

EVANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
2019 ANNUAL REPORT



A PLACE WITH MANY
faces



evanston public library

epl.org | community | events | ideas | resources



A PLACE WITH MANY faces



The work of Evanston Public Library mirrors the community. The Library can look like an **avid reader**, yes. Or, a **new immigrant** learning English. It can look like **an elderly citizen of low income** receiving one-on-one computer training at home. It's **a young child**, participating in the Summer Reading Program in a city park, **a new parent** or **a teen seeking a safe place** to explore identity and independence in the Teen Loft. The Library welcomes all, **including people who experience prejudice.**



The face you see is familiar: the Library is all of us.

The Evanston Public Library continually works to redefine what kind of a place a library is.

A Place for Everyone



“The social services program has been of continuing use to me personally. It is a tremendous value to the community, particularly the homeless.”

– GEORGE D.

Social Work at the Library

The Social Work program meets the needs of patrons through trauma informed care. The presence of an onsite social worker and social work interns makes support systems more accessible for everyone, including those with invisible disabilities like chronic pain, social anxiety, and behavioral health problems.



Library Social Worker: Christina Mendez

Dementia Resource Center

The new Dementia Resource Center and the Memory Cafe serve people on the memory loss spectrum and their caregivers.



Onsite programs and take-home activities encourage people on the memory loss spectrum to interact with care partners and others in their

circle. These new resources are funded by a Reaching Across Illinois Libraries System (RAILS) partnership grant and by Age Options, a local nonprofit organization providing older adults and their care partners resources and service options.

656 patrons assisted with help for:

- Housing
- Loneliness
- Employment
- Depression
- Substance Abuse
- Conflict Management
- Insurance Issues
- Mental Health Disorders



The Library brings mental health issues to the forefront through programs like:

- Mental Health and Wellness Fair
- Mental Health First Aid Training
- Teens Speak Out on Mental Health

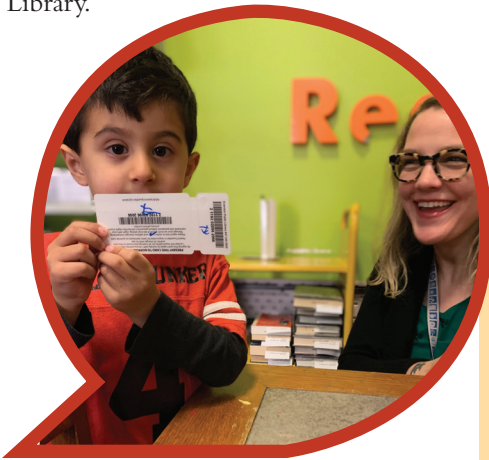
Drag Queen Storytimes bring fabulous new talents to library programming and make our celebration of Pride Month extra special.



Literacy and Learning for All

Elacsha Madison joined us in 2019 as our Teen Engagement Coordinator.

She absolutely loves driving the EPL Mobile Vehicle to Evanston schools. She sets up a “chill zone” complete with bean bag chairs, where kids can use chrome books, play chess and other games, receive free books, get a Library card, and learn all about the wonders of the Library.



She says, “Students are ecstatic over the wide range of books that we offer. Teachers love the EPL Mobile Vehicle as a cool new way to engage students. Parents say that EPL positively impacts their child’s day with a school visit.”

And, for older teens navigating life just after high school, Elacsha helps them with life skills like budgeting, finding a job, and gaining more independence from parents.

6312

New library cards issued in 2019

539,710

In-person visits



STEM Programs

More than 250 STEM programs engaged young people in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math concepts. Some programs are specifically targeted to those who are underrepresented in STEM fields: girls and people of color.





EPL's Teen Engagement Coordinator, Elacsha Madison, connects with both students and young people just out of school

“

A lot of Evanston students don't know what to do after graduating high school. I've helped them secure jobs, manage issues with their parents, or taught them about budgeting.”

— ELACSHA MADISON

1000+

Teens reached through the mobile vehicle

1000+

Early literacy programs for infants through preschool age children

3564

Summer Reading Program participants at our 3 libraries, 14 sites across the community, and 20 Evanston camp partners

10,000+

Free books supplied to the community at Free Book Distribution sites throughout Evanston

“While I am frustrated by the seemingly impossible task of achieving equity for all, I am heartened that we are taking concrete steps daily. The formal training and continued opportunity for dialogue is raising my awareness of many experiences of inequity. I am proud to be a part of this organization, and I believe time dedicated to this work can and will have real outcomes.”

