

20 Years

INSTITUTE of Museum and Library SERVICES



2017 NATIONAL MEDAL
for Museum and Library Service

**THE 2017 NATIONAL MEDAL
IS THE NATION'S HIGHEST HONOR
FOR LIBRARIES AND MUSEUMS,**



*a true tribute to their ability to make a
difference in the lives of children, families,
and communities around the country.*

IMLS will provide an audio recording of this publication upon request.
Special thanks to the entire staff at the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Credits: Writer: Katie Haswell, Editor: Giuliana Bullard
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INSTITUTE of **Museum and Library** SERVICES

REIMAGINE THE FUTURE

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is celebrating its 20th Anniversary. IMLS is the primary source of federal support for the nation's approximately 123,000 libraries and 35,000 museums.

INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES

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From the IMLS DIRECTOR

I AM PLEASED TO PRESENT THE RECIPIENTS OF THE 2017 NATIONAL MEDAL FOR MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICE.



The National Medal is the nation's highest honor for libraries and museums. The award also reminds us, and future generations, of these institutions' essential roles as anchors, facilitators, and innovators in shaping the future of their communities.

This year is especially significant as it marks the 20th year that IMLS has supported the work of libraries and museums across the nation. Our agency's history has been one of making capacity-building investments to help identify best practices and share learnings, as well as supporting the dynamic library and museum professions. We also encourage libraries and museums to draw upon their unique capabilities in response to local voices who use or rely upon their services. At IMLS, we, too, employ "local listening," as anyone can nominate their local museum or library for a National Medal award.

Earlier this year, 30 museums and libraries were announced as finalists for the National Medal. We encouraged their visitors and patrons to share their stories on social media.

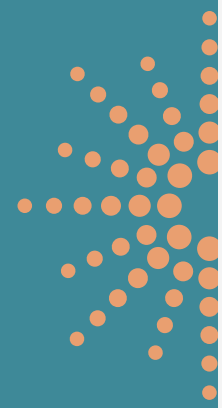
Many responded, enabling us to read first-hand how these institutions are valued:

RESPONSIVENESS....

"We...love how each [Sacramento Public Library System branch library] has been remodeled / improved to...[serve]...the community. We love that the system responds to what the community needs."

ACCESS.....

"Growing up in Western North Carolina, my school couldn't afford many field trips. So the annual 7th grade trip to Discovery Place Science was a huge deal -- not just because of the charter buses and my first time in a big city, but because of how accessible and engaging science suddenly became, from the eye-popping IMAX to the ethereal indoor rainforest."



THANK YOU

for your support



IMLS would like to thank HISTORY for their generous support of the National Medals celebration.



IMLS is proud to partner with StoryCorps to document stories from the winning institutions' communities.

LITERACY FOR ALL AGES....

“The Rochester [MN] Public Library established a collaboration with the Rochester Reading Center to advance their goal of increased community literacy. The program, called Reading Champions, connects struggling readers of all age levels with tutors trained by the Reading Center. The results are highly rewarding for both student and tutor!”

SUPPORTING STUDENTS....

“As a school librarian I love Tulsa Public Library for many reasons, but one reason my students love it is for the Homework Help Now. TCCL subscribes to it for helping students get online tutoring with their homework. You guys rock when it comes to helping the community!”

CONNECTING WITH VULNERABLE POPULATIONS....

“We are so fortunate to have the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum of Wausau here in Wausau! ...They consistently create high-quality, completely accessible

programs to some of our most vulnerable and sensitive populations, as well as incredible exhibitions for the general public. They are so much more than a museum in our community - they are a connection point for life in Wausau.” We can all be proud of both the finalists and the winners. Each of them has shown a willingness and tenacity to deeply connect with their communities. And each of them has shown an unwavering commitment to improving the lives of the people they serve. All of them can serve as a source of inspiration to the work that we do.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services staff, together with the National Museum and Library Services Board, are proud to congratulate the 2017 winners of the National Medal for Museum and Library Service.

Sincerely,

Kathryn K. Matthew

Dr. Kathryn K. Matthew, Director
Institute of Museum and Library Services



ALASKA



State Museums

IN THE BUSINESS OF CAPACITY BUILDING

Founded in 1900, the Alaska State Museums, the third-largest museum in the state, functions as a flagship institution and keeper of state history, and also as professional curation leader in Alaska. Throughout its history, the institution has maintained an ongoing statewide outreach effort to help develop other institutions professionally and to build capacity in a state with small, remote communities. In 1976, the Alaska State Museums was the first institution in the state to create a professional conservator position. This was the only conservator position in Alaska until 2007, and remains the only conservation position with a mandate to engage other institutions. The museums' beautiful and elegant displays narrate Alaska's rich history of native peoples, gold rush miners, and fishermen, and also trains others to tell their own stories according to national museum standards.

