

Date: April 8, 2021

To: The Urbana Free Library Board of Trustees

From: Celeste Choate, Executive Director

Re: Director's Report for Board Meeting of April 13, 2021



## 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.**

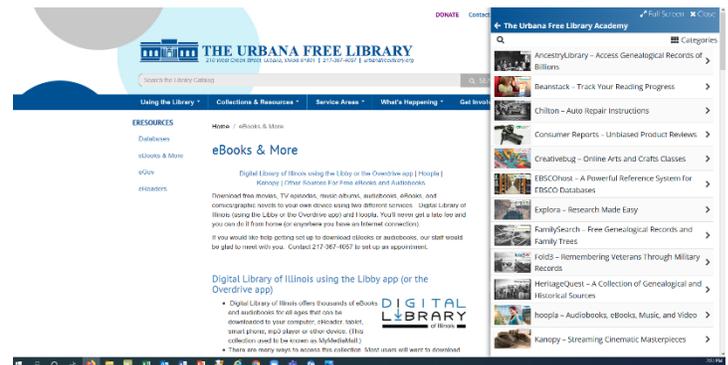
### Goal 1: We provide a welcoming and inviting space for dialogue and personal connections.

- During National Library Week from April 4-10, the Library has proudly hosted a giant book created by Leal School kindergarten classes! The book is 10 feet long and 35 inches tall, and the project has been led by artist and kindergarten teacher Patricia León. The book explores in English and Spanish what it has been like to attend kindergarten virtually during COVID-19.



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

- With the increased interest in and use of the Library's digital resources, the Library is pleased to provide community members with instructional videos on how to use these resources embedded in our website. The videos, which are offered by vendor Niche Academy, are clear, concise, and can be accessed at community members' convenience and from the comfort of their own homes. To see videos currently available, simply click the ["Show Me" button](#) on the right side of Library webpages related to digital resources.



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.

- In order to provide better access to TUFL collections, loan periods have been changed and updated in Polaris for some items. DVD's can now be borrowed for two weeks. New audiobooks, CDs, and magazines have changed to four weeks.
- On April 10 and in honor of National Poetry Month, children's poet Michelle Schaub will share poems from her book, *Finding Treasures*, during a program for community members. Schaub's book inspired the display cases in Downer's Grove Public Library, which The Urbana Free Library used as models for its own collection-sharing display cases. During the program, children will be encouraged to share their own collections and to create their own poems.
- Archives Librarian Sherrie Bowser updated [CCHA's Archive-It site](#) by adding metadata, links, and summaries to each community partner's web page archive. CCHA has contacted our community partners to share the link to our Archive-It site, and to their individual web archives. Over the next year, the Archives will identify more community partners and web pages to add to this growing effort.

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

- This year's Winter Reading program -- themed Light Up Your World with Reading -- ended on February 28<sup>th</sup>. Though the pandemic effected how many people signed up, we saw gains in the percentage of people who participated and completed. *Book prizes were generously funded by the Friends of The Urbana Free Library.*

Age Group	Participants who Completed 2021	Participants who Completed 2020	Completion Percentage 2021	Completion Percentage 2020	Participation Percentage 2021	Participation Percentage 2020	Amount Read 2021	Amount Read 2020
Children	107	114	81.68%	74.03%	90.08%	78.15%	84,909 minutes	86,553 minutes
Teen	13	17	50.00%	58.62%	57.69%	65.52%	14,902 pages	32,854 pages
Adult	82	79	64.57%	62.20%	80.31%	73.44%	832 books	709 books

- On April 5, local author Carol Spindel shared excerpts from her newest book, *I Give You Half the Road*. The book explores the recent history of the Ivory Coast told through the lives of five citizens. Spindel has been visiting and writing about the same community in the Ivory Coast since 1981.
- National Library Week is April 4-10. To celebrate, the Library has hosted themed story times, encouraged community members to post why they love TUFL on social media, is inviting community members to complete a [library-themed digital escape room](#), and is holding a raffle for a Roku Express. Community members can enter the raffle once per day during National Library Week by checking out any physical or digital item.
- The Graduate Society of Women Engineers is returning for another STEM program on April 17, and this time they are inviting children and their families to explore surface tension. Families can pick up a kit at the Library in advance so that they can perform the experiments with the engineers during the online program.



