



**Texas  
Book  
Festival**  
2019  
Annual  
Report

Literature’s enduring purpose has always been to show us the ways humans are connected—how we are connected outside ourselves and beyond borders. At Texas Book Festival, our mission connects authors and readers through experiences that celebrate the culture of literacy, ideas, and imagination. Although hard to quantify, we believe deeply that connecting people through literature produces more informed and more inspired communities. Our programs increase literary engagement and promote literacy throughout the state, thanks to the investment of board members, donors, sponsors, partners, and volunteers who believe in the life-changing power of reading.

Last year at our annual Festival Weekend, thousands of attendees turned out to meet more than 300 authors, including Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, National Book Award-winner Susan Choi, *New York Times* best-selling authors Malcolm Gladwell and John Grisham, James Beard Award-winner Sean Brock, Kirkus Prize-winner Saeed Jones, Olympian Ibtihaj Muhammad, Ambassador Samantha Power, and more than 100 notable Texas authors.

In 2019, the Texas Book Festival brought our high quality literacy and literary programming to Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, the Rio Grande Valley, and Midland. In addition, libraries across the state received more than \$100,000 in grants to enhance their collections and bring more books into Texas communities.

2020 marks TBF’s 25th Anniversary year, a milestone we are very proud to reach, stronger and more committed than ever. We are so grateful for your involvement and support. The work we do would not be possible otherwise. Thank you for sharing our commitment to literacy, literary culture in Texas, and the future of the Texas Book Festival.

Warm regards,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lois Kim".

Lois Kim  
*Executive Director*



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Queen".

Sarah Queen  
*Board Chair*



## FESTIVAL IMPACT

50,000 people attended the 24th annual Festival Weekend, held on October 26-27 in and around the Texas State Capitol. Even as the Festival grows and evolves, it remains free and open to the public, continuing to welcome and inspire all book lovers.

## 2019 FESTIVAL POSTER ARTIST

The official 2019 Festival Poster was “Burgeoning,” a mixed-media digital collage by Austin-based artist and graphic designer Dave McClinton. McClinton, who moved to Austin in the 1990s, has worked as a professional graphic designer for twenty-five years. His vibrant, provocative style makes use of photography, portraiture, historical American documents, and textures found in everyday life.



## FESTIVAL NUMBERS

- 350 authors
  - 54% White
  - 13% Black
  - 21% Latinx
  - 5% Asian
  - 2% Indigenous
  - 2% Indian
  - 1% Middle Eastern
  - 2% Other
  - 31% Texas
- 100+ exhibitors
- \$339,155 in book sales with local bookstore BookPeople
- 94% of attendees rated the Fest highly
- 175+ sessions



## TEXAS WRITER AWARD

The Texas Writer Award is given to a Texas writer in recognition of outstanding contributions to Texas literature. The 2020 Texas Writer Award recipient was Attica Locke, author of five novels, including *Heaven, My Home*, *Bluebird*, *Bluebird*; and *Pleasantville*. Locke is a screenwriter as well as a novelist. She contributed to the adaptation of Celeste Ng’s novel, *Little Fires Everywhere*. A native of Houston, Attica lives in Los Angeles, with her husband and daughter.

## JAN HUGHES VOLUNTEER AWARD

We recognized Festival Signs Volunteer Chair Josh Cano and Kirkus Reviews Volunteer Chair Paul Doyle for their long-standing and invaluable service to the Festival. This award is given in honor of Jan Hughes, Texas Book Festival’s former Board Chair and longtime volunteer.



## FESTIVAL WEEKEND

Our mission is always to connect authors and readers, and we also connect authors to each other throughout the Festival Weekend. Helping to support and cultivate this community is our way of saying thank you to the authors and artists who share their stories, poems, research, and illustrations with Texas readers.



### AUTHOR KICKOFF PARTY

Welcoming authors to Texas and to the Festival is one of the best parts of Festival Weekend, and we love supporting this creative community! Hosted at the iconic Antone's Nightclub and sponsored by Tito's Handmade Vodka, authors came from all over to catch up, congratulate each other on new publications, and make new friends.