— EPL Staff Member

Mission Impossible Program

Dr. E. Patrick Johnson, Carlos Montezuma Professor of African American Studies and Performance Studies at Northwestern, kicked off Mission Impossible 2019/2020 with a discussion of James Baldwin.



Through the Mission Impossible program, we read tough works of literature together for one year. For 2019/2020, we are reading James Baldwin. Facilitators of the 11 groups totaling 250 participants have received training and guidelines for respectful conversations while addressing topics of race, racism and sexuality through Baldwin's work.

11

Mission Impossible program facilitators

250

Mission Impossible program participants

“

I think Mission Impossible is a model program that I haven't seen at other libraries. The thing that sets this one apart: they really have picked these tough novels that people probably would not pick to read for pleasure. Evanston's got people who want to read really challenging books, so I think that Mission Impossible is a great program for people who want to read them together.”

– ANNA NARDO, MISSION IMPOSSIBLE GROUP FACILITATOR

“The staff and Library will continue to benefit from... Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion efforts. As individuals, a community, and a world, we cannot be full human beings if we are complicit in letting oppression exist.”

— EPL Staff Member

The Human Library: “Unjudge Someone.”

The Human Library is designed to foster frank conversations between people in a safe environment. Library patrons or “Readers” borrow human “Books” for 30 minutes in a public space mediated by “librarians.” “Books” are community members who share their experiences of prejudice and/or discrimination based on race, religion, sexual preference, class, gender identity, disability, or another aspect of their lives. “Readers” and “Books” engage in a one-on-one dialogue designed to encourage a deeper understanding among members of the community.

The Human Library teaches love and acceptance as those who have experienced prejudice open their life stories to people through one-on-one conversations.



Participants say:

“By hearing other people’s stories, one can reflect on how they themselves may have discriminated against or stigmatized others. Connection is an antidote to stigma.”

“I’ve learned how discrimination takes place all around in different forms.”

“Prejudice comes from not knowing.”

“Learning about one another is the best way to understand one another.”

“The mere fact that EPL offers Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion training initially made me feel very comfortable as a minority employee! I have attended more than one of the EDI Training Sessions and found them to be very informative. Keep them coming as often as possible!”

— EPL Staff Member

165

Human Library conversations held



A Gathering Place

Black Women's Health Awareness Day

60
attendees

16
health care vendors

6
panel presenters

Partners who helped make this day possible

- Foundation for Black Women's Wellness
- Susan G. Komen Chicago
- Erie Family Health Center
- YWCA Evanston North Shore
- City of Evanston Health & Human Services Department
- Sisters Working It Out
- Hip Circle Dance Empowerment Center
- Second Baptist Church of Evanston
- Skylight Counseling Center
- ChicagoFit4Life
- Whole Foods Market
- YoFresh Yogurt Cafe

Reflecting on this year, one of the best days I had was at Evanston Public Library, with our Black Women's Health Awareness Day. It reminded me that this work has power and beauty, that it touches women, ignites them, and then this fire of life and wellness spreads and transforms our consciousness first, then our behavior, then our lives and then our bodies!"

— Lisa Peyton Claire
Founder and President
The Foundation for Black Women's Wellness



A Vital Center for New Parents and Their Children

Shruti Vijay from Mumbai, then Houston, now Evanston, found herself new in town as a stay-at-home mother with an 8-month-old daughter. The weather was colder than she had ever experienced and she wondered how they would manage the winter.



“I decided to get out and explore. I wrapped up my daughter and the first place we came was Evanston Public Library. It was Thursday morning and Miss Martha was having her big storytime program. It was the first time my daughter saw kids her own age and we’ve both met so many people since then. Once I started coming, I encouraged others to come. I’ve made really good friends at the Library and I’ve been able to share my culture as part of the Library’s Diwali celebration.”

Caryn Eldridge started coming to early childhood literacy programs at the Library as a new mother. Three years later she has an entire community of friends developed through connections made at the

Library. They call their group “the class of 34.” That’s when their youngest children will graduate high school. Together they are raising kids, socializing, exchanging ideas on child development, and passing on clothes and toys.

