



Biblio Bash 2024 Surpasses \$1M Once Again In Support of Toronto Public Library

Unlocks and expands vital Library services for newcomers to Canada

Toronto, ON (April 26, 2024) - Last night the Toronto Public Library Foundation (TPLF) surpassed its fundraising targets, reaching an unprecedented \$1,071,550 in support of TPL. Toronto's city builders joined library lovers, business leaders and philanthropists at Biblio Bash, presented by **Fitzrovia**. Attended by over 425 guests and 38 of Canada's notable authors, the sold-out black tie gala was dedicated to raising funds for Library initiatives to support those settling in our city. Significant funds were directed to the Toronto Public Library Foundation's Newcomer Community Initiative which will enable TPL to launch new welcome resources in 40 languages and expand critical outreach for newcomer programs and services, including financial literacy programs and new business entrepreneurial support.

Toronto Public Library is an essential resource for individuals and families who move to Canada and is often the very first place they connect with when they arrive. The Library and its partners are able to help newcomers find a job, learn English, enroll children in school, locate a place to live and so much more. These critical services were highlighted in a short film profiling three unique newcomer stories and was made possible thanks to Community Sponsor **The MacNamara Family**.

The evening's host, comedian, actor and author **Ali Hassan** had guests laughing wildly and bidding madly as he helped TPLF achieve its fundraising goal while sharing his own personal experience as a second generation Canadian.

Biblio Bash Co-Chairs, **Claire MacNamara** and Global News anchor **Farah Nasser** emphasized the fundraising priority and spoke to their family's stories, "As the children of Irish and East African immigrants, this year's fundraising area of focus is particularly close to our hearts. From language services to help finding employment, Toronto Public Library acts as a vital community hub, going far beyond book lending. The generosity of Biblio Bash attendees plays a critical role in supporting the resilience and courage of those who, just like our parents, immigrated to Canada in the hopes of building a better future for their families."

Toronto's Public Library's **City Librarian, Vickery Bowles**, spoke passionately about the Library's role as a connector and highlighted how the support of donors, sponsors and volunteers makes such a difference in the lives of those who rely on TPL. As she does every year, Vickery also took a moment to celebrate all the authors in the room, asking them to stand for a round of applause amongst the 5.5 million books housed in the Toronto Reference Library.

The Toronto Reference Library transformed into a magical and mysterious forest exploring the wonder of words. Guests were encouraged to try their luck at Airline Sponsor **Air Canada's** "Giving Tree" while being escorted to the second-floor stacks for drinks and hors d'oeuvres thanks to Cocktail Sponsor **Mantella Corporation**. In the atrium, each dinner table welcomed a notable guest author, thanks to Author Host Sponsor, **Bazil Developments**. Writers in attendance included Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, Emma Donoghue, Morgan Campbell, Stephen Poloz, Len Senator, Carley Fortune, Cara-Lyn Morgan and Ali Velshi. To see a full list of authors, visit bibliobash.ca.

Biblio Bash is known for curating exceptional silent auction prizes and this year did not disappoint. One-of-a-kind experiences included eight rounds of golf at the Point Hardy Golf Course at the new members-only Cabot Saint Lucia, two business class tickets anywhere in the world Air Canada flies, a luxury stay at the Fairmont Château Whistler, and an exclusive dinner at LA hotspot Stella West Hollywood which fetched over \$25,000 through a spontaneous live auction. VIP dining experiences from Aburi Hana, Nobu, the Vintage Conservatory and others rounded out the list of sought-after experiences.

Thanks in part to the contributions from Gala Sponsors **CIBC, Dream and Ralph Lauren**, guests grooved to the musical mastery of Bellosound's Riham Hagona ("Love Bonez"), enjoyed a delicious menu developed by The Food Dudes and had personal tarot card readings with Lori Dyan "Tarot Lori". As a takeaway, Love Bonez developed a unique event playlist which is [available for download on Spotify](#).

Celebrity photographer George Pimentel's always popular Portrait Studio was back, capturing the stylish crowd in their "moody" formal attire. The evening's Media Sponsor was longstanding TPLF partner, the **Toronto Star**.

Foundation CEO **Will Scott** underscored the Library's direct impact on newcomers, "No other institution has the mandate and reach, physical and technical infrastructure, talent and community presence to support newcomers and help them succeed in a new city, the way TPL does. Donor support is essential to ensure we are able to meet the needs of every newcomer who walks through our doors."

For anyone wishing to give to TPLF's Newcomer Community Initiative, all public donations are now being doubled until July 15th thanks to a matching gift from **Fidelity Canada**. Go online to give now at: tpl.ca/donate.

Biblio Bash 2024 Sponsors: Presenting Sponsor: Fitzrovia, Community Sponsor: The MacNamera Family, Author Host Sponsor: Bazil Developments, Cocktail Reception Sponsor: Mantella Corporation, Gala Sponsors: CIBC, Dream, Ralph Lauren, Airline Sponsor: Air Canada, Media Sponsor: Toronto Star.

Biblio Bash 2024 Committee: Farah Nasser & Claire MacNamara, Co-Chairs; Amanda Alvaro, Amanda Aquino, Justice Faith Betty, Amy Burstyn-Fritz, Aisha Champsi, Alison Fiorini, Jonathan Goldman, Jen Grant, Jane Halverson, Marissa Kassam, Krystal Koo, Lindsay Mattick, Claire McIntyre, Naomi Parness, Erika Rodrigues, Kate Schatzky, Carmen Steinberg, Victoria Webster, Vanessa Yeung.

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 and #imlibrarypeople on social media. Photos by George Pimentel.

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