

**Date:** February 5, 2021

**To:** The Urbana Free Library Board of Trustees

**From:** Celeste Choate, Executive Director

**Re:** Director's Report for Board Meeting of February 9, 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.**

- Community member and Library patron, Doris Gebauer, contacted Library staff to share the following feedback: "You have such a wonderful staff in the circulation department and the Reference department. Those are the two areas where I contact the library most. Your curbside pick up has been extremely organized and easy to use. Pat everybody on the back."
- The Library's new adult book club, Fantastic Fiction, met for the first time on January 30 and discussed [The Ballad of Black Tom](#) by Victor LaValle. The monthly club will focus on new, shorter science fiction, fantasy, and horror and looks forward to adding new members each month.
- TUFL reopened on February 1, 2021, and is currently in the Grab & Go service model. TUFL moved from Grab & Go to Curbside Only plus Technology by Appointment Only on November 20, 2020.

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

- Thanks to CCHA staff, especially Tom Kuipers, the City had the historical research it needed to develop this [Resolution Committing to End Structural Racism and Achieve Racial Equity](#).



**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.**

- A link to the Champaign County Historical Archives' [Archive-It site](#) is now live on the [Online Collections page](#). A subscription to Archive-It was provided in the Community Webs Grant received by the Archives in FY18.
- TUFL patrons now have access to a large collection of vital, genealogical, and family history records from the United Kingdom, as well as historical British newspapers through the [Find My Past database](#).
- On January 24, Sarah from Common Ground Food Co-op showed 28 community members how to use spices from the around the world to create healthy and delicious meals. A recording of the program is currently on the Library's Facebook page, along with a link to some of the Library's most popular cookbooks for additional culinary inspiration.

- Using the [Books and More! Bundles](#) service, patrons checked out 994 items from the children’s collection in January.

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

- Teen Online Lab celebrated Black History Month on February 4. Library staff highlighted Black history with a book talk focusing on biographies and nonfiction titles. The book topics ranged from historical events to modern well-known names, encouraging teens to explore the depth and breadth of Black history.
- Back by popular demand, the Library is again partnering with Riggs Beer Company to host a Valentine’s Day Virtual Beer Tasting on February 14. In this month’s program, Matt Riggs will lead a tasting of four beers. Samples of the beers can be purchased at Riggs Beer Company in advance, or attendees can enjoy the program without beverages. Along with the tasting, there will be music from members of the swing and jazz group Hot Club of Urbana.
- In celebration of Chinese New Year, community member Natalie Wess will lead children in creating red paper fans at this month’s Young Artist’s Studio on February 21. A University of Illinois student, Natalie serves on the board of the campus Asian American Association and is the Media Communications Intern at the Asian American Cultural Center.
- Families looking for inside winter activities had multiple program options to choose from in January. In addition to take-home craft kits, families made Melting Snowman Dough on January 23 and created their own puppet friend at Sock Puppets with Sal on January 16. The two craft programs had a combined attendance of over 30 participants, and take-home kits were given to over 225 community members.



**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.**

- On February 5<sup>th</sup>, Champaign-Urbana’s Writers of Oya will celebrate the release of their first book, *Unmasked*, with a virtual reading on the Library’s Facebook page. The Writers of Oya, a group moderated by Urbana’s Poet Laureate Ashanti Files, encourages middle school girls to use poetry to express themselves. These talented youth will share poetry from their new book with community members.
- Donica Swann, Brian Robertson, and Drew Kenton have volunteered to move our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work ahead in an intentional way, beginning with TUFL’s partnership with the City on using gender-neutral language. You can find out more about this initiative by taking a look at the City’s [Resolution Regarding the Implementation of Gender-Neutral Language in Official Written and Verbal Communications by the City of Urbana](#).

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

- In celebration of both Black History Month and Women’s History Month, the Library will be hosting Black HerStory Slam on March 2. Hosted by Urbana Poet Laureate Ashanti Files, the event features poetry, music, and spoken word performances by women in the community. This program is a joint venture of the Urbana Arts Program, the Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center, and the Library.
- As part of CCHA’s ongoing partnership with the iSchool, students from IS 562 (Administration and Use of Archival Materials) will make appointments to tour the Archives and “Ask an Archivist” about aspects of the profession throughout the month of February. This program helps connect students to CCHA for future practicum, apprenticeship, and internship opportunities.



