

## DELIVERING LIBRARY SERVICE DURING THE PANDEMIC

STAFF REFLECTIONS AND SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report would not be possible without the support and contributions of the staff and departments of the Metropolitan Library System including:

- Central Information Services
- Collection Development
- Engagement & Program Services
- Information Technology
- Marketing, Communications, and Public Relations
- Public Services
- Special Collections & Research
- Strategic Planning and Projects
- Access Managers\*
- Access Specialists\*
- Engagement Managers\*
- Engagement Specialists\*
- Librarians\*
- Library Aides\*
- Library Managers\*

\*Staff in these roles were asked to reflect on their experiences in providing customer service during the pandemic and share what they did to meet the needs of our community through an employee validation survey.



## **PRODUCTION TEAM**

#### **AUTHORS**

Kellie Delaney, Digital Strategies and Services Manager, Strategic Planning and Projects Emily Williams, Teen Services Manager, Engagement and Program Services

#### **ANALYSIS PROVIDED BY**

Tricia Andrews, Manager of Access, Public Services Administration Erin Bedford, Regional Director, Public Services Administration Kimberly Boldt, Director of Outreach and Engagement Services, Engagement and Program Services

Kellie Delaney, Digital Strategies and Services Manager, Strategic Planning and Projects LaVetta Dent, Regional Director, Public Services Administration

#### STATISTICS PROVIDED BY

Anne Fischer, Deputy Executive Director for Information Technology, Information Technology

Risa Jensen-Jones, Regional Director, Public Services Administration
Larry "Buddy" Johnson, Special Collections and Research Manager, Special Collections
Manisha Koosuru, Data Analyst, Strategic Planning and Projects
Kristine Magers, Collection Development Librarian, Collection Development
Tim Spindle, Central Information Services Manager, Central Information Services
Kim Terry, Public Relations Manager, Marketing and Communications
Janeal Walker, Collection Development Manager, Collection Development
Emily Williams, Teen Services Manager, Engagement and Program Services
Jonathan Willis, Network Systems Coordinator, Information Technology

#### REPORT STEERING COMMITTEE

Tricia Andrews, Manager of Access, Public Services Administration Erin Bedford, Regional Director, Public Services Administration Kimberly Boldt, Director of Outreach and Engagement Services, Engagement and Program Services

Kellie Delaney, Digital Strategies and Services Manager, Strategic Planning and Projects LaVetta Dent, Regional Director, Public Services Administration

Jessica Gonzalez, Program Manager, Engagement and Program Services

Risa Jensen-Jones, Regional Director, Public Services Administration

Chris Kennedy, Deputy Executive Director for Public Services, Public Services Administration

Teresa Matthews, Program Manager, Engagement and Program Services

Mark Schuster, Regional Director, Public Services Administration

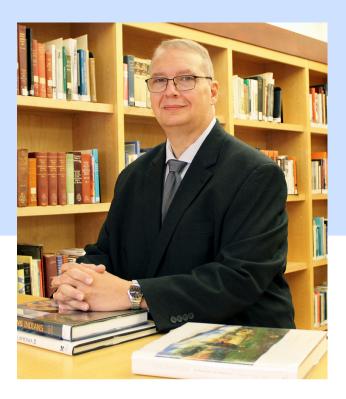
Emily Williams, Teen Services Manager, Engagement and Program Services

Kristin Williamson, Children Services Manager, Engagement and Program Services

# FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Last year, public libraries from every community in the United States were called upon to respond to a plethora of community impacts: COVID-19 and the corresponding health care crisis, a national financial crisis with unprecedented job losses, and social unrest in response to calls for social justice in our communities. Public libraries became the center point of community responses by supporting accurate counts in the US census: supporting remote work and learning: providing access to governmental information and resources to aid those harmed by severe weather and business / employment setbacks; providing resources and services to aid community members facing life's challenges; and facilitating participation in our elections.

The Metropolitan Library System (MLS) was one of these public libraries supporting their communities in a time of need. MLS began by providing social media content to aid our customer's transition to digital library services the day after we were forced to close due to COVID-19, even though there was no infrastructure in place to do so. We then began supporting remote work and online learning and recreation. MLS responded quickly to the communities needs by immediately transitioning its operations to support the new demands of customers and introduced new technology (MEEscan) to aid in safe and convenient materials pick up by the customer. Access Services began by modifying customer access to the collection by providing curbside pickup,



"MLS is now a more dynamic and flexible organization that can meet the changing needs of our customers more effectively both in-person and online."

bonus bags, extending Library by Mail program activities, and offering curbside printables highlighting services and resources available to the customer. Departments and staff shifted quickly to offer virtual programming within a matter of days of our closure in March. The speed at which new services and programs were offered can be witnessed by our nationally recognized Virtual Children Reading to Dogs program which got off the ground in 10 days. Systemwide engagement generated online thematic programming and take-home activity kits were quickly added to support our customer's needs in education and enrichment.

