

NEWS RELEASE

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Stark Library's Dr. Audrey Lavin Speaking of Books Author Series returns for 10th season

June 14, 2024 (Canton, OH) – This fall, Stark Library will be kicking off the 10th season of the acclaimed Dr. Audrey Lavin Speaking of Books Author Series, which brings authors of every genre and background to Stark County to inspire and delight patrons and bring the community together with lively and sometimes challenging conversation.

“Throughout the years, the Series has brought the community together to hear from authors who have inspired, uplifted, entertained, and even challenged the way we look at our community and our world,” said Mary Ellen Icaza, CEO & Executive Director at Stark Library.

The upcoming Speaking of Books Author Series promises to be one the community will embrace and celebrate.

On October 24, with support from National First Ladies Library and Museum, the 10th season begins at the Canon Palace Theatre with co-host of *TODAY with Hoda and Jenna*, literacy advocate, and best-selling author, Jenna Bush Hager. Hager has written several books including *Everything Beautiful in Its Time*, a collection of essays paying homage to her beloved grandparents as well as several children's books.

The Series continues November 18 with global #1 best-selling author, David Baldacci. Baldacci is the co-founder of the Wish You Well Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting literacy efforts across America. He was selected as the 2024 PEN/Faulkner Literary Champion in recognition of his work devoted to literacy advocacy.

In 2025, the Series will move to First Christian Church Auditorium while the Canton Palace Theatre undergoes renovations. On March 6th, we will welcome Wilmer Valderrama, star of the #1 TV drama *NCIS* and beloved from his role on *That '70s Show*. Valderrama's new book, *An American Story: Everyone's Invited*, is the remarkable true story of a young immigrant with a dream to change the world. An actor, producer, and entrepreneur, Valderrama is a leading voice for Latino representation in the United States and beyond.

The 10th Season will conclude on April 24 with author, Kimberly Williams-Paisley. This author, actress, producer, and director first lit up the screen in the film *Father of the Bride*. In 2014, her mother was diagnosed with a rare form of dementia called primary progressive aphasia. In her book, *Where the Light Gets In*, Williams-Paisley tells the full story of her mother's illness drawing on her memories of her relationship with the fascinating, successful woman who raised her so well.

Throughout the years, Stark Library has partnered with many organizations to bring more than 30 authors to Stark County. Opportunities to sponsor the 10th season of Speaking of Books Author Series are available.

"We value the support of our community partners which has allowed us to bring authors who have not only entertained, but also raised awareness of important topics affecting our community and challenged us to learn and grow together," said Icaza.

Speaking of Books authors have included those who have graced the top of bestseller lists, like Terry McMillan, Sandra Brown, and Garth Stein. Authors who provoked honest and impactful conversations about addiction, recovery, and mental health including Elizabeth Vargas, David Sheff, Danny Trejo, and Michelle Williams have captivated audiences. Families and young children have been delighted by Marc Brown and Kate the Chemist. Astronauts Mike Massimino and Nicole Stott inspired us to reach for the stars, and Bernie Kosar provided a once in a lifetime opportunity to meet a Cleveland Browns legend.

Ticket information coming soon at StarkLibrary.org.

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ABOUT THE LIBRARY

Stark Library is committed to strengthening the community by advancing literacy, connecting people, and encouraging exploration. We envision a thriving, literate, and equitable community.

One of the 9 largest library systems in Ohio – Stark Library serves the community through 10 locations, our bookmobiles, and our 24/7 digital branch.

For locations, hours, or more information visit StarkLibrary.org or call 330.452.0665.

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