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## A farewell to our fearless leader, Library Foundation President & CEO, Rhona Frazin

After nearly 50 years holding leadership roles in the philanthropic sector at powerhouses like Metropolitan Family Services, The Nature Conservancy, Goodman Theatre, and The John Marshall Law School – Rhona Frazin will be retiring as President & CEO of the Chicago Public Library Foundation this April, after dedicating the last 14 years of her career to the organization.

### Vision for the Foundation

By any estimation, 50 years in a dedicated field and 14 years of service to Chicago's families deserves gratitude and respect. We recently had a chance to sit down with Rhona, and ask her what made it such an easy decision to work at the Chicago Public Library Foundation.

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**"I didn't come in with a vision" she chuckled, "I came in with a passion."**

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### On Rhona and the Foundation

Rhona's strategic leadership has launched the Foundation to new levels of success, both in fundraising and reputation. Her zeal attracted a highly engaged Board of Directors, and greatly expanded the Foundation's base of individual, corporate, and foundation support. Under her leadership, the Foundation has also consistently earned a "4-Star" rating from Charity Navigator, the nation's largest and most-used charity evaluator. "The Library is the most democratic of all our institutions," Rhona explained. "It's there for everyone without regard to income, age, race, or immigration status... and that must be cherished."

In addition to building greater transparency, Rhona is a driving force behind the Foundation's largest annual fundraiser, the Carl Sandburg Literary Awards Dinner – which raised a record-breaking \$1.9M for the Library and Foundation in 2017, and was acclaimed by Crain's Chicago Business as "the smartest event in town." Foundation Board President Bob Wislow noted that Frazin "is leaving the Foundation in the strongest financial condition in its history."



### **Rhona the Bibliophile**

Rhona is a self-described life-long book lover, and we had to ask about her biggest literary highlight of the past 14 years. Turns out it was just last October! “This was a bucket list year for me,” Rhona started. “Because we honored Margaret Atwood at the Carl Sandburg Literary Award Dinner.” Before the advent of easy, international book distribution, Frazin reminisces, “I used to vacation in rural Canada each summer in the early 70s and stock up on books by Canadian authors. I must have devoured everything she has written. Of course honoring Stephen Sondheim was a real thrill, as well!”

Although many books line her office walls, Rhona admits her favorite authors come from equal parts love and admiration. “Many of my favorite authors are winners of the Library and Foundation’s Carl Sandburg Literary Award,” she said. “Not only are they phenomenal writers but they’re phenomenal people and wonderfully generous with their time and talents.”

### **Her Hopes for the City**

Before she leaves us we wanted to know, If there was just one thing, you wished the people of Chicago knew about the Foundation, what would it be? “That we’re here!” she exclaimed. “That we’re here and that while your tax dollars go a long way towards supporting the Library’s outstanding facilities and staff, because of the Foundation, and people like you, the Library can continue to be a global leader in programming and innovation.”

Rhona also left us with a reflection. “When I first signed on to the Chicago Public Library Foundation, we were largely unknown in the philanthropic, civic and corporate communities,” she said. “It was really quiet...too quiet. But through the generosity of our donors, we’ve made the importance of private support for the Library, just a little bit noisier.”



**We’re excited to announce  
the recipients of the 2018  
Carl Sandburg Literary Awards  
– NEIL DEGRASSE TYSON  
and JUDY BLUME!**



# 2018 Carl Sandburg Literary Awards Dinner



The Carl Sandburg Literary Awards Dinner is an annual event where we recognize the literary and artistic achievements of established and emerging writers and artists. The Carl Sandburg Literary Award is presented to authors for outstanding contributions to the literary world. In addition to honoring the achievements of these writers, the dinner also raises funds for the Chicago Public Library Foundation and innovative programs at Chicago Public Library.