TRAINING HUB FOR PROFESSIONALS

In 2007, the Alaska State Museums established an internship program at local museums and cultural centers where graduate students nationwide are recruited and placed in remote institutions across Alaska to complete their museum studies requirement. Since 2007, 42 interns have completed residency programs in Alaska museums and cultural centers, with some returning after graduation to take permanent jobs in Alaskan institutions. The museum plans on expanding the program in the near future by partnering with the University of Alaska to train university students for the museum profession, emphasizing tribal cultural center jobs.

EXTERNAL OPERATIVE: OPPORTUNITY FOR EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

After the Alaska State Museums moved into a new building, staff saw the move as an opportunity for mentorship. During the moving process, the Alaska State Museums established the "EXO" project (short for external operatives), bringing 31 museum professionals from 12 institutions and cultural centers to help move the museums' entire collection, while learning the proper way to maintain, conserve, and preserve artifacts. The "EXO" project afforded museum professionals training opportunities otherwise unavailable in Alaska and the chance to network with Alaska State Museums staff, while gaining hands-on collection management experience.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

The vast, sparsely populated state of Alaska cannot be traveled by car alone, and in some areas, day-long travel is required to make one's way from point A to point B. In the spirit of reaching as many Alaskan communities as possible, the Alaska State Museums' exhibit department has offered a slate of traveling exhibits to small institutions for decades. These traveling exhibits provide smaller communities with a taste of the museum's world-class offerings and expertise without having to travel to the institution.

“THE ALASKA STATE MUSEUMS HELP RAISE THE PROFESSIONALISM AND TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE OF MUSEUMS AROUND THE STATE. *We serve as a support system for small museums and institutions that have their own vision in telling their local history. We want to give others the resources to succeed while also affording them the opportunity to be the best stewards possible of their stories.*”

– PATIENCE FREDERIKSEN, DIRECTOR ALASKA DIVISION OF LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES, AND MUSEUMS

ALASKA STATE MUSEUMS

Address: 395 Whittier Street

Juneau, AK 99801-1718

Phone: 907-209-2901

Patience Frederiksen, Director, Alaska

Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums



ASPEN



Art Museum



CREATION OF A SYNERGISTIC, RURAL COMMUNITY

As one of four accredited art museums in Colorado—and the only accredited art museum in Colorado’s Western Slope—the museum uses art and its programming to make meaningful connections with the surrounding community. The Aspen Art Museum commits itself to serving the region’s unique geography and demographic environment, where nearly one third of schools in neighboring school districts are designated Title One. Through no-cost program and free admissions, the museum has opened the doors of its new building to approximately 200,000 visitors since 2014, and since 2014 has seen an increase of annual visitors by 217 percent. The museum taps into the power of art to bring neighboring rural communities together.



EXHIBITION IN A BOX: DEPLOYING ARTS EDUCATION

The rural nature of Colorado’s Western Slope means art education is not readily available to students. Almost a quarter of schools within a 100-mile radius of the museum either do not have regular art instruction or only have art instruction for select weeks during the year. With the museum’s Exhibition in a Box program, staff drive to schools within a 100-mile radius to teach art to third grade students, matching their curriculum to the benchmarks of Colorado’s standardized testing. Exhibition in a Box consists of three parts: a museum-to-school classroom visit, a school-to-museum tour, and a follow-up activity to take back to the classroom. The free program affords children invaluable access to art and encourages self-expression found to be critical to a child’s personal development.

TRANSCENDING LANGUAGE BARRIERS: ARTE EN ESPAÑOL

The Western Slope’s Hispanic population is booming, having doubled to 30 percent of the total population in the last decade in some areas. Museum staff made it a priority to engage this population in Aspen, which is typically economically disadvantaged, and instead of assuming what the community needed, staff simply asked: how would you like to be served? From that simple question came Arte en Español, a collaborative program with local Spanish radio station, La Tricolor. The free quarterly event is hosted entirely in Spanish and features family art gallery activities, public celebration of local figures, and personal stories of immigration. Most importantly, participants’ input helps inform the next program, which in turn fosters a mutually beneficial partnership between the museum and the Hispanic community.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

The remote geographic location of Colorado's Western Slope and Roaring Fork Valley has left many of its residents isolated from metropolitan centers. As a result, the emotional, psychological, and social well-being of some in this region is at risk. To address the rising tide of mental illness, the Aspen Art Museum partnered with the Aspen Hope Center to serve as an additional resource and safe space for those undergoing emotional crises. Museum staff trained with the Aspen Hope Center to learn appropriate response protocol for individuals who may be navigating mental health crises, and the museum is now featured as a venue to serve the center's clients.

