The last couple of weeks have been a whirlwind! On January 30, we reached a huge milestone in the history of Multnomah County Library when we presented a detailed proposal to the Multnomah County Library District Board to expand and modernize library spaces.

For years, our community has been limited by small library spaces. As our population has grown, libraries have not kept pace. Every day, people here miss out on opportunities that are abundant in other communities, near and far.

The proposal we presented expands library space by nearly 70%; builds, rebuilds or renovates seven public library locations, including the addition of a new East County flagship library comparable in size to Central Library; adds automation to increase efficiency and speed up delivery times; and increases broadband speeds at all locations.

Over the past two-and-a-half years, we've done our homework. Our community deserves for us to get this right. The hard work of many library staff and expert partners got us to this point. Now, the next step is up to the Board. If the Board chooses to refer a measure and voters approve it, then we begin the next phase: input and design. We will center our communities in that process. As always, the Library Advisory Board will play a critical role, helping us hear from and respond to the needs of our community. I can't wait to turn the page and see what unfolds!
Día de los Niños y Día de los Libros

Día de los Niños y Día de los Libros (Children's Day/Book Day), commonly known as “Día,” is a nationally recognized initiative that emphasizes the importance of bilingual literacy for children. Día is a traditional celebration in Latin American countries, mostly happening on April 30.

Each year, in April, Multnomah County Library hosts three Día celebrations made possible in part by gifts to The Library Foundation, including a free book for every child in attendance.

Over 12,000 community members and library patrons experienced Multnomah County Library Día celebrations and Día outreach events in 2019.

Additional 2019 Día highlights:

- 118 volunteers contributed 706 hours to help plan, promote, conduct, and evaluate the event
- 200 new library cards were created during Día and Día outreach
- 85% of caregivers felt more confident reading to their child, and teaching their child to read, after attending Día (283 patrons surveyed)
- 4,912 books were handed out at Día events

This year’s Día theme is “Sports, Health & Fitness,” with activities and books reflecting the theme. Multnomah County Library will host three Día events in 2020:

- Gresham Library, Saturday, April 11, 2-4 pm
- North Portland Library, Saturday, April 18, 2-4 pm
- Midland Library, Saturday, April 25, 2-4 pm
From Historical Trauma to Historical Wisdom: How a Generation is Healing

On January 15, the library partnered with the Indigenous 20-Something Project on the special event, From Historical Trauma to Historical Wisdom: How a Generation is Healing.

The local and Native-run Indigenous 20-Something Project is focused on bringing healing to a generation of Native youth who’ve been impacted by intergenerational trauma.

The successful, standing-room only event at Central Library featured two speakers who founded the Indigenous 20-Something Project—Shalene Joseph and Josh Cocker. The speakers discussed historical trauma experienced by Indigenous people and how they themselves navigate colonial structures to empower young Native people. The event is available to listen to as a podcast. One library staff attendee commented:

“The presenters modeled their message of balancing the wounding from colonialism with the healing potential of Indigenous wisdom. Their way of being in the room reinforced the power of ‘know where you come from.’”

The event was part of Everybody Reads, the library’s community reading project which runs January 2 to March 5. The 2020 Everybody Reads selection is There There by Tommy Orange. This year’s Everybody Reads programs, which are all presented by members of the local Native community, are opportunities to discuss the themes of Orange’s book.

Everybody Reads 2020, 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.

For more information about Everybody Reads programs, visit the library website.
Library celebrates Slavic New Year

The library presented a Slavic New Year celebration for the community on January 12, 2020 at Midland Library. The well-attended event brought in more than 500 attendees throughout the day.

Library staff handed out 185 gift bags for youth in attendance. In addition to the gift bags, children were each presented with a new book, made possible by gifts to The Library Foundation. Event attendees enjoyed a play, holiday crafts, a balloon performance and even an indoor snowball fight (with cotton balls)! Read a full recap of this event in the East Portland News.

Patron comments

“In 2017 I decided to become a US citizen. I was at lost on how the whole processed worked so I googled US citizenship classes and one of the places that came up was MCL and since I had used their services before I had no doubt that it was the place for me to take classes, even though, I live all the way in beaverton. So I signed up for the classes and drove all the way to one of the branches in SE. It was one of the best experiences ever because the instructor made me feel that she really cared. She also had an immigration lawyer come in and he gave us very important information. Because of him I was able to contact SOAR immigration services and they helped me out with the whole process. In 2018 I became a US citizen and voted for the first time in November and it was one of the best joys of my life. Additionally, because of the help and information that I got through MCL my parents also became US citizens. So I just want to thank MCL for all the help and services that they provide.” — Juan, January 2020

“Mandy in popular library [Central Library] went out of her way to find me some books. She was great. She cared that I left with something to read.” — Luci, January 2020
In the news

County backs library system expansion (Portland Tribune, February 4)
Multnomah libraries on track for major upgrades, new flagship library in Gresham area
(The Oregonian/Oregonlive, February 3)
Opinion: Well-used and deeply-loved Multnomah County libraries have outgrown their space
(The Oregonian/Oregonlive, February 2)
Check it out! Huge new library on the way? (Gresham Outlook, January 28)
The 25 Best Things to Do in Portland This Week — [Black Belt Eagle Scout event] (Portland Mercury, January 27)
Multnomah County Library Now Has One of the Highest Digital Circulations of Any Library in the World (Willamette Week, January 23)
Check Out What’s Streaming (for FREE!) On The Multnomah County Library's New Library Music Project (Portland Mercury, January 22)
Multnomah County Library users love ebooks, audiobooks (The Oregonian/Oregonlive, January 22)
Record number of digital checkouts from Mult. Co. libraries in 2019 (KOIN, January 15)
Ded Moroz helps Russian/Slavic community celebrate the New Year (East Portland News)
Multnomah County Announces Record Three Million Ebook and Audiobook Checkouts in 2019 (The Skanner, January 9)

Upcoming events: Black History Month

A Place Called Home: From Vanport to Albina
Wednesday, February 12, 6:15 pm
Midland Library

Black History Month Film Fest
Saturdays, February 15 and 22, 3 pm
St. Johns Library

The HeART Gallery
Saturday, February 15, 3 pm
Rockwood Library

Honoring Black Heritage Through Art
Sunday, February 16, 2:30 pm
Kenton Library

Ken Burns’ Central Park Five Movie Screening
Sunday, February 16, 2 pm
Central Library

I Love Being Me
Friday, February 21, 12 pm
North Portland Library

I Never Knew There Were So Many Books About Us!
Saturday, February 22, 1 pm
Hollywood Library

Power to the People: The Black Panther Party’s Legacy in Albina
Sunday, February 23, 1 pm
North Portland Library