



Annual Report 2025





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Our Mission

Seedlings is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization dedicated to increasing the opportunity for literacy and education by providing high-quality, free and low-cost children's literature in braille.

Leilani, 4
Cover: Wyatt, 5

Welcome

My name is Karen Smith and I'm a proud Seedlings board member and Children's Librarian at the Livonia Public Library. Long before joining the board, I discovered Seedlings through a grant from the Livonia Community Foundation that provided braille books for the library. Thanks to this grant, our braille collection has grown immensely over the years with a variety of board books, early readers, chapter books, Newberry Award Winners, non-fiction, tactile items, and a braille overlay for the library's StoryWalk®. Needless to say, I am very well-versed with Seedlings' programming and catalog. So when I was asked to join the board, I was thrilled to get involved from a leadership perspective.



During my time on the board, I have had the honor of celebrating the organization's 40th anniversary, honoring Debra Bonde's retirement, and watching Amanda Hercula take the reins as Seedlings' new executive director. In her short time as executive director, I've watched Amanda implement new programming, make strategic updates, and foster a positive and purposeful culture among the Seedlings staff. 2025 was a particularly exciting year with expanded free programs (and a new program for libraries), Inclusive Story Time programming in partnership with the Livonia Public Library, a facility expansion, and more. Keep reading for a closer look at everything that's been going on at Seedlings!

I'm excited to see what the next year brings for Seedlings. There are many intriguing projects in the works, including braille books for emergent readers and the return of the in-person fundraiser. Amanda has often described Seedlings as a "magical place," and I could not agree with her more. The welcoming and inclusive energy, the desire to make continuous improvements, and the dedicated community of supporters is a perfect recipe for success.

I'm grateful to be part of this community and look forward to building upon our success, together in 2026!

Karen M. Smith

Board Secretary, Library Head of Children's & Teen Services

Board of Directors

BOARD MEMBERS SERVE 3-YEAR TERMS AS UNPAID VOLUNTEERS.

Matt Collins, Retired Sales Engineer & Livonia Lions Club Member

Ann Devereux, *President*, Parent of child with vision loss, Market Research Analyst

Danielle Erickson, VP of Operations

Theresa Gibbons, Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments

Jennifer Joseph, Parent of child with vision loss, School Psychologist

Jessica King, Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments

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Jackie Rau, *Treasurer*, Controller

Seif Saqallah, Attorney & braille reader

Cheryl Shewach, Semi-retired HR Professional & Consultant

Karen Smith, *Secretary*, Library Head of Children's & Teen Services

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Mary David, *Shipping & Production Assistant*

Catherine Eskandari, *Administrative Assistant*

Laura Garvey, *Office Manager*

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Cameron Mair, *IT Coordinator & Service Technician*

Cheri Muchow, *Production Assistant & Braille Proofreader*

Kari Nelson, *Program Manager*

Caleigh Noonan, *Community Outreach Manager*

Lauren Randazzo, *Community Outreach Assistant*

Joseph Sabatella, *Administrative Assistant*

Deb Tzafaroglou, *Production Assistant*

Debbie Walker, *Production Assistant & Braille Transcriber*

By the Numbers

51,599

The record number of braille books produced in 2025.
Up 6% from 2024.

830,437

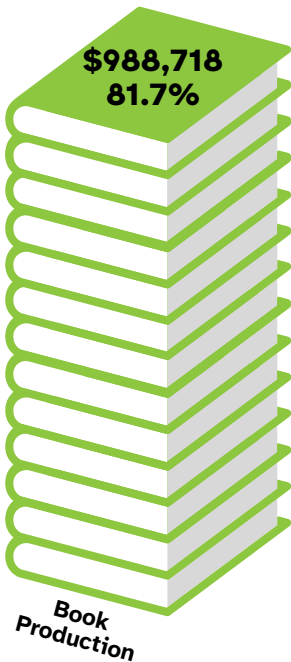
The total number of braille books distributed to children with vision loss since Seedlings began in 1984.

32,216

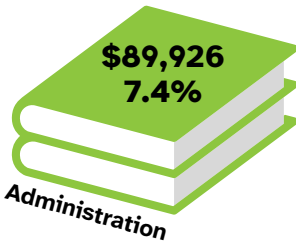
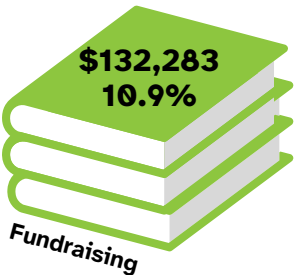
The number of FREE books distributed in 2025.
62% of the total.

86/971

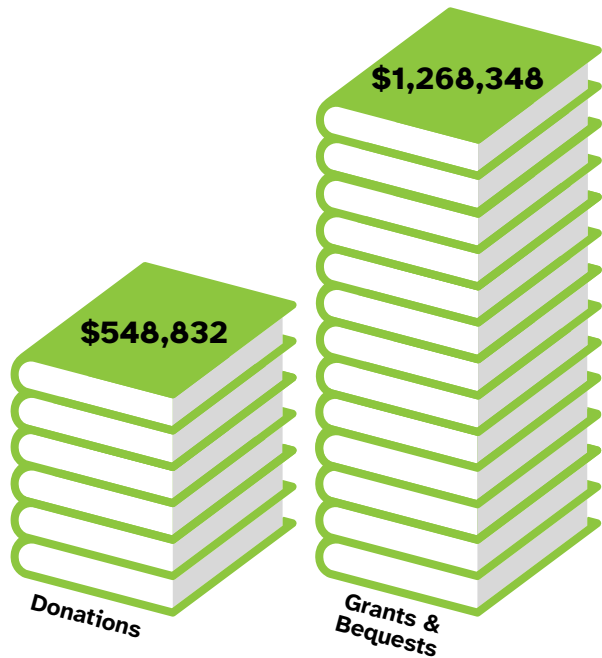
In 2025, 86 titles were converted to the new braille code (UEB), bringing the total to a record 971.



\$1,210,927
Total Expenses



Seedlings remains one of the country's largest children's braille book producers.



\$2,045,586
Total Operating Revenue



All amounts are pre-audit numbers.

