



*The Urbana Free Library Foundation
Board of Directors*

Our Mission and Our Achievements

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<http://foundation.urbanafreelibrary.org>

The Role of the Board

According to United for Libraries, a division of the American Library Association, “Library foundations are gaining strength in numbers as visionary communities are looking toward securing the future of their libraries. Foundations typically differ from Friends groups in that they raise larger amounts of money through higher end fundraising such as major gifts for endowments, implementing planned giving campaigns, and sponsoring higher profile ticket events.”

The Foundation’s Mission

The Urbana Free Library Foundation’s purpose is stated in Article I of the bylaws:

The purposes of the Foundation are solely and exclusively for the charitable, educational, and scientific purposes set forth, as follows:

- a. To assist in developing and increasing the resources of The Urbana Free Library for public library services for the community which it serves by encouraging gifts of money, property, and other materials having value to The Urbana Free Library and by such other proper means as may be advisable, in accordance with the policies of the governing body of The Urbana Free Library.*
- b. To receive, hold, and administer gifts and resources, including but not limited to real or personal property or both, and to use and apply the whole or any part of the income there from and the principal thereof exclusively for the enhancement and support of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, or corresponding provisions of any subsequent federal tax laws.*
- c. To do such other acts and undertake such other activities as in the judgment of the Board of Directors, with the approval of the Board of Library Trustees of The Urbana Free Library, shall tend to promote the interests and welfare of The Urbana Free Library. The Foundation shall not directly provide library services to the public.*

The Foundation is a valued partner to the City of Urbana and has played a vital role in providing significant private funding for the Library, primarily for capital projects.

Foundation Formed to Support The Urbana Free Library

The welfare and interests of The Urbana Free Library are advanced by the Foundation and two other groups:

- The **Library Board of Trustees**, whose members are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council, and responsible for the overall operation of the Library, including budget, policy, and planning.
- The **Friends of The Urbana Free Library**, a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to fostering relations between the Library and the community.

The Foundation is managed by a volunteer Board of Directors comprised of community members, the ex officio Library Executive Director, and ex officio representatives from the Library Board of Trustees, the Friends of The Urbana Free Library, and the City of Urbana.

Leadership and advocacy for a much-needed Library expansion project led to the initial establishment of The Urbana Free Library Foundation. During the course of an active capital campaign in early 2000, the Foundation, with the assistance of over 100 volunteer community members, raised over \$2.5 million in private donations. Dedicated on May 1, 2005, the \$8.3-million Library expansion was achieved without increasing taxes and without incurring any debt.

As a much-loved anchor of downtown Urbana with a rich history, The Urbana Free Library is a place of opportunity and enrichment. It is a place where children develop a love of reading and teens enjoy after-school programs that offer access to creation technologies. It is a place where people discover their ancestors through the Champaign County Historical Archives and families socially connect with their community through Library programs. Regardless of the reason, The Urbana Free Library is a welcoming place that transforms lives.

Established in 1997, the Foundation assists "in developing and increasing the resources of The Urbana Free Library for public library services for the community."

Achievements

After the capital campaign, the Foundation shifted its fundraising focus to further enhance the attractiveness of the Library and grounds. Early on, successful fundraisers included the sale of engraved brick pavers for the landscaped Cherry Alley walkway and a popular 5K walk/run event.

Funds also have been raised through an annual direct mail appeal and through donations received through the Library's website. Over the years, these annual fundraising efforts have provided for many significant improvements to Library facilities and programs:

- "Slow and Steady," a large limestone sculpture of the tortoise and the hare with a stack of books, by artist Todd Frahm, located at the Green Street entrance
- Cherry Alley Arch, a decorative entryway to the beautifully landscaped plaza with its personalized, brick-paved walkway
- "Ibidem," a bronze sculpture by Urbana artist Cecilia Allen, located in the garden area at the southeast end of Cherry Alley
- Restorations of the Library's historic art pieces, including the Lincoln and Longfellow busts, two Busey portraits, several archival maps, and a watercolor painting ca. 1900 of the Champaign County Courthouse
- Murals painted by Glen C. Davies for Megan's Reading Room, the hallway path to Children's Services, and Megan's Garden
- Works by local artists, including fiber art by Mary McDonald and a metal sculpture by Christiane Martens
- Landscaping improvements to the Library entrances, including flower boxes, planters, and benches
- An upright piano for concerts in the Library's first-floor reading rooms
- Sponsorship of two popular monthly music series for all ages
- *Tutor.com*, an online homework help service, available through the Library website
- Redesign of the Library website
- Purchase of the Webber property at the southwest corner of Race and Green Streets to provide for future Library growth
- Raised nearly \$50,000 during their annual fundraising campaign in 2014 and 2015