**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 City has been exploring options for COVID-19 testing for City staff, and also for the staff of The Urbana Free Library. Starting February 8<sup>th</sup>, we will be using the [BinaxNOW rapid antigen test](#), which delivers results in about 15 minutes, to test all Library employees once per week, with a goal of testing twice weekly in the future. While the rapid tests are slightly less accurate than PCR tests, there is significant value in having timely information so that we can reduce the possibility of spread. These self-administered tests are free from the Champaign Urbana Public Health District and are free to the Library. Specially trained test administrators will supervise the self-administered tests and will record results for the Illinois Department of Public Health.

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

- On January 21, Donica Swann attended "Project Management and Workflow for Digitization Projects" thanks to a scholarship from the Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board. The practical knowledge gained at this workshop will help Archives staff plan for and implement medium and large-scale digitization projects, as well as start to develop a Library-wide digital preservation plan.
- Archives Librarian, Sara Bennett, attended the Internet Archive's 2020-in-Review open call with the Director of Web and Data Services at the Internet Archive. The Archives will use information gained from the session to better develop TUFL's web archives.



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

**Requested FY21 Budget Amendments:**

A transfer has been made between two general fund lines to cover the expense of new recruiting software access.

- Subtract \$225 from 80280801 52907 Credit Card and Bank Fees. New total = \$5907
- Add \$225 to 80280801 52904 Recruiting Expenses. New total = 725

If the Board approves Resolution 2021-01 to accept gifts, the Administrative Team proposes designating the \$78,000 in unrestricted gifts received from the estate of an anonymous donor to the Library Trust Fund:

- Add \$78,288.43 to Donations/Contributions/Gifts revenue line 810-46300
- Add \$78,288.43 to Admin Gifts/Other Library Materials expense line 81080831-51990

The Friends of The Urbana Free Library support a staff request to begin a new collection of VOX book/audiobooks for the youth collection using funds from books sold on Amazon.com and Etsy. We will not be spending as much as budgeted for furniture for the historic reading rooms, and the Friends are comfortable reallocating \$4,500 from the budgeted furniture expenses to begin this new collection.

- Add \$4,500 to
- |            |                                  |          |       |               |
|------------|----------------------------------|----------|-------|---------------|
| 82207-BOOK | CHILDREN BOOK SALE MONEY EXPENSE | 81080833 | 51801 | library books |
|------------|----------------------------------|----------|-------|---------------|

- Subtract \$4,500 from

82205-BOOK	CAFE BOOK SALE EXPENSE	80280805	51420	office furniture
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**Policy Updates:**

This month, we are bringing forward an updated Public Posting Policy, formerly the Posted Advertising Policy. After a conversation with the American Library Association’s Office of Intellectual Freedom, we made revisions to this policy to make it accurately reflect the display space that is available for the public, and also to accurately reflect what types of items the Library will post to ensure we are in compliance with the *Library Bill of Rights*. We ask that the Board approve this updated policy, which we believe gives clarity to members of the community about using the Library’s public posting areas and allows for flexibility when the Library wishes to use those spots for Library promotion.

<b>Library eNewsletters:</b>	
February News & Events: <a href="https://conta.cc/2KZmrXK">https://conta.cc/2KZmrXK</a>	February Youth & Teen: <a href="https://conta.cc/39qAm2j">https://conta.cc/39qAm2j</a>
February Archives Newsletter: <a href="https://conta.cc/3abYHlw">https://conta.cc/3abYHlw</a>	Building reopening eBlast: <a href="https://conta.cc/39Uu9uv">https://conta.cc/39Uu9uv</a>

**Other Library News:**

**Five things in the arts this month: January 2021:**

[http://www.smilepolitely.com/arts/five things in arts this month january 2021/](http://www.smilepolitely.com/arts/five%20things%20in%20arts%20this%20month%20january%202021/)

**The Top Things to Do in January in Champaign-Urbana:** <https://www.chambanamoms.com/2021/01/09/january-things-to-do-champaign-urbana/>

