into one big Library, and then for its second major grant infusion in 2017-19 to significantly upgrade the ILS. Think in terms of almost a million e-accessible, cataloged items for all Westmoreland County patrons vs. just 65,000 in total at the Murrysville Community Library.

Thank you also to the Community Foundation of Westmoreland County for its two-year seed funding in 2014-15 for standards-based, STEM, professional development of Library staff; and to the PPG and Eden Hall Foundations for supporting Storytime STEM-packs for additional years beyond that in WLN libraries.

Thank you to the Lulu A. Pool Health and Education Trust. Over ten years, the Lulu Trust has awarded grants to the MCL Foundation for the PreK-2 Storytime STEM-packs program, Teen Power Library, much needed Children’s Room computer upgrades, Jingles ‘n’ Gingerbread multi-cultural holiday programming, and, just this year, help with the cost of new audio/visual equipment to be ordered for the new TechNook little theater. What a sustaining supporter you too have been!

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There are many more to thank, both corporate and individuals, who already have been highlighted on the glass Donor Wall in the Library and in paid ads on the pages of the Penn-Franklin News, including the Penn-Franklin News itself, but for this time I just wanted to single out a few Foundations and a Trust that have been generous to us when we have come to them for very significant special projects. All were and are essential to the Mission.

Charles B. Greenberg
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