## This Year's Recipients

This year, the Carl Sandburg Literary Awards Dinner will be held on October 9, 2018 at the UIC Forum. This partnership event between the Chicago Public Library Foundation and Chicago Public Library will present the Carl Sandburg Literary Award to two esteemed writers: Neil DeGrasse Tyson, astrophysicist and author of *Death By Black Hole and Other Cosmic Quandaries* and *Astrophysics for People In A Hurry*; and Judy Blume, known best as the author of many acclaimed novels for children and young adults such as *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret*, *Here's To You*, *Rachel Robinson*, and *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing*. We are excited to honor these two individuals whose literary works have shaped generations.

In addition, the 21st Century Award will be presented to native Chicagoan, author, and poet Erika L. Sánchez. This award honors significant recent achievement in writing by a Chicago-based author. In presenting this award, Library Foundation directors hope to encourage the creation of new works and increase public awareness of the writer's talents. Sánchez earned tremendous acclaim for her 2017 poetry collection, "Lessons on Expulsion," and her young adult novel, "I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter," was a finalist for the 2017 National Book Award for Young People's Literature.

## Other Highlights

Legendary Chicago newscaster Bill Kurtis will serve as host, and the evening's highlight will be an intimate onstage conversation with the two Sandburg Award honorees moderated by best-selling author and National Public Radio host Scott Simon. An acclaimed author with ties to Chicago is also seated at each table, making the evening even more unique. This year's dinner will also pay tribute to Library Foundation President & CEO Rhona Frazin, who retires in April after 14 years leading the organization.

The 2018 Sandburg Award Dinner will be chaired by Charles Matthews and Michelle Rindt, executive leaders of Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas, and Marcus Wedner of CIVC Partners. Library Foundation board member Donna La Pietra will produce the evening's festivities.



## Interested In Learning More?

Tickets for the 2018 Carl Sandburg Literary Awards Dinner, which Crain's Chicago Business has coined "the smartest event in town," go on sale in July 2018. To receive updates on this event, you can sign up here. For more details, visit our website: <https://cplfoundation.org/events>



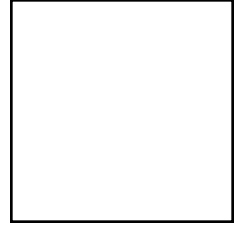
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# CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY FOUNDATION

DEDICATED TO THE CURIOUS



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Spring 2018 | Dedicated to the Curious

## Party In The Library

### IS THERE ANYTHING BETTER THAN PARTYING IN THE LIBRARY? NOT TO US!

We're excited to announce 2018's Night in the Stacks, the one night of the year that making noise in the library is not only not forbidden, it's encouraged!

#### What is Night in the Stacks?

It's an evening of food, drinks, and dancing that takes place in the Harold Washington Library's Winter Garden. The event is hosted and attended by the Associate Board, a group made up of Chicago's up-and-coming young professionals and library supporters. Night in the Stacks is both a celebration of Chicago Public Library, and a fundraiser to support critical learning programs.

#### Give me the Details

This year's Night in the Stacks will take place on April 6, 2018 and as in years past, will include food and drinks, dancing, an interactive photo booth, and an awesome raffle of some of the hottest merchandise as well as tickets to events and activities in Chicago.

This year's theme is music—so make sure to get dressed up and bring your dancing shoes, so you can shake and shimmy through the decades. We'll be joined by DJ Edwin Konsept who in past years has been known to bring down the house. This is a party you won't want to miss!

#### How do I attend?

Tickets just went on sale and have been made available for purchase on our website. General Admission tickets are \$150. This event sells out every year, so be sure to get your tickets soon!

#### More on the Associate Board

The Associate Board is a group of Chicago's up-and-coming young professionals and Library supporters. It's a great opportunity for professionals aged 25 to 40 to get engaged in the Chicago Public Library Foundation's fundraising efforts, while also meeting like-minded individuals who believe in free and open access to learning for all Chicagoans. You can find more information about the Associate Board on our website at [cplfoundation.org](http://cplfoundation.org).