Caryn says that through the Library and its staff she has:

- made good friends
- acquired a greater sense of connection to the Evanston community
- learned how to teach her child to read
- found an economical, inclusive, and safe community hang out spot
- discovered a place that will help her children throughout their lives



A Community Connector

Where great (and small) things begin together

Community Mobile Resource Center

Hyperlocal access to vital information is the mission of the Community Mobile Resource Center which piloted this year offering programming on **law, health,** and **personal finance** at the Family Focus building in the 5th Ward. The Library is a catalyst and connector for services and resources that are community driven and tailored to the specific needs of a neighborhood. We kicked off the pilot with an outdoor community event at Family Focus. This program is funded in part by a grant from the Evanston Community Foundation.



"...the library is among the most critical forms of social infrastructure that we have. It is also one of the most undervalued."

— Eric Klinenberg, from the book *Palaces for the People*

"I have increased the diversity on my team with recent hires. I have discussed with my team ways to make programming more equitable, diverse and inclusive."

— EPL Staff Member

Racial Equity Task Force

The newly formed Racial Equity Task Force, meeting twice each month, got underway and began identifying barriers to service that exist across the community. A primary intention is to reach under-served residents, especially in the 5th, 8th, and 9th wards. Our hope is to create a more welcoming atmosphere in the Library for everyone.

The Task Force will also help determine how the Library can best work outside Library walls in the broader community. The overall goal is to expand the Library's reach in a way that is most sensitive to the issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

“The lived experience of these community members is invaluable to our efforts. Their ideas challenge us to reach further as we work to provide greater access to those who need the most in the Evanston community. I appreciate the opportunity to welcome voices to the table who are not typically present, and more often overlooked.”

— TERI CAMPBELL, ASSISTANT LIBRARY DIRECTOR

“By creating a task force like this, EPL is demonstrating a commitment to diversity. By listening to and implementing the recommendations of the task force, EPL is demonstrating a commitment to equity.”

— Tracy Fulce-Gentle
Task Force Member, 2nd Ward Resident



Who are they?

8
community members

4
staff members

2
board members



A Technology and Reading Hub

Expanding Digital Literacy

Free classes grow digital literacy in Evanston with topics like:

- Traveling with Digital Devices
- Using iCloud
- Protecting Your Online Privacy
- Windows 10 Basics
- Using Apple Maps and GPS
- And Many More

ETHS Parents and other community members enjoy basic computer classes taught in Spanish at the high school by Sergio Gonzalez of Evanston Public Library. The technology skills being taught through this collaboration between the Library and Evanston Township High School are useful for school, work, and parenting responsibilities as well as for practical, everyday activities and socializing. Knowing how to use our increasingly digital world is important for everyone.



363
one-on-one tech training sessions

176
group technology classes

150
Wifi Hotspots for "borrowing the internet"



24 Hr. Reader's Paradise

In print, online, in every format:

Total material circulations: 1,191,600

- Books: 763,708
- Audiobooks and DVDs: 238,711
- Digital materials: 156,951

The library really is a palace. It bestows nobility on people who can't otherwise afford a shred of it. People need to have nobility and dignity in their lives. And, you know, they need other people to recognize it in them too."

– ERIC KLINENBERG, FROM THE BOOK *PALACES FOR THE PEOPLE*

Books On Wheels: Betty Werrenrath

The Books on Wheels program delivers books to residents, like Betty Werrenrath, who can't make it to the library themselves.

Betty is an avid reader at 105, but her failing vision stopped her from reading print about eight years ago. That hasn't stopped her from reading. In the past year, she has checked out 98 audiobooks which are delivered to her by Al Bjornson, a volunteer for the Library's Books on Wheels program.

300 volunteers provided more than 11,000 volunteer hours



“I couldn't live without this program. Finding it was like turning on a light. I could read, be informed and entertained. I love to exchange ideas and I love to know about what's going on in the world. The Library understands what I like. The program is fabulous. I just want to find all the other people who could benefit from this service.”

– BETTY WERRENRATH

EPL Super User Kirsti MacPherson

I download audiobooks to listen to while I'm cooking, cleaning, or exercising. I love downloading ebooks to my Kindle because every book becomes a lightweight yet large-print book.

I have enjoyed using the streaming service **Kanopy** to catch up on quirky short films,

documentaries, and old movies. *The Man in the White Suit* is delightful and stars a young heartthrob named Alec Guinness.

Also, I check out **Blu-Rays** and **DVDs** to watch old movies. The last one was *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure*, which I somehow had never seen before.

