



# LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

***Dear J3 Supporters,***

What a year 2024 has been for the J3 Foundation! Thanks to you, J3 has been able to reach more students than ever before. By December, 2024, J3's reading coaches were providing critical reading intervention programming to **907 students in 23 schools**, our largest cohort to date. More importantly, each of those students is now not only a better reader, but also better prepared for academic success throughout their school years as a result of their improved literacy skills. This would not have been possible without your generous support.

My wife Jamie Mohn and I started the J3 Foundation more than six years ago after uncovering an alarming statistic: that **4th grade students who are reading below grade level are two-thirds more likely to end up incarcerated or face long-term economic hardship as adults**. Why 4th grade? For the simple reason that the curriculum in most 4th grades has moved from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn,' which means students who have fallen behind have no opportunity to improve their reading proficiency. As a result, the downward academic spiral begins, and will only become greater and greater for them as they move through their elementary, middle and high school years.

Understanding that this reading proficiency gap in 4th grade is the potential beginning of the school-to-prison pipeline, Jamie and I realized we wanted to disrupt that pipeline by helping 4<sup>th</sup> graders who had fallen behind improve their reading mastery. Thanks to our Senior Program Director Stacey Longo and her incredible team, we have a program that **provides twice-weekly reading intervention classes during the school day**, no matter how far behind they may be. In addition, we also provide once-a-week after school 'Cozy Reading Clubs' to help instill a love for reading, and give free books to students to help them create their own home libraries.

The tremendous success and growth of our program has allowed us to hire our inaugural Executive Director, Sarina Sande, whose letter accompanies this annual report. We are all so inspired by Sarina's wealth of experience, and are thrilled to welcome her to the J3 team.

Jamie and I are proud of the tremendous work done by our administrative team, our marketing team, and our program team, which includes our site coordinators, reading coaches, and staff at each of our schools. We are thrilled to see the results they have achieved for the **nearly 3,000 students we have served since 2018**. The Board of Directors and the entire J3 Team are equally proud of the tremendous support you have given us along the way, including some donors who have given consistently since our very first year!

On behalf of all of the students we are serving, **thank you for your continued generosity**. You are the reason why our students are now destined for academic success, and empowered to pursue their wildest dreams.

***With much gratitude and appreciation,***

**JOE BLACKSTONE**

*Co-Founder and Board Chair*



# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

***Dear J3 Foundation Community,***

It is an honor to step into the role of Executive Director at J3 Foundation and join a team deeply committed to the mission of empowering young readers. While I officially began my journey in January 2025, I have been inspired by the incredible work accomplished throughout 2024—work driven by the passion of our staff, the dedication of our board, and the generosity of our supporters.

This past year marked significant progress in our mission, with **J3 nearly doubling the number of students served** across Los Angeles County by the end of the '23-24 school year. The opening months of the '24-25 school year have already far exceeded that number. That level of growth in such a short period of time speaks volumes to J3's proven success. Our in-school interventions and after-school reading clubs not only improved reading proficiency but ignited confidence and joy in reading among our students.

I'm particularly moved by the fact that **71 of our students—some of whom started the year reading more than 3 years below grade level—caught up entirely and finished at or above grade level by year's end**. That kind of turnaround doesn't happen by accident. It's a testament to the consistency, care, and rigor of J3's program. Even more inspiring, we're seeing ripple effects: students in J3 schools are making greater literacy gains than those in neighboring schools without our programming. That's the kind of systemic impact we're here to make.

As we look forward, I am eager to build upon the strong foundation created by our visionary co-founders, Joe Blackstone and Jamie Mohn. My priorities for J3 include expanding our school partnerships in underserved communities, strengthening our organizational infrastructure to support sustainable growth, and working with our Board of Directors and Senior Program Director to lay the groundwork for our first expansion beyond Los Angeles in the coming years.

**None of this would be possible without you**—our champions, our partners, and our community. Your belief in our mission fuels our work, and I look forward to working alongside you as we write the next chapter for J3 Foundation.

