

**Rochester
Public Library**

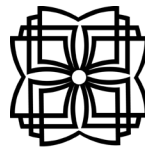
More Than You Think

115 South Avenue | Rochester | New York | 14604

**Rochester Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting
Kusler-Cox Auditorium, Rundel Memorial Building, Central Library
March 25, 2026, 9:00 a.m.
Agenda**

I. PUBLIC COMMENTS	Brenner	
II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES	Brenner	page 3
III. PERSONNEL CHANGES	Scott	page 9
IV. FINANCIAL REPORTS	Hasselwander	page 11
V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS (Action Items) None		
VI. NEW BUSINESS (Action Items)		
1. Nominating Committee Recommendations	Cooper	page 15 and 31
2. FFRPL Grant For Circulating Materials	Clasper	page 15
3. Central Library Evening Event Late Closing	Clasper	page 15
4. Closure of Frederick Douglass on April 3, 2026	Scanlon	page 16
5. DASNY Grant	Hasselwander	page 16
6. Pomeroy Foundation Grant	Hasselwander	page 16
7. Love Your Library Grant Agreement	Hasselwander	page 16
VII. REPORTS & DISCUSSION		
1. Liaison Reports		
a. From the Friends & Foundation of RPL	Borgus	
2. Staff Reports		
a. Director’s Report	Clasper	
b. Central Library Assoc. Director	Lehman	
c. Community Libraries Deputy Director	Scanlon	
3. Other Reports or Discussion		
VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS		
IX. ADJOURNMENT		

**Next Meeting
April 22, 2026, 9:00 a.m.
Rundel Memorial Building, Central Library**



**Meeting of the MCLS & RPL Boards of Trustees
Board Room, Central Library
February 25, 2026
Minutes**

- MCLS Trustees Present:** Gary Brandt, Kimberly Brown, Christopher Corcoran, Amy Moffitt (Vice President), Francesca Padilla, Mei Qi, Jamia Williams (quorum present)
- MCLS Trustees Excused:** Marjorie Shelly (President), Suzanne Stockman
- MCLS Trustees Unexcused:**
- RPL Trustees Present:** Donna Benjamin, Gary Brandt (MCLS Liaison), Marcus Cooper, James Kraus, Matt McDermott (VP), Sarah Murphy Abbamonte (Secretary), Sharon Salluzzo (Reynolds Liaison), Jeffrey Tucker, Mark Wyand (Treasurer) (quorum present)
- RPL Trustees Excused:** Ellen Brenner (President),
- RPL Trustees Unexcused:** None
- Staff and Guests:** Monroe County Administration Liaison, Conor McMahon; Monroe County Law Dept. Liaison, Bridget Cook; City Administration Liaison, Barbara Pierce; City Law Liaison Johanna Brennan; Friends & Foundation of Rochester Public Library Liaison, Donna Borgus; staff members, Emily Clasper, Katy Hasselwander, Sarah Lehman, Debi Mansour, BJ Scanlon, Geraldine Scott, Jennifer Smathers

Vice President Moffitt called the MCLS meeting to order at 9:06 a.m., welcomed trustees, staff, and guests, and noted a quorum was present.

Vice President McDermott called the RPL meeting to order at 9:07 a.m., welcomed trustees, staff, and guests, and noted a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MCLS MINUTES

The minutes of the January 26, 2026, meeting were APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

APPROVAL OF RPL MINUTES

The minutes of the January 28, 2026, meeting were APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no members of the public wanting to address the board.

MCLS FINANCIAL CLAIMS

Finance Mgr. Hasselwander reviewed the financial claims with the trustees and offered to answer questions. After discussion, Trustee Corcoran MADE A MOTION to approve the financial claims as presented. Trustee Brandt Seconded. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

RPL FINANCIAL REPORTS

Finance Mgr. Hasselwander reviewed the financial reports with the trustees and offered to answer questions. Trustee Salluzzo MADE A MOTION to approve the monthly financial reports as presented and approved by the RPL Finance Committee. Trustee Benjamin seconded. HE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

PERSONNEL CHANGES

Human Resources Specialist Scott called attention to the personnel changes and staffing levels for January 10–February 13, 2026, and offered to answer questions. Trustee Murphy Abbamonte MADE A MOTION to approve the personnel changes. Trustee Tucker seconded. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

LIAISON REPORTS

Liaison from the Rochester Public Library (RPL)

RPL Trustee Murphy Abbamonte directed the MCLS trustees to the enclosed RPL Board minutes and offered to answer questions.

Liaison from the Monroe County Library System (MCLS)

MCLS Trustee Brandt directed the RPL trustees to the enclosed MCLS Board minutes and offered to answer questions.

Liaison from the Friends & Foundation of the RPL (FFRPL)

Executive Director Borgus reported that the Friends and Foundation of the Rochester Public Library’s spring annual campaign letter is scheduled to arrive in homes around March 2. Planning is underway for Library Giving Day on April 1. The Books Sandwiched In spring series will be held on Tuesdays at 12:12 p.m. in the Kate Gleason Auditorium from March 10 through April 21, with registration details and future access to recordings available at ffrpl.org. Trustees were also asked to note that the Sokol High School Literary Awards Ceremony and Reception will take place on Thursday, April 23, from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. in the Kate Gleason Auditorium.

She further reported that all required annual reports for the FFRPL Library Grants for Circulating Materials program have been received, and 2026 grant agreements were distributed on February 18. Signed agreements are due by March 31, 2026. In 2025, the program awarded \$844,161.19 to 62 eligible libraries in the Monroe County, OWWL, and Nioga Library Systems, resulting in the purchase of 32,846 supplemental items, including 19,335 print books, 7,125 e-books, and 6,386 audiobooks. For 2026, a total allocation of \$914,541.78 will be distributed. Of that amount, the Monroe County Library System will receive \$687,397.84, including \$117,258.24 for the Rochester Public Library.

STAFF REPORTS

Director’s Report

Director Clasper reported that her first year as Director has been challenging but successful, and she expressed appreciation to the Board and staff for their support during this period. She stated that her recent and upcoming work is focused on strategic planning for both RPL and MCLS, including development of the five-year plan of service, review of RPL policies, and internal reorganization to support future transformation. She emphasized that although much of this work is not immediately visible, it is foundational for long-term change.