Goals for 2026



**Produce & distribute
at least 53,000 books.**



**Give away at least 35,000
FREE books.**



**Launch a brand new book
type: Little Big Books.**



**Place books in all 50 states through
our Libraries in Braille program.**

**All books are
\$20 or less,
averaging only
\$10 each.**



Theophilus, 2

“Theophilus spent his first 7 months of life in the NICU. In the early days there wasn’t much we could do besides read to him. He has developed a love for books and loves when he can feel textures in books and start to feel “bumpy letters” as we call them!”

FREE Book Programs

2025 was an exciting year for Seedlings' free programs! A new free program was launched, two free programs were expanded upon, and 62% of all books produced were given away for free. Thank you to our generous donors and grantors for making our free programming possible!

The Book Angel Program (BAP)

Originally called "Anna's Book Angel Project" in memory of Anna K. Bonde, BAP enables every child with vision loss in the U.S. and Canada to receive 5 free braille books per year.

Through BAP, 12,385 books were sent to children in 2025, bringing the total to over 124,000 free Book Angel books since 2002.

The Assist-A-Reader Program (AAR)

Donors can make a big impact on a child's life by donating \$100 through this program, formerly known as Adopt-a-Reader. Expanded in 2025, children in MI, OH, IL, IN, MN, WI, and IA can receive a box of 10 free braille books of their choice from Seedlings.

Teachers of The Visually Impaired Program (TVIP)

Our hearts go out to all the teachers who all too often have very few materials available to help them teach braille to their students.

Through TVIP, teachers across the U.S. were the recipients of 4,834 free books, bringing the total free TVIP books to over 31,500 since 2019.

Braille for Beginners (B4B)

Through the B4B program, thousands of Print-Braille-&-Picture Books are sent to Early Intervention programs across the U.S. to share with the families they serve, getting braille into the hands of children at a young age.

In 2025, 9,148 free beginner books were placed in the homes of children with vision loss through intervention centers in all 50 states, bringing the total of free B4B books to 41,732 since 2019.

The Rose Project

Rose, our oldest free program, was established through a generous bequest in 1994. It enables children with vision loss to access free World Book Encyclopedia articles in braille. In 2025, Rose expanded to include an article of the month subscription with a corresponding activity. Through this expansion, a record of 198 braille articles were transcribed, printed, and sent to children across the U.S. in 2025 to broaden their knowledge and assist with their schoolwork, bringing the grand total to over 11,500 articles.



AAR sent a record 500 books to children with vision loss in 2025, surpassing 7,200 total free books since 2011.



Biggest year since 2009!

Libraries in Braille (LIB)

LIB was established in 2025 through generous donations in honor of Seedlings' 40th anniversary and Debra Bonde's retirement. The program was designed to increase access to braille books through both public libraries and school libraries, ensuring that library patrons and visually impaired children in schools can check out books just as easily as their sighted peers. In the first year alone, 1,582 books were sent out to school and public libraries across 31 U.S. states and one location in Canada!

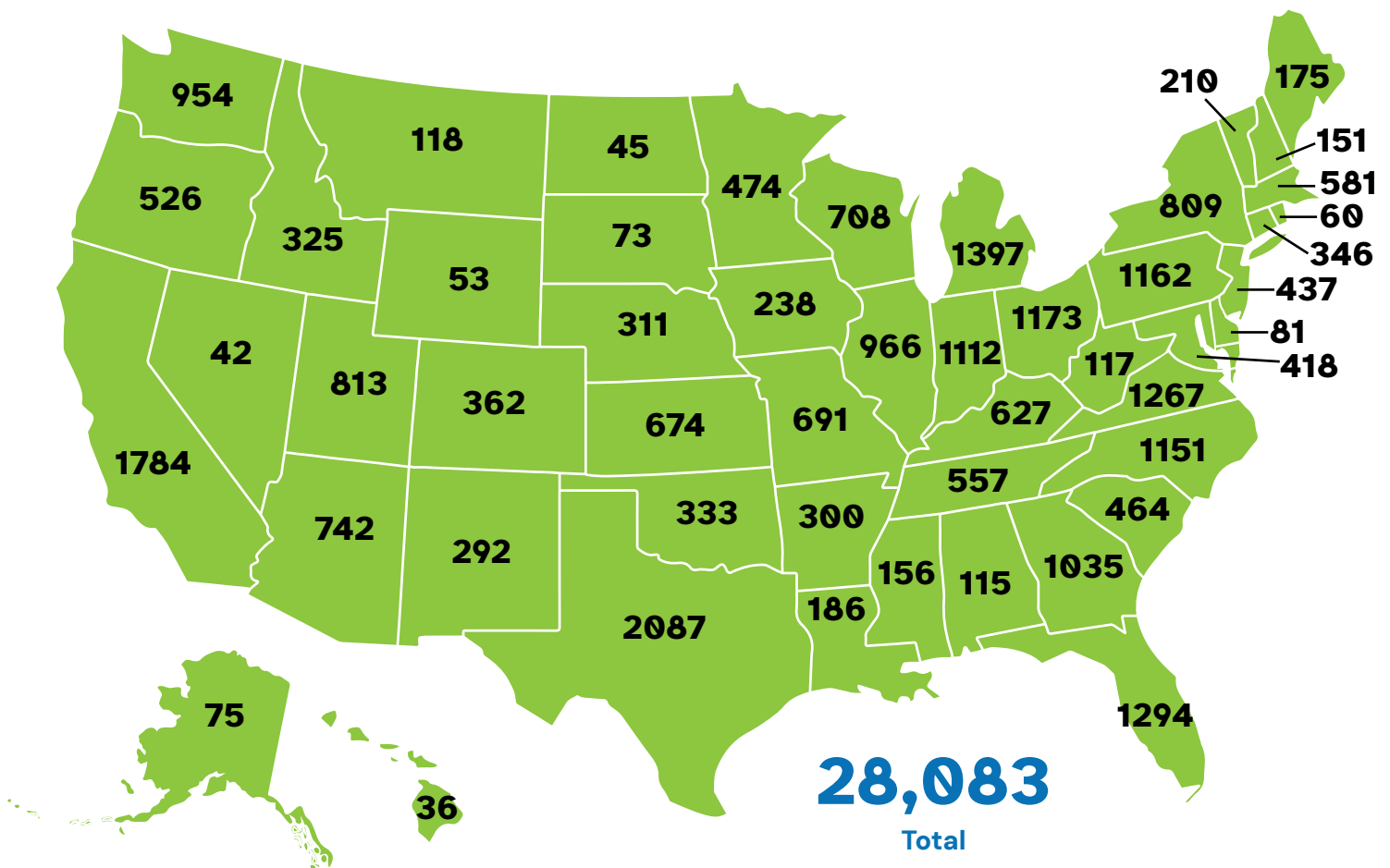
Additional Giveaways

Throughout the year, additional books were given away for free through smaller giveaway programs like Summer Sets, Pics & Quotes, and our Gently Used program. Over 3,100 books were given away for free as a result of these extra programs.



