

# absolutely vital

A newsletter from  
The Toronto Public Library Foundation

## Welcome to Long Branch

Located in a rapidly developing Etobicoke neighbourhood near the shore of Lake Ontario, this small but mighty branch has a unique feature: outdoor garden PODs! In partnership with Humber College and LAMP Community Health Centre, Long Branch hosts garden beds of fresh fruit, vegetables and herbs that are harvested and distributed to the community in an effort to address local food insecurity. Librarians tie the PODs into summer programming by having children plant their own seeds to take home and watch them grow. Long Branch is also a stop in the community's annual garden tour, a free opportunity for garden lovers to gather, learn and admire the work of local green thumbs.



## Meet Stephanie

### Branch Head, Long Branch

Stephanie began her career at Toronto Public Library as a page when she was just 16 years old. Her passion for librarianship has blossomed into 20+ years at TPL, where she has held a variety of roles at library branches in every corner of the city. What is her favourite part about working at Long Branch? She says it's the wonderful staff and engaged community. *"It's really evident that the people in this community care. They care about our services and participate in events. Our customers invest in the history of the neighbourhood, and they're invested in the rebirth that is happening too."*



## Record-breaking fundraiser

# Biblio Bash raises over \$1 million for Toronto Public Library



Toronto's library lovers joined business leaders, philanthropists and city builders on April 20<sup>th</sup> at the Toronto Reference Library for Biblio Bash, presented by Tricon Residential. Attended by 41 notable authors and over 450 guests, our sold-out black tie gala raised significant funds to support TPL's Leading to Reading program. Thank you to the Biblio Bash volunteer committee and our sponsors for helping us smash our fundraising goal.



Hosted by Global National News Anchor Farah Nasser, she commented,

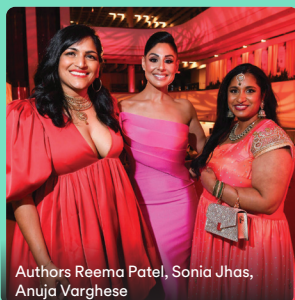
*"Raising a record-breaking \$1 million for TPLF, I was honoured to host Biblio Bash 2023. So much fun spending time with old (and new) friends at the Biblio Hotel, but the pinch-me moment was a conversation with John Irving. Unforgettable."*



Host Farrah Nasser, Biblio Committee Co-Chairs Claire MacNamara and Victoria Webster



Jane Halverson and Dr. Bruno Venditelli



Authors Reema Patel, Sonia Jhas, Anuja Varghese

For photos, news coverage, impact video and social media visit, [bibliobash.ca](https://bibliobash.ca) or search #BiblioBash

## Freedom to Read

# TPL joins the Book Sanctuary movement

TPL is proud to join the Book Sanctuary movement in February, started by Chicago Public Library, recommitting the Library to protect and defend Torontonians' rights to freely access a broad range of diverse materials – including those that have been challenged or banned. Online and at its 100 branches across the city, TPL has created a Book Sanctuary collection (as shown below) with 50 adult, teen and children's books that have been censored or removed from a public library or school in North America.

Thanks to an Anonymous Lead Donor, a new programming stream will launch in the fall of 2023 as part of TPL's popular On Civil Society Series, dedicated to exploring intellectual freedom. [tpl.ca/intellectualfreedom](https://tpl.ca/intellectualfreedom)



**"It's never been more important to stand up and speak out for intellectual freedom and to ensure voices, especially those of marginalized and equity-deserving communities are not shut down."**

Vickery Bowles  
City Librarian, Toronto Public Library



Photographer: Elana Emer  
Production Designer: Patricia Reilly

## Mavis Gallant stories retold at the Toronto Reference Library

Back in March, The Jack Rabinovitch Reading Room was host to a wonderful, innovative celebration of Canadian storytelling, RETOLD. These sold-out premiere performances of three new works were inspired by short stories from award-winning Canadian author Mavis Gallant. Enjoy programs, author talks and special events in this beautiful, donor-funded space. Learn more: [tpl.ca/jackrabinovitch](https://tpl.ca/jackrabinovitch)

## Sincere thanks Shawn Kimel and Kate Schatzky make a \$1.25 million unrestricted donation to Toronto Public Library

One year later, this transformational gift, made with no conditions, empowered Toronto Public Library to invest the funds into areas where they were most needed.

- 1 **Community Crisis Intervention Team** provide vital connections to mental health supports to address challenges faced by our city's most vulnerable residents.
- 2 **Community Librarians** supporting people at their point of need by working directly with Black-focused agencies.
- 3 **Financial Empowerment** services offer those living on low incomes access to financial counselling in select library branches.



