A Message from the Redwood City Public Library Director

During these unprecedented times of public health crisis and sheltering in place, people’s lives have changed in countless ways, from children learning at home, to the closure of small businesses, to the strain on our healthcare system. As routines have been disrupted, people have realized what is important to them. On Sunday, March 15, the last day Redwood City libraries were open before the shelter-at-home order, it was simultaneous casualty heartwarming and heartbreaking to see lines of people waiting their turn to enter the Downtown and Redwood Shores Libraries. At the mid-afternoon peak, people were waiting 45 minutes to get books and other library materials for their families “one last time” before the libraries would be closed for an unknown period. This community loves its libraries, and we are incredibly grateful for that love.

As we made the difficult decision to reduce library services, one of the huge worries we heard from the education community, the business community, and our most vulnerable residents was the loss of wifi access. One million people per year log into our wireless networks at the four libraries, and in the fall of 2017, with support from the Redwood City Library Foundation (RCLF), the Library launched a program called Bridging the Digital Divide to allow home checkout of hotspots (personal wifi devices) to support residents with limited or no connectivity at home. On Sunday, March 15, the last day Redwood City libraries were open before the shelter-at-home order, it was simultaneous.

The temporary loss of wifi in our public spaces brought into sharp relief how critical this need is, so we have added an additional 100 hotspots to help meet community demand. The devices themselves are not terribly expensive, but each one carries a monthly data plan, so the cost to purchase a hotspot and support it for a year is about $600 per device. While we are still raising funds for exciting new initiatives like the future Makerspace in the Library and enhancements to the Redwood Shores Library Interpretive Center, the need to improve access to the internet for students, including those with special needs and low-income residents, is profound and immediate. Your support for our Bridging the Digital Divide initiative truly changes people’s lives. Thank you very much, and take good care.

Sincerely,
Derek Wolfram
Library Director

When the new hotspots are available, residents will be able to check them out at the Downtown Library and/or Fair Oaks Library to be determined. These and other hotspots currently checked out will have a due date of June 30.

Our mission is to support the Redwood City Public Library in cultivating literacy, life-long learning, and community connections.

Please Support Our Community!

RCLF needs your help to raise $60,000 toward purchasing additional hotspot devices for immediate use. Donate today on RCLF’s website (www.rclfnd.org) and make a big difference in our community!

Many, Many Thanks

RCLF is proud to partner with Bothin Foundation and Saga Foundation in supporting the Makerspace in the Library program. Thank you for your generous grants!

Bothin Foundation: $30,000
Bothin Foundation has been a long-time partner since 2017, helping RCLF to address the most pressing needs of the community, such as youth development, bridging the digital divide, and assisting families who need it most.

SAGA Foundation: $40,000
SAGA Foundation, based in Menlo Park, is a private, independent, grant-making organization that partners with RCLF in helping underserved youth, providing safe spaces and development opportunities.
John Blake's Board Member Profile:
Chi, reads, and occasionally enjoys fly fishing. We are lucky to have John live in Redwood City with his wife Daisy, who brings added community and the global community. “He leads the Foundation’s STEAM Fest on the Square, which grew to be one of the Bay Area’s largest Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math events.”

Kelsey Dubois, Executive Director of the Library Foundation since 2018, holds a master’s degree in Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering from the University of Michigan and is Senior Electromechanical Engineer at San Carlos-based company, Dishcraft Robotics. Thank you, Kelsey, for touching all our lives with your talent, energy, professionalism, and hard work. Redwood City is a better place because of your efforts.

Premia Capital, a real estate development company in Redwood City, has awarded a $25,000 grant to RCLF. Founded in 2009, it remains 100% privately owned. Michael Halow, company CEO, believes his legacy should be to lead by example and work hard to make the community better for all its residents. Mike focuses on helping kids and lower income residents, and believes that supporting RCLF’s Bridging the Digital Divide program, along with local sports, contributes to the mental and physical well-being of our community.

Kelsey and her husband Blake Griffin in Bruges, Belgium.

RCLF was proud to nominate Ms. Kelsey Dubois as our 2019 Unsung Hero. Kelsey joined the Library Foundation’s board of directors in December 2016 and has contributed her significant skills and talents to the library and community ever since. As the External Communications Manager, Kelsey was a key member of the Foundation’s rebranding effort, after which she implemented the committee’s recommendations by creating the Foundation’s new website and managing their marketing and outreach materials. Kelsey was also a committee member for the Foundation’s STEAM Fest on the Square, which grew to be one of the Bay Area’s largest Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math events. Kelsey is also a member of the Library Foundation’s Governance Committee, which has been instrumental in marketing strategies and policy decisions that have set the board on a strong trajectory for the future.

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Lucie Newcomb

Many thanks to our generous donors! The following individuals, groups, and businesses contributed between January 1 and December 31, 2019.

[Raw text of donors and contributions]
RCL’s Unsung Hero of 2019

RCL’s Unsung Hero 2019 was John Blake, who has been a member of the RCL board since 2004 and has served as its president at least three times, on several boards, and has contributed to the library's success for more than 30 years—and in his spare time, he practices Tai Chi. John lives in Redwood City with his wife Daisy, who brings added energy to supporting the Redwood City Library in this role.

As the External Communications Manager, Kelsey was a key member of the Foundation’s rebranding effort, after which she implemented the committee’s recommendations by creating the Foundation’s new website and updating their marketing and outreach materials. Kelsey was also a committee member for the Foundation’s STEAM Fest on the Square, which grew to be one of the Bay Area’s largest Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math events.

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$25,000 Grant Supports Digital Divide Program

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He said “I am inspired by the many amazing and selfless people in the Redwood City community, including the true champions that serve on the Library Foundation Board and those on-site day to day. They work hard to bring this community together and make it a better place. I take my kids to the Redwood City Public Library all the time and I see how much it means to them and to us. Working with you in many different ways, Redwood City Library, you are crusading it — keep doing your thing, and let’s keep pushing each other to make RWC the best town in America! Way more to do.” The Foundation is grateful for Premia Capital’s generous support.

Many thanks to our generous donors!

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Nancy Radcliffe
Diana Roody
Katy Robinson
Donna Smith & Juan Raigoza
Kathryn Strong
Genny Zhang
Jane & Paul Taylor
Daniel Tkhov & Katia Goetz
Donna Williams
Derek & Robin Wolfgam

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$50,000+ Support

Surfing Giving
Our Current Programs & Initiatives

Your gifts promote literacy and building community for all ages through these programs:

**Bridging the Digital Divide**
Funds new devices for the Downtown Library Teen Center and supports data & annual software licenses for laptops & hotspot devices.

**Interpretive Center Upgrades - Redwood Shores Library**
Funds updates & improvements to the center, allowing children to learn about the SF Bay and its wetlands through interactive displays & games.

**Makerspace**
Help us fund a space in the Downtown Library for patrons to “make things” using computers, printers, audio/video, and traditional arts & crafts supplies.

**Free Books for Families**
Provides free children’s books in both Spanish and English to encourage reading at home.

**Career Online High School in the Library**
Allows adult learners to earn a high school diploma and career certificate in Redwood City's Downtown Library.

April 23 is National Library Giving Day
Show your support for the Redwood City Public Library by donating to the Redwood City Library Foundation on our website! www.rclfdn.org

Redwood City Library Foundation
1044 Middlefield Road • Redwood City, CA 94063
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**Weights & Measures**

**Our mission is to support the Redwood City Public Library in cultivating literacy, life-long learning, and community connections.**

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