***With gratitude and excitement,***

**SARINA SANDE**

*Executive Director, J3 Foundation*

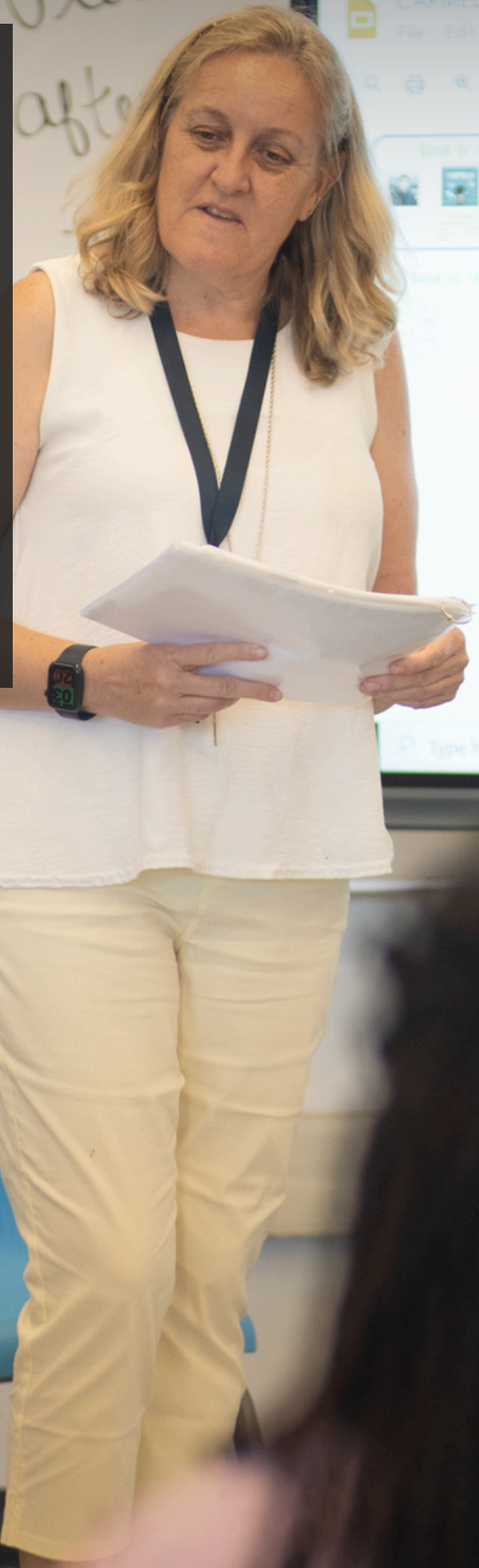


## MISSION STATEMENT

### J3 FOUNDATION

is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in Los Angeles that partners with high need schools to **provide reading programs.**

**OUR MISSION** is to equip 4th grade scholars with the **skills, habits, confidence,** and **books** they need for a **LIFETIME OF READING SUCCESS.**



## TOO FEW FOURTH GRADERS READING AT GRADE LEVEL

*When Children Fall Behind in Reading, They Fall Behind in Life.*

**Fourth grade** is a critical turning point. It's when students are expected to read independently across subjects—but many haven't yet mastered the foundational skills. **That's where J3 steps in:** partnering with schools to offer additional, targeted support right when it's needed most.

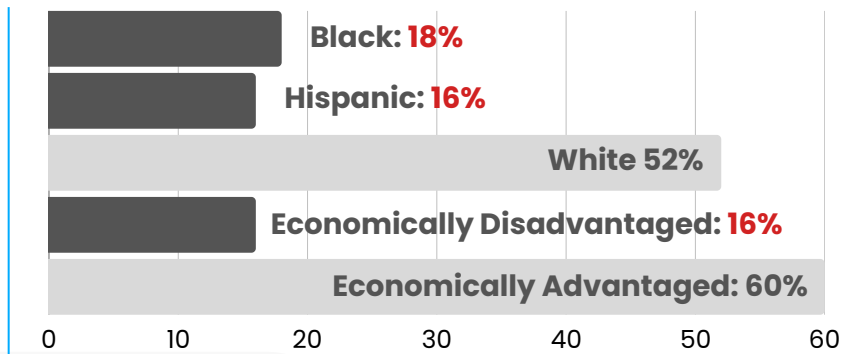
## L.A. FOURTH GRADE READING PROFICIENCY

