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**Authors Ann Patchett and James Patterson Become First Ambassadors
for the Book Industry Charitable Foundation**

Two of America's most celebrated authors, Ann Patchett and James Patterson, are the inaugural ambassadors for the Book Industry Charitable (Binc) Foundation, now celebrating its 20th year. Since 1996, the Binc Foundation has given more than \$6 million in tax-free, emergency financial assistance and scholarships to booksellers across the country. With Patchett and Patterson as its co-ambassadors, Binc will increase awareness of its mission to directly support booksellers with confidential emergency financial assistance.

Both Patchett and Patterson have long been champions of literacy and independent bookstores. Patchett, the co-owner of Parnassus Books in Nashville, knows firsthand the joys and struggles of being a bookseller.

"Booksellers have always been there for me, both as a reader and a writer," said Patchett. "I support Binc because it's an organization that's always there for booksellers. Together we can help Binc weave a safety net for all booksellers. It's a way to say thank you to the people who have given us so much."

In 2015 alone, Patterson donated \$2 million in holiday bonuses and grants to independent bookstore employees and school libraries. His commitment to independent bookstores stems from their critical role in cultivating "a nation of readers" in American society, he said. "Are you worried about civility and tolerance in today's society? I ask because we have too often allowed our guardians of civility and tolerance to be under-recognized and under-appreciated to the point where too often they have trouble pursuing their vital profession. Booksellers are the tip of the spear in the battle to keep this a nation of readers. We need to do everything we can to safeguard and encourage bookselling. This is Binc's mission, and one I wholeheartedly endorse."



Binc Executive Director Pamela French lauds the dedication of the new co-ambassadors. “Ms. Patchett and Mr. Patterson understand the unique role that bookstores play in building community,” she said. “They also understand that many people who work there do so out of passion — and are often one emergency away from financial hardship. That’s why we feel so honored to have them as ambassadors.”

Funded 100 percent by donations from bookstores, authors, publishers, vendors and employee payroll contributions, the Binc Foundation provided 28 booksellers with emergency grants in 2015, covering everything from major medical bills to homelessness prevention to escape from domestic violence. The foundation also granted booksellers and their dependents 70 college scholarships or paid tuition for professional development programs ending the year with granting over \$266,000 in total assistance.

“There is no greater satisfaction than to be able to help the profoundly committed booksellers who give of themselves to inspire passion for books.” said French. “With the support of Ann Patchett and James Patterson, we will advance our efforts to be a safety net in hard times. We want booksellers to be there for their customers and communities for years to come.”

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The Book Industry Charitable (Binc) Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Ann Arbor, Michigan. With the support of its industry ambassadors, authors Ann Patchett and James Patterson, Binc strengthens the bookselling community through charitable programs that support employees and their families. Established in 1996, the core program provides assistance to bookstore employees who have a demonstrated financial need arising from severe hardship and/or emergency circumstances. Since its inception, the organization has provided over \$6 million in financial assistance and scholarships to more than 7,000 families. Support for the Foundation’s programs and services come from all sectors of the book industry.

The Book Industry Charitable Foundation was imagined and built by booksellers and proudly continues to be their safety net. We care about books, and we cherish the people who sell them.

www.bincfoundation.org.