Drag Queen Storytime debuts

This fall, the library has been proud to host Drag Queen Storytime events at several locations. The storytimes offer a fun way for children to experience gender diversity with a literary focus from glamorous role models.

Geared for kids ages 2 to 6, each storytime features a guest who reads stories about inclusion and diversity, sings songs, and leads a craft or dance party. Guests include Poison Waters, Meesha Perú, Carla Rossi and the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence.

The program encourages kids to look beyond gender stereotypes, and fosters empathy and creativity.
“People who identify as non-binary or genderfluid are all around us,” says Lyndsey Runyan, who coordinates the programs. “Many children express gender fluidity. Drag Queen Storytime teaches children to embrace gender diversity in themselves and in others, and helps to curb bullying of LGBTQ children and kids who may be perceived as different in all kinds of ways.”

Drag Queen Storytime (also called Drag Queen Story Hour) started at San Francisco Public Library and today can be found all over the country in bookstores, libraries and schools.

Our community's response has been overwhelmingly positive. “I am so proud to be part of a library that offers drag queen story time!” said one patron. “I just heard it on the news and it brought a smile to my face. I had to write to say thanks for being a positive voice in a country needing acceptance.”
More comments about Drag Queen Storytime:

“Amazing! Thank you Multnomah County Library for having this event and for teaching our children about love and acceptance.” —Ernesto

“Thank you for caring about marginalized kids, Multnomah County Library ❤️” —Armeline

“Thank you for providing such a neat cultural experience for kids. They're at such a good age to have open minds and be accepting of all!” —Cassidy

“Reason #7,526 why I LOVE MY LIBRARY!!!” —Amy

“This is why Libraries are the best. Everyone is welcome” —Kelly

Corey Pursel creates options for young people at Rockwood Library

As summer kicked off in June, Multnomah County Library welcomed Corey Pursel in a new type of job. As Rockwood Library's youth engagement specialist, Corey is bringing a new perspective and a unique toolkit to working with young people at Rockwood Library.

Rockwood is one of Oregon's most diverse and economically challenged communities. Many of its residents work hard to make ends meet or to adjust to a new life in the United States. For young people, that can mean grappling with the effects of trauma, systemic barriers and generational poverty.

In creating the position of youth engagement specialist, the library sought to provide young people more options — ways to reinforce positive behavior and address other behavior in a more proactive way than the singular punitive consequence of exclusion. In addition, the library can better utilize trauma-informed practices that address deeper underlying issues
that affect children's lives. Together, these approaches help young people keep using the library when they might need it most in their lives.

An East County native, Corey came to Rockwood Library with a depth of experience in serving youth as a caseworker, a counselor and a crisis team member for local and state government. "When I saw this position, it captured the positive direction of social services. As libraries collaborate more with other public services, I saw the chance to develop something new that fits both of those roles," he said.

In his time at the library, Corey has developed community partnerships and helped young people and their families understand which resources are available, how they differ and where to find culturally specific services. He's also working to help youth understand the library rules, which have numerous legal provisions and can be tough to decipher in a youth-oriented context. By looking at those rules though a frame of positive behavioral intervention support, Corey says he can develop ways to engage youth without saying, "Don't do this. Instead, we'll try to do it this way."

Corey brings knowledge of the safety net services and systems that families in Rockwood are often engaged with. "A lot of families experience day-to-day instability with finances, food and housing," he says. "When parents are having a hard time, we can supplement those families' needs. If a young person is involved with DHS, that factor might have caused library staff to get stuck right there before this role existed. Now we can reach out to parents and get a bigger picture, understand the family's concerns and create a plan to help that young person."

"Corey can help us understand these situations better, what young people are experiencing," said Rockwood Library Administrator David Lee. "He understands the systems that young people and their families are part of and, because of that, he can support us in helping them use the library successfully."

The youth engagement specialist job was created as a two-year pilot effort. As Corey puts his expertise to work, he's also imagining more ways for the library to serve youth. He dreams of more dedicated teen space and more ways for people to understand each other better, despite their differences. Perhaps an entire team of youth engagement specialists. When asked if any youth are familiar with that title, he responds, "They just know me as Corey."
Library helps prepare parents as kids head to kindergarten

Kids with little or no preschool experience have the hardest time transitioning to kindergarten. During late summer, the two-to three-week long Early Kindergarten Transition program aims to help those kids and their families.

The program, hosted at 47 SUN schools in six districts, offers a daily class for children with a kindergarten teacher, a once- or twice-weekly parent education class for parents or other significant adults in the child's life, and childcare for siblings.

The library is a valuable partner in the parent education classes, sharing information on early literacy, summer reading and library resources. This summer, we issued at least 100 new library cards, signed up at least 170 kids for the Summer Reading program, and gave a free book to each family — roughly 840 books in total. We also provided nearly 2,000 gently used books from Every Child and The Title Wave Used Bookstore to the childcare locations, which were in desperate need of developmentally appropriate resources.

From Portland Public Schools’ Nancy Hauth, program manager of the district’s Early Learner Programs: “I’ve been meaning to send you and your team a thank you for all the work you do to support EKT parents with your visits. This year has been extra special because the give-away book, Draw!, is so wonderful. Every time I walk into the parent meeting room, parents and facilitators bring up how much they love this book, and how easy and fun it is to read to their kids, tell stories and ask questions. Plus the artwork is lovely. So thank you! We appreciate you!”

You can learn more about the program from this PBS NewsHour report, and hear about the program's impacts in this Children's Institute podcast.
Everybody Reads features the work of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Everybody Reads 2019 will celebrate the work of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie with the novel *Americanah* for adults and the essay *We Should All Be Feminists* for high school students.