Over 90 libraries received books across 31 states.

FREE Books Per State



Numbers reflect the number of books given away through Seedlings' 6 Free Programs.

Donors

Bonita Abadie
Virginia Abramson
Patricia Abujen
Marie Adame
Angela Adams
Elaine Adams
William Allen
Erin Altieri
John & Lorraine Andary
Ruth Andersen
Carolyn Anderson
Lori Anderson-Doby
Carol Anderson-Gregg
Mason Archibald
Deborah Armstrong
Thomas Assessor
Vivian Austin
Jane Bacher
Jane Bailey
Patricia Blazoff-Baker &
Mark Baker
John Balger
Carol Ball
Paul & Susan Banner
Mike & Barb Baranovic
Paul & Lynette Bartlett
Lysle Jeffrey Basinger

Mark & Karen Bosscher
Gwen Botting
Ernest & Carol Bowman
Barbara Brady
Mary Brady
Stanley Broffman
Linda Brown
Evelina Bryant
Brita Bucklin
John Bull
Paulette & Alan Bull
Susan Bullock
Susan Burda
Kristin Burgess
John & Janis Burkhardt
Joanne & Frank Camiller
Ed Caram & Barb
McIntire
Regina Cassidy
Marty Cezon
Susy Chacko
Pam Chapin
Robert Chiang
Bob & Ann Christenson
Gina Cibuzar
Irene Clancy
John Clark

M.R. Cezon

“Seedlings provides below cost books for blind children around the globe, which helps them learn the essential skill of reading. I am proud to support this jewel in our community.”

Walter & Doris Basko
Alan & Lonna Baum
Judy L. Beard
Melisa Beck
Diane Becker
Judy Berry
Veronica Bielat
Teri Billau
Marilyn Bishop
Joann Bjork
Samantha Blea
John J. Bodnar
Andrea Bolan
Debra J. Bonde
Pasquale Bonfrisco
Faith Boortz
Margaret Borsvold

Susan Clark
David & Jeffrita
Colglazier
Patricia Colomina
Brenda Combs
Jan Conflitti
Patricia Corcoran
Robert Cordaro
Gary & Jan Cornillaud
John & Megan Correia
Walter & Janet Covert
Kim Otto Covington
Robyn Crawford
Harold Creech
Riley Crozier
Calvin Crush

Thank You

For supporting our mission this year!

Barbara Cutshaw
Margaret Czarnik
Michael & Ann
Dagostino
Catherine Dasher
Roger De La Cruz
Randy & Teresa DeGraaf
Dea DeWolff
Joseph Dimech
Patricia Dishman
Kathy Donagrandi
Marlene Donoghue
David Drlik
Ray & Sherry Duff
Danielle & Doug Durbin
Mary Jo Durivage
Brenda Durling
Anthony Dwyer
Terry & Julie Edewaard
Family
Carole & Hugh Edwards
Hannah Ehrhardt
Saeed Ehsani
Henry Engelking
Catherine Eskandari
Clara Eusebi
Saralu Evans
Bob Farmer
Christine Farris
William Farry
Faten Fawaz
Mary Ann Fielek
Frances Firek
William & Betty
Fishbeck
Judi Fisher & Tom Brand
Mark & Deborah Fisher
Valerie Fisher
Gar Fitz
James Fitzgerald
Esther Flaherty
Diane Flor
Beth Freeborn
Bob & Kathy Freeman
Norma J. Freeman
George & Maiga Friess
Beverly Garcia
Laura Garvey
Pamela Gatewood
Wynema Gatewood
Catherine Gibson
Khara Gilmore
Cecelia Ginger
Twalla Gipson

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Janet Going
David Goldstein
Lori Grammer
Brent Greer
Judy Gruner
Justin Guenther
Shana Guerrero
Denise Gundle
Pamela & Andrew
Gustafson
Susan Hagaman
Julie Handel
Connie & Larry Harding
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Catherine Hasse
Bomi Hathikhanavala
Michael & Luane Hayden
Emily Hayes
Marsha Heads
Bill & Helene Heaton
Patricia Heibel
Stephanie Helle
Dorothy Hendriksen
Ramona Herbert
Amanda Hercula
Megan Hillmer
Alan & Debbie Hitsky
Russell & Mary Anne
Hoadley
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Natalie Hogan
Linda Holt
Christopher Hood
Frances Hoopingarner
Rahiel Housey-Johnson
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Marilyn & Michele
Hughes
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Christine Jamrok
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Carol & Gordon Johnson
Susan Johnson
Bill Jones
Michelle Jones
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Daniel Kaczmarek
Elli Kalas
David Kalinowski
Delores Kanights

James & Joanne Keefer
Nancy Kelel-Rivera
Kimble Keyes
Todd & Lisa King
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Peggy Kocoras
Linda Koester
Margaret & William Kohn
Bill & Joyce Kolnik
James & Mary Ellen
Krueger
Ernie & Cathie Kuck
Marion & Sonia Kurtyka
Reginald Kuszynski
Kristen La Forest
Amy LaBarge & Ron
Beeber
Lori Laird
Linda M. Landau
Susan Lang
Gerald Lange
Mary Louise Lansbarkis
Paul & Veronica Laplant
John Lawrence
Mike Lee
Jane LeGros
Claude & Joy Leroux
CC Leslie
Adeline Levine
Michael & Margaret
Levon
Ruth Liberman
Beverly Lietz
Denise Lindsay
Harriet Livingstone
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Lloyd
Jim & Cindy Long
Charles Luehring
Martin & Teresa
MacDougall
Gail Susan Mack
Jim & Charlie Mahoney
Roberta Maki
Kellen Malone
Mary Maples
Darlene Markiewicz
George Marshall
Alexander Martinez
Donna Mathiesen
Jim Matthews