Director Clasper also underscored the urgency of state-level advocacy for library funding, noting that the Governor’s proposed budget reduces both construction aid and library aid. She urged trustees to contact their state legislators as soon as possible in support of restoring and increasing library funding, commenting that while email is helpful, phone calls are even more effective.

Trustee Brown joined the meeting at 9:17 a.m.

MCLS Associate Director’s Report

Associate Director Smathers reported briefly, reinforcing the Director’s call for advocacy. She explained that the Legislature is currently working on the “one house” budget bills, during which the Assembly and Senate attempt to restore funding removed in the Governor’s proposal, making this a critical moment for outreach to state legislators. She advised that any email communications to legislators should be personalized, even slightly, to attract more attention. Smathers also noted that a pre-Advocacy Day meeting had been held to identify ways to help trustees and others become more effective advocates, and that staff will be developing additional opportunities over the coming year for trustees to learn and practice advocacy skills.

Central Associate Director’s Report

Associate Director Lehman reported that she, along with other representatives of MCLS and RPL, attended Advocacy Day at the beginning of the month and met with several state legislators and lawmakers. She indicated that her written report outlines the main state-level priorities they advanced during those meetings and offered to answer any questions regarding those advocacy points.

Next, she announced that Roc Paint will be coming to the Central Library in March to complete mural work on interior walls. In preparation, a survey will be distributed to patrons and staff to gather feedback on desired themes, content, and what the library means to them.

Community Libraries Deputy Director’s Report

Deputy Director Scanlon added to the advocacy discussion that letters have been drafted to all Assembly members and Senators the group met with, summarizing key talking points and specific advocacy requests. He stated that these materials will be distilled into bullet points and shared with trustees to support their ongoing advocacy. Scanlon further reported that a new heating unit for the Wheatley branch is expected to arrive in the United States next month and be installed in April, and that the damaged carpet there has already been replaced with an economical but attractive option. He informed the Board that the People’s Pantry, a tenant at the Lincoln Branch Library, is seeking to extend its lease and appears to be investing in the space, including adding a new freezer, which signals a continued long-term commitment to the neighborhood. He also described discussions with the Father Tracy Advocacy Center regarding expanding their presence and services at library locations, including additional days at Central and potential expansion to the Lyell Branch, as well as possible future staff space needs in the Central Library. Finally, Scanlon noted that he is approaching his one-year anniversary in his current role and is very happy to be working at RPL.

NEW MCLS BUSINESS

Nominating Committee Recommendation

Trustee Padilla presented the item to the trustees and offered to answer questions. Trustee Brandt MADE A MOTION to appoint Ichin Zinn to complete the unexpired term of Peter W. Knapp, effective immediately, with a term ending date of June 30, 2027. Trustee Qi SECONDED. After discussion, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Telecommunication Agreements

Finance Mgr. Hasselwander presented the item to the trustees and offered to answer questions. Trustee Corcoran MADE A MOTION to approve a professional services agreement for digital transmission services with Crown Castle Fiber, LLC, with a term of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2029. And to approve a professional services agreement for internet services with First Light Fiber with a term of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2029. Trustee Williams SECONDED. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Annual Library Automation Services Agreement

Finance Mgr. Hasselwander presented the item to the trustees and offered to answer questions. She noted the dates in the board documents were incorrect and should be February 25, 2026, through December 31, 2026. Trustee Corcoran MADE A MOTION to approve a professional services agreement with CampbellNet Solutions for a term of February 25, 2026, through December 31, 2026, with maximum compensation not to exceed \$5,000. Trustee Brandt SECONDED. After discussion, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

JOINT NEW BUSINESS

Proposed FY27 Central Library Budget

Finance Mgr. Hasselwander presented the item to the trustees and offered to answer questions.

RPL Vice President McDermott made a motion to move into Executive Session to discuss matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, dismissal, or removal of particular people. Trustee Kraus seconded. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MCLS Vice President Moffitt made a motion to move into Executive Session to discuss matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, dismissal, or removal of particular people. Trustee Brandt seconded. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Both Boards moved into Executive Session at 9:58 a.m. Staff and guests were excused.

RPL Trustee Wyand made a motion to exit Executive Session. Trustee Salluzzo seconded. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MCLS Vice President Moffitt made a motion to exit Executive Session. Trustee Brandt seconded. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Both Boards exited the Executive Session at 10:15 a.m.

MCLS Trustee Brandt MADE A MOTION to approve the proposed 2026-27 Central Library Budget. MCLS Trustee Corcoran SECONDED. After discussion, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

RPL Trustee Wyand MADE A MOTION to approve the proposed 2026-27 Central Library Budget. RPL Trustee Cooper SECONDED. After discussion, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

RPL NEW BUSINESS

Proposed FY27 Community Library Budget

Finance Mgr. Hasselwander presented the item to the trustees and offered to answer questions. Trustee Benjamin MADE A MOTION to approve the proposed 2026-27 Community Library Budget. Trustee Murphy Abbamonte SECONDED. After discussion, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Grant Acceptance, Rochester Regional Library Council

Deputy Director Scanlon presented the item to the trustees and offered to answer questions. Trustee Murphy Abbamonte MADE A MOTION to accept a grant of \$3,500 from the Rochester Regional Library Council. Trustee Cooper SECONDED. After discussion, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Close All Branches for Community Library Training Day

Deputy Director Scanlon presented the item to the trustees and offered to answer questions. Trustee Kraus MADE A MOTION to approve the closure of the ten community branch libraries on Thursday, April 30, 2026, for an all-branch training day. Trustee Salluzzo SECONDED. After discussion, THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice President Moffit reminded MCLS trustees that the next meeting is March 16, 2026.

Vice President McDermott reminded RPL trustees that the next meeting is March 25, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

Both Boards adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

Emily Clasper, MCLS Secretary

Sarah Murphy Abbamonte, RPL Secretary

DRAFT

CENTRAL FINANCIAL REPORT, FEBRUARY 2026

SALARY & BENEFITS

Salaries, wages, and overtime are projected within budget.

EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES

Materials expenses within budget (\$15,098). Equipment and supplies within budget—includes replacement book trucks (\$4,108); stockroom supplies (\$457); and maintenance supplies (\$1,915)

SERVICES & CHARGES

Services & Charges expenses are within budget. Includes: utility invoices (\$37,628); refuse (\$3,669); print & copy machine monthly maintenance and lease payments (\$2,028); elevator inspection and maintenance (\$5,623); programming expenses (\$3,805).

CASH CAPITAL

No new capital expenses.

COMMUNITY FINANCIAL REPORT, FEBRUARY 2026

SALARY & BENEFITS

Salaries and wages are projected within budget. Overtime budget will be adjusted, as necessary.

EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES

Materials expenses are within budget (\$38,406). Equipment and supplies within budget. Includes office supplies (\$1,633); stockroom supplies (\$457); minor glass repair and maintenance supplies (\$1,777).

SERVICES & CHARGES

Services & Charges expenses are within budget. Includes: elevator inspection and maintenance (\$1,183); utility invoices (\$30,390); refuse (\$1,820); security services (\$2,209); social services at RPL (\$8,475), annual Zoom licenses for RPL (\$2,012); plowing services (\$3,880); programming and tutoring expenses (\$1,014).

CASH CAPITAL

Gate replacement at Lincoln (\$1,380). Wheatley carpet replacement (\$10,028). 20 replacement monitors for branch public computers ordered - expense reflects invoices for units as received, remaining 11 units received (\$1,302).

NEW HIRES

None

RESIGNATION

Griffith, Zoe	Clerk Typist/PT/Charlotte	02/19/26
Jones, Paris	Security Guard/FT/Central	03/01/26
Maneiro, Heather	Librarian Sub/PT/Children's	02/14/26
White, Suede	Mailroom Clerk/PT/Shipping	03/06/26

RETIREMENT

Born, Joseph	Supervisor of Audiovisual Services/FT/Media	02/28/26
39 years of service		

STAFFING

Full-Time Positions	Central	Community
Budgeted	81	31
Filled	77	30
Vacancies	4	1

Part-time Positions	Central	Community
Budgeted	106	134
Filled	76	106
Vacancies	30	21

Central Financial Report, Fiscal Year 2025-26 Fiscal YTD (through February 28, 2026)						
Category	Description	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Expenses Fiscal YTD	Remaining Balance	% of Budget
Salary & Benefits						
	Full-Time Salaries	5,226,800	5,226,800	3,044,007	2,182,793	58.2%
	Part-Time/Temp Salaries	1,664,200	1,664,200	834,813	829,387	50.2%
	Overtime	19,000	19,000	4,358	14,642	22.9%
	Employee Benefits	3,642,600	3,642,600	2,524,696	1,117,904	69.3%
	Employee Development	34,100	40,261	10,262	29,998	25.5%
	Other	67,200	67,200	37,280	29,920	55.5%
	Sub Total	10,653,900	10,660,061	6,455,416	4,204,644	60.6%
Equipment & Supplies						
	Materials Budget	511,800	519,313	206,292	313,021	39.7%
	Other Furnishings & Equipment	10,100	10,100	1,811	8,289	17.9%
	Office Supplies	60,100	69,384	27,168	42,215	39.2%
	Other Materials & Supplies	59,800	68,487	30,002	38,485	43.8%
	Sub Total	641,800	667,284	265,273	402,010	39.8%
Services & Charges						
	Utilities	467,500	468,300	314,783	153,517	67.2%
	Facility Maintenance	109,300	123,869	40,225	83,644	32.5%
	Professional Services/Fees	236,600	241,647	160,001	81,646	66.2%
	Chargebacks	89,700	89,700	22,332	67,368	24.9%
	Service Charges - Other Gov't	51,400	51,400	39,722	11,678	77.3%
	Telecommunications	14,200	14,200	7,628	6,572	53.7%
	Other Expenses	172,300	177,367	29,483	147,883	16.6%
	Sub Total	1,141,000	1,166,482	614,174	552,309	52.7%
TOTAL EXPENSED		12,436,700	12,493,827	7,334,863	5,158,963	59.0%
Central Cash Capital						
	Facility Maintenance Allocation	50,000	171,850	24,499	197,352	14.3%
	Rundel Loading Dock Assessment	120,000	0	0	120,000	0.0%
	Cash Capital Total	170,000	171,850	24,499	317,352	14.3%
REVENUE RECEIPTS						
	Original Budget	11,736,100	11,736,100	3,192,530	8,543,570	
	Original Budget		Revised Budget	City Prorate Share + Revenue YTD	Outstanding Revenue	

Community Financial Report, Fiscal Year 2025-26						
Fiscal YTD (through February 28, 2026)						
Category	Description	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Expenses Fiscal YTD	Remaining Balance	% of Budget
Salary & Benefits						
	Full-Time Salaries	2,157,700	2,157,700	1,212,048	945,652	56.2%
	Part-Time/Temp Salaries	2,022,700	2,030,400	1,158,157	872,243	57.0%
	Overtime	2,000	2,000	2,638	-638	131.9%
	Employee Development	19,600	22,309	8,154	14,155	36.5%
	Other	27,400	27,400	17,621	9,779	64.3%
	Sub Total	4,229,400	4,239,809	2,398,617	1,831,412	56.6%
Equipment & Supplies						
	Materials Budget	536,600	561,940	200,632	361,308	35.7%
	Office Supplies	37,700	39,851	17,812	22,040	44.7%
	Other Materials & Supplies	41,200	56,519	27,848	28,671	49.3%
	Sub Total	615,500	658,311	246,292	412,019	37.4%
Services & Charges						
	Utilities	229,500	230,513	119,905	110,608	52.0%
	Facility Maintenance	39,700	48,306	9,055	39,251	18.7%
	Professional Services/Fees	402,000	484,846	200,991	283,855	41.5%
	Chargebacks	26,400	26,400	8,416	17,984	31.9%
	Service Charges - Other Gov't	7,500	7,500	6,603	897	88.0%
	Telecommunications	17,100	17,206	7,103	10,102	41.3%
	Other Expenses	50,900	58,788	14,308	44,480	24.3%
	Sub Total	773,300	873,759	366,382	507,176	41.9%
TOTAL EXPENSED						
		5,618,200	5,771,878	3,011,291	2,750,607	52.2%
Community Cash Capital						
		FY26 Budget	Prior Year Carryover	Expenses YTD	Remaining Balance	
	Library Furnishings	12,000	39,042	21,899	29,143	42.9%
	Library Facilities	40,000	112,133	72,301	79,832	47.5%
	Library Technology	0	108,664	85,940	22,724	79.1%
	Library Capital Projects*	0	0			
	Cash Capital Total	52,000	259,839	180,140	131,699	69.3%
REVENUE RECEIPTS						
		277,000	277,000	318,595	-41,595	
		Original Budget	Revised Budget	Receipts Fiscal YTD	Outstanding Revenue	