**95%** of children are **cognitively capable** of learning to read

while only

**25%** of 4th graders in Los Angeles are reading proficiently &

**31%** of 4th graders nationally are reading proficiently



In short: there is a literacy crisis in the U.S. that is only getting worse. **Black, Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students are faring the worst.**



 **2 out of 3**

struggling 4th grade readers will end up on **government assistance or incarcerated**



Struggling 3<sup>rd</sup> grade readers are: 4x more likely to **drop out** of high school



Every student who doesn't complete high school represents **over \$250,000** in lost income and productivity

**85%** of youth in juvenile detention are **functionally illiterate**



## J3 INTERVENES BEFORE THE GAP BECOMES A LASTING LIMITATION

Our targeted, research-backed reading intervention gives children the skills, confidence, and support they need – **right when it matters most.**

### J3 FOUNDATION DELIVERS READING PROGRAMS

- IN HIGH-NEED SCHOOLS
- SERVING FOURTH-GRADE STUDENTS OF COLOR
- TO INTERRUPT THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE

## WHY WE FOCUS ON 4<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

*Fourth Grade Is the Last Best Chance.*

In most schools, formal reading instruction ends after third grade—just as the academic demands start to rise.

### We focus on fourth grade because:

- It's the last moment to **close the literacy gap** before students begin falling behind across all subjects
- Students at this age are forming beliefs about their capabilities—**beliefs that can stick for life**
- The **risks escalate quickly after this point**—academic failure, disengagement, and even dropout



**We believe every child deserves the chance to read, thrive, and choose their future.**

## PROGRAM SNAPSHOT & EXPANSION

In 2018, we launched the **Cozy Reading Club**, our after-school reading enrichment program. And, at the start of the 2023-24 school year, we proudly added **Building Bold Readers**, the in-school arm of our multi-pronged reading intervention program. The expanded program grew from continued research into the most effective elements of high-impact reading programs and close examination of our own growing data.

We know that our program is only as effective as our willingness to always dig deeper to bring the best to our students.

### Expanding our program has allowed us to:

- **increase access** to our students – growing attendance & student scores in tandem
- **expand our support** to include ALL 4th grade students reading below grade level –the vast majority of whom are more than 1 grade level behind
- **tailor instruction:** personalized from highly-qualified Reading Interventionists
- **employ small-group reading instruction** with cohorts of 4-6, facilitating focused learning & individualized attention



### Building Bold Readers

*In-School Reading Intervention*

#### We boost foundational reading skills.

##### Twice weekly (30–45 mins):

- Utilizing [SIPPS® Curriculum](#)
- Phonological Awareness
- Phonics & Decoding Instruction
- Sight Word Recognition & Guided Spelling
- Individual Reading Time with Staff

*Data is monitored and instruction is tailored to each student all year long.*



### Cozy Reading Club

*After-School Reading Enrichment*

#### We boost reading skills, confidence & habits.

##### Once weekly (2 hour sessions):

- Student-Led Mindfulness
- Literacy-based Games & Activities
- Social Emotional Learning
- Read Alouds & Cozy Reading Time

*We begin & end with Community Circles, fostering social connection.*

## Our Reading Program

brings together individualized evidence-based lessons with measurable outcomes, a low staff-to-student ratio, culturally relevant books, and community involvement to support reading progress in school and beyond.



## RESEARCH & EVALUATION

Our approach is grounded in rigorous, evidence-based research and informed by a cycle of continuous evaluation.

We monitor student progress during each session, capturing real-time insights that allow our team to adjust instruction to better meet student needs.