Barbara Maxfield
Charles & Nan May
Anne McCarthy
Ann McClue
Richard & Ann McDowell
Louise McGhie
Liz McGough
Mary V. McHale
Bruce McKeithan
Diane McKnight
Alice E. McLaughlin
Kathy McLaughlin
Mary McNamara
Janet McNeil
Smita Mehta
Thomas & Patricia Meyers
Ronald Michals
Priscilla Miley
Barbara Miller
Judy Moehle
Margaret Molenda
Dr. David Mordis
Mary Kidwiler Moritz
David & Kay Morrison
Celia Morse
Josephine & Alyssa Moskala
Barbara Munson
Martin & Maria Mutter
Troy & Kari Nelson
Heather Neufeld
Judith Neville
Carolyn Newell
John Nicoloff
Karen & Matt Nieman
Caleigh Noonan
Karen Noonan
Diane Nousanen
Cynthia Oliver
William Olson
Dennis & Donna Opoka
Mary Ormsby
Susan Palutis
Rebecca Parker
Brian Parsons
Jill & Dan Pavlat
Fred Pegan
Chuck & Lorey Peltó
Barbara Pence
Frank Peppers
Gordon Pethick
Charles & Patricia Pettke
Jean Peyrat
Mark Phillips
Kenny & Donna Pittman
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Joan Plonka
Nancy Plummer
Mary Pohlod
Michael Pommeranz

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Barbara Prindiville
William Pullen
Richard Pulliam
Joel Puntigam
Robert Putt
Katrina Ramos
Lauren Randazzo
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Caitlin Reed
Carolyn Reno
Traci Reust
Susan Rieckhoff
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Martha Riha
Janice Riley
Patricia A. Risinger
Ralph & Deborah Rodriguez
Sandra Rogers
Judith Roth
Myrna Jean Rugg
Courtney Runyan
Vivian Sahin
Raymond & Joan Sandberg
Rosemarie Sandel
Brian & Rhonda Sarkisian
Frances Sartori
Cohen Scheerer
Denman Schmid
Mintzi Schramm
Barbara Scully
Heather Seaman
Daniel & Donna Senft
Michael & Margaret Shade
Diane Shavinski
Kathleen Sheets
Barbara Sheperdigian
Roxanne Shields
Sarah Shipp
Isaac Shloss
John Simek
Nanne B. Simonds
John Sinacola
Mary Ann Sincok
Susan Skibicki
Julie & William Skrent
Timothy & Jan Slezak
Arden Small
Jackie & Ian Smart
Connie & Audrey Smith
Peggy Smith
Joseph Sobecki
Jerome & Marilynn Spencer
Michelle Stahr
Natasha Stanger



Linnea, 6

"I love the access to books that Seedlings gives to my daughter. Linnea is deafblind and enjoys books with bright simple illustrations, tactile features, and sing-song rhythm. Linnea is learning to locate the braille on the pages."

Sherryn Stauffer
Janet, David, & Andrew Stechholz
Mike & Debbie Stellini
Tracy Stewart
Gerri Stewart-Conway
Nathan Stoecker
Erica Strassler
Ronald & Barbara Strong
Lorraine & Evan Stroup
Renee Studinski
Ronald Stuebben
Tim & Lynette Sutton
Rick Swaine
Barbara Swanson
George & Shawn Swiechowski
Johnette Thomas
Melissa Thun
Elizabeth Titus

Bryce Tochman
Tyonne Triplett
James & Elizabeth Truba
Richard & Barbara Truskowski
Paul & Catherine Tulikangas
Jess Vandenboom
Pamela Vellente
Bob & Dot Vernan
Caryn Walker
David Walker
Charles Webb
Jack R. Webb
Anna Weidner
Susan Weinger
Donna & Scott Wellman
Richard & Mary Welscott
Mrs. B. T. Weyhing III
Michelle Wheeler

Bob & Lisa Willard
Clark & Barbara Williams
Kathryn Wilson
Zephyr Winbigler
Cynthia Windecker
Gary Wlosinki
Caren Woods
Gina Woods
Megan Wuller
Mike & Jo Wuller
Lorraine Wygonik
Sarah Y
David Yanuzzi
Denise Yarnevich
Anne Yee
Reya Yeoman
Fen Zhang
Robert & Kathy Zimmerman

Memorial Tributes

Jim Aikin from Holt Family & Sandy
Dale Akers Jr. from David Titus
Pete Arciario from Catherine Camilleri
Maria Asuncion from Ray & Nancy Doute
James Aumend from Eve Aumend
Robert Babcock from Ted & Terri Langlois
Rachel Bagozzi-Leja from Denise Bagozzi
Mary Bahn from Anonymous
Diane June Baird from Elaine & George Anderson, Tom & Sharon Tate
Patricia Baker from Carol & Gordon Johnson
Don Baldwin from Ray & Nancy Doute
Andrew Balestrieri from Bill Bialkowski
Adela Balseira from Marion & Eduardo Phillips
Eleanor Barker from Dennis Schlemmer
Mark Barringer from Mary Brady
Margaret Basil from Carol Fluhrer
George E. Baxter from Janet Simms
James Bennett from Renee Seccombe
Micki Berg from Sheila & Shel Kohn
Cliff Beyer from Dave Swaine
Patricia Beyer from Susan Newton
Charlotte Binhammer from Ken & Michele Nagy
Joanne Biondi from Anna Merucci, Mary Anne Merucci
Debbie Blair from Marilyn Hersh
Janet Blea from Samantha Blea
Branson Blevins from Kathleen Esper
Anna Bonde from Bill & Sue Bresler, Stuart & Theresa Moyer, Tim & Charlene Schnelle, Seedlings Staff
Dolores Marie Bosman from Mr. & Mrs. Denis J. Hurley, III
Pattyann Boucher from Terry & Patrice Gould
Robert "Bob" Bovitz from Ray & Nancy Doute
Kyle Steven Bradley from Ray & Nancy Doute
Helen Brandenburg from Maureen & Michael Seccombe
Rock Brandstadt from Joan Forgrave
Brooklyn from Placer County Office of Education
Dianne Brundage from Lynn Klimczak, Andy & Marilyn Kurmas
Isadora Bryant from Ray & Nancy Doute
Louis Burdell from Cindi Fluhrer
Kathleen Burdette from Kathleen & Bill Fussinger, Patricia Gawlik, Karen Hall, The Haupt Family, Nancy Magoullick, Kenneth & Marlene Preston, Richard & Tracy Probst, Marilyn Wegienka

Thank You

To those who made special donations to Seedlings
in memory of friends and loved ones.