“I KNOW FOR A FACT THAT ART AND THIS MUSEUM HAVE CHANGED LIVES.

Our geographical reach coupled with our community service have been essential fibers of the museum's conviction that art matters to shaping an equitable and flourishing society.”

– HEIDI ZUCKERMAN, CEO AND DIRECTOR

ASPEN ART MUSEUM

Address: 637 E. Hyman Avenue

Aspen, CO 81611-1922

Phone: 970-925-8050

Heidi Zuckerman, CEO and Director



CEDAR RAPIDS



Public Library



CEDAR RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY: A MIRROR TO THE COMMUNITY

When a 2008 flood destroyed the physical structure of the beloved Cedar Rapids Public Library, the response from library staff and volunteers was to rebuild a new library centered on the community's needs. When a 2016 flood, potentially as disastrous as the previous one, threatened the library's resources and services, the staff stayed strong and resolute, not giving in to the fear of losing another building, and through this strong stance, they embraced the library's identity as a place of civic engagement and community-driven involvement. As a result, the library flourished. It continues to reflect its community, advocating for the needs of residents, successfully serving more than 600,000 annual visitors while also fostering successful partnerships and building community trust. According to director Dara Schmidt, the library is "alive because of the vibrant community that supports, challenges, needs and loves it."



SUMMER READING THAT TRANSCENDS THE LIBRARY

In 2015 the library redesigned its traditional summer reading program, partnering with the Cedar Rapids Metro YMCA to pilot 'Summer Dare Everywhere.' An unlikely partnership of the library and the YMCA soon became a collaboration in which the library brought summer reading activities to underserved youth who experienced barriers to accessing library resources and programs. Library volunteers made weekly two-hour visits to YMCA sites where they came armed with requested books, tablets, and craft activities, introducing underserved youth to a safe space where reading, technology, and art became integrated into their summer activities.

MICRO: MICRO LOANS. MEGA IMPACT

The library staff, experienced at assisting patrons with finding available resources and referring them to local nonprofits, successfully took on the new task of becoming loan consultants. Through the library's MICRO program, staff assist entrepreneurs in the city of Cedar Rapids in applying for micro loans. They often meet one-on-one with individuals to discuss business plans, review documents, prepare for meetings and fill out appropriate paperwork. Since the program's inception, 50 clients have benefitted from the advice of the library's staff members, and seven loans have been approved.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

At Cedar Rapids Public Library, the staff is tasked with creating community engagement opportunities. From the creation of a continuous community story where visitors add sentences to a growing narrative to a patron-made coloring book and a collaborative art mural, the library staff and residents of Cedar Rapids drive content creation and content consumption at the library. These opportunities help the library create a welcoming environment that responds to the needs of community members.

“OUR DREAM AS A LIBRARY IS TO MAKE CEDAR RAPIDS THE ‘CITY OF LITERACY.’ *We want to create a culture in our community that understands the importance of literacy and, in that spirit, we do not leave any person behind in becoming a successful reader.”*

– DARA SCHMIDT, DIRECTOR

CEDAR RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Address: 450 5th Avenue, SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52041-1904
Phone: 319-739-0401
Dara Schmidt, Director



ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST



Museum & Education Center

REMEMBER THE PAST, TRANSFORM THE FUTURE

Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center, the third largest Holocaust museum in the world, serves as a keeper of the lessons learned when humans commit atrocious acts of hatred. The museum also teaches patrons about the power one has to create change. Located in Skokie, Illinois, the museum was founded by Holocaust survivors living in Skokie who stood up to a proposed march that threatened their community in the 1970s. What started as a small store-front museum soon became a pillar in a community that, in the 1990s, played a critical role in the Illinois General Assembly's decision to mandate Holocaust education in public schools, making Illinois the first state in the country to do so. The museum and its 100 community partners collaborate annually to provide a forum for the public discussion of relevant topics and provide a stage for learning, engagement, and action important in keeping the lessons of the Holocaust alive.