* Projects administered by City DES

Trust Funds Financial Report, Fiscal Year 2025-26

Fiscal YTD (through February 28, 2026)

		Allocation	Carry-forward	TOTAL	YTD Expenses	% of Total
Fenevessy (Central + Branch bal)*	4224	\$81,871	\$26,256	\$60,127	\$44,734	74.4%
Gleason Fund	4225	\$16,362				
Gleason Fund (FFRPL)*	4225	\$12,572	\$15,976	\$24,910	\$10,673	42.8%
Taylor Fund	4226	\$3,723	\$13	\$3,736	\$658	17.6%
Beenev Fund (FFRPL)	4227	\$5,042	\$4,246	\$9,288	\$4,241	45.7%
Carnahan Fund	4228	\$1,604	\$818	\$2,422	\$31	1.3%
Reynolds Fund - RPL	4229	\$148,267	\$112,797	\$261,064	\$114,639	43.9%
Purton Fund	4231	\$17,543	\$11	\$17,554	\$7,789	44.4%
Boland Fund	4232	\$1,589	\$2,504	\$4,093	\$0	0.0%
Kenyon-Jeffries Fund*	4233	\$20,827	\$1,497	\$10,324	\$3,000	29.1%
Poletto Fund	4234	\$1,604	\$363	\$1,968	\$0	0.0%
Gervickas Fund	4235	\$6,236	\$7,823	\$14,059	\$3,268	23.2%
Craig Fund (FFRPL)	4236	\$2,803	\$2,642	\$5,445	\$362	6.7%
Lee Fund (FFRPL)	4237	\$1,524	\$1,365	\$2,889	\$848	29.3%
Vietnam Veterans Fund (FFRPL)	4238	\$701	\$1,896	\$2,597	\$128	4.9%
Holtzman Fund (FFRPL)	4239	\$1,604	\$330	\$1,934	\$774	40.0%
Tummonds Fund (FFRPL)	4241	\$103,307	\$52,168	\$155,475	\$66,343	42.7%
TOTAL		\$427,180	\$230,704	\$577,884	\$257,488	44.6%

*Support for staffing expenses removed in total column.

Fenevessy \$48,000 for literacy aides; Gleason \$20,000 for SHH staff; and Kenyon-Jeffries for LHG staff.

Gift Fund Financial Report, Fiscal Year 2025-26

Fiscal YTD (through February 28, 2026)

Fund	Allocation	Transfer In	TOTAL	YTD Expenses	% of Total	
Gift Fund	4230	\$33,118	\$4,588	\$37,706	\$4,180	11.1%

NEW BUSINESS (ACTION ITEMS)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS (COOPER)

Board Action Requested: A motion to appoint Jessica Williams to complete the unexpired term of Elizabeth Call, effective immediately, with a term ending date of December 31, 2029.

Details: The Nominating Committee is recommending the appointment by the Board of Jessica Williams to a partial term effective immediately and expiring December 31, 2029, to replace Elizabeth Call who resigned from the board. Williams is a Bank Manager with a deep understanding of fiscal oversight, organizational management, and customer service. She currently serves on the Do the Right Thing Board of Directors. Do The Right Thing of Rochester, Inc., recognizes youth for helping law enforcement and other first responders, acts of heroism, displaying leadership, role model behavior, and volunteering in their community.

Board Action Requested: A motion to appoint Jean-Paul Scott to complete the unexpired term of Sarah Murphy Abbamonte, effective May 2, 2026, with a term ending date of December 31, 2028.

Details: The Nominating Committee is recommending the appointment by the Board of Jean-Paul Scott to a partial term effective May 2, 2026, and expiring December 31, 2028, to replace Sarah Murphy Abbamonte who is resigning from the board as of May 1. Scott is an educator with 30 years of English Language Arts experience teaching both secondary and community college students.

FFRPL GRANT FOR CIRCULATING MATERIALS (CLASPER)

Board Action Requested: A motion to accept the 2026 FFRPL Grant for Circulating Materials allocation of \$117,258.24.

Details: Rochester Public Library will receive a grant from the FFRPL Grant for Circulating Materials using a proportional allocation of available funds, based on a rolling 3-year average of the library's total circulation as reported in the NYS Library Annual Report for 2022-2024. The grant contains conditions for use as noted in the agreement. For 2026, the grant amount for the Rochester Public Library is \$117,258.24.

CENTRAL LIBRARY EVENING EVENT LATE CLOSING (CLASPER)

Board Action Requested: A motion to keep the first floor of the Central Library's Rundel Building open an additional three hours until 8 PM on June 5 to accommodate the opening of an exhibit in the Mascioli Gallery commemorating the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution.

Details: The City and County Historian has been working with the Sons of the American Revolution and the Daughters of the American Revolution to plan an exhibit for the Mascioli Gallery that will run during June and July, commemorating this year's big 250th anniversary of American Independence. The opening celebration for the exhibit will be a festive event funded by the Sons of the American Revolution, featuring refreshments and costumed re-enactments, and other entertainment. The event is planned to run until 8 PM.

CLOSURE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS COMMUNITY LIBRARY ON APRIL 3, 2026 (SCANLON)

Board Action Requested: A motion to close the Frederick Douglass Community Library on Friday, April 3, 2026, to accommodate an RG&E transformer replacement.

Details: RG&E will be replacing the electrical transformer that services the complex located at 999 South Ave that houses Frederick Douglass Community Library, Frederick Douglass Recreation Center, and the Anna Murray-Douglass Academy No. 12 school. The work will take place on Friday, April 3, 2026, beginning at 9:00 AM and taking approximately 8 hours to complete. During this time, the building will be without power and cannot stay open. Staff will be alerted, and any staff member scheduled to work that day will be offered an alternative location to work.

