Celebration of the 20th International Book Fair 2026 a Complete Success

Lawrence, MA — November 9, 2026 — The International Book Fair celebrated its 20th anniversary from October 16 to 17, 2026, dedicated to "The Voices of the Caribbean," with strong attendance both in person and virtually.

This year's event took place at the Lawrence Public Library located at 51 Lawrence Street in Lawrence, Massachusetts, where families, writers, educators, artists, and literature lovers gathered to celebrate the power of reading and storytelling across all cultures.

Statistics obtained of the IBF indicates that:

Total participants ……. 311

High School students reached 565

People reached online ……..... 8587

Countries reached 10

(More details can be found on the attached Impact Report)

The International Book Fair started on Friday, October 16 at 6 PM with a Tribute to the 20th anniversary and the Voices of the Caribbean, where books, poetry, and Caribbean culture took center stage through different cultural groups from the area. A special video was shown summarizing the key people who took on and continued this great mission and vision of connecting art, music, history, literature, and community in harmony. The musical activity was led by the well-known Puerto Rican cultural manager, musician, choreographer, dancer, actor, and singer, Jorge Santiago Arce, who, after presenting the history of Caribbean rhythms and musical instruments, led us to join in a musical parade where part of the audience became the musicians playing Caribbean percussion instruments, much to everyone's delight.

The Youth Fairs at Lawrence High School (Abbot and Upper Academy) and Notre Dame Cristo Rey High School in Methuen took place on Friday morning during school hours in their classrooms, where guest writers and poets shared experiences with the students. On Saturday afternoon, in the space of the Poetry Gathering, the awards were given to the winners of the

Poetry contest at both schools. A total of 21 students received these awards and recognitions for their winning poems, which will soon be published in a book by the Fair in the spring of 2027.

On Saturday, writers, parents, children, young people, families, writers, poets, publishers, artisans, and the general public came together for programming from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the Lawrence Public Library facilities.

The Children's Fair took place at the Library in the morning with a series of activities that included stories, music, movement, and children's books. There were also two panels **about Caribbean History, Roots, and Heritage, as well as a talk with Five Points Publishing on How You Can Write Your Story.**

Thanks to the kindness and delicious dishes made by different local restaurants, a tasty lunch was offered to everyone present. This is the first time such an offer has been made to please everyone and to give a space to appreciate the culinary art of our local restaurants.

In the afternoon, several presentations/panels about the **Voices of Immigration, Identity, and the Diaspora Experience,** as well as the **Voices of Support for Family and Community** and the **Voices of Equity, Justice, and Diversity** were held in different rooms.

In the Poetic Readings section, we had the famous writer/translator **Rhina Espaillat and the Pow Wow Poets,** and later the young winners could hear their winning poems read aloud and receive their awards.

The 2026 Fair ended with a musical activity led by **Leonardo Nin** featuring a variety of well-known songs that invite people to celebrate Hispanic culture. The next **International Book Fair 2027 will take place on October 15 and 16, 2027, at the Lawrence Public Library** once again.

About the International Book Fair, Inc.

Founded in 2006, the International Book Fair, Inc. is a nonprofit cultural initiative dedicated to promoting literature, cultural exchange, and community engagement through the celebration of books, art, and education. Every year, the fair brings together authors, educators, artists, and readers from all over Latin America and the United States to encourage dialogue, creativity, and multicultural understanding.

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