

Date: August 6, 2020

To: The Urbana Free Library Board of Trustees

From: Celeste Choate, Executive Director

Re: Director's Report for Board Meeting of August 11, 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.

- Although there is no in-person programming – so no Teen Open Lab, teens still have the opportunity to engage with the *Teen Zoom Check in with Teen Librarians* and the *Teen Online Lab*.

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

- Beginning this month, Library staff will invite everyone who attends a program to provide feedback about their experience via an online survey. The survey results will provide staff with more data to determine the program's success and its impact on those who attended. Results will be used to adapt regularly-occurring programs and to develop new programs as well.



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.

- On August 8th, author and musician, Jim Gill, will hold an online workshop for area librarians and educators on how to use music play to promote literacy, math development, and inclusion. Jim Gill has twenty years of experience in creating music play programs and completed graduate studies focused on child development at the Erikson Institute of Chicago. During this workshop, he'll share his expertise on the benefits of music play and how educators and librarians can incorporate music play into their work. *This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency and is presented in partnership with the Urbana Early Childhood School.*
- The Library recently added Testing & Education Reference Center (TERC) for community members. Testing & Education Reference Center is a valuable online tool for standardized test preparation, researching undergraduate and graduate programs, finding tuition assistance, and exploring careers. Community members can also pursue new career paths by using the test prep assistance for certification exams and receiving advice on resumes, cover letters,

interviewing, and networking.

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

- In July and early August, the Library held a weekly series of online programs designed to help community members searching for employment or those looking for a career change. Each workshop focused on a different topic such as marketing yourself, job search strategies, pivoting in your career, and more. Though attendance was small, several attendees noted that the information was helpful and thanked us for holding the workshops. Thank you to our community partners, the University of Illinois Extension, Parkland College, and Lincoln & Hill, who led these programs.
- As part of its new online programs, the Library offered a four-week series on Guitar Basics. Community members ranging from children to adults took advantage of the program and learned about tuning a guitar, hand position, basic chords, and more.
- Jim Gill's last concert for community members debuts on August 8th. Using music and play, Jim Gill will encourage children and caregivers to interact, have fun, and practice reading skills by reading along with some of his songs. *This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.*



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.

- To celebrate the birthday of acclaimed author James Baldwin, the Library participated in two programs. On August 6th via our Facebook page, the Library hosted a dramatic reading of portions of Mr. Baldwin's works by actor Kevin T. Hobbs. *This program was cosponsored by The Urbana Free Library, Urbana Arts and Culture program, Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center, and READ: Racial Education, Activism, and Discussion.* The second program will be on August 9th via Zoom and is a discussion with bestselling author Eddie Glaude. Dr. Glaude's newest book, [*Begin Again: James Baldwin's America and Its Urgent Lessons for Our Own*](#), is a current *New York Times* bestseller. Dr. Glaude will be joined by community members to discuss James Baldwin's life and works. *This program is cosponsored by The Urbana Free Library and READ: Racial Education, Activism and Discussion. The program is also supported by Parkland College Library, Mahomet Public Library, Rantoul Public Library, St. Joseph Township-Swearingen Public Library, Danville Public Library, and the International and Area Studies Library of the University of Illinois.*
- The Champaign County Historical Archives is [chronicling racial and social justice movements in Champaign County](#), like Black Lives Matter, by collecting physical and digital materials including photographs, videos, voice recordings, social media posts, poems, essays, reflections, artwork, organizational records, and more from community members. Community submissions will add to and complement our existing physical and web-archived collections from organizations including eBlack Champaign-Urbana, the Urban League of Champaign County, and the Champaign-Urbana Area Project.

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

- At the prerecorded program STEAM Power: Citizen Scientists and Backyard BioBlitzs, Library staff interviewed University of Illinois professor Rob Kanter of the School of Earth, Society, and Environment about what a citizen scientist is and how people can get involved. The program also explained how to do a BioBlitz in your backyard and listed helpful resources. The video was watched 15 times in the first three days it was posted.

- In partnership with Urbana Park District, The Urbana Free Library is displaying StoryWalk® exhibits in several Urbana Parks. Over the month of August, stories created by community members will be displayed, highlighting the community’s creativity. For community members who can’t make it to the park, each location will also have a virtual walk through of the StoryWalk®. *This project is supported in part by a City of Urbana Arts Grant.*
- The Champaign County Historical Archives is partnering with the Champaign Public Library to launch a program for local seniors and those living with memory impairments similar to the [Tales & Travel series](#). CPL will record videos based on research provided by CCHA, and will share the completed videos with TUFL so we can use them for programming, too. To view a draft of an upcoming video, [visit CPL’s YouTube page here](#).



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 Foundation received gifts totaling \$650 in memory of Thomas Nevins, which they are passing on to the Library. The budget amendment below explains how the Library will use the gift.

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

- Lauren Chambers has been invited by the Illinois Heartland Library System to participate in an online panel about how public libraries can promote a complete count for the Census. The panel takes place on August 10th.
- After being delayed due to COVID-19, we have developed an Activity Plan process that will help us fully implement our strategic plan. We started aligning our work with the new strategic plan in January and the Activity Plan will deepen our implementation work now that the building is open again and we can focus a bit more on the future. Departments will work on Activity Plans between now and early September and we’ll bring everything together in a complete Activity Plan by the end of September. This will guide our work over the life of the strategic plan, and we’ll continue to make changes and updates on a regular basis.



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

Requested FY21 Budget Amendments:

- The Urbana Free Library Foundation recently received gifts totaling \$650, given in memory of Thomas Nevins. If the Board approves Resolution 2020-10 and this budget amendment, it will be used, as requested by the donor, to support the music collection by purchasing music CDs.
 - \$650 increase in revenue to Donations/Contributions/ Gifts, 802 46300
 - \$650 increase in expense to CD purchase line, 80280802 51805

IMLS Released new data FY2018 data on American Public libraries, available here: <https://www.ims.gov/news/ims-releases-new-data-american-public-libraries>.

July 10 Library eNewsletter: <https://conta.cc/3gldvA3>

July 10 Youth & Teen eNewsletter: <https://conta.cc/3gJf14Y>

July 24 Library eNewsletter: <https://conta.cc/3jz5aRK>

July 24 Youth & Teen eNewsletter: <https://conta.cc/2CxaZOV>

August Archives eNewsletter: <https://conta.cc/2P3ZgKe>

Other Library news:

Grab and Go at the Urbana Free Library: <https://www.wcia.com/ciliving-tv/grab-and-go-at-the-urbana-free-library/>

ALA Member News: Constructing library buildings that work by Fred Schlipf: <http://www.ala.org/news/member-news/2020/07/constructing-library-buildings-work>.

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