## CULTURALLY-RELEVANT BOOKS

J3's lending library and home collections have been carefully chosen to include high-interest fiction and nonfiction titles aligned with students reading levels to encourage wide reading.

In the curated collection, students are exposed to characters who share their backgrounds as well as expand their understanding of different communities.



## INSTRUCTOR-TO-STUDENT RATIO

Our program maintains low staff-to-student ratios.

This small-group model allows for personalized instruction, stronger relationships, and more meaningful engagement—key factors in helping students build confidence and accelerate their reading growth.

## SCHOOL COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

J3 collaborates closely with school leaders, teachers, and families.

These partnerships extend beyond the classroom—sponsoring author and illustrator visits at partner school sites, and supporting community reading events that inspire a love of reading and build lasting connections around literacy.





907

Students Served in 2024

### Student Demographics

72%

Latino/a

18%

Black

94%

Low Income

38%

English Learners



24

Partner Schools



3,602

literacy intervention sessions held



94%

of classroom teachers report J3 positively impacted their students



84%

of students achieved mastery of reading skills taught



3,020

titles in J3's curated library



2,400

books distributed to students



9

Staff Members



89

Instructors



30

Guest Author & Therapy Dog Visits

## DEEPENING OUR IMPACT

### Every Cozy Reading Club received a visit from a local author

—offering students powerful role models who bring real-life stories of resilience, creativity, and literacy growth into the classroom. These visits reminded students that readers—and writers—can come from anywhere.

### New schools and districts are reaching out to J3

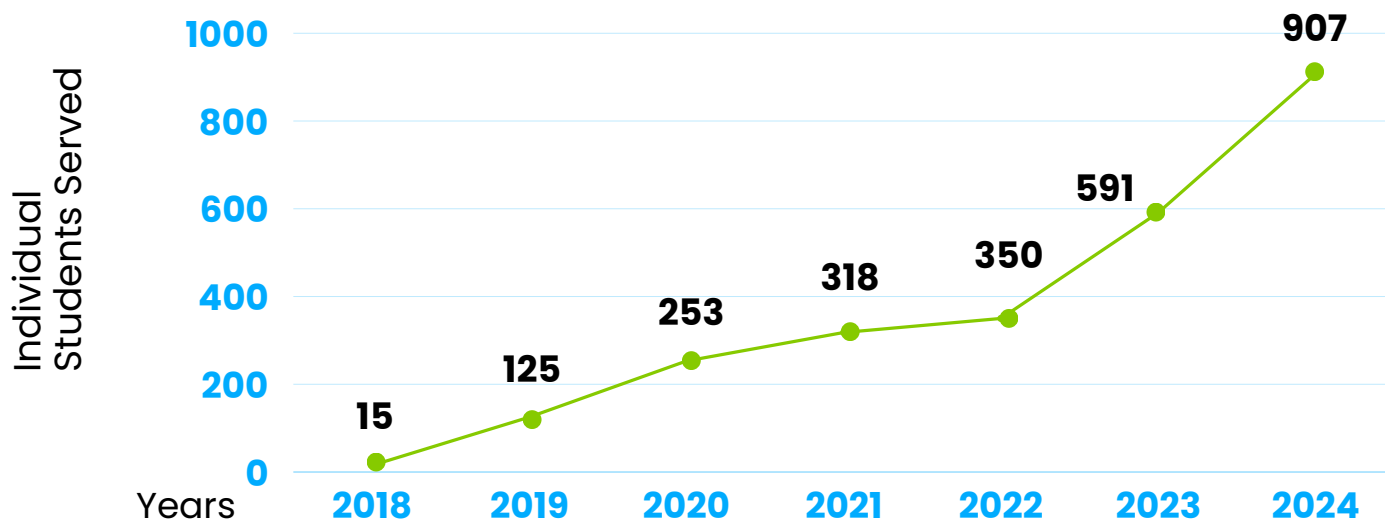
after seeing the impact of J3's program—clear evidence that our program is sparking belief, building momentum, and resonating far beyond our current sites.

