



Building a better world through Summer Reading

Multnomah County Library runs one of the largest Summer Reading programs in the country, and this year 90,000 kids are signed up to read for fun and prizes, with over 800 volunteers trained and ready to welcome them. Our new Summer Reading game encourages reading all summer long! This year, younger players mark each day that they read a suggested amount or engage in a learning activity. In order to finish, they'll have read or learned for 45 days over the summer—a good start to making reading a lifelong, daily practice.

"I am so glad you changed this [game] to make it last all summer! Thank you!" — parent, Central Library.

To improve teen participation, the library is implementing changes learned from surveys and workshops conducted with teens. This summer, high school players will engage with staff when they've earned a prize instead of the summer reading volunteers. This change

allows library staff an opportunity to offer teens additional help finding books or to ask them about their favorite activities from the challenge. The library is also offering special, high school-only prizes, like Dutch Brothers coffee cards or chances to win \$100 at Powell's.

Summer Reading is also an opportunity for many youth to engage with the library as volunteers. For hundreds of teens volunteering this summer, the program offers an opportunity to develop job skills, form relationships with adults and mentors, and learn about public service.

Summer Reading is supported by gifts to The Library Foundation, a local nonprofit dedicated to our library's leadership, innovation and reach through private support.

Equity and inclusion in our libraries

In December 2016, Multnomah County Library hired its first-ever equity and inclusion manager, Sonja Ervin.

For the past six months, Sonja has spent much of her time visiting branch locations, meeting staff, and learning about the library's array of programs and services. Her observations and leadership thus far have helped to identify several key priorities for strengthening equity and inclusion in our libraries: ensure decisions are examined through an equity lens; develop partnerships with Multnomah County staff and other departments to further equity work; develop training and education for all library staff; and form an organization-wide equity team.



The library is a place where every single person — regardless of status, affiliation or background — is welcomed, included and valued. Sonja's experience in leading these efforts are helping the library to ensure we are listening to the needs of the communities we serve and that we encourage a welcoming and inclusive culture for employees and patrons alike.

A vision for library spaces

The Multnomah County Library District Board officially adopted the [Framework for Future Library Spaces](#) on Thursday, June 29. The Framework outlines a vision for the library to more than double its systemwide space and draws attention to the need for destination libraries.

The Framework provides a comprehensive analysis of how the library can improve its spaces to meet the changing needs of the community; it is the result of significant input from library staff, community members, local leaders, the Library Advisory Board, the Library Foundation, and consulting with Group 4 Architecture and Henneberry Eddy Architects.

At the direction of Multnomah County Library District Board Chair Deborah Kafoury, the library will begin working with the county, partner organizations, and the community on a plan for implementation.



Refugee State: Global Visions in a New Land

On June 10, Multnomah County Library partnered with the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO) to welcome TeAda Productions, a social justice theatre of color based in LA, to present *Refugee State: Global Visions in a New Land*.

TeAda has been working with the immigrant and refugee community for over twelve years and specializes in documenting and preserving people's experience through performance art. The event, which was part of the Theatre Communication Group (TCG) Conference in downtown Portland, included a performance of and from the Bhutanese community, one of the largest growing refugee communities in Portland. They performed their story of leaving their motherland to a refugee camp in Tibet then to America. A grandmother sang in her native language to the crowd of over 70 theatre leaders and community members, and professional artists performed a short improv piece of their experience working with

the families and their perception of the current political and social climate towards refugees and communities of color.

The performance was followed by a panel discussion on social justice theatre, the state of the refugee community in Portland and sustaining partnerships. The panel included Artistic Director and Founder of TeAda, Leilani Chan, and their artists; Sophorn Cheang, the director of Asian Family Center IRCO; and Coi Vu, program coordinator for Multnomah County Library.

Patron comments

"I wish to express my gratitude to you for the excellent computer services your provide. In addition (and more to the point) is the help I have received from your library staff (Karen, Nick) (main branch 6:00 pm). Without them I would have been clueless. I am computer illiterate and they made success possible. You have wonderful staff personnel. I love to read, always have, but this dimension (computers) I may be able broaden myself with. Not that this is my first experience doing things like resume and taxes here, but your people inspire me to learn more and spend time here. They were friendly, helpful, patient and did I mention friendly. Thanks so much to you and them. . ." — Tom R., July 6

"We just saw Rhys Thomas at Gresham library. What an absolute treat! He even kept my busy 2.5 year mostly entertained. Thank you for offering such entertaining and enriching performances!" — Janene, July 5

"I am a 63 yr old who has been using my public libraries since I was 13, in Minnesota (my original home town), California and now Portland. I absolutely love the public library system. So far I have to say Multnomah Co. system is a step above. The everybody reads program is such a great service that not only encourages reading and community but recognizes authors with local connections. The summer free lunch programs are proof that the library is more than a place of learning and fun but indeed, an integral part of our community. I have the app on my phone, which is a great convenience that helps me foster the same love for libraries in my 5yr old granddaughter. Thank you all for a job well done." — Candance, July 5

"This message is for the staff at Hollywood, especially the Children's librarian. We attended Zaniac with our 2 grandkids today. It was spirited, interactive and great fun. The performer has considerable skill, but most notable, He really "gets" kids. He was able to relate to all

ages, temperaments and anomalies. Great pick....and we grandparents had fun as well. Thank you." — Mary Kay, June 27

"Catherine at the help desk is THE loveliest most helpful info person a patron could want. All Mult. Lib folks are great, of course, but she really stands out — even so! A true gem!"
— Northwest Library patron, June 27

"I have had an awesome experience & it's because of Denise. She is the most qualified & helpful & driven staff person. She is always kind & pleasant. It is very refreshing to feel invited to share in all of the wonderful aspects of the library. . ." — Shai, June 22

In the news

[Summer Fun Begins June 16 at North Portland Library](#) (*The Skanner*, June 15)

Upcoming events

[Family Gardening at the Library](#)

Wednesday, July 12
Capitol Hill Library

[Senior Health Insurance Benefits Assistance](#)

Thursday, July 13
Hillsdale Library

[Trash to Artistic Treasure](#)

Friday, July 14
Gresham Library

[Introduction to Solar](#)

Monday, July 17
Troutdale Library

[Spread the Word: Silk Screening Camp](#)

Monday, July 17 – Friday, July 21
Rockwood Library

[Spread the Word: Silk Screening Camp](#)

Monday, July 17 – Friday, July 21
Rockwood Library

[Stop Motion Animation](#)

Tuesday, July 18 – Thursday, July 27
Midland Library

[Scales, Claws and Expanding Jaws](#)

Wednesday, July 19
Woodstock Library

[Build It! Engineer It! Exploring Ancient Technologies](#)

Monday, July 24
Hollywood Library

[Healthy Living for Your Brain and Body](#)

Tuesday, August 1
Albina Library