EDUCATION THROUGH FIRST-HAND STORIES

The museum uses its role as an education center and incorporates survivors into programming to provide a powerful experience for visitors. Survivor volunteers and eyewitnesses work at the museum and are deployed to different schools, community, and adult groups to share experiences and lessons personifying the difficult subject matter. The museum's Speakers Bureau reaches over 70,000 individuals throughout the community each year. Additionally, the museum has partnered with the USC Shoah Foundation to capture survivor stories digitally, using cutting-edge voice recognition software and three-dimensional technology that will enable visitors to have a life-like conversation with survivors for generations to come.

UPSTANDING CITIZENS

The museum's planning and development of the forthcoming, three-gallery Take a Stand Center drew inspiration from the notion that individuals can act as 'upstanders' instead of bystanders in difficult situations. The center will showcase survivor stories holographically in the Survivor Stories Theater, illuminating the dangers of hatred, prejudice, and indifference. The Upstander Gallery will feature people who have fought against injustice and stood up for causes, while the Take a Stand Lab provides tools to inspire visitors to turn their passion into action. The center aims to instill the important lessons of the Holocaust through its exhibits, turning visitors from passive learners to active doers.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Through their Law Enforcement and Democracy Initiative, the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center trains Chicago police recruits and officers about the balance between individual rights and civil protection. This initiative invites recruits and officers into the museum for a day of learning, where they explore— through the lens of the Holocaust— what it means to be a democratic society, the responsibilities of law enforcement, and the protection of civil rights. Guided tours and in-depth discussions inform the recruits on how to make moral and ethical decisions in light of difficult situations, which they can apply to their work after they leave the museum.

ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM & EDUCATION CENTER

Address: 9603 Woods Drive
Skokie, IL 60077-1095
Phone: 847-967-4800
Susan L. Abrams, Chief Executive Officer

“OUR STAFF USES THE HISTORY, LESSONS, AND STORIES OF THE HOLOCAUST TO INSPIRE OUR VISITORS TO BE ‘UPSTANDERS,’ INSTEAD OF BYSTANDERS.

We want visitors to realize the power of their voices and their choices to affect positive change in their own lives and in society, and to transform our world for the better. Ultimately, we want to move people from knowledge and inspiration to action.”

– SUSAN L. ABRAMS, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



LEIGH YAWKEY WOODSON



Art Museum



A SERENDIPITOUS, MIDWESTERN OASIS

The Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum serves as a beautiful gateway to Wisconsin's Northwoods where the rural community of Wausau, Wisconsin is nestled amid the forests and lakes of the upper-Midwest. The museum opened 41 years ago, offering the gift of art to the community via its commitment to free admission. Today the museum remains steadfastly committed to its mission to enhance lives through art. The staff continually seeks what director Kathy Kelsey Foley calls, "serendipitous opportunities to grow." Programming, barrier free access, and partnerships expand possibilities for all people to experience art of the natural world and diverse exhibitions.



EXPANDING ACCESS THROUGH PROGRAMMING

The museum's Art Beyond Sight program, which began in 2006, was driven by the desire to engage individuals with visual impairments. With guidance from New York-based Art Beyond Sight, the museum developed programming that offers tactile sculptures, robust verbal descriptions, multisensory elements, and hands-on art making. This successful program challenges the notion that art has to be seen to be enjoyed. Through the SPARK! program individuals with memory loss, early-onset dementia, and Alzheimer's disease can engage meaningfully with others through art. Accompanied by a friend, family member or care partner, individuals participate in stimulating discussions and hands-on art activities that enhance museum experiences.

DEMYSTIFYING THE ART PROCESS

In response to visitors' frequent questions about the artistic process and how artworks are created, the museum developed Artist Residencies in 1999, incorporating visiting artists into museum programming. These dynamic artists offer insights on diverse artistic mediums through public programming and site-specific installations, and they provide first-hand art creation experiences to students, educators, area artists, and visitors of all ages. Artist Residencies help demystify the art process by encouraging museum visitors to embrace their creative potential. Demonstrations, workshops, and hands-on art making for all ages empower and encourage visitors' creative pursuits beyond the museum's walls.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum's commitment to barrier free access to the arts goes beyond free admission to ensure the facility is barrier free to individuals with disabilities. The ADA-compliant museum received the first-ever five-wheelchair star rating for accessibility and great service from local blogger Hunter Kelch, a 24-year-old visitor with Cerebral Palsy. In his blog he writes, "My mother and I were able to sit in a beautiful setting and take a break from our hectic lives. For that moment, we were mother and son, not caregiver and client."

"OUR MUSEUM STRIVES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY.

We are nimble and care about helping others pursue their passions and enhance their lives through art. The museum is committed to eliminating barriers. We want to make every community member aware that, at the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, there is something for everyone."

