April 23, 2020

Welcome, and thank you for participating in Library Giving Day in support of the Long Beach Public Library Foundation.

As you know, this virtual reading event is being held in lieu of the Library Foundation's annual fundraising gala, Grape Expectations. And while I'm sure many of you would rather be drinking wine than reading a letter from me, I want to thank you for supporting the Library Foundation. (Of course at a virtual event you could be sipping wine while reading this for all I know!)

Now more than ever, your help is vital to the library foundation’s mission of supporting libraries, literacy and learning in Long Beach.

California's libraries are facing one of the most critical moments in our collective history. Libraries across the state are closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and many of us are facing challenges at home and in our communities.

But if there's one thing I've learned in my time as State Librarian, it's that libraries respond creatively, proactively and quickly in times of crisis. Whether it's providing access to accurate information and digital content or connecting patrons with local public health resources and services, libraries play an invaluable role in supporting their communities in times of need.

During and after the 2008 recession, library attendance soared. We anticipate the COVID-19 pandemic will have a similar impact. When library branches do reopen, even more Californians will depend on them for resources like community forums, job searches, online learning and other vital services. And more Californians will be entering through their library's digital door because that's what they've gotten used to over the past weeks.

Thank you again for participating in Library Giving Day. By supporting the Library Foundation, you're supporting Long Beach's most vulnerable communities at the time they most need it.

Respectfully Yours,

Greg Lucas
State Librarian

Looking forward to attending the meet "live" event!