**Kids learn to DJ at January 24<sup>th</sup> Young Artist’s Studio:**

[https://www.smilepolitely.com/splog/kids learn to dj at january 24th young artists studio/](https://www.smilepolitely.com/splog/kids%20learn%20to%20dj%20at%20january%2024th%20young%20artists%20studio/)

**Pick up your free family craft kit from the Urbana Free Library**

[https://www.smilepolitely.com/splog/pick up your free family craft kit from the urbana free library/](https://www.smilepolitely.com/splog/pick%20up%20your%20free%20family%20craft%20kit%20from%20the%20urbana%20free%20library/)

**What’s Open and Closed for Family Fun in Champaign-Urbana:** <https://www.chambanamoms.com/2021/01/26/open-closed-champaign-urbana-family-fun/>

**Celebrating the Chinese New Year and Lunar New Year in Champaign-Urbana:**

<https://www.chambanamoms.com/2021/01/26/lunar-chinese-new-year-champaign-urbana/>

**Zoom learning with Crass Stitching and how I found my stitch fix and more:**

[http://www.smilepolitely.com/arts/zoom learning with crass stitching and how i found my stitch fix/](http://www.smilepolitely.com/arts/zoom%20learning%20with%20crass%20stitching%20and%20how%20i%20found%20my%20stitch%20fix/)

**Coronavirus response – Area libraries reopening their doors:** [https://www.news-](https://www.news-gazette.com/coronavirus/coronavirus-response-area-libraries-reopening-their-doors/article_bd31c48e-4b83-5bcb-b1d6-0a6af8455c9e.html)

[gazette.com/coronavirus/coronavirus-response-area-libraries-reopening-their-doors/article\\_bd31c48e-4b83-5bcb-b1d6-0a6af8455c9e.html](https://www.news-gazette.com/coronavirus/coronavirus-response-area-libraries-reopening-their-doors/article_bd31c48e-4b83-5bcb-b1d6-0a6af8455c9e.html)

**Libraries start to reopen buildings to public:** <https://www.wcia.com/news/libraries-start-to-reopen-buildings-to-public/>

**Discover new authors, books with program from Urbana Free Library:** <https://www.wcia.com/ciliving-tv/discover-new-authors-books-with-program-from-urbana-free-library/>

**Valentine's Day Events and Activities for Families in Champaign-Urbana:**  
<https://www.chambanamoms.com/2021/01/27/valentines-events-families-champaign-urbana/>

**The Urbana Free Library: Serving our community with care and resilience:**  
[https://www.smilepolitely.com/culture/the\\_urbana\\_free\\_library\\_serving\\_our\\_community\\_with\\_care\\_and\\_resilience/](https://www.smilepolitely.com/culture/the_urbana_free_library_serving_our_community_with_care_and_resilience/)

**Inside Out| East Central Illinois' annual struggle with mighty snowstorms:** [https://www.news-gazette.com/news/weather/inside-out-east-central-illinois-annual-struggle-with-mighty-snowstorms/article\\_5bf5a7fd-8ac4-565e-a2d3-748d74610331.html](https://www.news-gazette.com/news/weather/inside-out-east-central-illinois-annual-struggle-with-mighty-snowstorms/article_5bf5a7fd-8ac4-565e-a2d3-748d74610331.html)

**Improve your home garden with The Urbana Free Library's Seed Library:**  
[https://www.smilepolitely.com/splog/improve\\_your\\_home\\_garden\\_with\\_the\\_urbana\\_free\\_librarys\\_seed\\_library/](https://www.smilepolitely.com/splog/improve_your_home_garden_with_the_urbana_free_librarys_seed_library/)

**Urbana City Council to look at resolution on ending 'structural racism':** <https://www.wcia.com/news/urbana-city-council-to-look-at-resolution-on-ending-structural-racism/>

**Five things in arts this month – February 2021:**  
[http://www.smilepolitely.com/arts/five\\_things\\_in\\_arts\\_this\\_month\\_february\\_2021/](http://www.smilepolitely.com/arts/five_things_in_arts_this_month_february_2021/)

**Writers of Oya launching book virtually:** <https://www.wcia.com/ciliving-tv/writers-of-oya-launching-book-virtually/>

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

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