### LIT CRAWL: WHERE LITERATURE HITS THE STREETS

A collaboration between the Texas Book Festival and the Litquake Foundation, Lit Crawl Austin celebrated its ninth year of irreverent literary programming. On Saturday, October 26, more than 2,000 book enthusiasts and more than 50 authors and poets joined us in the Red River Cultural District.



### AUTHOR BREAKFAST AND COCKTAIL PARTY

Before a full day of panels, authors, Board members, and major donors gathered for breakfast at the offices of the legendary *Texas Monthly*. They reconvened to bookend the day with the annual cocktail party, hosted at the home of a longtime Festival supporter.

TEXAS BOOK FESTIVAL 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



## STATEWIDE AND YEAR-ROUND IMPACT



### READING ROCK STARS

Reading Rock Stars brings nationally recognized children’s authors and their books to students in Title I elementary schools around the state of Texas. TBF makes a three-year commitment to each school in the program, providing ample resources and a comprehensive curriculum guide so students can fully engage with the book and author. Since the program’s inception, we’ve given more than 119,000 brand new, hardcover books and hosted more than 415 author visits in Austin, Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, and the Rio Grande Valley.



### REAL READS

Based on the Reading Rock Stars model, Real Reads connects at-risk teenage students around Texas with authors that resonate specifically with them. Students in the program receive their own copy of the book and practice reading and writing through peer-based book study. Then, they are able to connect with the author through an in-person session at the Festival where they meet the author and have the opportunity to ask questions and engage in meaningful dialogue.

## TEXAS TEEN BOOK FESTIVAL

The Texas Teen Book Festival was held at a new location at Southwestern University on Saturday, October 12, 2019. Teens, YA fans, teachers, and librarians spent the day meeting authors, discovering new favorite books, and celebrating the joy of reading with their peers.



### SOME TEXAS TEEN BOOK FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

This was our second year doing Studio Create! Centrally located on the TTBF grounds, this unique space brought our partners together under one tent to share interactive experiences with Festival attendees, including zine-making, button decorating, and photo ops from the year's most popular YA books.

Our annual costume contest sponsored by Fierce Reads! Prizes were given out to the most creative, inspiring costume interpretations of favorite literary characters, including Daenerys Targaryen of *Game of Thrones*, Beauxbaton students from *Harry Potter*, *Captain Underpants*, and *The Phantom of the Opera*.

Erika Sanchez, author of *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter*, presented on a panel, gave a keynote, and also gave a private session to a group of KIPP Austin students, answering all their questions about the book and about being an author!

### LIBRARY GRANTS

In 2019, we gave \$100,500 in collection enhancement grants to libraries all over the state of Texas! Since 1995, we have awarded more than \$3.1 million in grants. These grants bring much-needed brand-new books into communities, varying from large-print adult books to nonfiction childrens' books and everything in between.



## FIRST EDITION LITERARY GALA

In 2019, the First Edition Literary Gala was held at the Four Seasons in Austin, Texas, on Friday, October 25. The Gala featured authors Stephen Harrigan, Laila Lalami, Sharon Robinson, Alexander McCall Smith, with poet Carrie Fountain as our emcee. Children’s author Jon Scieszka shared his experiences from Reading Rock Stars that very morning. Artist Dave McClinton’s mountain landscapes created an immersive, imaginative world in which more than 500 guests gathered to support TBF’s mission and programs.

Thanks to Gala Co-chairs Anna Near and Annie Downing, Board Chair Sarah Queen, the Gala Committee, Junior League volunteers, and generous donors, the night was a rousing success, filled with old friends, new books, stimulating conversation, and a shared mission. Overall, the Gala raised more than \$750,000 for the Texas Book Festival!





## ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITY

Throughout the year, we meet readers and supporters around the state, celebrating the life-changing joy of reading. All the money raised keeps the Festival free and open to the public, provides grants for libraries, buys books for Reading Rock Stars and Real Reads, and supports the Texas Book Festival as we enter our 25th year!

