



A young patron receives a free vision screening at Northwest Library.

Library holds free vision screenings for kids

This spring, Multnomah County Library joined other public libraries across the state in supporting families through the [See to Read](#) initiative by offering free vision screenings for children ages 3-7, in partnership with the Elks Children's Eye Clinic at OHSU's Casey Eye Institute. The screenings were held at Troutdale, Gresham, Albina, Capitol Hill, Northwest and Fairview libraries.

According to the Elks Children's Eye Clinic, 80 percent of learning in the first years comes through vision, and as many as 15 percent of all preschoolers have an undetected vision problem that requires treatment with glasses. See to Read, established in partnership with the American Library Association, aims to support the sight and success of Oregon's children by detecting vision problems that can only be treated successfully if caught before age 7. In Oregon, vision screening is required for new kindergartners, and attendees of the screenings received certificates for school registration.



A teen patron at Gresham Library holds up her vision board.

Gresham Teen Council hosts first-ever “Teen Mental Health Fair”

On May 19, the Gresham Library Teen Council hosted the library’s first-ever “Teen Mental Health Fair,” offering local teens resources, support and uplifting activities.

The event, described by the Teen Council members as a “huge success,” gave space for attendees to talk and connect with one another, discover new resources for health and mental health support, make bath bombs and vision boards, enjoy tea and relax. The teens did not provide advice or counsel, but did encourage members to take handouts from local organizations.

The Teen Council members spent months organizing every detail of the special event, from what activities to offer to the types of tea to serve.

One Teen Council member, Suehay Mercado, who helped plan the event and who also serves on the [Multnomah County Youth Commission](#), felt it was important to create a special place for teens:

"I really love the acceptance of Teen Council and the library. This event is important to us because mental health matters. Teens are pushed to the side with topics like these. We wanted to open a space for teens to let out things they need to let out."

Library Assistant and interim Teen Librarian Lori Chester was proud of the teens for bringing the event to fruition:

"We do a lot of entertainment events and this was different. It was teens supporting teens. This hasn't been done."

The Teen Council was excited by the turnout and is looking forward to planning another Teen Mental Health Fair next year.

Learn more about Multnomah County Library's Teen Councils at multcolib.org/events/teen-council

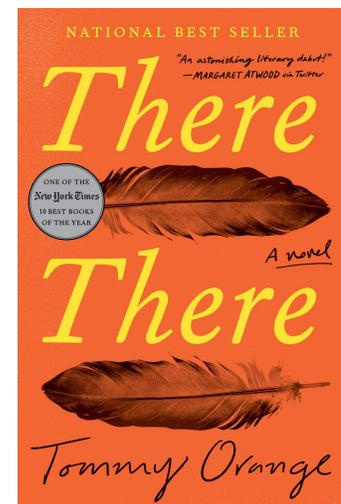
Everybody Reads 2020 to feature author Tommy Orange

Next January, Multnomah County Library will launch [Everybody Reads 2020](#), the library's 18th annual community reading project, with Tommy Orange and his debut novel, [There There](#).

There There offers a series of gripping portraits and perspectives of Native people in urban America, told from the perspectives of twelve characters traveling to Oakland for a powwow, each of them contending with issues of identity, memory and belonging.

The library is working with the Native community to center events and discussions around Native voices, organizations and movements. Patrons can check out [There There from the library](#) now. The library will also distribute thousands of copies of *the title* to libraries and high schools across Multnomah County early next year.

Everybody Reads, a community reading project of Multnomah County Library, is made possible in part by gifts to [The Library Foundation](#) with author appearance made possible by [Literary Arts](#).



Library upgrades computer system, patron catalog

On Thursday, May 16, after nearly two years of planning and preparation, the library successfully transitioned its decade-old software system that powers the library's catalog and patron accounts to a more modern system that is better equipped for the library's future. The new integrated library system, called "Symphony," allows the library to offer improved technology features to patrons, like self-checkout interfaces in multiple languages and improved notices for holds, while bringing a more reliable and enhanced experience for library staff.

This project was a collaborative effort between Multnomah County Library and Multnomah County IT, and its success would not have been possible without the creativity, determination, and technical knowledge of the dozens of library and county staff supporting the project.

Library kicks off Summer Reading on Friday, June 14

The library's annual Summer Reading program starts Friday, June 14 with the theme "Space: A Universe of Stories." Babies, kids and teens can sign up at their neighborhood library to read for fun and win prizes! The library partners with local school districts to help sign up more than 84,000 youth and distribute gameboards before the school year ends. Summer Reading is also the library's largest annual volunteer program, with more than 800 volunteers, mostly teens, helping throughout the summer. Learn more at multcolib.org/summer-reading.

The library is also hosting two Summer Reading kickoff events in partnership with the National Book Foundation and Home Forward:

[Summer Reading Kickoff Party at New Columbia](#), Wednesday, June 26 at 2:30 pm

[Summer Reading Kickoff Party at Rockwood Station](#), Saturday, June 29 at 1:30 pm

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.

Patron comments

"I'm so thankful for the library as a resource in my community. I value having a place to go that not only offers wonderful books, but so many other materials, resources, services & events. As an educator, the library has not only had a wonderful impact on my life, but has also provided so much joy & knowledge to my students through the books I've brought to four classrooms & through the events and classes they've taken here. Thank you for the work you do to enrich our lives!" — Cathy, Woodstock patron, May 2019

"I just want to say you all are amazing. I am continually surprised & impressed by your wonderful resources. I just saw you do caregiver kits for people caring for those with Alzheimer's or dementia. While that issue does not affect me personally, I think it is so thoughtful & a great idea. From Discovery kits, to free or low-cost community events, to highlighting world language books & children's books with strong P.O.C. protagonists....the library's heart is really in the right place. Your work is vital and enriching & I am so glad you're here! Great respect for you and gratitude too! Thank you!" — Morgan, Woodstock patron, May 2019

"I want to thank all the excellent staff at the Central Library for their patience and good humor. They are wonderfully knowledgeable and always generous in taking time to find books or explain computer issues. I've been a patron of this library for 22 years and feel very blessed to have such a beautiful building to come to and a true 'library' atmosphere with stacks to browse and places to sit and read. I hope the new computer upgrade does not affect any of the good aspects of the library. Thanks again to all of you." — Central patron, May 2019

In the news

[Multnomah County Library Summer Reading Programs](#) (The Scanner, May 30)

Upcoming events

[Intuitive Watercolor for Teens](#)

Wednesday, June 12 at 4 pm
Fairview-Columbia Library

[Summer Reading Blast Off](#)

Saturday, June 15 at 2 pm
Hollywood Library

[Library Music Project: Traditional Cuban](#)

[Music with Melao de Cuba](#)
Saturday, June 15 at 2:30 pm
Collins Gallery at Central Library

[Forgotten Portland History: Chinese](#)

[Vegetable Farmers of Portland](#)
Sunday, June 16 at 1 pm
Northwest Library

[Space Camp](#)

June 17 through June 21
St. Johns Library

[Learn to Make Churros](#)

Monday, June 17 at 4 pm
Midland Library

[Meet the Minis \(Horses, That Is!\)](#)

Thursday, June 20 at 3 pm
Northwest Library

[Earthquake Preparedness](#)

Sunday, June 23 at 2 pm
Gresham Library