

Wicomico Library Receives \$1M Donation from Henson Foundation

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The Wicomico Public Library in Salisbury, Maryland, has received a \$1 million donation from the Richard A. Henson Foundation, marking one of the largest private contributions in the library's history. The generous gift will directly support the development of the new Paul S. Sarbanes Branch Library, slated to open in the summer of 2027.

This major investment will fund the creation of the Richard A. Henson Meeting Hall, a 2,200-square-foot space that will serve as a central venue for community events, educational programs, and social gatherings. The hall is expected to become one of the most visually prominent and functional parts of the new library building, which will be located near Schumaker Pond.

The announcement was made during the library's recent Design Reveal and Campaign Kickoff event. Speaking at the gathering, Greg Olinde, Chairman of the Richard A. Henson Foundation, shared a quote from Mr. Henson himself: "Individuals and businesses have a social and humanitarian responsibility to improve the community in which they live." Olinde further emphasized the foundation's commitment to that mission, especially regarding public learning and community development.

According to library officials, the Paul S. Sarbanes Branch will go far beyond the traditional role of lending books. In addition to housing a wide selection of printed materials, the facility will offer digital technology, interactive learning spaces, and various public programs designed to serve a diverse population across Wicomico County.

"A library is such a critical component of what makes a vibrant community," Olinde said. Aside from being a book repository, our library offers technology, programs, and a multitude of resources for all. This new location with beautiful natural surroundings will be an inviting and welcoming place for residents to relax and bury their heads in a book, conduct research, and socialize with others."

The new library will be built to become a hub for lifelong learning and civic engagement. The donation from the Henson Foundation represents a strong show of private sector support for these aims.

In recent years, public libraries across the United States have worked to modernize and expand their services in response to changing community needs. This project is part of Wicomico County's broader initiative to invest in educational and cultural infrastructure that remains accessible to all residents, regardless of income or background.

With construction expected to begin soon, local leaders are hopeful that additional private contributions will follow the example set by the Henson Foundation, helping to bring the project to full completion on schedule.