MLS also worked to support our online community and keep it connected to our real-world community of service. We found



new ways to interact with our customers and meet their needs in the dynamic changing environment that was COVID-19. The library supported community groups and movements in meeting community and social needs. We worked with the OKC StorySLAM to offer monthly programming online through special partnerships; historic walking / cycling tours were created to match customers with our resources in new interactive ways: created a 2020 quilt at Southern Oaks to commemorate the year; offered our Author Hour program online fostering interactivity with customers; and offered online interactive health programs such as yoga and tai chi. Summer and Winter Reading were completely transitioned to a virtual format while still maintaining a connection to our customers.

MLS is now a more dynamic and flexible organization that can meet the changing needs of our customers more effectively both in-person and online. We are proud of the staff and their work that has made our transition so effective in this effort. We wish to thank all those who's time and contributions have made us successful in our new digital world of library service.

DR. LARRY NASH WHITE

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** 



Teen Librarian, Elisabeth, and Access Manager I, Taylor, ready to help customers with our Curbside service

## INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted so many facets of normal life: the way we connect, the way we work, and the way we help others. Reflecting on this time, it is important to recognize the significant changes our libraries underwent to deliver customer service.

Reaching our customers during this time took everyone at every location and in every department. Our entire library team was essential in providing service to our customers through curbside pickup, online programs, and working behind the scenes to provide technology infrastructure, support for purchasing, collections for customers to browse online, and guidance and support when trying something new. This report contains accounts from our staff on their experiences and statistics reflecting how

customer service was delivered. These statistics are not compared to years where we offered full service but a reflection of what our library system was able to accomplish during a global pandemic with varied levels of openness to the public.

## **DEDICATION**

This report is dedicated to the front-line staff members who made serving our customers possible and to the many individuals behind the scenes helping them along the way. Thank you so much for helping restore normalcy in our communities by providing library services.

## **PIVOTING TO PROVIDE SERVICES**

Libraries take pride in being safe spaces and welcoming under normal circumstances and even those times of crisis. COVID-19 made gathering indoors unsafe. Out of concern for the safety and well-being of library staff and the communities we serve, we closed the doors to our physical buildings following the governmental shutdown recommendations. Closing our doors did not mean we were absent in our communities, but it created a unique opportunity to find new ways to serve our customers and communities.

While most of our in-person and physical services were unavailable while we were closed, we extended online renewal policies, expanded online checkout services, and added virtual programming and services.

After returning from our closure in March and April, our libraries expanded to provide more in-person services such as curbside, take-home kits, bonus bags, and public computer access.



Photo provided by @lesliederwin with some of our newest library card holders

## VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING



Oklahoma Musician Carter Sampson performing as part of the Celebrate Oklahoma Music Online Concert

Within the first week of closure, staff had already begun planning their first virtual programs. We were one of the first libraries in the nation to deliver virtual programming on our social media channels. Our first virtual program was not something new but a rapid delivery of an existing program, Tailored Titles. Tailored Titles is our popular reader's advisory program launched on our social media channels to provide reading recommendations to customers while they were at home. Our suggestions were based on books they could get instantly from our hoopla or OverDrive collections.

Shortly after that, we began offering popular in-person programs virtually including Online Storytimes, Book Clubs, health and wellness programs and programs on hobbies.

IMPORTANT FIGURES

1,499

Virtual programs

27,601

Program participants



Children's Librarian Alma and her puppets filmed and produced several videos during the pandemic for customers to enjoy

## **ONLINE STORYTIMES**

A mainstay to libraries, Storytimes, were missed by kids and staff alike. While virtual Storytimes are not the same as attending in-person, they helped provide an opportunity for kids to see their favorite children's librarians and to receive the benefits of being read to while providing an outlet for caregivers. Publishers granted special permissions to allow their books to be read and shared online. Prior to the pandemic, publisher restrictions made this impossible.

Staff reported that virtual Storytimes allowed them to step out of their comfort zone and to try something new to reach customers during this time. 375

Online Storytimes were offered since March 2020



Virtual Storytimes were not the only way Storytimes took place. Children's Librarians and Engagement Specialists created "DIY Storytime". Customers could create a unique Storytime experience at home based on a specific theme. Each DIY Storytime included recommended reading (available from our always available online collections), songs or activities, and ways learn together as a family.

## VIRTUAL CHILDREN READING TO DOGS

We adapted our very popular Children Reading to Dogs program to a virtual format. Initially our dog therapy teams were concerned their therapy dogs would have difficulty shifting to an online environment. We were concerned young readers would not be engaged and would not feel comfortable reading to a screen. We were wrong. After hosting over 50 Virtual Children Reading to Dogs sessions, a true community has emerged between the dog therapy teams, the staff and the young readers who participate. The unexpected relationships and the connections created are one of the main reasons this program has received nationwide recognition. Several library systems across the nation are replicating our program to provide similar reading programs to their customers.