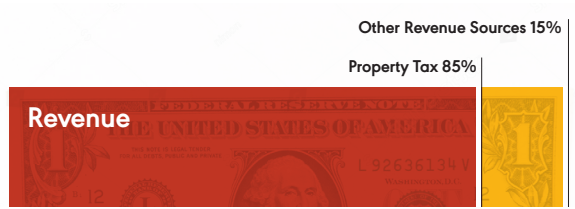
I check out paper copies of art books, graphic novels, and other large-format books as well as some children's books. Sometimes there's no substitute for ink and paper.



2019 Operating Fund*

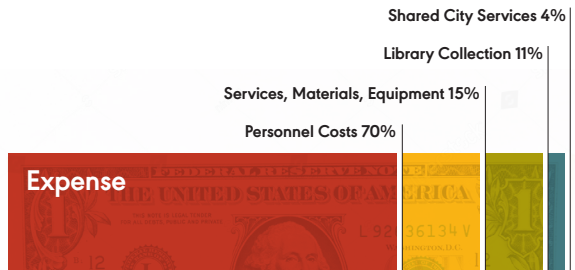
Revenue

Property Tax	6,739,361.91
Other Revenue Sources	1,216,620.91
Total Revenue	\$7,955,982.82



Expense

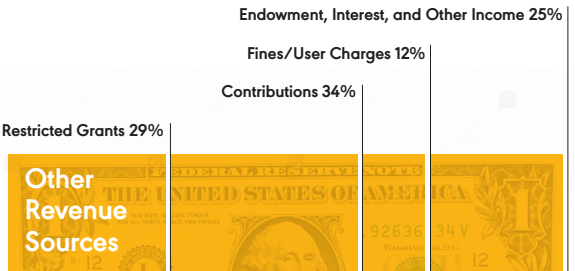
Personnel Costs	5,146,208.19
Services, Materials, Equipment	1,103,753.05
Library Collection	860,000.00
Shared City Services	270,000.00
Total Expense**	\$7,379,961.24



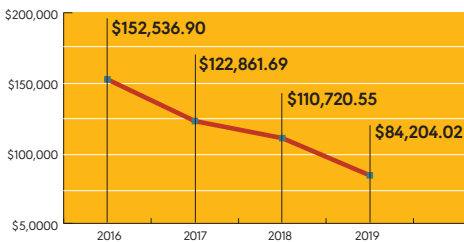
A View of Changing Revenues

Other Revenue Sources

Restricted Grants	354,768.93
Contributions	410,882.41
Fines/User Charges	147,071.46
Endowment, Interest, and Other Income	303,898.11
Total Other Revenue Sources	\$1,216,620.91



Late Fees



The Library has been steadily reducing income from late fees since 2016.

* Preliminary financial overview pending annual comprehensive audit.

** Expenditure total does not include \$260K balance forward for new branch

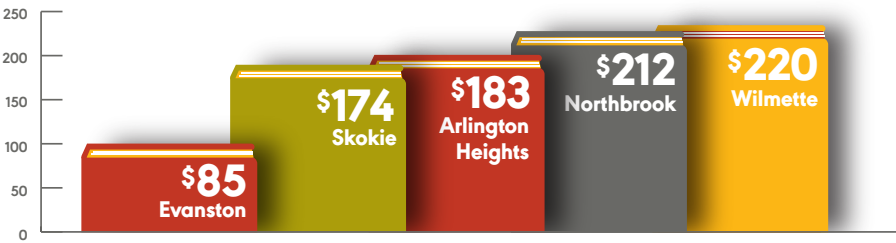
Together, We Are Evanston Public Library

A message to our supporters

You may know that for every Evanston property tax dollar, the Library receives only 3 cents. You may know that Evanston Public Library is funded significantly less than our neighboring libraries.

We all have a special part to play here at the Library.

Local tax allotment per resident — 2018 Illinois Public Library Annual Report



But you may not know that with your support, we are expanding programs and services, while decreasing fines and fees to remove individual financial barriers. We continue to connect outside of the Library's walls, strengthening our presence in every ward through strategic partnerships across Evanston.

Thank you for the many ways you support this progress. Whatever your role here — staff member, patron, donor, volunteer, or partner — we are counting on you. We all have a special part to play here at the Library.

Thank you!



Staff, patrons, and Friends, all support the Library. To learn how you can join us, contact Wynn Shawver, Chief Development Officer at 847-448-8657.

Come visit us in 2020 at the brand new Robert Crown Library Branch at 1701 Main St. at the corner of Main St. and Dodge Avenue.



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