Annie Burian from Kathleen Esper
Angelena Burke from Clara Schlemmer, Dennis Schlemmer
Phyllis Burns from Carol Jamieson
Bobbie Butler from Tom & Patti Barbuto
Steven Bylis from Eileen St. John
Robert W. Cadotte from Catherine Camilleri
Mary Camiller from Joanne Camiller
Ben Campbell from Sally Belanger
William "Bill" Carocci from Carol Kilsdonk
David A. Chamberlain from Christine Cahill
Barbara Christenbery from Renee Seccombe
Jonah Chupack from Marion Phillips
Richard Clancy from Irene Clancy
Phylis Clapper from Kathleen Esper
Thomas Clark from Carol Fluhrer
Joseph Israel Cohen from Scott & Mary David & Family, Lori & Dave Grammer
Ann Rose Cordaro from Barbara Cordaro
John A. Cronan IV from Jan Hankins
Patrick Dahlin from Marlene & Greg Dahlin
Mrs. Margaret Dahlka from Sara Swift
Virginia Daly from Sharon Rose
Nancy D'Amato from Eileen St. John
Donald Dames from Robert & Catherine Mears
Maryann Damico from Kathleen Esper
Jack & Helen Danahy from Lori Laird
Raymond Craig Daniels from Ray & Nancy Doute
Patricia (Patsy) Agnes D'Arca from Jacquelynn Stengel
Joan Daugherty from Jim & Lynn Liddle
John David from Cindy Martz & Teri Abud
Brandon Davis from Jackie Davis
Ann Dawson from Donna Gothe
Harry Loyd DeFreese from Ray & Nancy Doute
Janet DeKlever from Carol Fluhrer & Family
Pete DeLuca from Janet C. Backus
Sally Demers from Patrice & Terry Gould
Eunice Dempster from Jim & Lynn Liddle
Shirley Digirolamo from Terry & Patrice Gould
Dombrowski Family from Patricia Peters
Elizabeth Dowe from Eileen St. John
Ed Dreslinski from Marsha Dreslinski
Doris Ann Dunn from The Eves Family
Menzo & Doris Durham from Lee & Kathy Kappler
Gladys Eckardt from Susan Misiewicz
Tom Edwards from Doris Edwards, Diana Robbins
Mary Ann Egan from Christine Cahill
David W. Elliott from Cheryl A. Gambaro
Edwin Elliott from Beatrice Doan
Lillian Enger from Carol & William Irvine
Jerry Estwick from JhaNette Rivera
Joseph Evangelista from Mary Anne Merucci
Betty Farhat from Celia Morse
Elizabeth Farhat from Debra Bonde
Gordon Farrington from Suzanne & Rich Sherby
Dominick Fazio from Eileen St. John
Anthony Ferrari from Sara Swift
Mr. Kevin J. Figuray from Janet Backus
James Foley from Terry & Patrice Gould
Mollie Galate from Jeanine Courtney-Clark, Samuel Galate, Seedlings Staff
Mrs. Annette Rose Gallagher from Janet Backus
Elizabeth Gardner from Dolores Callus
William Garvey from Mary Anne Merucci
Anthony Gentilcore from Carol Fluhrer
Catherine A. Gentilcore from Carol Fluhrer
Rick Gergis from Lee & Kathy Kappler
Juanita Geter from Mary David
Steve Golembiewski from Violet Hanis
Al Gonzalez from Violet Hanis
Delphine M. Gors from Sandy & Charles Zeidan
Mr. David A. Goss from Janet Backus
Russell Gowin from Ray & Nancy Doute
Connie Gray from Teresa Gibbons
Linda Green from Michelle Milko
Wyatt Greene from Kathleen Esper
John Grimm from Terry & Patrice Gould
Kevin Groth from Bob & Linda Grimm, Suzanne Sherby

Irma Guest from Barbara Guest

Timothy Guest from Barbara Guest

Marjorie S. Guezen from Jill & Minas Apelian, Karen Barsy, Debra Bonde, Edward Caram, Roy & Barbara Finkenbine, Jeaneane Havstad, The Lloyd Family, Mark & Kim Love, Diane Luoto, Rosalba Martinez, Lynn Pickett, Jacqueline Rau

Charles Gunderson from David & Carol McCreadie

Barbara Halter from Bill Bialkowski

Violet Hanis from Margaret Bagley, Debra Bonde, Debra Brown, Stanley Cetnor, Patricia Kidd, Pat Kiss, Dominic Menton, Sharon Hulett-Shepherd, Frank & Jerilyn Petersmark, Kathleen Pucel, Eleanor Smith, Anne Spitz, Daniel & Diane Stock, Susan Templin Wehrenberg, Joan Yesner

Marilyn Harmon from Danny Harmon, Valerie Kaiser

Linda Harrell from Sara Swift

Eric C. Haupt from Bruce & Linda Flohr

Mary Elizabeth Henrich from Al David & Cindy Martz

Mrs. Agnes Hersey from Sara Swift

Rhoda Hodge from Cindi Fluhrer

Lynda Hoener from Sara Swift

Matthew Hoener from Sara Swift

Dennis & Angela Hoff from Debbie Charnley

Grace Horton from Angela Pinchem

Richard Howell from Bill Bialkowski

John & Dorothy Hoyles from Barbara Hoyles

Errol Huber from Lynn & Jim Liddle

Barbara Hulburd Iannucci from Patricia Iannucci-Waller

David Irish from Mary Anne Merucci, Anna Merucci

Every \$10 donation creates one new braille book, inscribed (in print and in braille) with the tribute's name.



Leena, 2

“Leena enjoys reading and feeling our Seedlings books. She has sensory issues and feeling the pages really helped her enjoy your books even more. She is thriving and loves your books.”