During one of our sessions this fall, a parent let us know how much the Virtual Children Reading to Dogs program has helped his son. He was so proud that his son's teacher contacted them because she was so impressed with the improved reading skills. The parents credited the Virtual Children Reading to Dogs program and the wonderful therapy teams. The student scored 98/100 on a recent reading test, and you can tell he was proud of himself.

We have seen children who were once shy and lacked reading confidence, now have confidence and are eager to attend week after week. An unexpected benefit of this program is the weekly stand-up comedy session led by the readers after they've completed their reading. The confidence to share, get a laugh, and provide joy are a small reflection of what the library provides to customers across the county.



Jerry, Library Volunteer, and his dog, Charley, being interviewed by KOCO for our Children Reading to Dogs program

According to Allie Barton, Children's Librarian at Belle Isle,who originally had the idea for the Virtual Children Reading to Dogs program:

"While disappointed that Children Reading to Dogs can't happen in-person, it is so rewarding seeing how our librarians, patrons, and dog team volunteers have adapted to make this program happen. While you can't pet and hug the dog or high-five the kids when they get a word correctly, the smile and joy from both the children and the dog volunteers is the same as in-person Children Reading to Dogs. In fact, because of the nature of breakout rooms, the children have more time with the dog team to practice their reading. The limit of time, space, and number of dog volunteers only allowed children during in-person children reading to dogs to have at most 15 minutes to practice their reading, but during our Virtual Children Reading to Dogs can have 25 minutes. Many of our kids often utilize the full 25 minutes!

My favorite aspect of Children Reading to Dogs has always been the relationships built between the children and the dog teams. It's been a joy to see this continue over Zoom. Children will request the same dog team each week or the dog teams will be fully invested in what the kids did last weekend and ask about it at the next program. Even our librarians have found creative ways to celebrate our kids practicing their reading over Zoom. One of my co-workers fills a balloon with confetti and at the end of the session he pops the balloon over his head to celebrate the reader completing their reading time.

While I can't wait to get back to in-person programming (whenever that will be), there is still nothing as rewarding as spending an hour each week on Zoom, watching kids blossom as they practice their reading to dog teams."



Artwork from the 2020 Summer Reading program

## SUMMER READING

Our traditional Summer Reading program looked somewhat different in 2020. From mid-March to mid-May our Engagement and Program Services department worked on a contingency plan and made modifications to the program to make it as simple and easy as possible for both staff and participants. The structure of the program itself was flattened to one goal level, with the same prizes for all ages. The reading activities customers could do to earn points were modified to be able to be done from home or online. Prize pickup was moved to August, and the community goal was reduced to a more achievable level.

Not all customers have access to reliable internet or feel comfortable participating online. Customers have always had the option of using a paper reading log. The challenge was creating awareness that despite the pandemic, Summer Reading was on! The library published ads with reading logs and activity logs to reach those without internet and included logs in curbside bags. A direct mailer with sample logs was mailed to over 13,000 households in ZIP codes with low internet connectivity.

Shifting and rethinking our largest and most visible annual library program was a big undertaking, and our staff was able to pivot and celebrate Summer Reading with our community in new ways!

IMPORTANT FIGURES

7,693
Participants

7,433,479

Minutes Logged

7,618,594

Points Earned

1,399

Logged Book Reviews



Community quilt organized by the Southern Oaks Library

## PRESERVING HISTORY

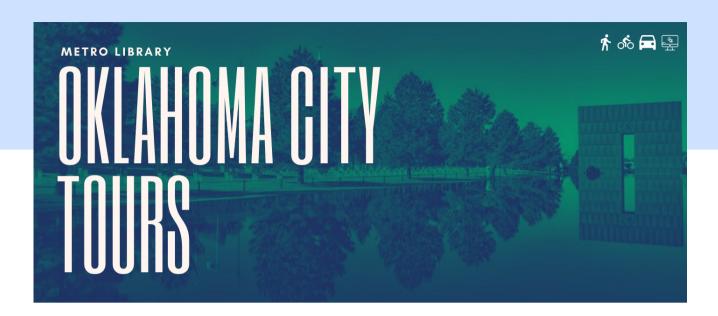
As part of its commitment to document and share the history, the library created multiple opportunities for the residents of Oklahoma County to share their story through the lens of the pandemic. These projects gathered journals, diaries, and other creative material from around Oklahoma County to help document the community's experiences during the crisis caused by COVID-19.

Special Collection's librarians are archiving and cataloging the community submissions so they can be useful to researchers in the future. They also took photos of individuals to help document what it was like during the stay-at-home orders.