The Foundation continues to receive both annual donations and large bequests, which are used to support current enhancements or are held in reserve for future capital needs.

Board Member Participation

The Urbana Free Library Foundation Board of Directors meets as needed, not less than six times per year, on the fourth Wednesday of the month at noon in the Satterthwaite Conference Room of the Library. Foundation bylaws provide for a minimum of 10 members and not more than 15 members. Directors serve for a three-year term and may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. Foundation board members endorse these guidelines for effective participation:

1. Believe in and be an active advocate and ambassador for the mission, values, and vision of The Urbana Free Library Foundation.
2. Support the Foundation's policies and procedures for conducting business.
3. Regularly attend board and committee meetings and come prepared to be a full participant in the decision-making process.
4. Stay informed about the Library, its directions, and its connections to the community.
5. Fully support board decisions once they are made.
6. Be available to serve on a committee.
7. Participate in fund development by taking on tasks tailored to one's personal comfort and skills.
8. Give an annual financial contribution to the best of one's personal ability. Consider the Library Foundation a top priority for charitable commitments.
9. As appropriate, use personal and professional contacts to benefit the Foundation, without "trespassing" on relationships.
10. Maintain confidentiality of board and committee information when appropriate.

Effective Board Governance

Board performance is regarded as a critical factor affecting a not-for-profit organization's ability to make an impact. The Urbana Free Library Foundation Board of Directors considers these guidelines to reflect best practices for effective board governance:

1. The organization has well-defined bylaws that guide board decision making and activities.
2. The board is comprised of thoughtfully recruited members who have specific capabilities, community connections, and experience that will help advance the Foundation mission.
3. The board understands its roles and responsibilities, exercises careful financial and legal oversight of its funds, and focuses on long-term strategy.
4. Board oversight of financial controls insures that: gifts are accurately recorded and disbursed as donors have specified, financial statements are reviewed regularly, independent financial audits occur, and IRS 990 forms are filed.
5. The board insures that its financial structure is sound by adopting a budget, creating a fund development plan and policies, and determining the parameters for board member involvement in fund development.
6. The engaged board provides support to the Foundation through personal giving, fundraising, and representing the organization in the community.
7. The board works effectively with the Library Executive Director and the Library Board of Trustees.

Board Leadership

The Urbana Free Library Foundation thanks these community members who have provided leadership with their service on the Board of Directors.

The Urbana Free Library Foundation Board of Directors 2017 - 2018

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Vision for the Future

In 2014, The Urbana Free Library celebrated 140 years of service to the community. The Foundation has had a vibrant role in the Library's rich history and looks forward to a bright future that includes helping to enhance the mission of The Urbana Free Library.

In the fall of 2011, the Foundation approached the Library Board of Trustees seeking approval to refocus its attention on property acquisition and future expansion. The purchase of the Webber property at the southwest corner of Race and Green

streets in 2013 was an initial step toward this goal.

The Foundation also sees a great need to help the Library prepare for some significant capital costs. These include the eventual replacement of the Library's 40-year-old boiler and air handling system; the renovation and repair of the historic Race Street porch; and the assessment and possible energy-efficient upgrades of 12 single-pane windows.

In the near future, work will commence to revise the 2004

Master Plan for the Library Block, a planning document jointly approved by The Urbana Free Library, the Foundation, and the Urbana City Council. The Library also will engage in long-range planning to learn more about the current and emerging needs of the community.

This year, the Foundation will embark on a major capital campaign to help supplement and support projects that will provide the community with the best Library experience possible, now and in the future.