**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.**

- As part of Women's History Month, Cyndee Schaffer, co-author of *Mollie's War*, shared with an audience of 25 community members her mother's experience as a member of the Women's Army Corps (WAC) in WWII. She covered her mother's time in the WAC from basic training to being stationed in various parts of Europe throughout the war. Cyndee also spoke about the role women have had in the military. This event was produced by the Champaign County Genealogical Society in partnership with Illinois Humanities and was also cosponsored by The Urbana Free Library and the Champaign County History Museum.

- March 13 through April 15 is National Deaf History Month. To celebrate, Teen Online Lab highlighted books in the Library's collection that related to Deaf History or prominently featured d/Deaf characters. During the program, teens were also taught the alphabet and basic introductions in American Sign Language (ASL). The ASL instruction was co-taught by a local deaf teen.
- On April 24, children and their families can learn more about wetland animals, soils, water, and plants from scientists at the Prairie Research Institute at the University of Illinois. The scientists will share information and lead community members through demonstrations and activities using kits that families can pick up at the Library to use at home during the online program.
- In March, the Champaign County Historical Archives celebrated International Women's Day with CCHA Intern Ani [taking a look at working women in CU](#) and sharing the research on the Library's blog. Additionally, CCHA Intern Johna delved into the newly processed Chanute POW/MIA collection [in this blog post](#).
- CCHA staff will be virtually visiting seven county libraries between April and August to give presentations on archival and genealogical resources available at CCHA. These presentations will include an overview of resources and an introduction on how to perform archival and genealogy research, both in-person and remotely. Each library's presentation will highlight material specific to the town or area. All area libraries were contacted; the libraries being visited are Danville, Mahomet, Philo, Rantoul, Sidney, St. Joseph, and Tolono.

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

- Read Across America adapted to the pandemic by holding a drive-through event on March 6 where community members could pick up a free book and bag full of activities and information about local resources. The event continued online with a [webpage](#) featuring videos of storytellers and local figures reading stories. There was also a live panel on social media where parents could have questions answered by literacy experts. During the drive-through, 401 bags and books were handed out! The event was organized by a committee comprised of members from multiple local organizations including the Urbana Park District, the Champaign Public Library, and The Urbana Free Library.
- Explore the history of local music and one man's impact on it during the program, [Walkin' Through the CU Music Scene with Nick Rudd](#), on April 13. Nick Rudd was a local musician whose influence on local music spanned forty years. During the program, a panel of speakers will explore Nick's influence and the history of Champaign-Urbana music since the 80s. This program is sponsored by the Sousa Archives and Center for American Music and the Nick Rudd Music Fund at The Urbana Free Library Foundation.
- On April 13, the Archives will host "How to Excel at Genealogical Analysis" in partnership with the Champaign County Genealogical Society. Candace Wilmot will demonstrate how simple, readily available organizational tools, such as Microsoft Excel, can be used to organize family history data.
- [Click here](#) to see the Library's video that is part of the Imagine Urbana initiative. The City of Urbana is updating its comprehensive plan and [Imagine Urbana](#) is the community engagement piece of the process to help identify goals and aspirations for the future development of the community. Besides videos featuring Urbana governmental entities and organizations, there is an [Idea Wall](#) for community members to post their ideas.



**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 proposed FY22 budget is included in the Board packet. The Board will discuss it this month and vote in May.
- The Community Webs program, initiated by the Internet Archive, [has received an additional \\$1.1 million grant](#) from the Mellon Foundation. This grant will allow the Champaign County Historical Archives to continue using Archive-It

to web archive pages from our community with a subscription waiver for longer than the original 5-year period, which ends in 2022.

