

Advocates & Supporters

According to the Public Library Association (PLA) today's public libraries are consistently being challenged to do more with less—less money, less staff, and less time. It has never been more important for librarians, staff members, trustees, and others with a vested interest in their public libraries, to convey to their communities the value of the library. Advocacy, the process of acting on behalf of the public library to increase public funds and ensure that it has the resources need to be up to date, is critical to the success of libraries. The Miami-Dade Public Library works with the following organizations to this end.

Friends of the Miami-Dade Public Library

www.friendsofmdpl.org

The Friends of the Miami-Dade Library was incorporated in 1974 as a non-profit volunteer organization seeking public support for the then emerging county library system. The founders were six writers who saw that growth was coming and realized the need for greater community involvement. They were Mae Knight Clark, Marjory Stoneman Douglas, Douglas Fairbairn, Pamela Johnson, Helen Muir and Nixon Smiley.

The Friends has maintained a close relationship with the Library, advocating, volunteering and raising funds for special educational and cultural programs as specifically approved by the Miami-Dade Public Library System and the Friends. The Friends primarily raise funds through memberships, grants, book sales, and corporate and private donations. Ninety-eight percent of the funds raised go directly to help support many of the Library's programs.

In 1988 the Friends formed its first Political Action Committee (PAC) to spearhead the campaign to establish a library book fund raising \$72 million with tax-payer dollars. In 1996, the Friends established its second PAC in an unsuccessful bid to raise additional dollars for a library book fund. In 2013, during the recent budget process, the Friends were active in rallying the community and meeting with the Mayor, the Mayor's office, County Commissioners, municipal elected officials and many stakeholders to help reinstate the library's budget. These efforts played an important role in maintaining library facilities and curtailing the layoff of over 250 employees. Additionally, the Friends are represented on the Blue Ribbon Task Force and have members on each of the Task Force's Working Committees to help work toward building a sustainable public library future.

Today the Friends has its own website, Facebook page, Twitter account and online newsletter that sends regular messages regarding library issues and events. The Friends' 10x10 Challenge, Annual Book Sale, and Miami Moments are major campaigns, each of which help to raise awareness for the library.

The Friends help make possible many of the library's programs including *International Art of Storytelling*, *Children's Book Week*, *Reading Ready*, *Summer Reading* and *Teen Read Week*.

Library Advisory Board

The Library Advisory Board is appointed by the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners to advise them on matters pertaining to the plans and policies of the Miami-Dade Public Library System. Members are appointed to serve three year terms.

American Library Association

www.ala.org

The American Library Association (ALA) is the oldest and largest library association in the world, providing association information, news, events, and advocacy resources for members, librarians, and library users. Founded on October 6, 1876, during the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, the mission of ALA is to provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.

Dade County Library Association

www.dclamiami.com

Dade County Library Association (DCLA) is a community of Miami-Dade information professionals ranging from academia to public to school libraries and welcomes all library supporters. DCLA promotes the professional growth of its members, supports innovative library services, encourages cooperation among libraries, shares information and ideas with its members, and produces career enhancing workshops and tours of sites to enhance understanding of local resources.

Florida Library Association

www.flalib.org

The Florida Library Association (FLA) develops programs and undertakes activities to earn it a leadership position for all areas of librarianship. To do this, the Association works with other professional organizations and professions that are relevant to librarianship; provides increasing opportunities for librarians and support staff in Florida to advance their skills so that they can maintain their effectiveness in the new information age; works closely with the information industry, facilitating productive links with the library community; and continues its role as legislative advocate for excellence in all types of library service within the State of Florida and beyond.

Southeast Florida Library Information Network

www.seflin.org

The Southeast Florida Library Information Network (SEFLIN) is a non-profit membership organization of Southeast Florida libraries dedicated to supporting cooperation between all types of libraries. Founded in 1984, SEFLIN strives to pioneer innovative services that support library staff and library services. SEFLIN is one of five Multitype Library Cooperatives in Florida.

Urban Libraries Council

www.urbanlibraries.org

The Urban Libraries Council (ULC), founded in 1971, is a membership association of leading public library systems in the U.S. and Canada. With the help of its members, ULC strategically advances the value that 21st century libraries provide communities in critical areas such as education,

lifelong learning, workforce and economic development, public safety, health and wellness and environmental sustainability. As thought leaders and change agents, ULC libraries regularly receive accolades at the national, regional and local levels. While ULC libraries primarily represent urban and suburban settings, lessons from their work are widely adapted by libraries of all sizes, including those in rural settings.