Additionally, the Southern Oaks Library created the Story/Memory Quilt of Hope through a take-home kit. Customers were asked to document their story or a memory of 2020 from their unique perspective using fabric to express their feelings.

"One of the library's roles is to preserve our history and culture for future generations. Collecting community stories is something we do every day, but these are anchored in the past. History is being made right now, however, so it's important to have fresh first-hand perspectives to better inform and inspire those future generations."

Larry "Buddy" Johnson, Special Collections & Research Manager



## HISTORICAL OKC TOURS

The Special Collections and Research department developed six historical tours for library customers. During the shutdown, individuals were looking for a way to maintain a healthy mind and body. Since in-person interactions were discouraged, this department created opportunities for our customers to use library resources differently.

Six different tours were created for cycling or walking that provide historical information about the city at every stop. These tours were great for getting out of the house, breathing some fresh air, and learning something new about Oklahoma City.

Each tour featured the best modes for travel. Some tours were optimized for cycling, while others could be enjoyed by walking, driving or even from the comfort of your home as a digital tour. Tours covered topics from historical parks, OKC Downtown Urban Renewal, Ralph Ellison's life in OKC and Fairlawn Cemetery Founding Fathers.

20,511

Visits to our online historical tours







Teen Librarian Kimberly Edwards hosting an online Dungeons and Dragons program with special presenter, W. Jerome Stevenson from the popular D20 to Curtain Podcast

## **ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES**

Because travel is not necessary for virtual programming, our library has been able to host authors, panelists, presenters, and special guest speakers that we would not have been able to afford or facilitate in person. For Native American Heritage Month in November 2020, Oklahoman Bird Runningwater presented about representation in media as the Director of the Indigenous Programs and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at Sundance Institute. We've hosted nationally recognized, best-selling authors and world-renowned guest speakers.

We have been able to reach customers in new ways. For example, book club attendees now have time to jump into a lunchtime Zoom during their workday. Kids can attend Storytime as passengers while their parents are driving. Program participants have attended library events while in the stands at their children's sports practices, in bed

when they're not feeling well, and while out of town. Through technology, volume and picture size are easily adjusted and transcription services are available to support those with disabilities.

"I think that virtual engagement provides us with a wealth of new opportunities for presenters that we hadn't thought about before. We are having a presenter from Minnesota in June and likely one from California in July. Virtual opportunities also provide another mode customers can use to engage with the library. Not everyone can attend in-person programming."

Library Engagement Manager

## ADDITIONAL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

#### **AUTHOR HOUR & AUTHOR EVENTS**

Our libraries have offered several author events historically. Because of COVID-19, we've taken those in-person experiences online and have hosted local and national authors, including William Bernhardt, Ellen Crosby, Megan Miranda, Jennifer L. Armentrout, and Kristyn Kusek Lewis. Through programs such as Author Hour, Black History Month and Hispanic Heritage Month, we can foster discussions about books, writing and the publishing world through these interactive experiences.

#### **OKC STORYSLAM**

Starting in May 2020, the library partnered with OKC StorySLAM to provide monthly storytelling events through Facebook Live. Founded by a current staff member of the Oklahoma Arts Council, the OKC StorySLAM has been a community tradition since 2005. Participants tell personal stories off a chosen theme. All stories must be true, told without notes, and must be told in 7 minutes or less. With the pandemic the StorySLAM was not able to hold their live monthly events, so our library co-produced online events that give local storytellers a virtual audience. With guidance from Special Collections and Research, these events were archived online to save these important stories from our community.

StorySLAM events are our most popular Facebook video series and bring in viewers from all over the United States to hear stories from Oklahomans.

"The potential is completely unrealized because we have only scratched the surface of what is possible."

Library Manager

#### JOY HARJO VISIT

In April, the Engagement and Program Services department organized a visit with Joy Harjo, an internationally renowned performer, poet, and writer of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. This event was hosted on our Facebook page and has become our most viewed and engaged with post in our Facebook's history. Over 2,000 people in over 30 countries viewed Joy's online visit.

#### **OTHER PROGRAMS**

While we highlighted the above programs, there are several other amazing programs and services happening at our libraries such as healthy living and physical activity programs like yoga and Tai Chi, arts and crafts programs, and our new Book a Librarian service. Staff reported how proud they were of the programs they produced, the skills they learned, and the response from our community. Our libraries are committed to our communities to connect them with the resources and experiences they need to educate and enrich their lives in whatever format that may be.



Capitol Hill Librarian, Gloria, helping customers with our Curbside service by answering the phone and preparing their materials

## EVOLVING TO MEET CUSTOMER NEEDS

Innovation is not only used to describe technology but how our libraries evolved to meet the needs of our customers. Staff during this time thought of new ways to provide safe customer service and help provide normalcy. Many locations consolidated desks, used laser pointers to help with one-on-one computer help, and even used book trucks in windows to display new book releases for customers when they could not come in the library.

