

Date: March 6, 2020

To: The Urbana Free Library Board of Trustees

From: Celeste Choate, Executive Director

Re: Director's Report for Board Meeting of March 10, 2020



VISION

Nurturing growth by sparking curiosity and fostering a sense of belonging.

MISSION

We encourage learning and enrich lives by providing access to diverse resources and programs.



We cultivate equity, mutual respect, and belonging by learning about and responding to our community.

WE WELCOME ALL.

Goal 1: We provide a welcoming and inviting space for dialogue and personal connections.

- The Poet Laureate's Showcase on February 13th highlighted a diverse group of local poets with a multitude of different styles and was attended by 43 community members. The event was co-sponsored by the City of Urbana's Art and Culture Program.

Goal 2: We engage the community to understand and respond to unique needs of our community.

- Staff from the Parkland College Library enjoyed a behind-the-scenes tour of The Urbana Free Library and the Champaign County Historical Archives as part of their staff in-service day on Thursday, February 27th. In total, 12 Parkland staff visited the Library, which included a special tour of Teen Open Lab.



We connect people with tools and resources for learning and leading fruitful lives.

WE SPARK CURIOSITY.

Goal 1: We connect people to resources and technology for personal growth leading to greater fulfillment.

- Cozy Winter Reading ended on February 29th and every age group saw an increase in the number of participants over last year! More information with final numbers will be included in the April Director's Report.
- In March, the Champaign County Historical Archives will go live with Local History and Genealogy Digital Exhibits. Using the digital content management platform Omeka, Archives staff and volunteers have created four digital exhibits and plan to add many more!
- New AV equipment including a new projector, speakers, amplifier, and controller have been installed in the Lewis Auditorium thanks to a gift from the Bergeron family.



Goal 2: We expand horizons and facilitate knowledge exchange by offering diverse programs.



- A crowd of 57 community members came to the Library’s Third Annual Spelling Bee to watch and spell their way to the trophy, but in the end one champion out-spelled the competition (pictured right). Thank you to Master Pronouncer Mari Lud McKeeth for pronouncing the words at the spelling bee!
- The Champaign County Historical Archives will continue the Library’s 145th anniversary celebration with Trivia Time at TUFL! on Thursday, March 5th. Teams can compete to answer trivia from the last 145 years. The event will be emceed by *News-Gazette* columnist Tom Kacich. It’s time to brush up on your trivia!



We help our community thrive by creating connections and working with partners.

WE CONTRIBUTE TO A STRONG SOCIAL FABRIC.

Goal 1: We make the community better for all by promoting diversity, equity and inclusion through our collections and programs.

- Community members celebrated black writers from around the world at Bitter Kola Tastes Sweet on February 20th. Nearly 50 attendees hailing from around the world came to read authors’ works and/or participate in the celebration. This program was co-sponsored by the University of Illinois Center for African Studies.

Goal 2: We stimulate connections and partnerships to create a vibrant, engaged community.

- This year marks the hundredth anniversary of Women’s Suffrage. The Library is partnering with the League of Women Voters for a book discussion on *The Woman’s Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote* by Elaine Weiss. Illinois historian Teresa Barnes, who is also the Director of the Center for African Studies at the University of Illinois, will attend and share information to provide additional historical context. The Museum of the Grand Prairie and the Champaign County Historical Archives will have items on display.
- Two authors are coming to the Library to as part of the University of Illinois’ [Year of Creative Writers](#). Award-winning authors Luis Alberto Urrea and Meagan Cass will be here on March 10th for a reading and book signing. The Year of Creative Writers is supported by the Presidential Initiative to Celebrate the Impact of the Arts and the Humanities. The Year of Creative Writers is presented by the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities (IPRH) and the Creative Writing Program / Department of English, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and is co-sponsored by the Institute for the Humanities (UIC), UIC Program for Writers, UIS Creative Writing, Champaign Public Library, The Urbana Free Library, Illinois Public Media, and The Illini Union Bookstore.



We are mindful of the wide array of resources needed to serve evolving community needs and are transparent with our operations.

WE ARE A STRONG ORGANIZATION.

Goal 1: We steward our physical and financial resources to allow for growth and sustainability.

- The Urbana Free Library Foundation funded the restoration of the 1918 historical porch. The Library was awarded a Heritage Award by the Preservation and Conservation Association for the restoration on February 22, 2020. The flower boxes have been removed for refinishing.
- The Library has been awarded an Urbana Public Arts Grant of \$520 and half of the amount will be given to the Library this fiscal year. See the end of this report for the requested budget amendment.
- The Friends of The Urbana Free Library Amazon book shop has been successful, and staff request a budget amendment for it, as well.



Goal 2: We cultivate continuous improvement among Board and staff members to create increased engagement, satisfaction, and retention.

- Amanda Standerfer, Sherrie Bowser, Dawn Cassady, Rachel Fuller, Esther Yi, and Celeste Choate attended the Public Library Association conference, which occurs every two years. The Urbana Free Library Foundation provided \$5,000 in funding so that more staff could learn from excellent programs and from other attendees.
- *Serving Our Public 4.0, Standards for Illinois Public Libraries, 2020* has been published. Celeste Choate was one of the Illinois Library Association committee members who revised the *Standards*.
- Donica Martin, Director of the Archives, has been nominated to serve as a Council member for the Midwest Archives Conference.
- At TUFL's Staff Day 2020, experts from ZingTrain taught us about "The art of giving great customer" service in the morning, and we had breakout sessions in the afternoon. These included a trial of a possible escape room for the Fairy Tale Ball, database demos, and Danielle Chynoweth shared information about how Cunningham Township provides service and to whom. Department updates were provided, and we participated in a culture code exercise.



Look here for additional information and action item details that are outside of the scope of the strategic plan.

Library eNewsletters: [Click here to sign up!](#)

Library News & Events: <https://conta.cc/32k7wf4>

Youth & Teen: <https://conta.cc/32h0vxx>

Other Library news:

[Yearlong series brings prominent authors to campus](#)

Budget and current financial information is here: <http://urbanafreelibrary.org/your-right-know#fin>, with FY20 financial reports here: <https://urbanafreelibrary.org/financial-reports>.

COVID-19 planning

TUFL staff are working on procedures and a continuity of operations plan and procedures in response to the COVID-19 virus, following the lead of the CU Public Health District (which is following the lead of the CDC) and the City of Urbana.

Budget amendments for March:

- Due to the ongoing financial success of the Friends of The Urbana Free Library Amazon book shop, staff recommend
 - Creating two new expense lines in the 810 budget to isolate the additional expenses as a result of sales:
 - 81080831 52902 postage, budget expense amount \$3075
 - 81080831 51900 supplies, budget expense amount \$275
 - Increasing the revenue budget for 810 46300 Donations/Contributions/Gifts by \$7500 to show the Amazon book shop revenue.
- The Library has been awarded an Urbana Public Arts Grant and half of the amount will be given to the Library this fiscal year. Staff request the following changes:
 - \$260.00 increase in revenue to Donations/Contributions/Gifts 802 46300
 - \$260.00 increase in expense to Library Program Supplies 80280802 51812
- Due to additional support provided by Shelves for the Library's successful Teen Open Lab, staff recommend the following changes:
 - Move \$2340.00 from AYS Staffing (80280802 50110) to Circulation Staffing (80280804 50110).