— KATHY KELSEY FOLEY, DIRECTOR

LEIGH YAWKEY WOODSON ART MUSEUM

Address: 700 North Twelfth Street

Wausau, WI 54403-5007

Phone: 715-845-7010

Kathy Kelsey Foley, Director



LONG BEACH



Public Library

A COLLABORATIVE AND ACTIVE COMMUNITY PARTNER

Long Beach Public Library is not your typical “book browsing library.” For over 100 years, the library has worked to meet the information needs of its culturally diverse and dynamic population. Additionally, staff focus on serving residents beyond the library walls and in the community by playing an active role as a community partner in tackling systemic issues in education, healthcare, and public safety. The library’s responsive and nimble staff leverages their passion for community service to develop innovative programming that meets the needs of residents and supports them in their personal endeavors.

RENEWED FOCUS ON STEAM EDUCATION

In the spirit of its role for advancing lifelong learning, the library established a network of Family Learning Centers aimed at providing academic assistance through tutoring and access to technology for the Long Beach community. The centers also include a digital/creative lab called “The Studio,” a community workspace where people meet and collaborate to use technology that helps develop intellectual curiosity and inspire academic success. Through the Studio and its Mobile Studio counterpart, the library offers classes and workshops that provide hands-on opportunities incorporating computer coding, robotics, animation, digital photography, and photo editing tools, developing new skills applicable in the 21st century in an entertaining and inspiring way.

SPECIAL CONNECTIONS TO SPECIAL POPULATIONS

The library has focused on providing opportunities for residents with special needs. Through the library’s Information Center for People with Disabilities, the library provides a state-of-the-art technology center equipped with assistive hardware and software designed for residents with physical, visual, hearing, and developmental disabilities. Additionally, the library’s Special Connect Services includes books, toys, sensory bins, specialized technology, multisensory classes and movies, civic engagement opportunities and other community partnerships that bridge the gap between the library and the families of children with special needs.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

The Long Beach Public Library prides itself on reaching beyond its walls to tackle the issues facing the community, committing itself to strategic partnerships that are critical to keeping residents safe. In recent years, the library has played an active role in several of Long Beach's public safety initiatives, including the city of Long Beach's Violence Prevention Plan (SAFE Long Beach), by partnering with a number of city agencies such as the Long Beach Health Department, and Long Beach Unified School District. As a member of the Long Beach community, the library has made helping solve some of the prevailing problems facing the city of Long Beach a priority.

“AT LONG BEACH PUBLIC LIBRARY, WE WANT OUR RESIDENTS TO WALK AWAY KNOWING WE ARE HERE TO HELP THEM MEET THEIR PERSONAL AND EDUCATIONAL GOALS. *Not only will we do our best to provide them with an excellent experience at the library, but we also want to go beyond our walls to meet them in the community and serve as another resource for helping them reach those goals.*”

– GLENDA WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR OF LIBRARY SERVICES

LONG BEACH PUBLIC LIBRARY

Address: 101 Pacific Avenue
Long Beach, CA 90822-1097
Phone: 562-570-7500

Glenda Williams, Director of Library Services



PERALTA HACIENDA



Historical Park



EVERY HUMAN MAKES HISTORY

Peralta Hacienda Historic Park, located in the Fruitvale community of Oakland, California, tells the stories of the extraordinary community it serves. Known as one of the most diverse neighborhoods in the United States, Fruitvale is noted by the Census Bureau as “severely distressed” economically. Fruitvale schools are Title One, with 95 percent of students receiving free lunch, and 30 percent of Fruitvale’s adults are not high school graduates. The historical organization boldly tackles community challenges – poverty and violent crime – by utilizing traditional cultivation techniques and a community-wide support system to promote understanding of each other, healing and neighborhood pride.



INTEGRATION OF A DAZZLING DIVERSE POPULATION

At Peralta Hacienda Historical Park, the staff believes that every individual who walks through their doors is an agent of history – every person is affected by their surroundings, but every person brings a unique perspective, and has the ability to make change. Through its Community Storyteller Program, the Historical Park trains the community’s agents of history to become docents. Residents taking part in the docent training program are not typical volunteers - many are refugees and immigrant youth. They learn about the history of their new Fruitvale home while training to guide visitors on tours of the site’s permanent and revolving exhibits. The training also encourages participants to incorporate their own stories into museum tours, giving them a voice in their community.