DASNY GRANT (HASSELWANDER)

Board Action Requested: A motion to accept DASNY funds of \$100,000 to purchase technology equipment for the Branch libraries.

Details: The Rochester Public Library will receive \$100,000 from the State and Municipal Program of the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY) to purchase technology equipment for the Branch libraries. Funding was awarded by New York State Senator Jeremy Cooney, through the Reinvesting in Organizations that Care (ROC) Grants. The Library will use these funds to deploy additional security cameras, replace printers, and replenish public computers.

POMEROY FOUNDATION GRANT (HASSELWANDER)

Board Action Requested: A motion to accept a Pomeroy Foundation grant in the amount of \$2,478.29 to purchase an historical transportation marker for the Feeder Canal in the City of Rochester.

Details: The Office of the Rochester and Monroe County Historian was awarded \$2,478.29 by the William G. Pomeroy Foundation to purchase an historical transportation marker for the Feeder Canal in the City of Rochester. The City's Department of Environmental Services will handle the installation of the marker.

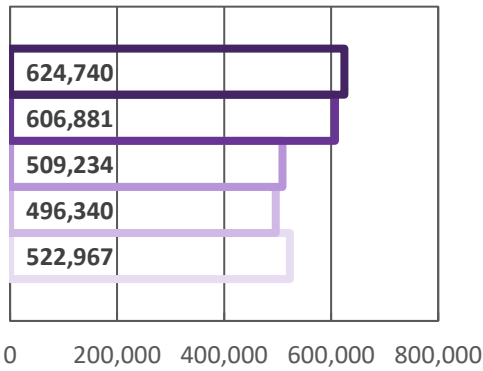
LOVE YOUR LIBRARY GRANT AGREEMENT (HASSELWANDER)

Board Action Requested: A motion to approve an agreement with Monroe County Library System for the administration of the Love Your Library grant program.

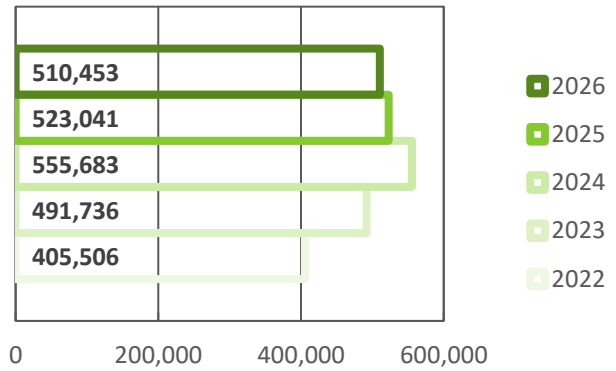
Details: The New York State Education Department, Division of Library Development, allocated \$3,995 in Love Your Library grant funds to the Monroe County Library System to support summer reading activities. The Rochester Public Library will enter into an agreement with Monroe County Library System to receive and administer these funds. The funds will supplement the cost of a professional service agreement approved at the January 2026 RPL board meeting for staff training.

RPL AT A GLANCE (FISCAL YEAR 2026 JULY–FEB)

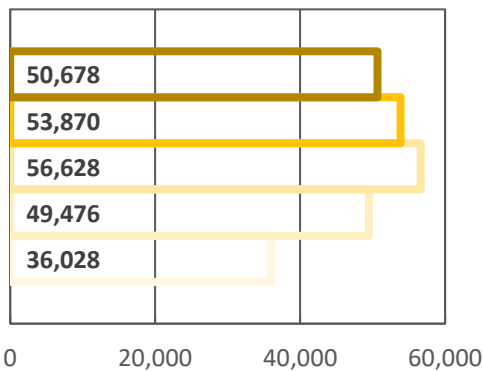
Circulation FYTD



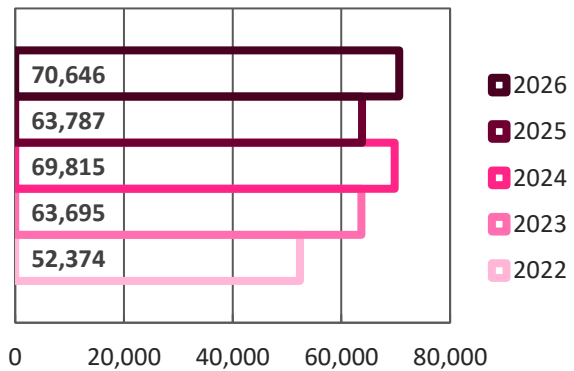
Visitors FYTD



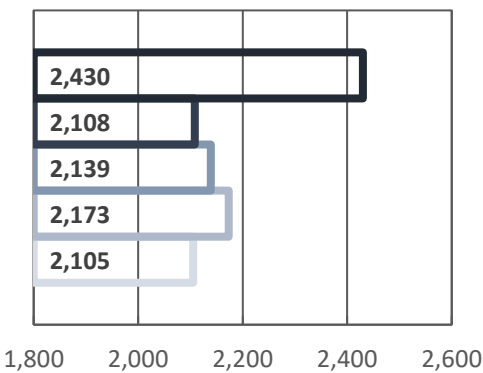
Computer Hours FYTD



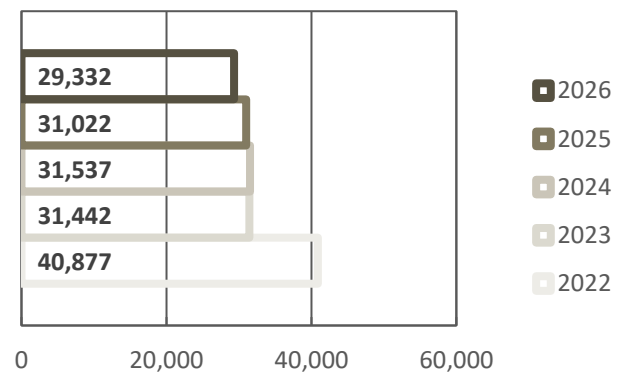
Wi-Fi Sessions FYTD



Group Programs FYTD



Program Attendance FYTD



PATRON STORIES

FROM LEARNER TO LEADER

A former student of Branch Manager Evanna DiSalvo recently returned to the Frederick Douglass Community Library with a Valentine's card and small gift as a gesture of thanks. Joyce, a young mother from South Korea, had previously shared her goal of preparing for her future once her children were grown. As an intermediate English learner, she was eager for conversation practice. DiSalvo helped her launch a Zoom-based English conversation group, giving her the opportunity to build confidence while supporting others seeking a low-pressure space to practice speaking. The group continues to meet. Since then, Joyce has volunteered at Saint's Place with a reference from DiSalvo and is now stepping into a new leadership program to mentor others. Her recent visit was a thoughtful reminder of the lasting impact libraries can have.