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

- The City of Urbana recently extended its employee benefit of up to 8 weeks of leave for COVID-19-related reasons “until further notice.” The Library’s up to 8-week COVID-19 leave benefit is set to expire on April 30, 2021. Given the recent increase in COVID-19 cases both locally and nationally, we feel continued access to such leave is important for Library staff and recommend the Board approve the indefinite extension.
- On March 30, AYS Librarian Carol Inskeep participated as panel member for a UIUC history course. The class, led by Dr. Kathryn Oberdeck, is archiving materials about the UC Independent Media Center and the history of local LGBTQ communities. The panel discussed drag performance in central Illinois, and Carol specifically spoke about the Library’s Drag Queen Story Hour events and the role of libraries in creating LGBTQ-friendly spaces.
- Donica Swann was elected by [Midwest Archives Conference](#) membership to serve a three-year term on MAC’s executive council. As a Council member, Donica will help conduct the business of the organization including the annual business meeting, the annual conference, and serving on standing committees as needed.
- On May 13, Donica Swann will present and chair a session called "Lockdown Lemonade" at the 2021 Midwest Archives Conference annual meeting. The panel session will cover the workflow, management, and importance of the oral history transcription project that Library staff participated in during the state’s COVID-19 stay-at-home order from March - June 2020.



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

**Requested FY21 Budget Amendments:** [Given the Finance Policy 5.a.](#), some fund shifts require preapproval of the Board, and administrative staff are authorize to exceed individual line item budgets in certain circumstances with Board approval afterwards. Here are this month’s FY22 Budget amendments.

- A transfer needs to be made to cover second-quarter 2021 costs for the Spark Hire software. This transfer will need Board approval to move ahead.
  - Subtract \$709 from 80280808 51500 Shared IT Costs.
  - Add \$709 to 80280801 52904 Recruiting Expenses.
- A transfer was made between two general fund lines to cover unexpected copier expenses.
  - Subtract \$1,700 from 80280801 51900 Other Supplies.
  - Add \$1,700 to 80280801 52203 Maintenance Agreements.
- In response to circulation trends, the funds below have been shifted.
  - Subtract \$1,500 from 80280802 51807 80103 Children’s Sound Recordings.
  - Add \$1,500 to 80280802 51811 Downloadables.
  - Subtract \$4,000 from 80280802 51806 DVDs.
  - Add \$4,000 to 80280802 51811 Downloadables.
- In response to an increase in Archives database expenses, a transfer was made in the funds below.
  - Subtract \$500 from 80280803 51803 Archives Periodicals.
  - Add \$500 to 80280803 51910 Archives Databases.

<b>Library eNewsletters:</b>	
April News & Events: <a href="https://conta.cc/3fy5rot">https://conta.cc/3fy5rot</a>	April Youth & Teen: <a href="https://conta.cc/3waUleF">https://conta.cc/3waUleF</a>

## Other Library News:

**Celebrating 'Read Across America' during pandemic:** <https://www.wcia.com/news/celebrating-read-across-america-during-pandemic/>

**Book Review – Becky Kasten | Prepare to be propelled through beautifully written 'The River':** [https://www.news-gazette.com/arts-entertainment/books/becky-kasten-prepare-to-be-propelled-through-beautifully-written-the-river/article\\_b34326af-5a87-5511-9c6c-3ee8faf4a575.html](https://www.news-gazette.com/arts-entertainment/books/becky-kasten-prepare-to-be-propelled-through-beautifully-written-the-river/article_b34326af-5a87-5511-9c6c-3ee8faf4a575.html)

**How to Get a Garden Plot in Champaign-Urbana:** <https://www.chambanamoms.com/2021/03/02/how-to-get-a-garden-plot-in-champaign-urbana/>

**Spring is Coming – Champaign-Urbana Weekend Planner:** <https://www.chambanamoms.com/2021/03/03/spring-is-coming/>

**Silver Hearts is serving a neighborhood in crisis** (The Urbana Free Library works with the Urbana Rotary Club, the Urbana Park District, and the Champaign County Forest Preserve District to provide a monthly newsletter as part of the food delivery):