ENGAGING FRUITVALE’S YOUTH

The historical park continues to prioritize youth programming as a way to empower students and young adults to enact positive community change. With the historical park’s summer-long Camp ACE (Arts, Culture and Environment) and winter and spring programs, “Welcome to Wildlife,” 400 at-risk Fruitvale youth explore the world of nature and discover, and find solutions to today’s problems, including environmental threats facing the planet. Peralta Hacienda Historical Park’s Legacy Explorers afterschool program introduces high school students to their role as community storytellers, leaders, and stewards of the public commons.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Peralta Hacienda Historical Park crafts its exhibits to reflect the ever-changing community of Fruitvale. Using community-listening forums, the museum develops exhibit and programming themes based on residents' feedback and suggestions. These changing displays have highlighted the histories of the Mein community; healing from trauma of through the recovery of lost Cambodian musical traditions; and spotlighting Oakland's Black history, among others.

“THE COMMUNITIES OF OAKLAND AND FRUITVALE ARE AT A CROSSROADS. OUR RESIDENTS ARE CONTINUOUSLY DEFINING THE ‘NEW AMERICAN STORY’ AND WE ARE HELPING THEM TELL THAT STORY. *Here at Peralta Hacienda, we celebrate all our visitors’ journeys and stories. We want to help individuals explore their roots, find solutions to their problems, and provide them a platform for self-expression and self-representation.*”

– HOLLY ALONSO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PERALTA HACIENDA HISTORICAL PARK

Address: 2465 34th Avenue
Oakland, CA 94601-2618
Phone: 510-532-9142
Holly Alonso, Executive Director



RICHLAND



Library

REDEFINING THE BUSINESS OF A COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Located in Columbia, South Carolina, the Richland Library, which consists of 11 libraries throughout the starkly different parts of the Midlands region, has redefined its business strategy to focus on changing and strengthening the lives of the people it touches. The staff members are passionate about taking the library beyond its traditional role as a book depository to better address the region's needs. Their human-centric approach to answering the needs of the community is evident in their response to the 2015 flooding in the Midlands. When the flood hit the region, the libraries immediately opened their doors to offer assistance and to serve as sanctuaries to those displaced by the flood. At crisis shelters, deployed staff set up computer labs, provided reading material, and offered children storytime and activities. An analysis conducted by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) revealed that the libraries were the busiest FEMA respite sites in the state, with 14 percent of all statewide applications received and processed by library staff.

COMMUNITY COHESION THROUGH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Proud of all the services it provides Richland County, the library staff members continue to enhance programming to address the most critical need of the community—economic revitalization after the Great Recession of 2008. The library uses innovative programs to facilitate workforce training and promote job growth. Its Business, Careers and Research Center offers certified career coaches who support patrons at every step of their employment journey—from career exploration to interview preparation. Partnerships with businesses and teen-focused organizations strengthens the library's Teen Center business and career exploration program and also encourages teenagers to imagine their life after high school graduation. Since their business center opened in 2010, the library has assisted customers with more than 75,000 job and small business-related transactions.

CELEBRATING LITERACY OUTSIDE THE LIBRARY

When the library saw an increase in the number of Columbia's school children struggling to read, it took action and developed an approach using evidence-based school readiness programs that involved the child and the parent or caregiver as well. The library's Here Comes Kindergarten family engagement and school readiness program aimed to help parents understand the skills necessary for school readiness, improved children's early literacy skills, and positively enriched child/parent interactions. Additionally, the library's partnerships with low-income, underperforming schools have reduced or, in some cases, completely eliminated summer learning slide in students reading below grade level, further strengthening both early literacy in the community and lifelong literacy skills.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

As part of its mission to create a stronger, resilient community, the library partnered with social workers to develop a specialized curriculum for male (and now female) inmates at a local detention center. Titled “Self-Sufficiency 101,” the weekly workshops provide instruction on literacy, technology, job, and financial literacy skills. Additionally, the workshops teach detainees how to foster healthy relationships, and mindfulness, and how to develop goal-oriented post-release action plans. The program shifts conversations away from “why am I here” to “what will my life and relationships look like when I am out?”

“OUR LIBRARY STAFF IS VERY PASSIONATE ABOUT PARTNERING AND SHARING WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS LOCALLY AND IN SOUTH CAROLINA TO FULFILL THE DEMANDS OF THEIR COMMUNITIES. *We are constantly asking ourselves ‘how do we share what we know about our human-centered design and how it relates to solving community problems?’ We are at a point where we can share our knowledge with other institutions to help solve the challenges and issues of today.*”

– MELANIE HUGGINS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RICHLAND LIBRARY

Address: 1431 Assembly Street

Columbia, SC 29201-3101

Phone: 803-929-3422

Melanie Huggins, Executive Director



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA *Libraries*



A LIBRARY SERVING CASCADING COMMUNITIES

The University of Minnesota Libraries, located in Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota, prides itself on serving not just the faculty and staff of the University of Minnesota Twins Cities Campus, but those referred to as a “cascading community” of diverse groups of people. As Minnesota’s only research library, it champions statewide access to research materials while also taking on the responsibilities of a comprehensive research institution that is open and responsive to everyone who visits. The library welcomes everyone—20 percent of its visitors are not affiliated with the University of Minnesota—and encourages all who utilize its resources to “drive tomorrow” by addressing the most pressing societal challenges facing Minnesotans and the United States.