### Strengthened training

with a week-long, in-person intensive for instructors, focusing on curriculum expertise followed by weekly professional development in phonics-based instruction.



## J3 Growth: Students *(as of Dec annually)*



## MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS



## POSITIONING FOR GROWTH

### Launching a national executive director search

in partnership with Koya Partners, culminating in the early 2025 hire of Sarina Sande as our inaugural Executive Director.

### Expanding our Board of Directors

to strengthen strategic guidance, increase fundraising capacity, and further advance our mission.

### Establishing the J3 Advisory Council

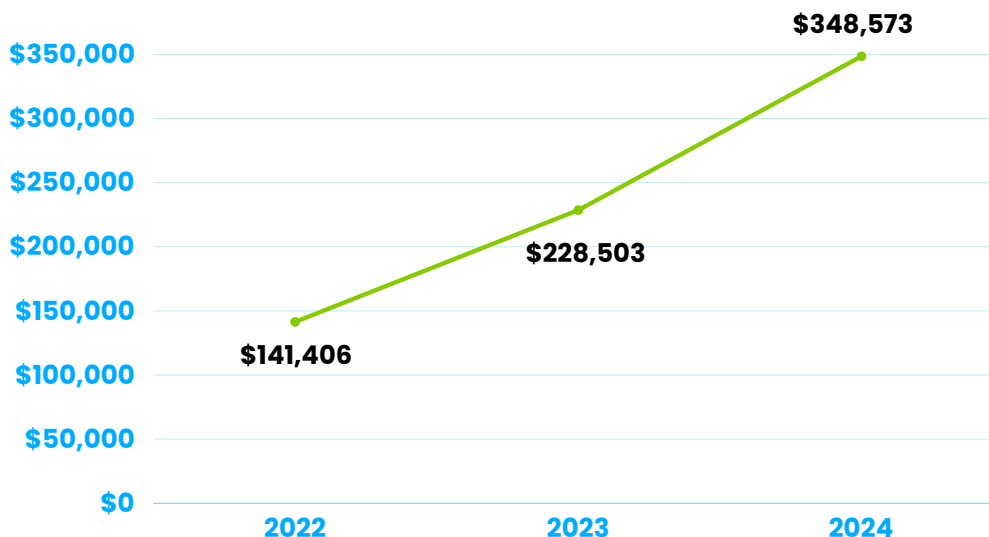
a group of expert educators, researchers, and advocates providing strategic insight and thought partnership to strengthen our programming.

## BROADENING OUR BASE

**J3 secured its first-ever \$100,000 grant** from an anonymous donor, and a \$50,000 grant from the Santa Barbara Foundation—two major milestones in our funding journey.

**In 2024 alone, J3 raised nearly \$350,000** through foundation gifts and our Giving Tuesday campaign—a 50% increase over 2023 and 150% growth since 2022.

### Foundation and Giving Tuesday Fundraising Growth



# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024

## ASSETS

Cash \$54,833

Pledges Receivable \$117,000

Prepaid Expenses \$347

Property & Equipment \$6,893

**TOTAL: \$179,073**

## LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses \$0

**TOTAL: \$0**

## EQUITY

Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions \$35,037

Temporary Restricted Net Assets \$100,000

Net Income \$44,036

**TOTAL: \$179,073**

## TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY

**TOTAL: \$179,073**

## INCOME

Contribution \$1,608,873

**TOTAL: \$1,608,873**

## EXPENSES

Program Services \$1,462,187

Fundraising \$12,185

General & Administrative \$190,465

**TOTAL: \$1,664,837**

## NET OPERATING INCOME

**TOTAL: -\$55,964**

## OTHER INCOME

Restricted Funds Awarded \$100,000

In Kind Revenue \$12,391

**TOTAL: \$112,391**

## OTHER EXPENSES

In Kind Expense \$12,391

**TOTAL: \$12,391**

## NET OTHER INCOME

**TOTAL: \$100,000**

## NET INCOME

**TOTAL: \$44,036**

## LIVING A THOUSAND LIVES THROUGH BOOKS

*Monthly Book Donor Inspired by Nice News*

Sometimes the smallest, quietest gestures make the biggest impact. That's certainly true of one of J3 Foundation's most devoted book donors, Ann Alves — a reader, grandmother, and lifelong lover of stories who has been donating one or two books each month from our Amazon Wishlist ever since discovering J3 through [Nice News](#).