Memorial Tributes continued

Linda Marie (Rowland) Irish from Scott & Mary David & Family

Grace Irvine from Carol & William Irvine

William Irvine from Carol & William Irvine

Fred Ishac from Chuck Pelto & Family

Mark Ivan from John & Lori Stofflett

Frances Ivankovic from Anton Ivankovic

Evelyn Jackson from Gale & Jane Minnick

Mary Francis Jackson-Goodner from Catherine Camilleri

Angela Jankowski from Carol & William Irvine

Raymond Jankowski from Carol & William Irvine

Michael Januszek from Karen Taylor

Thomas Jetke from Riley Crozier

Ron Johnson from Tom & Patti Barbuto

Jim Jones from Barbara & Ron Broadley

Wes & Margie Kappler from Lee & Kathy Kappler

Doris Kapsanis from Peggy Burns

Cynthia Kelly from Stephen Kelly, Cecile MacRae

Kaye Kent from Fern Jensen

Margaret Kime from Julia Kime-Callcut

Helen Kirwan from Sara Swift

Joseph Kirwan from Sara Swift

Beverly Klarr from Carol Irvine

Julie Klaus from Carol Bruland, Susan Koehler Gross

Miriam Kleven from George & Elaine Anderson, Carol Anderson-Gregg, Diane Blackburn, Debra Bonde, Eric Buszka, Scott Gali, Debra Guerrero, Alexander Guimaraes, Robert Knoerl, Marybeth, Ruth, & James Lewandowski, Belinda Mathers, Miriam Pfenning, Tom Randall, Ron & Kim Shollack, Henry & Leardyce Stroh, Mary Stroh, Nancy Stroh, Melissa Wansker, Scott Wickens

Kory M. Klubek from Marian Klubek

Mary Kowalski from Lori, John, Jared, & Beth Stofflett

Edward Kozlowski from Linda Vitali

Dennis Kramer from Carol McCreddie

Bill Kriska from Elizabeth Titus

Patsy Kuhlman from Sara Swift

Patricia Kurmas Bock from Andy & Marilyn Kurmas

Francis Kurrie from Cindy Martz

Mari Barbara Laing from Chris Argersinger

Rachel Leja from Ashley Frazier, Gayle Kucharski

Kevin Levasseur from Kathleen Esper

Lorraine LeVoi from Michelle Milko

Joanne LeVon from Michael LeVon

William Lewelling from Beverly Bogoslaw

Richard Lexby from John & Barbara Sullivan

John Lido from Eileen St. John

Sam Lionti from Kathleen Esper

Gerald F. Lynch from Patricia & Ethel M. Lynch

Tyler Lynn from Kimberly Otto

David M. from Adele Martz

Denny Mahle from Johanna & Larry McConahay

Joanne Malczewski from Lori & John Stofflett

Geraldine "Cioci Gerri" Marek from Kobiercki Family

James Marek from Barbara Geller

Dennis Marquardt from Kathleen Esper

Rosemary Martens from John & Joy Mallory, Johanna & Larry McConahay, Todd & Lisa Nelson, Troy & Kari Nelson

N. Lucille Martin from Kerry & Sharon Holmes

Pat Marunich from Kathleen Esper

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James Yurgil from Anna Merucci, Mary Anne Merucci

Dolores Zimmer from Joanne Camiller



Princess Eleanor, 15

"Seedlings has been an important part of my braille reading experience, which has led me to being able to read independently. Thank you."

Honor Tributes

Bob Appelle in honor of Stephanie Jo Petoniak

Eve Aumend in honor of Mr. & Mrs. Dorothy Awad, Tim & Jan Slezak, Tom & Candy Wachowiak

Margaret Bagley in honor of Marsha Head's Retirement

Gary Bailey in honor of Ella Muñoz

Bill Bialkowski in honor of Sue Piasecki

Ray Blaszkiewicz in honor of Ray & Rosemary Blaszkiewicz

Rosemary Blaszkiewicz in honor of Phil & Mara's Wedding, The Blaszkiewicz Family

Barb Blouin in honor of Avery Devereux

Carole Blum in honor of Martha Pierce, Berta Gardon

Beverly & Paul Bogoslaw in honor of Orlean Lewelling, Orlean Lewelling's Birthday

Susan Bradley in honor of Sarah Bradley, Mel Bradley, Eric Zarfas, Ariel Zarfas, Marty Finkelshteyn

Stanley Broffman & Marlene Zaroff in honor of Walter Horn's 90th Birthday

Shirley Brown in honor of Pam & Andy Gustafson, Sandi & Ken Banks, Peggy Sowders, Randy Frank

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Mary Lynn Colwell in honor of Becky Hunter

Riley Crozier in honor of Pauline Jetke

Barbara Diem in honor of Cheryl Altman

Thank You

To those who made special donations to Seedlings in honor of friends and loved ones.

Diane Diem in honor of Dovid Polter's 60th Birthday, Karen Diem

Marsha Dreslinkski in honor of Norman & Florence Osborn

Susan Durance in honor of Andy Dhaliwal, M.D.

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Patrice & Terry Gould in honor of Phyllis May's 100th Birthday, Sue Lang, Dennis O'Malley's 90th Birthday

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Ray Sandberg in honor of Mrs. Irene Savage

Every \$10 donation creates one new braille book, inscribed (in print and in braille) with the honoree's name.



Paul & Kathy Schneider in honor of Theresa Lisecki, Joe & Mary Pat Mysliwiec, Chris & Linda Dunlap, Diana Fucinari

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Joe & Dianne Silverstein in honor of Edie Resnick's 99th Birthday

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Sandra Stahl in honor of Alan & Trish Rabinowitz' Anniversary, David & Lainie Rabinowitz, Anniversary

John, Lori, Jared & Beth Stofflett in honor of Janet Stofflett's 96th Birthday, Janet Stofflett

Barbara Swanson in honor of Andy Swanson, Emily Thompson, David Thompson, Nellie Thompson, Casey Thompson

Sara Swift in honor of Mrs. Calista Trembath's 80th birthday, Dr. George Schwartz

The Staff of Livonia Eye Care in honor of Dr. Lupovitch & Dr. Kornblum

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Linda Widstrand in honor of Jacob Perkins

James Wilson in honor of Al Eardley

Oxley, 3

“Seedlings’ books bring joy to our youngest son while promoting early literacy skills. We are thankful for the conversations and relationship building moments that these books bring to all three of our children while building the foundations of learning to read and communicate through braille.”

