



The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, Inc.



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WEINBERG FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES \$5 MILLION COMMITMENT TO BUILD 12 NEW SCHOOL LIBRARIES

Original \$2M commitment has been increased to \$5M over four years

BALTIMORE (July 25, 2012) -- The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, one of the largest private foundations in the United States, today announced a major expansion of the Baltimore Elementary and Middle School Library Project.

This initiative, involving nearly 30 businesses, nonprofits, and government partners, works with Baltimore City Public Schools to design, build, equip, and staff new or renovated school libraries where existing public funding can be leveraged. As a result of the success of this initiative in just its first year, the Foundation is making a \$5 million commitment to build a total of 12 new libraries over four years.

"The Weinberg Foundation is thrilled to increase its investment in learning and literacy in Baltimore City Schools," said Rachel Garbow Monroe, Weinberg Foundation President. "The Foundation and its many partners look forward to celebrating the grand openings of the first three renovated libraries on September 12, completing the first chapter of what is now a much richer story of meaningful, lasting change contributing to greater success in school and in life."

"As a social worker and legislator, my goal has always been to make sure everyone in America has access to a first-rate education, so that no child or community is left out or left behind," stated Senator Barbara Mikulski, Chairwoman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Subcommittee on Children and Families. "That's why I am so proud of the Weinberg Foundation for putting its values into action to build libraries, build communities and build lives. This investment will help make sure that Baltimore's children have access to the resources they need to succeed."

U.S. Senator Benjamin Cardin commented "The Weinberg Foundation has found a way to enhance federal efforts to improve school buildings that allows for a comprehensive renovation of Baltimore City Public School libraries and brings together countless other community resources and talents. By increasing their financial commitment to the Weinberg Library Project, the Foundation will enable the renovation of 12 elementary school libraries in four years, giving new excitement and educational opportunities to students, teachers, and their communities."

Each library will feature new reading materials and customized furnishings as well as e-readers (Nooks), computers, and an "Enoch Pratt Parent Place" for parents and guardians to visit the library and share time with their child. In addition, Parks and People Foundation, Wells Fargo, the Maryland Food Bank, Baltimore Sun, and Dyslexia Tutoring Program will all be offering the schools opportunities for programming and various resources throughout the school year and beyond.

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"I am pleased that The Weinberg Foundation has committed to expand the Baltimore Elementary and Middle School Library Project," said Governor Martin O'Malley. "The simple act of reading gives us the ability to uphold the single greatest responsibility we have, which is to pass on our knowledge to the next generation. And together, we can build a better future."

Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake remarked "We are grateful for the Weinberg Foundation's commitment to strengthening our neighborhoods and our schools. Our children's success in life depends on the investments we make in their education. Building new libraries in our schools will benefit our students throughout the year, and for the rest of their lives."

"This magnificent commitment by The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation and their project partners represents a profoundly important investment in our students' futures, because it will help build the foundation for a lifetime of learning and personal growth," added Andrés A. Alonso, Ed.D., Chief Executive Officer, Baltimore City Public Schools. "My sincere thanks to the Foundation for their invaluable ongoing support for the students and families of City Schools."

"The Weinberg Foundation's generous commitment to developing libraries will brighten the future for thousands of Baltimore City schoolchildren," said Patrick McCarthy, president and CEO of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. "It is critically important that children learn to read proficiently by third grade, and when they successfully accomplish that, they will read to learn throughout life. Having these resources will improve opportunities for them to succeed in the classroom and eventually in their careers."

Library Project Designer Daniel K. Proctor, Principal of Kirk Designs, and in charge of the interior design for each library, shared "With this generous gift from the Weinberg Foundation, we can accelerate the evolution of Baltimore City School libraries becoming state of the art learning centers. Kirk Designs feels privileged to play a role in this collaboration among business, philanthropic, and educational communities. Through this effort, we hope to put each student on a lifetime path of discovery."

Betsy Nelson, President, Association of Baltimore Area Grantmakers, a project partner, remarked "I applaud the Weinberg Foundation and its trustees for this generous contribution to Baltimore's children. Reading creates the pathway to opportunity, and with these additional funds, more students and their families will be able to continue along this path."

Deborah Flateman, President and CEO of the Maryland Food Bank, also a project partner, noted "Our experience and external data tells us that well-fed children learn better in schools. That the Weinberg Foundation has the foresight to include the Maryland Food Bank's School Pantry Program with their Library Project speaks to their commitment for a holistic, thorough approach in building stronger minds and communities. We could not be more proud of our inclusion in this initiative."

The official grand opening celebration for the first three schools included in the Library Project will take place September 12 at Thomas Johnson Elementary/Middle School beginning at 9 a.m. Simultaneous events will take place at Moravia Park Elementary and Southwest Baltimore Charter School libraries. Looking farther ahead, the September celebration will also include the announcement of the next schools to be included in the Library Project in 2013.

Please follow all Weinberg Library Project developments at www.baltimorelibraryproject.org and on Twitter at #libraryproject.

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Baltimore Elementary and Middle School Library Project Partners:

*The Annie E. Casey Foundation
Art with a Heart, Inc.
Association for Baltimore Area Grantmakers
Baltimore City Public Schools
Baltimore Community Foundation
Baltimore Education Research Consortium
Baltimore Reads, Inc.
The Baltimore Sun Media Group
Barnes and Noble, Power Plant
Bogdan Computer Services, Inc.
Comcast
CPS Gumpert
Dyslexia Tutoring Program
Enoch Pratt Free Library
Fund for Educational Excellence*

*The Heart of America Foundation
Incite Creative
JRS Architects, Inc.
Kirk Designs
Maryland Food Bank
Maryland State Department of Education
Office of Governor Martin O'Malley
Office of Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Office of U.S. Senator Barbara Mikulski
Office of U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin
Parks and People Foundation
United Way of Central Maryland
VPC Incorporated
Wells Fargo Banking Corporation*

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About The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation

The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, one of the largest private charitable foundations in the United States, provides approximately \$100 million in annual grants to nonprofits that provide direct services to economically disadvantaged people, primarily in the U.S. and Israel. Grants are focused on meeting basic needs and enhancing an individual's ability to meet those needs with emphasis on older adults, the Jewish community, and our hometown communities of Maryland, northeastern Pennsylvania, and Hawaii. The trustees, some of whom also serve as executive officers of the Foundation, are Alvin Awaya, Judge Ellen M. Heller, Robert T. Kelly, Jr., Barry I. Schloss, and Chairman of the Board Donn Weinberg. Rachel Monroe serves as the Weinberg Foundation's President. For more information please go to www.hjweinbergfoundation.org.