A FAMILY'S RETURN HIGHLIGHTS THE LASTING IMPACT OF MUSIC AND MEMORY

To mark the one year anniversary of her longtime music partner Mike Baker's passing, Jennifer Cherelin hosted a special "Music with Jennifer" program centered on drumming and reflection. The program created space not only for remembrance, but for families to reconnect with a meaningful part of their lives.

Among those in attendance were Ashley and her daughter Kennedy, a family with a long history at the Charlotte Branch. Kennedy had participated in "Music with Mike and Jennifer" from early childhood through the start of kindergarten and is now in second grade. Although the family had not visited the library since Kennedy began school, they returned specifically to honor Mike's memory.



Ashley shared that the program had been an important part of their lives and expressed how meaningful it was to return, drum, and sing together in remembrance. Their experience reflects the lasting relationships built through Library programs and the powerful role these spaces can play in community healing, connection, and shared storytelling.

A RELIABLE RESOURCE

Since 2016, a loyal library patron has consistently sought assistance from Lyell Branch Manager Dennis Williams, following him from branch to branch because of the trust built over time. The patron, who is not a native English speaker, relies on Williams for help with a wide range of needs, including downloading music, paying bills online, transferring data between devices, setting up home security cameras, and addressing identity theft concerns. Most recently, he asked for help understanding letters informing him and his wife of separate data breaches involving AFLAC and a major medical provider. Both companies offered two years of complimentary credit monitoring. Williams helped activate the monitoring accounts and explained how the service would flag any unusual activity. The couple now receives regular updates about their credit status, providing added security and peace of mind.

BEST BOY

Winton Branch Youth Services Librarian Emily Quevedo Smith’s fondness for frogs is well known at Comic Club. The kids even created a slightly gloomy frog named Best Boy and made him the club’s unofficial mascot. Best Boy has appeared in paintings, drawings, and original stories, and his face was featured on a winning design in the RPL sticker contest last summer. This month, longtime Comic Club member and artist Matilda Gross surprised Quevedo Smith with a handmade clay statue of Best Boy. The gift now has a permanent place on her desk.



A SURPRISE CASH FIND

Eve Brewer in Outreach was returning an item that came back through Shipping and found five crisp, new hundred-dollar bills. Eve and Outreach supervisor Maren Kyle brought the money to Circulation Supervisor, Chad Cunningham. Cunningham contacted LAS and Pamela Principé was able to backtrack who had the item. Cunningham called the patron, who was extremely relieved that the money had been found. She had put the money in the book that was sitting on her table and only realized it after she had already returned the book.

A TRUSTED PLACE TO TURN

A community member visited the Winton Branch seeking help with a form for the Public Defender’s Office. Due to cataracts, he was struggling to see and needed to meet a tight deadline to submit the paperwork. He mentioned that staff had helped him during a previous visit and was glad the library was open again. Clerk/Notary Public Kate Bliss and Librarian Mary Fraser assisted him in filling out the form, ensuring everything was complete and ready to mail. He also bought a stamp at the library and sent the letter before heading home. Before leaving, he said, *"The library is a blessing to me."* A week later, he returned with another request: directions to Watertown for his upcoming court hearing. After getting a printed route, he looked confident again. *"I knew the library would help me,"* he said as he left.

SPECIAL INITIATIVES

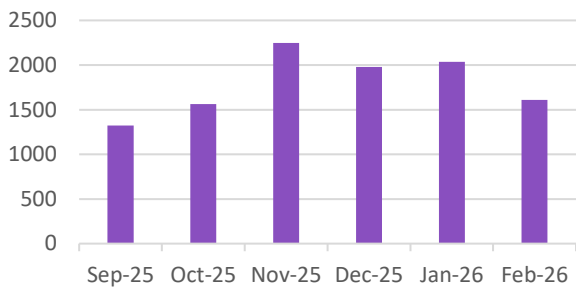
WIRED FOR OPPORTUNITY (MCLS)

PROGRAM STATISTICS

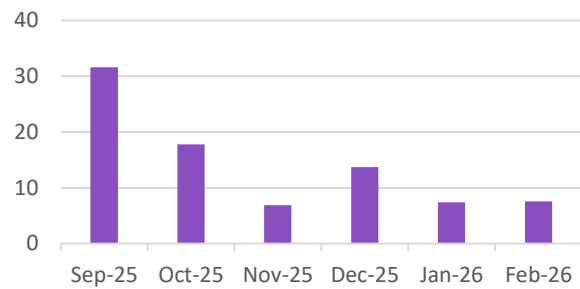
Month	Classes	Attendance	Class Topics	
Jul-2025	25	170	Intro to Computers	Library Resources
Aug-2025	23	146	Applying for Benefits	Intro to Google
Sept-2025	26	175	Computer Catch-Up	Online Job Search
Oct-2025	23	161	Scams and Security	
Nov-2025	35	252		
Dec-2025	21	109		
Jan-2025	27	178		
Feb-2025	35	229		

SOLAR TABLE USAGE

Total Solar Table Connections



Total Solar Table GB Used



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

FROM COMPETITION TO COLLABORATION

The Frederick Douglass Community Library hosted a lively speed puzzle competition that drew five teams of three participants. Teams raced to complete identical puzzles for a chance to win a Domino’s Pizza gift card. Even after a winner was declared, the remaining teams continued working until only one unfinished puzzle was left on the table. At that point, the competitive spirit shifted to collaboration, with everyone jumping in to help complete the final puzzle together.



