

*We grow smarter communities, one person at a time.*

## A Look Back on 2019

Last year was full of milestones and development. What milestones are you most proud of? Here is a list, just to name a few.

### Capital Projects

2019 included a slew of new building projects and renovations. Here are the highlights:

**1. The newly renovated Village Library opened in March.** The project included \$300,000 in updates including new furniture, reconfiguration of the walls to better utilize the space, repainting, new carpet, new furniture, a new book drop and self-checkout stations, a new staff area and new ADA compliant bathroom.

**2. A new Bethany Library opened in November.** The original Bethany Library was built in 1964 and became a part of the Metropolitan Library system in 1965. It was one of the first libraries to become a part of the Library System that we know today. The new library offers 16,000 more square feet of space to accommodate more library materials, more technology and more community gathering space. The library also has 23 more public computers than the original library. The updated collection includes about 48 thousand items.

**3. In December we broke ground on a new Del City Library.** The new library will double the size of the current location in the community center, at almost 16,000 square foot. Some features will include a covered patio area for children's events, two study rooms, two meeting rooms and a drive-up book drop. A more

spacious layout will also accommodate 30 public computers, 14 more than the current location. The new library is expected to open in 2021.

**4. Plans for the renovation of the Belle Isle Library were confirmed.** The Belle Isle Library was built in 1965 and last underwent an expansion in 1988 to add 6,600 square feet. The

renovation will include major changes to the existing floor plan and an expansion that will add about 14,000 square foot to the library. In addition, the library will add new furniture, fixtures and equipment.

**5. The Edmond Library closed for renovation in December.** The renovation will include several updates to increase energy efficiency with an all new HVAC system, roof, carpet, ceiling tiles and LED lighting. The library will reopen in March.



### Grow with Google

Our partnership with Google launched in mid-December 2018 and took-off in 2019. Six of our libraries began offering hotspots and Chromebooks to customers participating in Grow with Google programs.

- The **Edmond Library** collaborates with Community Literacy Centers to host classes helping students improve their English-speaking. In addition, they library also hosts programs to help customers with technology and job seeking skills.
- The **Community Libraries** does outreach to underserved areas of Oklahoma City, helping them apply for jobs Online and develop digital skills.

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- The **Capitol Hill Library** holds classes for both adults and teens. Teen classes focus on helping them develop skills needed for college and entry-level employment and adult classes help with career development.
- The **Southern Oaks Library** offers basic computer and job skills.
- The **Village Library** rotates classes teaching job skills and intergenerational computer skills.
- The **Ralph Ellison Library** helps formerly incarcerated individuals have Internet access and hosts an after-school program.

## Summer Reading and Neighborhood Arts

In 2019 we broke records yet again with our stellar Summer Reading Program, "WILD About Reading." The program was set around the works of popular author and illustrator Maurice Sendak, complete with an exhibit of his original works located at our Ronald J. Norick Downtown Library location. The program had over 31 thousand participants. Together, participants logged a total of 26 million minutes.

Neighborhood Arts showcased local talent including Lucas Ross, Sugar Free Allstars, OKC Improv, Adam and Kizzie, Michael Corely, *The Mister Puppet Show*, Alegria Real and Dustin Cooper.

## New Resources and Materials

Our library collection is constantly growing and updating to best fit the needs of our evolving library users. In the summer of 2019 we introduced audio enabled children's books. The books have a speaker attached to them, helping early readers, so they are able to read along with the print material.

In October we launched Brainfuse, including JobNow, HelpNow and VetNow resources. Brainfuse resources feature live tutoring, a writing lab, virtual study sessions, lifelong learning opportunities like test prep and more. Since its launch, Brainfuse had almost 7 thousand uses.

We also celebrated a record-breaking 2 million eBook and eAudiobook checkouts on OverDrive for 2019.

## Literary Voices Dinner

In September the Library Endowment Trust hosted author Kristin Hannah at the 17<sup>th</sup> annual Literary Voices fundraising dinner at the Oklahoma City Golf and Country Club. Hannah shocked and delighted attendees by donating her speaker's fee back to the Library Endowment Trust and offering guests free copies of her book, *The Great Alone*, recently released in paperback.