A Nigerian-born artist whose influence spans continents and genres, Adichie has received acclaim as an author, poet, playwright and speaker. She was a recipient of a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship and her work has been recognized with the O. Henry Prize, the National Book Critics Circle Award (fiction) and the PEN Pinter Prize, among many other distinctions.

The library announced the titles in September to overwhelmingly positive community response. On social media, patrons said things like “Great choices!” “Americanah: My favorite book of 2017.” “Best choices ever!” “I love her books, some of the absolute best!” “Everyone should watch her TEDTalk too!”

This will be the library’s 17th annual community reading project. “Everybody Reads gives us a forum for understanding the many complexities of being human in a world that is prone to reducing us to ‘a single story’ — as Adichie so aptly puts it,” says project coordinator Alison Kastner.

In *Americanah*, Ifemelu leaves her childhood sweetheart and a troubled Nigeria to attend university in the United States. Despite her success, she is forced to grapple with what it means to be black in America, and founds a blog born of her unique perspective.

“By seeing the world through Ifemelu’s eyes, we have the opportunity to be observers of our own society, to see ourselves in a new light, and to unpack the tangle of race, class and culture that we have come to believe is normal,” says Kastner.
In *We Should All Be Feminists*, the author offers readers a unique definition of feminism for the 21st century, one rooted in inclusion and awareness. Drawing extensively on her own experiences and her deep understanding of the often-masked realities of sexual politics, she explores what it means to be a woman.

Everybody Reads begins in January and culminates with a presentation from the author in March. Everybody Reads is made possible in part by gifts to The Library Foundation with author appearance made possible by Literary Arts.

**New streaming video service available to patrons**

A [new streaming video service called Kanopy](https://kanopy.com) offers patrons more than 30,000 videos, with an emphasis on documentary, independent, and classic films — including films from the Criterion Collection.

“Patrons have been asking for this service by name weekly for the past year,” says Electronic Content Librarian Kady Ferris, “and we are happy to finally be able to offer it to the community of Multnomah County film lovers.”

Kanopy is an exciting addition to the library’s offerings for a number of reasons, says Ferris. “The breadth and depth of their video offerings, the smooth user experience, and the high number of apps and devices through which patrons can access the collection. Also every video comes with public performance rights so we can use all of these films for in-branch programming.”

Patrons can stream Kanopy films anywhere, anytime on smartphones, tablets, desktops, laptops and smart TVs — including iOS, Android, Roku, Apple TV, Chromecast and Kindle Fire. All videos include captions and transcripts and are compatible with assistive technologies.
Kanopy provides access to movies unavailable from any other library provider. In addition to the Criterion Collection, Kanopy offers videos from Kino Lorber, Frontline, and Media Education Foundation as well as the documentaries of Frederick Wiseman.

Kanopy videos are always available with no waiting. Patrons can view up to six films a month. Once a film is started, they have three days to watch it.

Four fast facts

- Kanopy offers three times the number of films that Hoopla offers. Library patrons view Hoopla videos an average of 3,600 times per month.
- The second round of the Library Music Project closed September 30. We received more than 80 submissions this round. During the first round, we received more than 400 submissions and chose 128.
- There are over 10,000 streams and downloads of the Library Music Project to date.
- We will begin accepting submissions for the third annual Library Writers Project on October 15. In addition to fiction, we'll be accepting memoir this year. We'll also accept titles self-published on more platforms than in previous years.

Patron comments

“You have offered a variety of classes and programs which bring good to the communities and enrich [lives] … . We really appreciate it and enjoy the classes and programs. The computer classes for seniors have helped use use computer technology and afforded us the opportunity to exercise our brain power. Our two instructors Chun and Yi have been very patient in explaining the ABC's of the subject matter and leading us to learn the basics and build up our knowledge. Thank you very much.” —Zhong-Zhi Wu and Yu-Zhen Li, Central Library, September 2018 (translated from Chinese)

“You and Overdrive supply 80% of my entertainment. I've had my library card since around 1978. Thank you. Next time downtown, I'm going to visit the main library.” —Carl, September 2018

“Jessica checked us out at the counter today, and she was absolutely AMAZING! She was so friendly and accommodating. My client has had problems in the past returning books and movies on time, so Jessie went above and beyond to ensure that she got an extension for returning rentals, and answered all of our questions accurately and patiently. I have never had such great customer service before.” —Katherine + LaShonda, Midland Library, August 2018
In the news

You Can Now Stream Movies for Free with Your Library Card (Willamette Week, October 1)
Multnomah County Library adds film streaming (News Radio 1190 KEX, October 1)
Multnomah County Library Card Holders Now Have Access to Film-Streaming Service Kanopy (Portland Mercury, October 1)
Library book challenges stack up (Portland Tribune, September 25)
Drag queen storytime struts into Fairview Library Sept. 24 (The Outlook, September 13)
Drag queen storytime is a hit at Holgate Library (KOIN.com, September 8)
Multnomah County Library selects Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie for Everybody Reads 2019 (The Skanner, September 10)

Upcoming events

Extreme Time Management in a 26/7 World
October 18
Central Library

Slabtown's Ghosts and Murders
Various dates and libraries

Fresh Voices from the Ukraine
October 23
Central Library

The Genius of Beethoven: The String Quartets
October 27
Central Library

Portland Opera Preview: La Traviata
October 28
Central Library

Writing Through It
Series begins November 1
Central Library

PDX (Pretty Damn X-traordinary) Native Film Night
November 1
Hollywood Theater

Día De Los Muertos / Day of the Dead Crafts and Celebration
November 2
Gregory Heights Library

DJ Lamar Saturday Dance Party
November 3
Central Library

City of Portland: Archives Roadshow
November 3
Kenton Library

Poetry is the Flavor of Unity with Oregon Poet Laureate
November 4
Central Library