### COLSON WHITEHEAD

The Texas Book Festival was honored to welcome Pulitzer Prize-winning author Colson Whitehead to Austin for a summer book event introducing his novel, *Nickel Boys*.

### AUTHOR BRUNCH AT OLAMAIE

The unparalleled Olamaie restaurant and James Beard-nominated chef Michael Fojtasek once again welcomed one of our cookbook authors for a collaborative author brunch on Saturday October 26. Israeli food writer Janna Gur introduced her book, *Shuk: From Market to Table, the Heart of Israeli Home Cooking* and Chef Fojtasek created several incredible dishes, bringing together the cuisines of the American South and Israel.

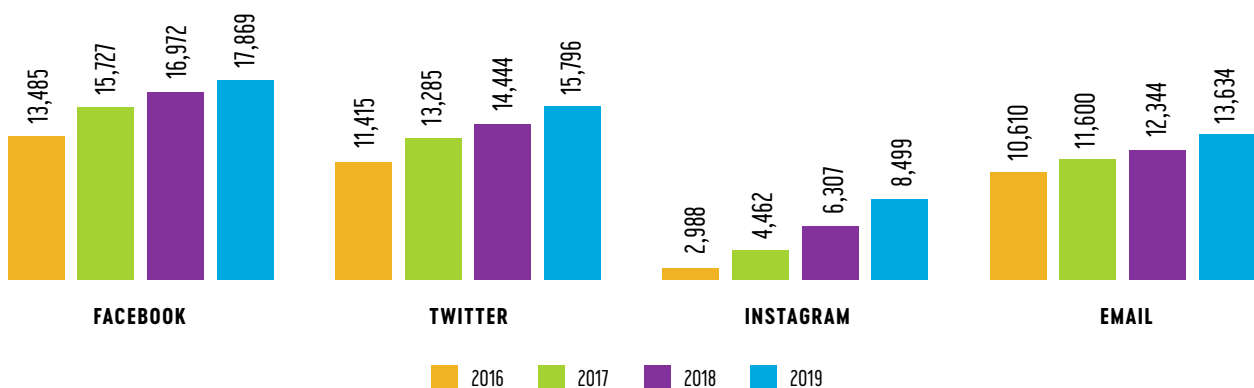
### MIDLAND LITERARY SALON

We returned to West Texas on May 24 for our annual Midland Literary Salon with novelist Oscar Cásares. He read from and presented his novel, *Where We Come From*, a timely story about a Mexican-American family in Brownsville that reluctantly gets involved with smuggling immigrants into the United States.

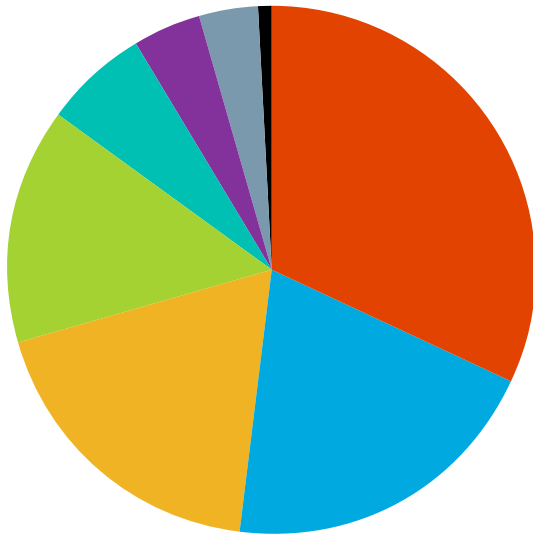
## DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

The Texas Book Festival always seeks to reach people across the state of Texas, and one way to do that is through digital communication. By growing our social media and email audiences, we can deliver more literary content to readers, including author interviews, book recommendations, and community highlights.

