



Bridging the digital divide at Capitol Hill

On January 28, a group of Somali-speaking patrons gathered at Capitol Hill Library to build digital literacy skills and work toward ownership of their own laptop computers, courtesy of Free Geek.

The bilingual program was part of a new series designed and delivered for Somali-speakers by Multnomah County Library Digital Inclusion Fellow Charly Eaton and Bilingual Library Assistant Suad Mohamed. Over the course of three sessions totaling eight hours of

instruction, participants learned keyboard and mouse proficiency, navigating the web, using search engines and creating email accounts.

Digital inclusion is a primary focus of Multnomah County Library. The library created the role of the digital inclusion fellow (funded in part by NTEN and Google) to implement the library's Digital Equity Action Plan (DEAP). The DEAP, adopted by Multnomah County commissioners in 2016, created a new set of policy actions and partnerships among and between government, private enterprise and non-profits to help more people participate in today's digital world.

Among the library's partners in this effort is Free Geek, a Portland nonprofit dedicated to sustainably reusing technology, enabling digital access, and providing education to create a community that empowers people to realize their potential. Free Geek provided 11 computers to program participants with a one-year technical support warranty. To receive a computer, participants had to attend each of the classes.

Making a difference: a staff member's story



Hearing from library staff members about the impact of their work is one of my favorite parts of this job. Below I want to share a story from Azalea Ebbay, a library assistant at Northwest Library, because it reflects why we do what we do.

Azalea writes, "I first met Dale in December when he fell into a Book-A-Librarian appointment. One Monday evening he just happened to be working on his resume at the library, unaware that I was there to be booked.

Dale wanted to get a job in masonry and he was working on a portfolio that consisted of his resume and digital photos of his finished work. After I helped him perform some computer tasks, I encouraged him to come back to the library if he ever needed help.

Dale returned to the library multiple times for computer help during January and February. During one appointment, I made sure that he could also get consultation from our expert

resume volunteer Ophelia, whom he found incredibly helpful. From what I could see, Dale put in a lot of hours into his job search and he learned new computer skills constantly.

While I enjoyed working with him, I also felt worried about seeing him because it meant he hadn't yet reached his goal. On Friday, March 3, he came back to our library just to tell me that after three interviews, he secured a job with benefits in Seattle! He was super appreciative, but he was the one who worked hard and with persistence."

Join us: capital planning meetings April 4,5

As our community grows and changes, the library should change, too. We've been hard at work gathering information, listening to people and understanding different needs across Multnomah County. Now is the time to share your ideas. Join us to see a draft vision for library spaces in the next 15-20 years and tell us what you think.

Upcoming meetings:

- Tuesday, April 4, 6:30-8:00 pm, North Portland Library, 512 N Killingsworth St.
- Wednesday, April 5, 6:30-8:00 pm, Midland Library, 805 SE 122nd Ave.

To learn more about this planning process, visit www.multcolib.org/plan/.

***The Oregonian* lauds Carol Rogers's 50 years at MCL**

In February, Oregonian columnist Samantha Swindler paid homage to the library's longest-tenured employee, Carol Rogers. In her piece, "[Portland's longest-serving librarian, after 50 years, isn't quitting soon](#)," Ms. Swindler recounted the incredible changes in library services over the course of Carol's tenure.

Carol has also been part of the library in every incarnation since becoming a tax-supported public library in 1902: as The Library Association of Portland, then as a department of Multnomah County and now as the Multnomah County Library District.

As an Access Services Supervisor at Central Library, Carol is a familiar face to patrons and a vault of institutional knowledge and know-how for her coworkers. A 50-year commitment to any pursuit is remarkable, but in today's workforce, it's something many of us are unlikely to encounter ever again. On behalf of the library and as a former coworker who learned under Carol's tutelage, I offer her my profound thanks for her contributions and her commitment.



“Thinking Money” for teens at Gresham Library

Gresham Library was host to Thinking Money, a new traveling exhibition designed to teach tweens, teens and the adults in their lives about money. The exhibit was on display from January 30 to March 15, 2017.