EVERYONE HAS A STORY

The Charlotte Branch launched Tell Your Story, a program that invites community members to record personal stories using video equipment, lighting, and guided prompts. Participants leave with a DVD to share with family and friends. Branch Manager Cathy Kyle recently facilitated her first session with a patron who initially felt she had “nothing interesting” to share. After a brief conversation to help her feel at ease, the patron opened up, resulting in a 40-minute recording that captured a rich and engaging life story. She left enthusiastic about the experience and plans to encourage friends to participate. The program provides a meaningful opportunity for community members to preserve personal histories and strengthen intergenerational connections and was launched thanks to Harold Hacker Grant funds.

A VALENTINE'S DAY SERENADE

The Monroe Branch celebrated Valentine’s Day with a live performance by two violinists from the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. The duo performed a mix of classical selections and popular favorites, creating a warm and festive atmosphere in the library. Twenty-two patrons attended and responded enthusiastically to the performance.



NEW READERS, NEW CONNECTIONS

The Book Club at the Phillis Wheatley Community Library continued to gain momentum this month, welcoming five readers to discuss *Water Moon* by Samantha Sotto Yambao. Two participants attended for the first time, including one reader who shared that she had always been nervous about joining a book club but was glad she took the step. She enjoyed both the book and the discussion. Looking ahead, the group chose *The Mothers* by Brit Bennett for March in anticipation of the author's visit to Rochester in April through Rochester Reads. Complimentary event tickets were made available to book club members, and participants were excited about the chance to attend.

CONNECTING WITH TEENS

Library staff offered engaging teen programs that promoted both social connection and hands-on learning. Library Assistant Kathryn Rebholz from the Phillis Wheatley Community Library hosted Kindness Bingo, encouraging teens to interact positively with peers and staff through a series of activities. Many participants completed the board, earning prizes while building confidence and forming new connections.



At the Arnett Branch, Librarian Manju Sharma, with guest cook Liz Bauld, led the creative "Will It Waffle?" program. Teens experimented with a variety of foods using a waffle maker, gaining practical cooking skills in a fun, collaborative setting. The strong turnout and enthusiastic response highlighted teens' interest in interactive, skill-building experiences.

At Central, the 3rd Annual Mayor's Madden Tournament was a resounding success. Mayor Evans participated in the gaming. There were many stations and lots of food that contributed to the festive feeling. The tournament was [covered in the news](#) by local channel 13.

A FULL HOUSE FOR CHESS CLUB

The Chess Club at Winton Branch hit a milestone when nearly twenty players filled the room, a record turnout for the program. In the middle of the excitement, one of the young volunteers who helps to run the club turned to Clerk Ashley Black Warney with a grin and pointed out that there were so many players, they needed to bring out more boards.

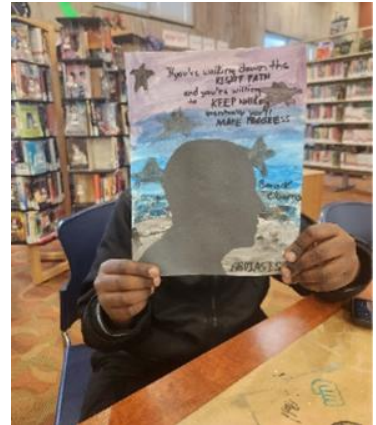
MOVING TOGETHER

Children filled the Phillis Wheatley Community Library with rhythm and movement during African Drumming and Dancing with Building Families First. Mayukwa Kashiwa led the group in music and conversation, asking the children how they can show kindness to one another. Ahara shared, *"Give our friends hugs when they are feeling sad."* Each child had a turn leading songs in a call-and-response format, building confidence as the group echoed back. Scarves and shakers added to the energy as children danced to the beat. Mohamed spun around the room with his scarf, while Abdirahman cleverly tucked his shaker inside his scarf so he could hold both at once. Even one of the library's youngest regular patrons, not yet two, joined the circle with her family. She danced in the center alongside the older children, with her parents stepping in to share the moment.



CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY WITH TEENS

Staff at the Phillis Wheatley Community Library and Sully Branch offered a range of meaningful programs in recognition of Black History Month. Library Assistant Kathryn Rebholz led a Silhouette Art program in which teens created watercolor pieces featuring influential Black Americans, prompting reflection and discussion.



At Sully Branch, Jacob Bigelow facilitated Rochester Black History Trivia Night, where teens worked together to learn about notable Black Rochesterians, while George Carter led a reading program that combined learning about influential African Americans with public speaking practice.

Meanwhile, back at Central Library, the Black History Month Gallery hosted a reception for its chosen Community Superheroes. They were able to see the gallery featuring their photoshopped posters and view the [black history month video](#) put together by Jeff Bostic in the ImagineYOU lab. Together, these programs fostered cultural awareness, creativity, and a strong sense of community.



ROCHESTER JAMAICAN ORGANIZATION

On Saturday February 21, the Rochester Jamaican Organization returned to the Central Library for their second collaboration with the Archive of Black History and Culture. With over seventy-six patrons in attendance, the program featured a history lecture and presentation, live instruments and free food provided by local restaurants.

CELEBRATING THE LEGACY AND IMPACT OF BLACK STORYTELLING

Arts & Literature Division Librarian Don Hyatt presented a program featuring Jackie McGriff and Taurus Savant, who led an engaging exploration of the history and impact of Black storytelling. The program traced a narrative from West African traditions through early Black storytellers in America to contemporary voices. Through interactive discussion, participants were invited to share individual experiences and reflect on significant cultural moments and artists. The program fostered strong engagement, with many attendees remaining afterward to continue conversations and build connections.



STORIES FROM STORYTIME

Storytime programs across RPL continue to create meaningful, memorable experiences for young children and their families. At the Winton Branch, Toddler Time took an unexpected and heartwarming turn when Youth Services Librarian Emily Quevedo Smith shared *Maria Had a Little Llama/María Tenía Una Llamita*. Although she planned to read only in English, a parent, Daniel, volunteered to read the Spanish text, and the two alternated pages to bring the bilingual story to life. The moment was especially meaningful for Daniel's daughter, Samantha, who beamed with pride and even helped teach the group a new word, "llamita."

At the Sully Branch, Librarian Steven Shon launched a weekly Toddler Story Time in February in response to community interest and a direct inquiry at the end of last year from the father of a two-year-old. The program has been warmly received, with families praising the experience and returning regularly. It has also drawn visitors from beyond the neighborhood, including families from Ogden where Shon previously worked reconnecting with him and discovering the branch's welcoming children's space. Together, these storytimes highlight the library's role in fostering early literacy, family engagement, and community connection.

