



GWINNETT COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY

MEDIA ALERT

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GWINNETT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD ELECTS 2023 OFFICERS IN GROUNDBREAKING VOTE

January 9, 2023 - The Gwinnett County Public Library marked another milestone in its nearly 100-year history when its Board of Trustees elected Gwinnett native and longtime board member Jonathan "JT" Wu as the Chairman of the Library system.

Wu is the Vice President of Corporate Development for Meadowlark Title, a philanthropist, and the founder of the national childhood literacy nonprofit Preface. He first joined the board in 2019 and held various officer positions before being sworn in as just the eighth Chair of the Gwinnett Public Library Board since preserving records in 1996. Wu is also the first Asian American to hold the position.

Addressing the board, Wu emphasized his intent to build on his predecessors' legacies in ensuring that Georgia's largest circulating library system continues to provide "best-in-class and no-cost services while serving as Gwinnett County's multicultural window to the world."

"I still remember the joy I felt in the Duluth library branch with my parents as a kid, running around the stacks looking for the next magical opportunity to get lost in the world of books. Today, Gwinnett County remains one of the most diverse places in the country – where a uniquely American multiculturalism can be lived, heard, and explored in every corner of our amazing community," said Wu.

Charles Pace, the Executive Director of the Gwinnett County Public Library, congratulated Wu stating, "JT has done great work for us as a member of the Board of Trustees. I am pleased to see him take the reins and lead us in our continued goal of providing resources and services that enrich and inspire our community."

The Gwinnett County Public Library system, with its 15 branches, has long been regarded as a top-tier model for library services throughout the state of Georgia and across America. GCPL has received multiple awards from the American Library Association and the Institute of Museum and Library Services, including being chosen as Georgia's sole finalist for the National Medal for Museum and Library Services.

"Today, we offer so much more than just books. Our libraries are community hubs and centers for innovation. Customers have free access to 3D printers, passport renewals, top-of-the-line video and audio equipment, thousands of movies and TV shows, career training, business acceleration, and language learning", said Wu. "Thanks to our strong partnerships with Gwinnett County, the State of Georgia, and the US Department of Education, we've given back more than \$258 million in circulated services to Gwinnett County residents in the last year. I'm ready to keep listening, learning, and collaborating with all of our partners to build an even stronger Library system in the coming years."

The board also elected Univision's Community Empowerment Director, host of the Community News/Magazine show "Contigo en la Comunidad," and lifelong community advocate Adriana Andrade as the first Latin American Vice Chair. It is timely, given the system now serves nearly one-fifth of Georgia's Spanish-speaking population.

"I am humbled to have the opportunity to serve my community in this capacity. Our Gwinnett County Public Library provides much-needed access to resources and safe spaces for our communities to create, collaborate and learn. As a teen, I was immersed in the library culture as I volunteered. As a mother, I feel blessed that my children have the privilege to have spent countless hours in the library's Learning Labs, tutoring sessions, with bilingual books, and even reading to puppies," said Andrade. "I am thrilled to be part of the leadership team of a library system that is intentional about providing access to resources to its diverse community. We offer literature in Spanish and other languages. We also hold English as a Second Language programs, citizenship clinics, college planning, and SAT & ACT workshops. Along with the rest of the board, I am committed to continuing work with the County and our partners to expand and evolve the GCPL system to meet the needs of our communities."

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