Learn more at [tplfoundation.ca/impact](https://tplfoundation.ca/impact)

## North York Central Library Receives bequest from Salvatore and Marion Brancaccio



This generous legacy gift will support the renovation of the Teen Zone to incorporate a full suite of youth services, Youth Hub equipment and vital programming for teens at this branch. As avid library users and as a former teacher (Marion), the Brancaccio family saw firsthand the impact of the Library in their community, and decided to give back.

## TD Bank Group renews its generous support for three-year term

Helping build confidence in  
children through the power  
of learning

As Canada's biggest, bilingual summer reading program, the TD Summer Reading Club (TDSRC) has reached over 8 million children, offering fun, free programming and activities at more than 2,000 public libraries across Canada and online. The Club celebrates Canadian authors and illustrators and inspires kids of all ages, interests and abilities to explore the joy of reading their way - while maintaining and improving their literacy skills during the summer. Investment in summer reading and learning programs such as the TDSRC are key to supporting vulnerable kids as we recover from the pandemic.

Learn more at [tpl.ca/reading-club](https://tpl.ca/reading-club)



Program launched June 12<sup>th</sup>  
[tpl.ca/reading-club](https://tpl.ca/reading-club)

## With thanks to The Azrieli Foundation for their generous support Providing Pathways to Success

A recent gift of \$750,000 over three years from The Azrieli Foundation will help fund two vital initiatives at TPL: the Career Coaches in Residence (CCIR) program and Community Librarians (CL) for Newcomers project. CCIR fills the gap in career navigational support services for young adults by providing career advice, mentorship and job search assistance. The CL for Newcomers addresses the immediate needs of those who have recently made Toronto their home at their point of need, through skills training, digital literacy and increased access to Library resources and information.

Learn more: [tplfoundation.ca/impact](https://tplfoundation.ca/impact)





## ask an expert

### Vicky Tourkolias

Manager, Children's Services

TPL's **Leading to Reading (LTR)** program provides vital support to children who are reading and writing below their grade level. Students are encouraged to learn and practice their skills with a volunteer in a fun environment.

**Q: What impact does the LTR program have on Toronto's children?**

**A:** It removes barriers and provides equitable access to free reading and writing supports to families. For children from low-economic families, LTR has the greatest impact to help improve their reading skills, behaviour, confidence levels and learning abilities. It's available at branches all across the city and has supported thousands of children across Toronto for over 40 years.

**Q: Why has LTR been so successful?**

**A:** With one-on-one support from volunteer tutors, students read and learn together in a welcoming, supportive environment. They are provided materials and technology during sessions as well as tips and tricks to continue, practice and reinforce the learning process at home with family members.  
[tpl.ca/leadingtoreading](http://tpl.ca/leadingtoreading)



The Leading to Reading program is generously supported by the Haynes-Connell Foundation, the Friends of TPL, North Chapter, Bank of America, Biblio Bash 2023 guests, and other donors.

## It's the perfect time to support your Toronto Public Library Donations made by August 15<sup>th</sup> are DOUBLED

[tplfoundation.ca/doubledonation](http://tplfoundation.ca/doubledonation) or call 416-393-7123



Mitchel, Aki and Saku

Thanks to a generous matching gift\* from a TPL Foundation Board Director, your gift to our Community Campaign will be **DOUBLED** and immediately directed to the Library's highest priority needs, including the Leading to Reading program. \*Up to \$25,000.

Leading to Reading makes a difference:

- ✓ The free service assists children who struggle with reading and writing.
- ✓ It helps kids develop skills, build confidence and make reading fun.

When you give today, your donation helps young readers like Saku, who rely on this vital TPL program to help put them on the path to future success.

## Kids can never start too early to give to the Library

Special thanks to Zoe, an avid young reader and library lover who won a neighbourhood letter-writing contest promoted through the College Street Branch. Organized by IC Savings, children 16 years of age and younger were invited to enter and nominate their favorite charity to receive a \$500 donation. It's a win, win for everyone.



7-year old Zoe with Alessandro Marrone and Ana Rita Sousa of IC Savings

## Celebrate Pride Month and National Indigenous History Month at TPL



Indigenous garden and mural at Albert Campbell branch.  
[tpl.ca/indigenous](http://tpl.ca/indigenous)



Trans and Pride rainbow-wrapped columns outside Yorkville Branch.  
[tpl.ca/pride](http://tpl.ca/pride)

Explore events, initiatives, reading lists, podcasts, special collections and more. Did you know that...

- TPL established an Indigenous Advisory Council in 2018, where members from diverse Indigenous communities and service partners across the city provide feedback and guidance on the direction of TPL's Indigenous Initiatives.
- While there are 2SLGBTQ+ materials available at all 100 TPL branches, the most complete Pride Collection is located at the Yorkville branch.

Join the conversation

   #ImLibraryPeople