Staff reported during this time they were able to reach new customer bases and were able to provide a thoughtful and measured approach to getting to know their customers. The pandemic also brought out a sense of teamwork and helped enhance communications at local libraries.

Evolving and changing was essential and our staff helped usher in new ways and new solutions that may not have been thought of unless we were in a global pandemic.

"The concept that customer service doesn't always happen behind a desk. Meeting customers at their cars, having those conversations, building relationships - it all helps to connect our library with our community. If you have trouble getting around, are in a hurry to get somewhere else or have a carful of babies in car seats just need to pick up your holds, we're demonstrating that we can be there for you."

Library Manager



Library mascot, Spoticus, and Access Specialist, Donna, deliver books to a customer's trunk through our curbside service

## **CURBSIDE SERVICE**

Beginning in May 2020, the library began offering curbside service. The library had been closed from the middle of March and our digital collections only offered a fraction of the content and books available to our customers. The first phase we deployed after our closure was Curbside. Our Curbside service allowed customers to receive books and materials even though we weren't fully open to the public. To use our Curbside service, customers call us when they arrive, and we place their books in their vehicle while maintaining social distance.

Our customers missed us, and we missed them. After multiple weeks of library materials being unavailable to our customers, this service put new books and materials in the hands of our community and helped provide the connection and comfort during this difficult time.

"I and my fellow Access people looked out for our regulars at WA who were used to coming into the library and who were very glad that we were taking precautions and adapted well to the new ways they could use the library. We got to know them a little better, got to know what they drove and were able to get them their items quickly, sometimes even before they could call. One customer in particular was (and is) happy to see us. She told us that she was pretty much alone in the pandemic, that her husband was in a nursing home and she couldn't see him and that coming to see us always brightened her day. When we moved to the Grab and Go phase she was so happy to come in and she replied that this had become her second home."

Access Specialist

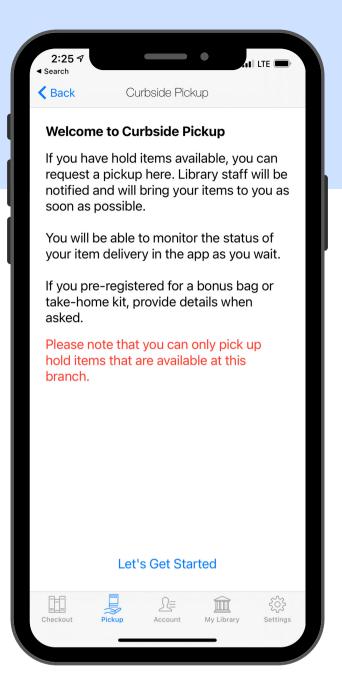
## METRO CHECKOUT APP

In early January 2021, the library system deployed a new app to help facilitate our curbside service.

This service was discovered by staff who attended the Public Library Association (PLA) conference in Nashville and brought back information about an app that could be used on customers' personal devices to checkout materials when visiting the library (through Self Checkout). Our IT department reached out to the vendor (MeeScan) to get a price quote and received it the day before the libraries were closed due to the pandemic.

Once we opened back up, our IT department started talking with them again and found that they were also working to enhance the app to work for curbside pickup as many of their current customers had asked for this enhancement. After signing an agreement with the company to purchase a version of the app for our system, IT worked with them to have this system ready for our customers.

MeeScan provides a dashboard for library staff to monitor when a customer has arrived for their curbside pickup and any associated notes. This app helps streamline the customer and staff experience.



"Curbside service was only successful because of the teamwork of our staff. The runners coordinated with each other and with those at the access desk answering the phones. The app made things incredibly easier, but on busy days our communication was the real reason for our success."

Library Aide



Del City's Job Search Starter Take-Home Kit

## **TAKE-HOME KITS**

"We learned that Take-Home Kits are particularly helpful for reaching some audiences who can't make it to scheduled inperson programs (for example, working adults). We will continue doing that at some level moving forward, to reach people who cannot align their schedules with live library events."

Engagement Manager

Over the course of the past year our libraries have continued to find creative ways to connect with our customers through the various stages of closure and phased reopening. One of the most popular ways we have done this has been with Take-Home Kits. Our libraries have created numerous kits for very young children, grade school kids, teens, adults, and the whole family. This has not only benefited our customers but provided our Engagement Staff the opportunity to continue to be creative and engage with our customers in a way that was similar to the in-person programming they had been doing. Staff have shared their ideas, pictures, content lists, and instructions for making these kits on SharePoint so that other locations can recreate them for their customers.