“Money affects us all, but many of us lack the information we need to make smart decisions about our financial futures,” said Amy Miller, Gresham’s Teen Librarian. “Thinking Money was designed to teach us about financial literacy in a way that is not only understandable, but fun. We’re proud to have had Thinking Money on display in our library.”

Through an adventure-themed storyline, interactive iPad content and other fun activities, Thinking Money explores themes like wants vs. needs, preparing for a rainy/sunny day, imagining your future self and avoiding financial fraud. In one program, Gresham teens

created working arcade games out of cardboard and circuits, while learning about budgeting, prioritizing and profits.

In April 2016, the American Library Association and the FINRA Foundation announced 50 libraries nationwide to host the 1,000-square-foot exhibition. In addition to the exhibition loan, Gresham Library received a \$1,000 programming allowance, expenses paid for training at the 2016 ALA Annual Conference in June 2016, and promotional and support materials.

Patron comments

"Ms. Sara G was so nice and gave me great information I didn't know that Gresham and Fairview libraries has Title Wave book cart. She gave me awesome customer care service."
— Anna, Feb. 28

"Concha was extremely helpful with my library card. I couldn't download e-books to my nook. I kept receiving an error message. Concha took extra time and was very patient. After we discovered my error she helped me find additional books that are helpful with my medical condition. I really appreciated her attitude and kindness." — Kenton Library patron, Feb. 24

"I just want to tell you guys how wonderful "Librarian John" is at Story time on Saturdays. My friend & I have been going with our almost 3-year old boys since they were 2 months old- and we remember when John took over the story times. Our sons adore him, and we both really appreciate how thoughtfully he interacts with all of the children at every age. She is a 2nd grade teacher, and I am a Librarian, so we can be a bit "judgy." I also have a video from last Saturday with her son absolutely losing his mind about how Librarian John fell down during Humpty Dumpty. it's adorable, and a great reminder of why we and you do what we do! Thank you wonderful Kenton Branch!" — Phoebe, Feb. 21

"Lin, one of your library staff was very helpful a the check out desk. I waited for assistance and no help was available. A staff member had a problem filling a request on the computer. I found Lin sorting books and she left what she was doing. She was pleasant, courteous, patient and calmly answered my questions including checking on material I still had on hold. She communicated with a smile which made me think that she really likes her job and the people she helps. Please let her know what a difference she makes!!" — Woodstock Library patron, Feb. 22

In the news

[Portland's longest-serving librarian, after 50 years, isn't quitting soon](#), *Oregonian*, Feb. 27

[Library reading program tackles 'Evicted,'](#) *Hollywood Star* Feb. 18

[Central Library Says Goodbye to Century Old Elms](#), *Skanner*, Feb. 16

[Got a tattoo? Get a personalized book recommendation](#), Minnesota Public Radio News, Feb. 15

[What's it like to have almost no money?](#), *Portland Tribune*, Feb. 14

[Why these librarians are protesting Trump's executive orders](#), PBS NewsHour, Feb. 13

[Multnomah County Library Hosts 20th Annual African American Read-In](#), *Skanner*, Feb. 9

Upcoming events

[Caring for Another: Demystify the Foster Care System](#)

March 18

Sellwood-Moreland Library

[Build an Arcade](#) (camp for teens)

March 28-April 1

Gresham Library

[The Audacious Adventures of Nellie Bly](#)

March 18

Central Library

March 21

Hollywood Library

[Plant Yourself Where You Will Bloom](#)

March 28

North Portland Library

[Introduction to Spreadsheets](#)

March 21

Gresham Library

[Teen Anime Club](#)

March 31

Hollywood Library

[Stencil Screen Print for families](#)

March 25

St. Johns Library

[Free Range Poetry](#)

April 3

Northwest Library

[Rock Out and Write Music](#) (camp for teens)

March 27-31

Sellwood-Moreland Library

[Best of Funny Shakespeare](#)

April 5

Hillsdale Library