

New Library Board Trustees to begin in January

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Charlotte Mecklenburg Library's two newest board members, Ailen Arreaza and Brandon Neal will attend their first Library Board of Trustees meeting on Monday, January 23. Neal and Arreaza, both of whom bring strong leadership expertise and a love for the community, were appointed by the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners in December.

"We are so fortunate to have Ailen and Brandon join our Board of Trustees," said Library CEO Lee Keesler. "Each brings a high level of community engagement, relevant skills, knowledge and experiences, and with their families the valuable perspective of library users. They'll contribute immediately in their trustee roles."

Ailen Arreaza is the North Carolina Program Director for ParentsTogether, a national non-profit that provides resources and community-building to help children and families thrive. Before joining the ParentsTogether team, Arreaza spent nearly a decade working on issues of equity and access for the City of Charlotte, including helping to educate Charlotteans, particularly Latino immigrants, about their fair housing rights. She is also a regular contributor to Charlotte's alternative weekly newspaper, Creative Loafing, where she often writes about issues related to social justice. Arreaza is originally from Cuba and a graduate of The George Washington University. She lives in NoDa with her husband and two rambunctious sons.

Arreaza will be filling the unexpired term of Dr. Eric Freedman until 2018, at which time she will be eligible for reappointment to a four-year term. Dr. Freedman who left the board when he became the Dean of Media Arts at Columbia College in Chicago.

Brandon Neal is a Charlotte native with a passion for the continued growth and improvement of his home city, the state of North Carolina and urban communities. As a Senior Counsel in the law department of Wells Fargo on the investment banking and securities team, he provides legal support for a variety of units at Wells Fargo. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art where he founded the museum's young affiliate group, the Bechtler Young Visionaries, and currently chairs the Firebird Society (\$1,000+ membership level). Neal also serves on the boards of the N.C. Center for Nonprofits, the Duke Law Alumni and the Unite Charlotte Advisory Council. In addition to his board service, he is involved in numerous other community endeavors and fundraising activities. Previously named one of Charlotte's "Seven to Watch" by the Charlotte Observer, he was recently honored as a Young Philanthropist by two local Charlotte magazines. He and his wife, Kerbie, have a daughter and a son.

Neal's term is four years, and he will fill the vacancy created when Charles Bowman's term expired in 2016.

[Library Board of Trustees](#) Chair, Jennifer Appleby will welcome the new board members at their January meeting. "I am happy to add Ailen and Brandon to our library board," said Appleby. "I work with a dedicated group of people who truly believe that strong libraries are essential to strong communities. Over the next few years Ailen and Brandon will lend their amazing talents to our board and I'm looking forward to their contributions."

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library operates under the guidance of a volunteer [Board of Trustees](#) whose members give generously of their time, talent and support to further the Library's mission. The Board consists of eleven trustees, ten of whom are appointed by the Board of County Commissioners and one of whom is appointed by the Board of Education. The Board of Trustees hires, directs and advises the Library CEO, adopts organizational policies and an annual budget, and serves as principal advocate for the organization.

Tags:

board members , Charlotte Mecklenburg Library , Library Board of Trustees