We pivoted to doing virtual programs and quickly found that while we gained many new customers, others were being left behind; whether that be due to lack of connectivity at home, busy schedules, or just screen fatigue. Take-Home Kits like the Teen Book Box allow our customers to learn more about our resources and collection. They can enjoy the benefits of our community partnerships through kits such as the Earth Day Grow a Library Seed Kits in partnership

with the Myriad Botanical Gardens and the Free Family Day Art Kits in partnership with the Oklahoma City Museum of Art. People can also learn about the robust history of Oklahoma with kits like Greenwood (Life Before the Massacre) that takes people on a tour of the Greenwood District prior to the Massacre in 1921. All of this can be done on their own schedule and in the convenience of their home.

## **BONUS BAGS**

When Curbside started in May 2020, we wanted to develop an easy way to be able to provide materials and reader's advisory services to support customers who were unable to come into the buildings and browse the collections. Customers called (or direct messaged us through social media) to let us know what theme they wanted - in one word - and staff specially hand-selected and packed with up to five books or DVDs on a theme and a specific age group. We created unique care packages to surprise and delight our community. Books on princesses? We've got that! Dinosaurs? Yep! How did we know they'll like our picks? We're librarians! That's just what we do.





Two customers using our socially distant public computers

## WIFI AND PUBLIC COMPUTERS

Digital Divide:

gulf between those who have access to computers and the internet and those who do not.

Our libraries provide services to those who experience the digital divide. Access to our WiFi and public computers serve as a lifeline for many library users. The library is one of the only places in Oklahoma County that provides free and open access to high-speed WiFi and public computers.

During our closure, customers would visit our library parking lots to connect to our WiFi so students could complete homework, individuals could apply for jobs, or simply to check their email or connect with others online.

over

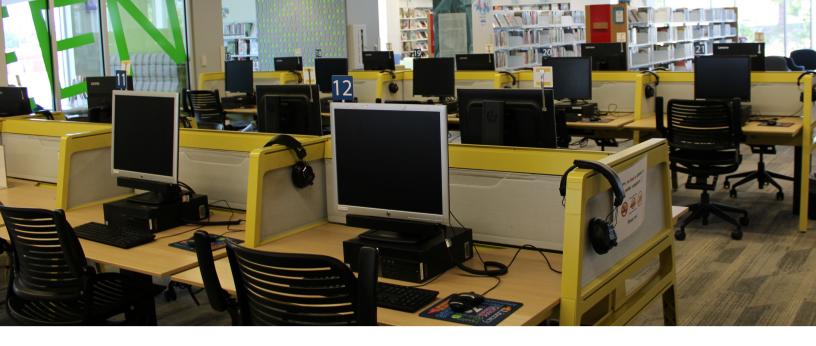
138,000

Public computer sessions have been logged by our customers since June 2020

over

919,000

WiFi sessions logged



## UNDERSTANDING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

The digital divide in Oklahoma can be categorized by affordability and availability. While Oklahoma City has high availability of broadband providers, Oklahoma City has a high level of poverty, making home internet a luxury that many in our county cannot afford. Smaller towns in Oklahoma County are both low in availability and affordability. Our public computers with access to the internet provide this basic need, which helps our customers achieve higher levels of enrichment; whether that's to prepare a

resume, learn new skills online, complete schoolwork, or even the normalcy of streaming a video—internet access is essential to our customer's overall wellbeing.

Even though we made significant strides in our virtual services and programming, there were still areas in our community who could not take advantage because they did not have access to technology and rely on the library to provide that access.



Library customers excited to find a new book to check out and read

## REACHING OUR CUSTOMERS

The library system used multiple approaches to reach our customers during our closure through physical and online marketing, public/media relations, and centralized services through our call center. Because our libraries have had various stages of openness, it was important to reach customers through as many outlets as possible.

Since March 2020, the library has earned free publicity in over **100 spots** on the news and in newspapers highlighting library services offered during the pandemic, changes in services offered, exciting new online programs, and library building news.

Social media was essential during the closure to help advertise our closure status and to keep customers updated on upcoming programs and new services available. Since March 2020, we received

nearly **75,000 engagements** (number of interactions which include reactions, retweets, replies, likes, shares, and comments) on the library's Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts on over **2,500 pieces of content** such as posts, videos, tweets, and images.

Signage, curbside guides, and other collateral were developed by our Marketing Department to help reach customers through curbside service. Since our programs moved online, they stopped the production of their monthly print calendar and created a brand-new email newsletter, *Check It Out*, to help communicate upcoming events, highlight blog posts, and share new services and resources.

## DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND EQUITY

While the pandemic was the center of how we delivered customer service, we as a nation came face to face with systemic racism. After the murder of George Floyd, the American Library Association (ALA) Executive Board called on all libraries across the nation to participate in activism and create antiracist reading lists and content and to take a stand alongside ALA in condemning violence and racism toward Black people and people of color.

