



The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, Inc.



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## **WEINBERG FOUNDATION INCREASES LIBRARY PROJECT FUNDING** ***Total of \$10 million now committed for up to 24 new public school libraries***

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BALTIMORE (September 23, 2013) -- The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, one of the largest private foundations in the United States, today announces an additional \$5 million in funding for up to 12 more public school library renovations as part of the Baltimore Elementary and Middle School Library Project. Including the Foundation's current \$5 million commitment for 12 libraries by 2015, the Weinberg Foundation now has committed a total of \$10 million for as many as 24 new public school libraries.

The announcement highlights the grand openings of the next two school libraries completely redesigned and renovated. The new libraries are located at The Historic Samuel Coleridge-Taylor Elementary School and at Arlington Elementary/Middle School where today's official celebration takes place:

- **Monday, September 23, 2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.**
- **Arlington Elementary/Middle School, 3705 West Rogers Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21215**
- **Scheduled speakers include** (remarks at 2:30 p.m.):
  - **Governor Martin O'Malley**
  - **Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake**
  - **Tisha Edwards, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Baltimore City Public Schools**
  - **Rachel Garbow Monroe, President, The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation**

In addition to showcasing the transformed library spaces at both schools, the Weinberg Foundation has partnered with Maryland Food Bank and Heart of America to provide mobile food pantries at both schools. These mobile food pantries utilize a client choice approach where families can pick the items that they would like to receive. Every student in the school will have the opportunity to go home today with 25 pounds of food – including fresh produce. Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake will also announce a new reading program linked directly to the Weinberg Library Project.

"This is a truly extraordinary day for the Weinberg Foundation and the Library Project," said Rachel Garbow Monroe, Weinberg Foundation President. "What began as a dream only two short years ago today has grown into a \$10 million Foundation initiative which has been embraced and supported by more than 30 government, nonprofit, and community partners as well as individual philanthropists. Making today even more special, the Weinberg Foundation will announce a multi-million dollar, major new capital grant to Baltimore's very own Enoch Pratt Free Library. We also celebrate Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake's announcement of a new City literacy program that perfectly complements the focus and spirit of the Library Project."

Each new library is a well-designed, well-made, flexible and durable space that includes a vast array of new products and features. These include flexible book shelving, e-readers, computers, and other technological instructional devices, an "Enoch Pratt Parent Place" for parents/guardians, informal reading areas, and separate areas for study and research, instruction, and group discussion.

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"Our better choices continue to invest in the education of our children, the health of our people and the health of our land, air and water. Through the 2010 Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund, we are investing more than \$3 million to transform outdoor spaces throughout Baltimore City, including \$866,000 for greening projects at Baltimore City Library Project Schools," said Governor Martin O'Malley. "Partnering together with The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation and the Parks and People Foundation on the Baltimore City Elementary and Middle School Library Project is one more way we can continue to invest in a better quality of life, a fuller life that our kids will share with their fellow citizens in the next generation."

The Weinberg Library Project now involves more than 30 partners across all sectors. Extending that public-private collaboration, Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake today announced the *Mayor's Reading Club*, a program intended to improve vocabulary and literacy skills of students from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade in Baltimore City. "The Reading Club will get high-quality books into the homes of children and will provide parents with practical tools to help their children become early learners," said Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake. "It will be an important part of my Third Grade Reads initiative to help kids who have fallen behind in their reading proficiency to finally catch up—and thus do better in school and in life."

The Reading Club program will initially focus on the four schools associated with the Mayor's Third Grade Reads initiative as well as Weinberg Library Project schools.

The Library Project coincides with Baltimore City Public Schools' work to provide its school communities with modern, high-quality school buildings, an effort that will result in \$1.1 billion in renovations and new construction in the coming years. "Today's celebration is exciting—for the students, teachers, and families at Arlington Elementary/Middle School, the Historic Samuel Coleridge-Taylor Elementary School, and all of City Schools. This fabulous project complements the broader work now underway throughout the district," observed Tisha Edwards, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Baltimore City Public Schools. "But more importantly, these libraries send the message to our students that the whole community cares about them and is working hard to provide them with the learning spaces they deserve."

Please follow all Weinberg Library Project developments at [www.baltimorelibraryproject.org](http://www.baltimorelibraryproject.org) and on Twitter at #libraryproject.

### **Baltimore Elementary and Middle School Library Project Partners:**

*The Annie E. Casey Foundation*

*Art with a Heart, Inc.*

*Association of Baltimore Area Grantmakers*

*Babetta's World*

*Baltimore City Public Schools*

*Baltimore Community Foundation*

*Baltimore Education Research Consortium (BERC)*

*Baltimore Reads, Inc.*

*The Baltimore Sun Media Group*

*Barnes and Noble*

*Bogdan Computer Services, Inc.*

*Comcast*

*CPS Gumpert*

*DLA Piper*

*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*

*Raising a Reader*

*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 low-income and vulnerable individuals and families, 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 Donn Weinberg, Barry I. Schloss, Robert T. Kelly, Jr., Alvin Awaya, and Chair Ellen M. Heller. Rachel Garbow Monroe serves as the Weinberg Foundation's President. For more information please go to [www.hjweinbergfoundation.org](http://www.hjweinbergfoundation.org).*