AUDIENCE GROWTH 2016–2019

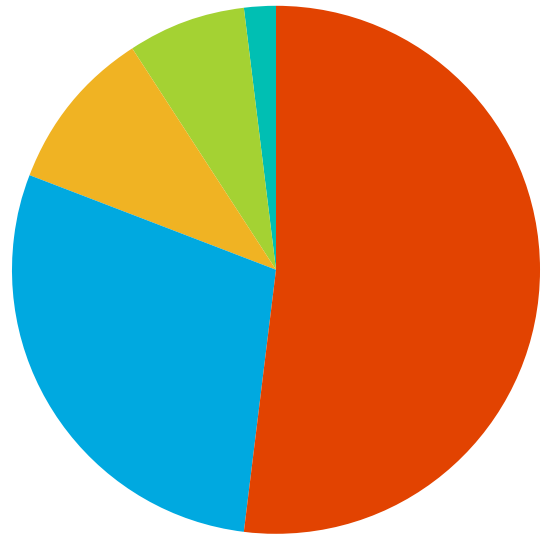


## INCOME



- 31.9% Major Donors & Foundations
- 20.11% Contributions
- 18.36% Gala Tables & Tickets
- 14.47% Corporate Sponsors
- 6.34% Booth Sales
- 4.32% Investment Income
- 3.63% Book Sales
- 0.57% Special Event Income

## EXPENSES



- 52% Administrative / Operations
- 28.95% Festival Weekend
- 9.87% Reading Rock Stars
- 7.25% Library Grants
- 1.89% Texas Teen Book Festival

## MAJOR SPONSORS



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PRESENTING SPONSOR

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**StDavid's HEALTHCARE**

C-SPAN2  
**BOOK TV**  
booktv.org

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**CURRENT STAFF**

Lois Kim, *Executive Director*  
 Claire Burrows, *Deputy Director*  
 Matthew Patin, *Literary Director*  
 Maris Finn, *Development Associate*  
 Lucy Vélez, *School and Community Programs Coordinator*  
 Nicole Wielga, *Logistics and Volunteer Coordinator*  
 Katey Psencik, *Communications and Marketing Coordinator*  
 Gavin Quinn, *Programs Assistant*

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**GALA COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

*Gala Co-chairs:*  
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 Elise Bridges  
 Taylor Bowles  
 KC Coats  
 Elizabeth Davis  
 Anna Loewenbaum  
 Hargrove

Robyn Hargrove  
 Carrie Healy  
 Liz Howard  
 Laura Key  
 Marcia Logan  
 Lisa Lucero  
 Susan McCoy  
 Tracy LaQuey Parker  
 Janna Paulson  
 Rachel Rehwinkel  
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 Gretchen Scardino  
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**\$25,000+**

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 St. David's HealthCare  
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**\$15,000+**

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 Riki Rushing and Alan Gilmer  
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 Eddie Safady  
 Nancy Scanlan / Becky Beaver  
 Liz and Duff Stewart / Ingrid and James Taylor



## THANK YOU!

Because of your support, TBF is able to provide the annual Festival free of charge and offer high quality literary programming and books to communities across Texas. Thank you for sharing Texas Book Festival's vision to inspire all Texans to love reading.

## WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

### VOLUNTEER

Texas Book Festival relies on nearly 1,000 volunteers during the Festival Weekend! If you're interested in volunteering, please contact Nicole Wielga, Logistics and Volunteer Coordinator, for more information, [nicole@texasbookfestival.org](mailto:nicole@texasbookfestival.org)

### ATTEND THE GALA

The First Edition Literary Gala is our main fundraising event of the year! It will be held on November 6, 2020 and will include a silent auction and inspiring program featuring some of the year's best authors.

### DONATE AND BECOME A FESTIVAL FRIEND

Every donation we receive goes directly to ensuring that the Annual Festival remains free and open to the public, as well as supports our state-wide outreach programs. As a Thank You for any donation of \$100 or more, we will send you a Festival Friends Pass, which provides you special access to the Festival. To make your tax deductible donation today, visit [texasbookfestival.org/donate](https://texasbookfestival.org/donate).