



Annual Biblio Bash Raises Over \$745,000 to Support Vital Toronto Public Library Programs and Services

View Toronto Public Library Foundation's documentary short film, 'A Day in the Life of Toronto Public Library' starring Rick Mercer, which premiered at Biblio Bash at bibliobash.ca

Toronto, ON (May 1, 2019) – On April 25th, Toronto philanthropists, business leaders, city builders and library lovers came together in the stacks of the Toronto Reference Library for **Biblio Bash**, presented by TD Bank Group, to raise funds for the world's busiest public library system – Toronto Public Library (TPL). Attended by 43 notable authors and 460 guests, the sold-out black-tie gala, along with online donations from the first-ever **Biblio Bash Community Campaign**, raised more than \$745,000.

Funds raised exceeded last year's Biblio Bash gala total and will be directed to two important Library priorities:

- ✓ **TPL BOOKMOBILE:** The purchase of a new Bookmobile will provide under-served communities with improved access to a full range of library services. TPL's mobile library currently makes 28 weekly stops across the city including apartment complexes, shopping malls, community centres and family shelters, with an onboard collection of 2,500 books and DVDs targeted to children, youth, seniors and newcomers. Bookmobiles can also offer Wi-Fi, online resources and serve as a community gathering space for indoor and outdoor programming such as story time for families.
- ✓ **TPL AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS:** Funds raised at Biblio Bash will also contribute to children succeeding in school and thriving in life by ensuring TPL's After School Clubs at 46 branches are equipped with the essential materials, exceptional programs and nutritional snacks required to help kids to concentrate and complete their homework

The Marissa and Moez Kassam Foundation generously matched the first \$50,000 raised on site at the Gala. "Toronto's public libraries are magical spaces that enable intellectual discovery, community building and civic engagement," said Moez Kassam. "Far more than a repository of great books, our city's libraries host after school clubs for children, offer free internet access to community members, host lectures and talks by prominent thinkers, organize book clubs for bibliophiles, offer jobs and skills training to community members and much more. Marissa and I are delighted to be able to support the mission of the Toronto Public Library Foundation, and I am proud to be a member of the TPLF Board of Directors."

The gala was hosted by **Jessica Allen, Melissa Grelo, Marci Ien, Cynthia Loyst** and **Lainey Lui** from CTV's popular daytime talk show *The Social*. Each table featured a notable author host, sponsored by the Gerald Sheff and Shanitha Kachan Charitable Foundation and included **André Alexis, Arif Anwar, Linwood Barclay, Dan Bilefsky, Claudia Dey, Bruce and Vicki Heyman, B. Denham Jolly, Shari Lapena, Linden MacIntyre, Carol Off, Andrew Pyper, Anthony Rose, Mark Sakamoto, Tanya Talaga, Dr. Dave Williams** and **Samra Zafar**.

On the evening of the Biblio Bash, co-chairs Ellen Webster and Claire McIntyre commented "All of us at Biblio Bash are part of writing the next chapter for this incredible public institution. Libraries are of vital importance to our democracy and shape communities in immeasurable ways. They encourage learning, imagination and independent thought, and they must continue to evolve and keep pace with the communities that need them most."

The night kicked off in style with guests entering the iconic Toronto Reference Library through a stunning Holt Renfrew-designed entrance and making their way to the second-floor stacks for the cocktail reception sponsored by Mantella Corporation. Saxophonist Miles Raine performed live while guests bid on exclusive silent auction items such as a \$5,000 shopping spree at Holt Renfrew; two round trip business class tickets to anywhere Air Canada flies, a breathtaking trip to Fogo Island Inn and more. The popular library-inspired Portrait Studio sponsored by Rogers Communications was back again with celebrity photographer **George Pimentel** capturing all the stylish guests.

Dinner was served in the atrium where award-winning restaurateur **Chef Cory Vitiello** with 10tation Catering developed the delicious menu and Dinner Sponsor Labatt provided a Stella Artois beer service. A definite Biblio Bash highlight was the debut of the TPLF's new documentary short sponsored by Whitehots; *'A Day in the Life of Toronto Public Library'* starring comedian and author Rick Mercer. The gala continued until late in the evening with guests dancing to the soulful music of **Sean Jones** while enjoying cocktails in the Air Canada Lounge and snacking on McDonald's cheeseburgers and fries.

"We are grateful for the generosity our Biblio Bash sponsors, attendees and our community of supporters, whose gifts to the Library make a meaningful impact on individuals and families in Toronto," said Jennifer Jones, President of the TPL Foundation. "You simply cannot underestimate the importance of having access to a public library in your life. Access to learning, to opportunities, to resources, to supportive staff and to experiences - and donors help make this happen."

Toronto Public Library Foundation thanks the 2019 Biblio Bash sponsors: TD Bank Group, Presenting Sponsor; Moez and Marissa Kassam Foundation, Matching Gift Sponsor; Labatt Breweries of Canada, Dinner Sponsor; Gerald Sheff and Shanitha Kachan Charitable Foundation, Author Host Sponsor; Mantella Corporation, Library Lounge Sponsor; Air Canada, Airline Sponsor; Whitehots, Documentary Sponsor; Holt Renfrew, Entrance Sponsor; Rogers Communications Inc., Portrait Studio Sponsor; Toronto Star and Toronto Life, Media Sponsors; The St. Regis Toronto, Hotel Sponsor; CJ Graphics Inc., Print Sponsor; Balzac's Coffee Roasters, Dessert Sponsor.

For more information about the gala, links to photo albums, videos and the complete list of authors in attendance at **Biblio Bash**, please visit bibliobash.ca and [#BiblioBash](https://twitter.com/BiblioBash) [#ImLibraryPeople](https://twitter.com/ImLibraryPeople)

ABOUT THE TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY FOUNDATION

The Toronto Public Library Foundation is a registered charity that raises funds to support the exemplary collections, ground-breaking programs and services, and the innovative community spaces at the world's busiest public library system; Toronto Public Library. Since its inception in 1997, the Foundation has raised over \$84 million thanks to generous donors and corporate partners who have helped fund such popular and beloved programs as the TD Summer Reading Club and the Museum + Arts Pass (MAP). Donating to Toronto Public Library is an investment in literacy, education, culture and in the vitality of a world-class city.

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Media Contact:

Andrea McLoughlin, KWT Global
amcloughlin@kwtglobal.com
647-490-6602