Our library issued a statement of support and provided race and equity reads. Our system also acknowledged the need for our organization to embody our library's core value of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

Earlier in 2021, the ALA organization asked again for libraries across the nation to help stop all forms of racism in the United States and to support our Asian and Pacific American communities. The library again took a stand for our customers in this community to help stop Asian hate.

The library system acknowledged again that our core values will guide how we provide service to the numerous communities that make up our county by solidified our commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion within our operations, services, and collections.

Standing by our communities, acknowledging our role in providing equity, diversity, and inclusion and a commitment to striving to do better--we can create a more inclusive library for a more inclusive community.

"The Metropolitan Library System condemns hate in all forms regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age or ability. We are committed to working with our communities to create safe spaces for free thought, exploration and enrichment."

Dr. Larry White Executive Director



Still image from an online video series called Shelf Sneak Peeks where Sadie, one of our Collection Development Librarians highlights books coming out soon

## **STATISTICS**

Figures for March 2020 – April 2021



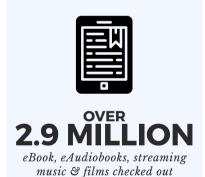
29,791

New Library Cards



1,292,915

Physical materials checked out





## **HIGHLIGHTS**

In April 2020 we received the highest recorded eResource statistics in our library's history. The top resources accessed included:

- Genealogy Databases (including Ancestry.com at home)
- Job and Career Resources
- Online Learning Platforms

## CENTRAL INFORMATION SERVICES BY THE NUMBERS









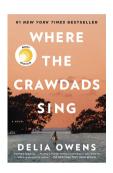






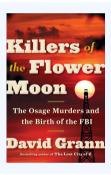
## **TOP CHECKOUTS**

## TOP CHECKOUTS: PHYSICAL COLLECTION



#### **ADULT FICTION**

- "Where the Crawdads Sing", Delia Owens
- "The Vanishing Half", Brit Bennett
- "Camino Winds", John Grisham
- "A Time for Mercy", John Grisham
- "The Giver of Stars", JoJo Moyes



#### **ADULT NONFICTION**

- "Killers of the Flower Moon", David Grann
- "Too Much and Never Enough", Mary Trump
- "Educated". Tara Westover
- "Becoming", Michelle Obama
- "Oklahoma Driver's Manual"



### **ADULT FICTION (AUDIOBOOKS)**

- "Camino Winds". John Grisham
- "Where the Crawdads Sing", Delia Owens
- "Walk the Wire". David Baldacci
- "A Time for Mercy", John Grisham
- "The 20th Victim". James Patterson



## **ADULT NONFICTION (AUDIOBOOKS)**

- "Killers of the Flower Moon", David Grann
- "Becoming", Michelle Obama
- "Killing Crazy Horse", Bill O'Reilly
- "The Splendid and Vile", Erik Larson
- "Talking to Strangers", Malcolm Gladwell



#### **DVDS**

- "Frozen II"
- "Aladdin"
- "Jumanji: The Next Level"
- "Little Women"
- "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood"



#### **GRAPHIC NOVELS**

- "Kristy's Great Idea (The Baby-Sitters Club, #1)", Raina Telgemeier
- "The Truth About Stacey (The Baby-Sitters Club, #2)", Raina Telgemeier
- "Big Nate: Blow the Roof Off!", Lincoln Peirce
- "Mary Anne Saves the Day (The Baby-Sitters Club, #3)", Raina Telgemeier
- "Big Nate: The Gerbil Ate My Homework", Lincoln Peirce



#### CHILDRENS: EARLY CHILDHOOD

- "Bob Books: Set 1, Beginning Readers", Bobby Lynn Maslen
- "The Thank You Book", Mo Willems
- "Bob Books: Animal Stories", Lynn Maslen Kertell
- "Bob Books: First Stories", Lynn Maslen Kertell
- "There is a Bird on Your Head" Mo Willems



#### **CHILDRENS: ELEMENTARY**

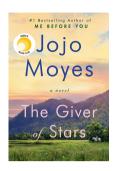
- "Dog Man: Fetch 22", Dav Pilkey
- "Dog Man: For Whom the Ball Rolls", Dav Pilkey
- "Dog Man: Grime and Punishment", Dav Pilkey
- "The Lightning Thief", Rick Riordan
- "Diary of a Wimpy Kid", Jeff Kinney



#### YOUNG ADULT

- "The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes", Suzanne Collins
- "Midnight Sun", Stephenie Meyer
- "Mockingjay", Suzanne Collins
- "American Royals", Katharine McGee
- "The Hate U Give", Angie Thomas

## TOP CHECKOUTS: DIGITAL COLLECTION



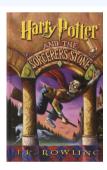
#### **OVERDRIVE: ADULT FICTION (EBOOK)**