Grants

Heartfelt gratitude

To our foundations
and grant partners.



Grant Funding Total!

Grant funding directly advances our free braille book programs and key organizational improvements that increase access to braille literacy for children with vision loss. Because of their commitment, braille books continue to open doors to learning, building literacy skills, confidence, and independence.

Alliance for Vision Research
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As we look to expand our programs in 2026, we are strengthening existing partnerships while actively seeking new support to expand these efforts. Together, we can ensure even more readers have access to the braille book resources essential to their literacy journey.

Delta Gamma Foundation

“We are proud to be a long-time supporter of Seedlings Braille Books for Children and are grateful for Seedlings’ important efforts to provide blind and visually impaired children with free and discounted Braille books that open the world through their fingertips.”

—Maureen Eddy Grinnell *Director, Service for Sight Grants*

**To explore partnership opportunities,
contact our Grants Manager.**

Barrie Brown, barrie@seedlings.org

Noah, 2

“My son was born with a genetic disease called Norrie disease which caused him to be legally blind in both eyes. We started early intervention when he was 5 months. With the help of our vision therapist, she introduced us to Seedlings. Noah loves to feel the braille! Every night before bedtime we let him choose the book that he wants to read.”



Group Donations

Generous support

From groups, community organizations, and foundations that goes directly to funding our free programs!

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Beverly Hills Lions Club
Bloomfield Township Public Library
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Several groups, foundations, and corporations also generously donated to Seedlings' Online Auction.

Planned Gifts

Planned gifts offer many benefits to you, your estate, and the legacy you hope to create. Commonly donated through a will, estate plan, or charitable bequest, planned gifts can have a major impact on Seedlings' longevity.

Bequests

Jean Burrell Family Fund
Estate of Mary Grinnell
Vincent & Mary Jo Schumacher Trust
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Delta Kappa Gamma: Gamma Alpha

"Delta Kappa Gamma educators visited Seedlings, a nonprofit with a big heart that provides free books to the visually impaired. We were impressed by the dedication of the volunteers and employees who make literacy a priority."

Book Sponsors & UEB Conversion Sponsors

Loyal supporters

Have helped convert titles into Unified English Braille (UEB), since it was introduced in 2016.

Book Sponsors

Helped launch 7 new titles!

The David W. Elliott Memorial Foundation

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Howard & Susan Zemser in memory of Midshipman 3/C Justin Zemser

UEB Conversion Sponsors

Helped convert 12 titles to UEB!

Susan Hagaman

Thomas & Patricia Meyers

Thanks to our generous donors, we are reaching the end of our conversion list and soon the majority of Seedlings titles will be available in UEB!

A \$1,000 contribution enables the launch of a new title.

A \$500 donation enables the conversion of a title to the new braille code.

Donor Advised Fund (DAF) Donations

Many individuals and families chose to support Seedlings through Donor Advised Funds (DAFs) this past year. Seedlings welcomes this tax advantageous method of giving!

American Online Giving Foundation: Susan Cline, Shana Guerrero, & others

DAF Giving 360: Stanton Elias & Donna Shewach, Cheryl A. Gambaro, Andrew & Amy Shepherd, Ann & Warren Watkins, & others

Fidelity Charitable: Bill Bialkowski, Stan & Peggy Chappell, Cherry Family Fund, Marlene & Greg Dahlin — in memory of Patrick Dahlin, Martha Foley & D. Fredendall Charitable Fund, Donna MacKinley, Dr. Celestine Mararac, Masco Matching Gift, Steven & Lois Matusow, Judith Stoltzfus, Howard & Susan Zemser — in memory of Midshipman 3/C Justin Zemser, & others

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Vanguard Charitable: The Memon-Subramanian Fund, Tom Quinn & Tommy Thompson, & others

Jessica

"I donate to Seedlings each month because I know my donation will go straight to creating high quality braille books that support children's literacy. There is no other place like Seedlings."

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Warby Parker

Many corporate donors generously donated to Seedlings' Online Auction.

Grateful

For our corporate donors, partnerships and our monthly donors!

Dan, D&B Landscaping President

"At D&B Landscaping, seedlings are an important part of our life. Similarly, Seedlings Braille Books for Children helps Seedlings' readers grow! We keep Seedlings close to our heart, so these readers can continue to flourish!"

Is your business interested in supporting Seedlings?

info@seedlings.org, 734-427-8552

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Monthly gifts provide sustainable support to Seedlings throughout the year, making it possible to fulfill our mission.

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Wyatt, 7 months

"We love our Seedlings' books for bedtime reading and exploring braille!"



Online Auction



Allows for the production and distribution of 4,700 books!

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Thank You

We have so much appreciation for everyone involved!

We would also like to thank the nearly 158 bidders who participated in our auction.

Individual & Fund-A-Need Donors

Angels Saints and Stuff,
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Debbie Walker
Jan Walter
Susan Ward
Scott Wellman

Connor, 2

“Connor loves his books from Seedlings. Every time he’s shown a book he just lights up and smiles and gets so excited. He can even sit there and look at all the pages and he gets so excited every time you turn to a new page. We’ve been so happy to get these books for Connor. Many of the books that we have are touch and feel so he can use other senses besides vision to explore the books when I read them to him.”



Inclusive Story Time

In 2025, Seedlings launched a quarterly in-person event for children, in partnership with the Livonia Public Library. Inclusive Story Time at Seedlings brings together children and families of all abilities within the Metro Detroit community for a morning of themed reading, inclusivity, and exposure to braille. Board Secretary and Head of Children's Services at the Livonia Public Library, Karen Smith (who you met earlier in the annual report), leads attendees in an immersive story time experience.

Each story time aims to give children an accessible, multi-sensory experience. With both braille and print copies of the stories for follow-along, tactile items to enhance the experience, song and dance, sensory toys, snacks, and a behind-the-scenes look at our facility, there is something for everyone!



Story Time Attendee

"This was a great event that the kids were very engaged in with a very welcoming and personable atmosphere. It felt like a private event! The kids could roam around the office and meet everyone. It's a great opportunity to expose your children to different, new things while learning about all types of literacy. Right away our child asked why there were bumps on the book!"



For future story time dates and information, visit our events page

seedlings.org/news-events/events/

How to Help

There are many ways you can make a lasting impact.