[https://www.smilepolitely.com/culture/silver\\_hearts\\_is\\_serving\\_a\\_neighborhood\\_in\\_crisis/?fbclid=IwAR1OM94TZ1MfPYPQ8Q-6eCGuqnp8v4LxRlq7U4qtBddbFtsh8sBpbH3wIA](https://www.smilepolitely.com/culture/silver_hearts_is_serving_a_neighborhood_in_crisis/?fbclid=IwAR1OM94TZ1MfPYPQ8Q-6eCGuqnp8v4LxRlq7U4qtBddbFtsh8sBpbH3wIA)

**Seed library and gardening resources available at Urbana Free Library:** <https://www.wcia.com/ciliving-tv/seed-library-and-gardening-resources-available-at-urbana-free-library/>

**Hopping Closer to Easter – Champaign-Urbana Weekend Planner:**  
<https://www.chambanamoms.com/2021/03/17/hopping-closer-to-easter/>

**Coronavirus response – Champaign library to ease some restrictions next week:** [https://www.news-gazette.com/coronavirus/coronavirus-response-champaign-library-to-ease-some-restrictions-next-week/article\\_5c557b51-7185-5752-9a0f-9772a29f7632.html](https://www.news-gazette.com/coronavirus/coronavirus-response-champaign-library-to-ease-some-restrictions-next-week/article_5c557b51-7185-5752-9a0f-9772a29f7632.html)

**Closing in on Easter – Champaign-Urbana Weekend Planner:** <https://www.chambanamoms.com/2021/03/24/closing-in-on-easter-champaign-urbana/>

**Here's the latest on the C-U Crochet Coral Reef Satellite:**  
[http://www.smilepolitely.com/splog/heres\\_the\\_latest\\_on\\_the\\_c\\_u\\_crochet\\_coral\\_reef\\_satellite/](http://www.smilepolitely.com/splog/heres_the_latest_on_the_c_u_crochet_coral_reef_satellite/)

**Book Review – Shalini Smith | 'What the Font' a cute mini-lesson on typefaces:** [https://www.news-gazette.com/arts-entertainment/books/shalini-smith-what-the-font-a-cute-mini-lesson-on-typefaces/article\\_7595dcc9-c5d3-5b65-a9ba-918b8ad7e7c6.html](https://www.news-gazette.com/arts-entertainment/books/shalini-smith-what-the-font-a-cute-mini-lesson-on-typefaces/article_7595dcc9-c5d3-5b65-a9ba-918b8ad7e7c6.html)

**16 Things to Do Before Turning 16 in Champaign-Urbana:** <https://www.chambanamoms.com/2021/04/04/16-things-before-turning-16-champaign-urbana/>

---

Budget and current financial information is here: <http://urbanafreelibrary.org/your-right-know#fin>, with FY21 financial reports here: <https://urbanafreelibrary.org/financial-reports>.

Bank Account totals for FY21 through March 31, 2021:

	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March
<b>Illinois Funds account</b>	\$ 205,960.29	\$ 205,988.20	\$ 206,009.74	\$ 206,122.77	\$ 206,340.41	\$ 206,403.46	\$ 206,418.43	\$ 206,430.57	\$ 206,441.01
<b>Busey Bank Cash accounts</b>	\$ 1,674,756.55	\$ 187,126.62	\$ 1,674,697.83	\$ 3,076,869.85	\$ 3,126,830.04	\$ 2,867,559.11	\$ 2,714,123.40	\$ 2,060,133.34	\$ 1,949,301.90
<b>Busey Bank Web account</b>	\$ 57,393.33	\$ 61,436.33	\$ 65,497.23	\$ 68,408.79	\$ 70,892.52	\$ 76,656.74	\$ 80,631.43	\$ 85,689.19	\$ 6,988.07
<b>Total</b>	\$ 1,938,110.17	\$ 454,551.15	\$ 1,946,204.80	\$ 3,351,401.41	\$ 3,404,062.97	\$ 3,150,619.31	\$ 3,001,173.26	\$ 2,352,253.10	\$ 2,162,730.98