- "Where the Crawdads Sing", Delia Owens
- "The Giver of Stars", JoJo Moyes
- "Little Fires Everywhere", Celeste Ng
- "American Dirt", Jeanine Cummins
- "Hideaway", Nora Roberts



#### **OVERDRIVE: ADULT NONFICTION (EBOOK)**

- "Educated". Tara Westover
- "Killers of the Flower Moon".
- "Untamed", Glennon Doyle
- "Maybe You Should Talk to Someone", Lori Gottlieb
- "The Splendid and Vile", Erik Larson



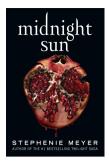
### **OVERDRIVE: JUVENILE FICTION (EBOOK)**

- "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone", J.K. Rowling
- "Guts", Raina Telgemeier
- "The Lightning Thief", Rick Riordan
- "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix", J.K. Rowling
- "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets", J.K. Rowling



### **OVERDRIVE: JUVENILE NONFICTION (EBOOK)**

- "Coronavirus: A Book for Children", Axel Scheffler
- "The Wimpy Kid Movie Diary", Jeff Kinney
- "Germs Are Not for Sharing", Elizabeth Verdick
- "Guide to Minecraft Dungeons", Stephanie Milton
- "Minecraft: Guide to Survive", Stephanie Milton



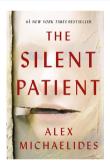
### **OVERDRIVE: YOUNG ADULT FICTION (EBOOK)**

- "The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes", Suzanne Collins
- "Midnight Sun", Stephenie Meyer
- "American Royals", Katharine McGee
- "The Hate U Give", Angie Thomas
- "You Asked for Perfect". Laura Silverman



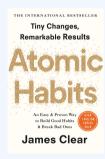
### **OVERDRIVE: YOUNG ADULT NONFICTION (EBOOK)**

- "Funny, You Don't Look Autistic", Michael McCreary
- "The Diary of a Young Girl", Anne Frank
- "Stamped--Racism, Antiracism, and You", Jason Reynolds
- "The Freddy Files", Scott Cawthon
- "Very, Very, Very Dreadful: The Influenza Pandemic of 1918",
   Albert Marrin



### **OVERDRIVE: ADULT FICTION (AUDIO)**

- "Where the Crawdads Sing", Delia Owens
- "The Giver of Stars", JoJo Moyes
- "The Silent Patient", Alex Michaelides
- " Walk the Wire". David Baldacci
- "The Duke and I", Julia Quinn



#### **OVERDRIVE: ADULT NONFICTION (AUDIO)**

- "Becoming", Michelle Obama
- "Atomic Habits", James Clear
- "Talking to Strangers", Malcolm Gladwell
- "Educated", Tara Westover
- "The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F\*ck", Mark Manson



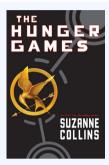
## **OVERDRIVE: JUVENILE FICTION (AUDIO)**

- "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone", J.K. Rowling
- "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire", J.K. Rowling
- "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets", J.K. Rowling
- "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows", J.K. Rowling
- "Harry Potter and the the Half-Blood Prince", J.K. Rowling



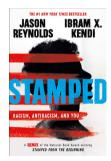
### **OVERDRIVE: JUVENILE NONFICTION (AUDIO)**

- "A Green Place to Be", Ashley Benham Yazdani
- "Never Caught, the Story of Ona Judge", Erica Armstrong Dunbar
- "The Jesus Storybook Bible", Sally Lloyd-Jones
- "Brown Girl Dreaming", Jacqueline Woodson
- "Bible Stories for Growing Kids", Francine Rivers



### **OVERDRIVE: YOUNG ADULT FICTION (AUDIO)**

- "The Hunger Games", Suzanne Collins
- "The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes", Suzanne Collins
- "Midnight Sun", Suzanne Collins
- "Catching Fire", Suzanne Collins
- "Mockingjay", Suzanne Collins



### **OVERDRIVE: YOUNG ADULT NONFICTION (AUDIO)**

- "Stamped--Racism, Antiracism, and You", Jason Reynolds
- "Funny, You Don't Look Autistic", Michael McCreary
- "The Diary of a Young Girl", Anne Frank
- "Just Mercy", Bryan Stevenson
- "All Boys Aren't Blue", George Johnson



#### **HOOPLA: COMICS**

- "Minecraft: Stories from the Overworld", Ab Mojang
- "Sheets". Brenna Thummler
- "The Umbrella Academy Vol. 1: Apocalypse Suite", Gerard Way
- "Minecraft Vol. 1". Sfe M
- "March: Book Three", John Robert Lewis



#### KANOPY

- "Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus", Weston Woods
- "Creepy Carrots", Weston Woods
- "Don't Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late", Weston Woods
- "Goldilocks and the Three Dinosaurs", Weston Woods
- "What We Do in the Shadows"