Your support will help fuel our mission by going directly toward braille book production and distribution. Together, we can provide more free and low-cost braille books to our readers, increasing braille literacy and education for children with vision loss around the world.

**Donations
are always
needed and
appreciated!**

General Donations

Help Seedlings thrive! General donations fund our greatest needs as well as book production, distribution, and programming. General donations include one-time, monthly, and tribute donations. Visit our website to donate today!

Planned & Estate Giving

Create a legacy rooted in braille literacy with a planned or estate gift to Seedlings! Planned gifts offer many benefits to you, your estate, and the sustainability of Seedlings' mission. Please visit our website for more information or reach out to us if you are interested in learning more.

Endowment Giving

Help secure Seedlings' longevity by sending donations directly to our endowment fund: the Edward T. and Ellen K. Dryer Endowment Fund for Seedlings Braille Books for Children. Checks should be made payable to Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan with our fund name in the memo line. Please mail checks to:

Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan
PO Box 713458
Chicago, IL 60677-435

Donor Advised Fund (DAF) Support

Do you currently have a DAF account, or are you interested in getting one? DAF donations are an easy, tax smart way to directly support Seedlings. If you wish to donate directly from your DAF provider, please visit our website to ensure you have the correct information.

Corporate Support

Promote your business while you support Seedlings! We are always looking for corporate partners to support events and programming. Check with your employer to see if they will match your donation. Please reach out to Caleigh, Community Outreach Manager, at caleigh@seedlings.org for more information.

Additional Opportunities

We welcome other types of gifts such as securities, charitable gift annuities, new title launches, and more!



For more information
seedlings.org/how-to-help
734-427-8552
caleigh@seedlings.org



Adeline, 6

"Addie always looks forward to getting Braille books in the mail! She is able to show me her new braille skills that she is learning at school while we spend quality time relaxing after a long day! She has developed a love for books that I didn't imagine would ever exist when she was first born. I'm so proud!!"

Volunteers

Thank You

You help us fulfill our mission every day!

Our volunteers are the key to Seedlings' success! We feel so fortunate to have a very dedicated group of volunteers who help with book assembly, binding, labeling, post office delivery, fundraising, and so much more!

Nancy Asseline
Hannah Blaney
Debra Bonde
Linda Bricker
Peggy Burns
Maureen Cameron
Elaine Chalom
Cathie Cheslak
Gary Chuslo
Scott David
Kathy Donagrandi
Brenda Durling
Karen Fehl
Mary Ann Fielek
Todd & Cindy Fleming
Cathy Gibson

Ken Heim
Peggy Holzhauer
Rita Howell
Carol & Bill Irvine
Connie Johnson
Karen Koester
Kristen LaForest
Paula Maas
Bob Madley
Chris McCaffrey
Liz McGough
Ron Miller
Mary Ann Mlynarski
Margaret Molenda
Siddi Nair
Jill Natalini

Marilyn Niemczak
Sandy & Tom O'Hara
Braelyn Petroski
Ella Petroski
Mary Jo Plante
Mark Ranta
Denise Rieckhoff
Sandy Rogala
Ruth Rogowicz
Pat Skilvenek
Pat Smolinski
Janet Stechholz
Kurt Walser
Susan Ward



Rita

"I've always enjoyed volunteering at Seedlings because of the wonderful staff and the camaraderie of the other volunteers. I love that we all work together to bring literacy to children everywhere."



Mary Ann

"One of the many things I enjoy about volunteering at Seedlings is the very friendly and accommodating staff and other volunteers who are all so helpful. It is a very comfortable experience."

Corporate & Group Volunteers

Alpha USA

Community Choice Credit Union

D&B Landscaping - Josh and Nick

Dynamic Map Platforms

MI Work Matters Good and Strong Club

orsa Credit Union (formerly Community Financial Credit Union)

Steve H. and Family

TRUE Community Credit Union

**We LOVE
all of our
volunteers!**



TRUE Community Credit Union

"We are grateful for the work Seedlings does for our community. Volunteering with them is important because we believe strong communities grow through service, connection, and partnership. We are honored to walk alongside Seedlings in this work."



Contact us to volunteer

info@seedlings.org

734-427-8552

seedlings.org/how-to-help/volunteer

Open House & Expansion Ribbon Cutting

In 2025, we welcomed community members, donors, corporate partners, and readers to celebrate the opening of a newly expanded Erin Lee Swaine Memorial Wing and the Open House.

The event featured a ribbon cutting with the Livonia-Westland Chamber of Commerce and special guest, ZuZu Sampson, author of *Braille Boy*. We are grateful to the David W. Elliott Memorial Foundation for sponsoring this event!





Q&A with ZuZu Sampson

Why do you like reading braille?

I like reading braille because it is the only way for me to read independently, learn new things, and grow my vocabulary. It also helps me read instructions.

What do you think about your experience at Seedlings and reading *Braille Boy* to the audience?

I liked reading at Seedlings a lot. It was an amazing experience for me to read to other children and members of the Seedlings community!

What was your inspiration behind *Braille Boy* and what has the impact of the book been so far?

I wrote *Braille Boy* because I could not find any superhero books at my reading level and so I decided to write my own. Braille Boy is the main character and he's a superhero. The book also helps new braille readers from making mistakes with some confusing letters. After *Braille Boy* was published, I was recognized by my school district. I was on the news which was very humbling. Now anywhere I go, someone comes up to say hello.

Why do you enjoy writing stories like *Braille Boy*?

I like writing stories like *Braille Boy* because it is really fun. And I also have two other books that I published — *The Amazing Adventures of Braille Boy: Teamwork* and *The Amazing Adventures of Braille Boy: Power Outage*.

Seedlings Braille Books For Children

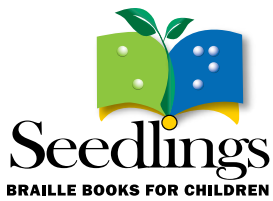
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Rayne, 8 Syren, 4 Steel, 1

"Our family's favorite books we've ever bought are Seedlings, hands down! Not only are they wonderfully priced but the options are incredible! We love the print-and-braille picture books at our house. It helps all our readers to be able to read together in a fun engaging way. Thank you so much, we don't know what we'd do without Seedlings!"