"I wished a program like J3 had existed for my granddaughters when they were younger," she shared with us. "They're 14 and 15 now, and struggled a bit with reading — especially after the disruption caused by the pandemic. By third grade, they were still learning to read, right when they needed to be reading to learn."



It's a story we hear all too often — but it's also why her ongoing support is so powerful.

Motivated by her granddaughters' experiences, and her own deep connection to literature, she decided to make a lasting commitment: a monthly book donation that brings stories into the hands of our J3 students. "I wanted to know what kids are interested in reading today," she said. "It's so different from when I was growing up — but it's also amazing to see how many more options there are now to keep kids engaged."

From Dick and Jane to Dr. Seuss, from Jane Eyre to Willa Cather, books have shaped her world — and now, through her quiet, consistent generosity, she's helping shape a world of possibility for children she may never meet.

"I've always loved reading. It helps us grow and understand not just the world, but each other — that as much as we are different, we are also very much the same. I'm not sure who said it, but I've always believed this: we all have one life, but if we read, we can live a thousand."

We're grateful to Ann for giving our students the chance to live those thousand lives, too — one book at a time.

## DONORS

### FOUNDATIONS

- Anonymous
- Better World Books
- The Book Foundation – a program of Make Good Inc.
- Darien Book Aid Plan Inc.
- Richard Allan Barry Family Charitable Foundation
- Santa Barbara Foundation
- Sydney Paige Foundation

### INDIVIDUAL

Prem and Mary Ann Akkaraju  
Ann Alves  
Brenda Anderson  
David and Beth Anderson  
Madie Anderson  
Marilyn and Ken Anderson  
Michael Anderson  
Leila Arrants  
Richard Avila  
Jerry and Chris Baker  
Lara Barbir  
Bob and Jane Bard  
Kenneth Beck  
Susanna Beck  
Ronald and Rosetta Bellamy  
Louis Benioff  
Georgia Blackstone  
Jacqueline Blackstone  
Bobbie Boggs-Miller  
Wayne Bragg  
Jim Bremhorst  
Brett and Sky Brewer  
Carron and Dylan Brown

Jim Brown  
Leena and David Brown  
Anne Burg  
Kris Cell  
Kanuja and JC Champaneri  
Nolan Charbonnet  
Dana Coleman  
Donald Craig  
Selena Cuffe  
Edie Daves  
Judith Dederick  
Roseanne Diamond  
Malick Diop  
Robert and Susan Duffin  
Don and Laverne Dyer  
Rosalia and Mike Egner  
Chris and Jean Farnsworth  
Mary Farrell  
Eric Fingleson  
Xochitl Flores  
Jared and Meghan Frandle  
Damon and Brook Frier  
Stuart Gibbs  
Ann Marie and Matt Gornick  
Rebecca Gotlieb and David Sherman  
Bonnie Greenberg  
Michael Gruber  
David and Suzanne Hadley  
Phil and Yasmin Harvey  
Ellen Himmel  
Alan Horwits  
Vicki Horwits  
Roger and Linda Howard  
Franklin and Patricia Hulsey  
Joseph Isas  
Patricia Jackson  
Martin and Akieva Jacobs  
Armeti Jahed  
Doris Jones

### CORPORATE

- American Healthcare Opps
- CTBC Bank Corp
- Glaser Weil LLP
- JP Morgan Chase
- J.W. Mills Management