CHAMPIONING REGION-WIDE ACCESS TO MATERIALS

The University of Minnesota Libraries champions region-wide access to research materials. What started as a resource sharing network in 1971, the Libraries’ Minitex program, has grown to a suite of high-demand services offered to residents of Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. In 2016, the program received nearly 350,000 requests for resource sharing; licensed thousands of periodicals, e-books, and newspapers; and provided free and unlimited access to e-books from Minnesota publishers and books about Minnesota. Minitex also manages the Minnesota Digital Library, which captures unique resources from over 190 cultural heritage organizations in the state and represents the fourth largest service hub contributor to the Digital Public Library of America.

FRIENDS FORUM: BRINGING COMMUNITIES TO THE LIBRARIES

As part of its mission to welcome different communities across the state, the Libraries sponsors exciting and engaging community programs that include events, tours, and exhibits. The Friends of the Libraries hosts Friends Forum: A Series for Curious Minds, a popular event series that welcomes many across Minnesota to learn from authors, poets, educators and scientists. The public programs, free and open to all, allows the Libraries to reach an audience beyond its immediate university patrons.


PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

The University of Minnesota Libraries, first and foremost, serves the students and faculty of its parent institution by leveraging an extensive portfolio of resources to promote student success. The Libraries' SMART Learning Commons, a network that provides one-on-one tutorial services, support for media creation, and a peer consultation, enables students to learn how to use technology and other resources for academia. A five-year assessment of University of Minnesota undergraduates concluded that students who employ SMART and other library services are 40 percent more likely to graduate from college in four years.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA LIBRARIES

Address: 450 McNamara Alumni Center
200 Oak Street, SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455
Phone: 612-626-7441

Wendy Pradt Lougee, University Librarian
and McKnight Presidential Professor



“AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA LIBRARIES, WE ALWAYS TRY TO BETTER UNDERSTAND WHAT PEOPLE ARE TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH IN ORDER TO PROVIDE SERVICES THAT HELP THEM REACH THOSE GOALS. *We also take pride in being the only research library in Minnesota and in our role in developing model programs that can be emulated by other libraries.*”

– WENDY PRADT LOUGEE, UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN AND MCKNIGHT PRESIDENTIAL PROFESSOR



WATERVILLE



Public Library



WIDE AWAKE INSTITUTION FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF IDEAS

The Waterville Public Library is a small but fiercely active institution. Situated on the banks of Maine’s Kennebec River, in a town of 15,771 people, the library has far exceeded its responsibilities as a classic brick-and-mortar book depository of old, becoming a community resource that forms partnerships that transform the lives of community members. The library staff members challenge themselves daily to expand what the library can do for the community through programming and through a rich set of partnerships. Library staff continuously find ways to welcome every resident of Waterville and they are committed to being a “wide-awake institution,” sensitive to community needs of greater employment opportunities and cultural experiences.

CHAMPION OF CAREER CATALYZATION

Over the past 20 years, the job market in Waterville has eroded, and a number of middle-class and professional Waterville residents have left as a result. The residents who stayed grappled with the possibility of changing careers or learning a new set of skills. Following the closing of Waterville’s Career Center in 2005 and recognizing the great need for economic growth in the community, the Library founded the Business, Career, & Creativity Center program. The library leveraged library space and sought partnerships with business and workforce development organizations. The Library facilitates job fairs and recruiting events for new and existing businesses. The library also hosts a weekly Job Search Lab where experts from regional career development organizations provide resume consultations, career coaching, and job search support for residents.

WATERVILLE CREATES! (AND CELEBRATES CULTURE)

Waterville abounds with arts and cultural opportunities that are important to community development and camaraderie. As a founding member of Waterville Creates!, the local arts and culture organization born from creative and collaborative partnerships that celebrate culture, the library works directly with community arts, creative and cultural institutions to bring richer arts and cultural events and opportunities to Waterville. The Waterville Creates! initiative promotes the city as a major arts destination for Maine and serves as the artistic “face” of the community it serves.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

With 71 percent of school-aged children qualifying for free or reduced lunch, Waterville Public Library has long been a lunch service hub during the summer. In 2008, the library teamed up with the Maine Department of Education summer lunch program to bring books to city parks where bag lunches were distributed. Through the Bookmobile, donated books are delivered along with lunches to children who might not otherwise have the chance to visit the library. The program, now in its ninth year, continues to grow and reach more and more children each summer.

