You **invest** in The Friends:
Libraries and communities grow **stronger**.

2016 by the numbers

$500,000 — The amount the City of Saint Paul included in their budget for renovations to Rondo Library as a result of The Friends’ Advocacy

$1.2 million — The amount The Friends raised from individual supporters, corporate partners, and grants

43 — The number of adult cultural programs that brought people into libraries

35 — The number of library systems we served nationally through our consulting group Library Strategies

100,000 — The number of reading outreach materials distributed to libraries through our role as the Minnesota Center for the Book

242 — The number of Minnesota-authored books submitted for a Minnesota Book Award

You **Believe** in Your Community. You **Invest** in Your Library.

Impact Spotlight: Zhen Tu’s Story
In early 2017, as a senior in high school, Zhen began applying to colleges. Her experiences with the library meant so much to her that she wrote her college essay on how it shaped who she is today. “The library has been crucial to both my character development and my academic growth,” she wrote.

“The library has been crucial to both my character development and my academic growth.” - Zhen Tu

Zhen Tu’s mother first brought Zhen to the library when she was a young girl, just after the family moved to the United States from China. Zhen’s mother told her that “the library is one of the best places to meet new friends and feel at home.” During their frequent visits, Zhen learned English reading library books with her mom.

This early exposure to books instilled in Zhen a deep love of reading, and she continued to visit the library regularly as she grew older. As a high school student, she decided to share this love of reading with others and became a tutor at Rondo Community Outreach Library.

It turned out to be more than just reading that connected Zhen to the people she taught. “My students would ask me about when I moved to America, and their eyes would light up as I shared my stories of learning English at the library.” This young tutor who had learned English at the library herself was now paying it forward, teaching others to do the same.

Her time at the library – and her essay – paid off. This immigrant, English language learner, tutor, and hard-working teenager is now a proud first year student at Yale University. The Library was an essential part of that journey.

Your generous support makes success stories like Zhen’s possible. Watch a video featuring Zhen’s full story at thefriends.org/zhens.