Steve Jones  
Ellen Julian  
Cheryl Junod  
Hillar Kaplan-New  
Kathryn Keim and Virgil Stinnett  
Becky King  
Craig and Jody Knight  
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Stu and Priscilla Levine  
Tom and Peggy Lipinski  
Anna Lobker  
Doris and Roy Longman  
Stacee and Frank Longo  
Kathy Macaraeg  
Patrick Mahany and Xizi Xia  
Bruce Marquardt  
Joan Martin  
Tavid Maughan  
Andrew McKuin and Kameron Kordestani  
Bobby and Mary Ann McKuin  
Sherry and Joel McKuin  
Karla McLucas  
Lynette Merriman  
Gloria Mohn  
Steve Moldenhauer  
Carmenta Moore and Douglas Bell  
David Moran  
Autumn Moultrie  
Elliott Musick  
Amanda Nafius  
Sue Neumark  
Wendie and Mark Newman  
Cheryl Newman-Tarwater  
Alton Palmore  
Kalpana Patel

*"I was so impressed when I learned about the work that you [J3 Foundation] do to help children become competent readers. I am happy to be able to help support your work and commend your organization for helping our vulnerable children."*

- Anonymous Donor

## DONORS

### INDIVIDUAL (CONTD.)

Bob and Amy Perille  
David and Ilysia Pierce  
Robert Pietranton  
Glen and Missy Polson  
Scott Polson  
Gerald Porter  
Anuradha Reddy  
Roopa Reddy  
Shyamala Reddy  
Lois Reinis  
John and Maryam Rezvani  
Jeffrey Richter  
Bob Riddle  
Michael Riddle

Joy Robinson  
Michael and Neeru Robinson  
Clifford and Pamela Rowe  
Phillip and Nell Schaefer  
Lewis Scott  
Mathew Segal  
David Shaw  
Carole Sherman  
Angela Shumpert  
Jane Silver  
Kyle Smith  
Mark Stegemoeller  
Erika Traver  
Andrea Tzadik  
Jeffery Vanston  
Arthur Vincie  
Diana and Bob Wagner  
Shilpa Wali  
Richard Walker  
Hannah Ward and Grant Mohn  
Kim and Brian Ward  
Katherine Watkins  
Roger Weaver  
Jeffrey and Nicole Westheimer  
Joe Wilson and Portia McGrew  
Susan Wilson  
Wenise Wong and Eric Barron  
Joanie Wread and Ken Freimann  
Cate and Erik Wright  
Rana Ziaee and Jay Gandhi

*"We appreciate the richness that reading has brought to our lives, and are grateful that you and your colleagues are bringing this gift to the children of our community."*

*- Phil and Nell S.*

*"As a mom of children with dyslexia I understand the power there is in reading and how important it is to support literacy efforts like this! Kudos for making a difference in the lives of our youth."*

*- Maureen P.*



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Joe Blackstone**  
*Co-Founder, Chairperson*

**Jamie Mohn, PsyD**  
*Co-Founder, Secretary*

**Rick Barry, PhD**

**Roger H. Howard, JD**

**Sherry McKuin**

## ADVISORY COUNCIL

**Humberto Gray**

**Lindsey Palmer, PhD**

**Rebecca Gotlieb, PhD**

**Shyamala Reddy**



## STAFF

**Alondra Fabian**  
*Reading Intervention Supervisor*

**Arthur Scott**  
*Program Coordinator*

**Beth Anderson**  
*Interim Manager of Communications  
& Fundraising*

**Bobbie Boggs-Miller**  
*Director of Operations*

**Courtney Gilmore**  
*Program Administrator*

**Jed Carandang**  
*Social Media & Communications  
Coordinator*

**Mira Brown**  
*Program Manager*

**Stacee Longo**  
*Sr. Program Director*

**Valerie Jauregui**  
*Program Director*



**...and a big thank you to our  
school site instructors, volunteers,  
guest authors, and therapy dogs  
who make J3 possible!**



**Building bold readers for bright futures.**

[J3FoundationLA.org](http://J3FoundationLA.org)