## The 2019 Friends Booksale

The Friends celebrated 40 years of membership and fundraising in support of our libraries. The Friends' 2019 sale drew thousands of attendees from Oklahoma and surrounding states. The sale grossed \$263,000; their highest proceeds on record

## 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten

In September we launched a 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program, inspiring caregivers to read with their

children. The goal is for children to read 1000 books before the age of 5 (about when they start kindergarten). The program is ongoing, and participants have the opportunity to earn prizes including a plush reading buddy and tote bag. So far 725 children have signed up for the program and together they have logged a total of 38,981 books.

## Advertising Campaigns

In late 2018 the marketing department announced that we had filmed an infomercial and by 2019 the campaign was in full swing, giving millions of Oklahoma County residents the opportunity to get connected with library services useful to them.

The Library's marketing department also launched five new television ads, averaging over 16,000 impressions per time aired on television (KOCO, KFOR & KWTU).

## American Creed

In June we hosted a series of screenings of the PBS documentary American Creed, followed by scholar-facilitated community conversations with local community leaders. The series was made possible through a grant from the American Library Association.



# \*Imagine Your Story\*

## ***Summer Reading is Coming!***

Our annual Summer Reading Program is coming! Every summer for over 80 years our library system has offered a Summer Reading program to keep everyone reading all summer long.

We are a part of a rich tradition in our community that brings readers together and promotes reading for fun and lifelong learning and enrichment. It may seem far off, but our 2020 Summer Reading program will be here before you know it and the Summer Reading Committee is hard at work planning another successful program.

This year we will use the collaborative theme, "Imagine Your Story"/"Cuentame tu historia" and dive into the mystical world of fairy tales, mythology and fantasy. Excited yet?

Participants can use Beanstack or track their progress on a paper log. Paper logs will be available at their local library or through our website as a downloadable PDF.

Be on the lookout for more updates on our annual Summer Reading program to come.



## **Summer Volunteer Training**

*Calling all volunteer tour guides!*

The first training for Summer Supers is January 23 at The Village Library from 1:30pm – 4:30pm. There will also be a putluck lunch from 12:30pm - 1:30pm.

## HELLO!

**Judy Elwell**

*NW Access Specialist I*

**Sharon Michele Ramsdell**

*AL Access Manager II FT*

**Kristin Sutliff**

*Ops Administrative Specialist*

**Shawna Jackson**

*BE Access Specialist I*

**Jessica Milburn**

*ED Access Specialist I*

**Brittani Mulkey**

*BI Access Specialist II*

**Jamie Pemberton**

*OUT Outreach Specialist*

**Alex Campbell**

*BI Access Specialist II*

**Kelsey Campbell**

*AL Access Specialist II*

**Oliver Ellington**

*NW Access Specialist II*

**Kristin Lankford**

*SO Teen Librarian I*

**Brittany Watson**

*NW Access Specialist I*

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## COMING UP

**January 16**

Commission Meeting at Northwest Library

**January 20**

Libraries closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day

**February 20**

Commission Meeting at Ralph Ellison Library

## CONGRATULATIONS

**Mitch Leasure**

*BI Access Specialist II to BE Adult Librarian*

**Danielle Walker**

*SO Access Specialist I to MC Adult Engagement Specialist II*

## GOODBYE

**Rebecca "Becca" Sterkel**

*1 years, Access Specialist II*

**Kendra LaBarbera**

*1 years, Access Specialist I*

**Natalie Currie**

*3 years, Engagement Manager*

**Lisa Mesenbrink**

*2 months, NW Access Specialist II*

**Tuan Pham**

*2 years, NW Access Specialist I*

**Rachael Vaughn**

*5 months, ED Access Specialist I*

**Lilith "Nix" Moore**

*2 months, ED Access Specialist I*

## DIY Development

### Yoga Fitness and Stretching at Your Desk 33(m) 11(s)

Find time for fitness. Learn simple yoga and stretching exercises you can do at your desk. The instructors at Desk Yogi have adapted traditional yoga poses into exercises that are suitable for the office. Follow along and learn basic stretches, bends, and exercises that help you improve your posture, strengthen your muscles and joints, increase blood flow, and keep you feeling strong and energetic throughout the day. This simple daily investment in your body—a program you can complete on your lunch break—will carry you through the work week and beyond.