“OUR COMMUNITY FACES A LOT OF CHALLENGES BUT THOSE CHALLENGES PRESENT THE LIBRARY WITH OPPORTUNITIES. *We will always be committed to being an agency that helps connect our neighbors with resources. We strive to show our community lots of love by fulfilling the needs of those who need us. And there is no other place like it.*”

— SARAH SUGDEN, LIBRARY DIRECTOR

WATERVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY
Address: 73 Elm Street
Waterville, ME 04901-6004
Phone: 207-872-5433
Sarah Sugden, Library Director

NATIONAL MEDAL *finalists*

Thirty institutions were named finalists for this year's National Medal for Museum and Library Service. From them, this year's 10 winners were selected.

Through the online Share Your Story initiative, scores of community members highlighted ways these finalist institutions have impacted and changed their lives for the better.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2017 NATIONAL MEDAL FOR MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICE FINALISTS.

CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG LIBRARY (*Charlotte, North Carolina*)

CHICAGO ACADEMY OF SCIENCES/PEGGY NOTEBAERT NATURE MUSEUM (*Chicago, Illinois*)

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF MANHATTAN (*New York, New York*)

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM TUCSON (*Tucson, Arizona*)

DETROIT ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY (*Royal Oak, Michigan*)

DISCOVERY PLACE (*Charlotte, North Carolina*)

EVANSVILLE VANDERBURGH PUBLIC LIBRARY (*Evansville, Indiana*)

GEORGE AND CYNTHIA WOODS MITCHELL LIBRARY, MONTGOMERY COUNTY MEMORIAL LIBRARY SYSTEM (*The Woodlands, Texas*)

HAINES BOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY (*Haines, Alaska*)

ILLINOIS FIRE SERVICE INSTITUTE LIBRARY (*Champaign, Illinois*)

JAMES V. BROWN LIBRARY (*Williamsport, Pennsylvania*)

LAWRENCE HALL OF SCIENCE (*Berkeley, California*)

MISSISSIPPI CHILDREN'S MUSEUM (*Jackson, Mississippi*)

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART SAN DIEGO (*San Diego, California*)

ORLANDO SCIENCE CENTER (*Orlando, Florida*)

PRETEND CITY CHILDREN'S MUSEUM (*Irvine, California*)

ROCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY (*Rochester, Minnesota*)

SACRAMENTO PUBLIC LIBRARY (*Sacramento, California*)

TERREBONNE PARISH LIBRARY SYSTEM (*Houma, Louisiana*)

TULSA CITY-COUNTY LIBRARY (*Tulsa, Oklahoma*)

THE NATIONAL MEDAL FOR MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICE

Since 1994, the National Medal for Museum and Library Service has honored 172 outstanding institutions that have made significant and exceptional contributions to their communities to enhance wellbeing. Selected institutions demonstrate extraordinary approaches to public service, exceeding the expected levels of community outreach. They may be active in urban, rural or tribal areas and partner with their communities in diverse ways, including by enhancing literacy, providing services to at risk populations, supporting digital connectivity, and curating local identity. The winners are selected by the Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services in consultation with the National Museum and Library Services Board.

Beginning with the 2009 awardees, personal stories demonstrating the ongoing impact of these award-winning institutions are being documented through a cooperative agreement between IMLS and StoryCorps, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to recording, preserving, and sharing the stories of Americans from all backgrounds and beliefs. These stories are preserved at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.

THE INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is celebrating its 20th Anniversary. IMLS is the primary source of federal support for the nation's approximately 123,000 libraries and 35,000 museums. The agency's mission is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning and cultural and civic engagement. Its grant making, policy development and research help libraries and museums deliver valuable services that make it possible for communities and individuals to thrive. To learn more, visit www.imls.gov.

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES BOARD

The National Museum and Library Services Board is an advisory body that includes the director and deputy directors of Institute of Museum and Library Service and 20 presidentially appointed members of the general public who have demonstrated expertise in, or commitment to, library or museum services. Informed by its collectively vast experience and knowledge, the board advises the IMLS director on general policy and practices, and on selections for the National Medals for Museum and Library Service.

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