TAKE YOUR CHILD TO THE LIBRARY DAY FEATURES INTERACTIVE LEARNING FOR FAMILIES

The Central Library hosted a series of interactive programs in celebration of Take Your Child to the Library Day, engaging children and families in hands-on learning experiences. The Business Insight Center created an interactive market activity in which children used shopping lists to make purchases, building practical math skills by calculating costs and tracking remaining funds.



In another program, Librarian Michael Callari led Dancing Salt Experiment: How Sound Vibrates, with support from Renee Kendrot during peak attendance. Participants constructed simple devices using cardboard tubes and paper plates to explore how sound waves can cause salt to move. The program drew twenty participants, and both children and caregivers were delighted and fascinated with the experiential learning.

MIDDLE SCHOOL RESEARCHERS UTILIZE PRIMARY SOURCES AT CENTRAL LIBRARY

Social Studies Teacher Zachary Clarry and ten students from Honeoye Falls-Lima Middle School visited the Science, History, and Social Sciences Division to conduct primary source research for their National History Day projects. Topics included Alcatraz, Radio Free Europe, the Manhattan Project, Cold War human experimentation, Robert Oppenheimer, and the Statue of Liberty.

Librarian Renee Kendrot coordinated the visit in advance, requesting research topics to ensure materials were prepared for student use. Kendrot and Librarian Michael Callari assembled relevant resources, and Kendrot provided guidance on using the NOVEL databases and other online tools to locate journal articles and primary sources. The visit demonstrated effective collaboration and resulted in a positive research experience for both the teacher and students.



VISUAL ARTS STUDENTS RETURN

Padilla High School students returned for a second visit, having visited Central last year. The students, enrolled in a visual arts program, brought digital cameras and tripods to document their experience. Teen Center Coordinator Shetora Banks led a comprehensive tour of both buildings, providing ample opportunities for photography. Students identified several standout subjects, including the Frederick Douglass statue on the second floor of the Rundel Memorial Building and the cannabis display in the Business Division. The group also enjoyed refreshments from the Foodlink Café and made use of the Adobe Suite in the Imagine You Lab.

OUTREACH & PARTNERSHIPS

EWV! A READ ALOUD THAT HAD KIDS IN STITCHES

Sully Branch Children's Librarian Steven Shon teamed up with R Center staff member Jessica Privitera to take part in School 33's World Read-Aloud Day celebration. Together, they read to a fourth-grade class, sharing the book *Butt or Face? A Hilarious Animal Guessing Game Book* by Kari Lavelle. The students were fully engaged and had plenty of laughs as they tried to guess each animal. One student summed it up perfectly, *"It was gross, but then I learned about animals, too!"* The visit also helped strengthen the connection between the school and the library. Inspired by the program, the teacher plans to bring the class to the branch for a mini field trip in the near future.

LIBRARY SERVICE, DELIVERED

MCLS Outreach Coordinator Maren Kyle and Amy Discenza, a librarian in Branch Administration, launched mobile library services this month at Plymouth Gardens, an affordable housing community for adults ages 55+ in southwest Rochester. Kyle and Discenza used RPL GO! to transport materials to set up a pop-up library in the building's meeting room for residents. Services included library card registration, a small circulating collection, holds pickup, and returns. Plymouth Gardens is scheduled to receive ongoing service on the third Wednesday of each month.



BRINGING HISTORY TO LIFE THROUGH HANDS ON LEARNING

On three different days in February, Local History Special Collections Librarian Brandon Fess partnered with St. John Fisher University to support Dr. Barbara Lowe's honors course on third spaces. As part of a class project focused on developing historical and promotional materials for the AIDS Remembrance Garden, students were given access to archival records from the Shoulders to Stand On collection, which is held at the Library.

Fess brought these materials directly to the Fisher campus, allowing students to engage with primary sources in a tangible and meaningful way. The experience underscored the educational impact of hands-on learning, with one student noting that interacting with the physical documents offered a deeper connection than viewing them on a screen.

The success of this collaboration highlights the Library's role in supporting academic research and fostering community partnerships. Fess and Fisher archivist Julia Novakovic are now exploring future opportunities to integrate Library collections into additional coursework.

TECHNOLOGY OUTREACH PARTNERSHIP STRENGTHENS TRAINING AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Library Technology Service Specialist Trevor Johnson has been delivering technology training at R. L. Edwards Living Centers, with participation spanning all levels of the organization, including leadership, staff, and

residents. The partnership has provided the Technology Center with a consistent and engaged audience to pilot new classes and instructional approaches. This ongoing collaboration has become a valuable testing environment for developing programming and building staff capacity in technology instruction, supporting more effective and responsive services.

PARTNERSHIP IN A PINCH

When facility issues temporarily disrupted programming at the Phillis Wheatley Community Library, Arnett staff stepped in to host Lifespan programs to ensure participants could continue meeting without interruption. Working closely with Wheatley staff, Arnett coordinated scheduling and space to accommodate the group. The Lifespan program coordinator later expressed appreciation for the library's responsiveness and flexibility, noting that Arnett's support enabled activities to continue seamlessly amid an unexpected challenge.

CATCHING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

The Frederick Douglass Community Library's regular Second Saturday Pokémon Club received special support this month from Dominic Testino, Shawdell Cummings, and Joseph Lugo of RocPokéCon. Staff first connected with the group in December when the entrepreneurs visited the branch to have documents for their new business notarized. More than thirty children and parents attended the event, where participants learned about Pokémon card collecting, how to set up battles, and how to identify counterfeit cards. Each young participant also received a protective case with rare full-art cards. The partnership highlighted how the library can work with local businesses to create engaging, educational experiences for families.



PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Throughout February, the Believe Chorus from School No. 33 used the Sully Branch Storytime Room for rehearsal as they prepared for their March 5 concert. Staff enjoyed hearing the students' voices fill the library during their practices. At the end of their time at the branch, the chorus surprised the library staff with a beautiful thank-you card. While the gesture was appreciated, staff felt the real thanks belonged to the students for sharing their music with the library community.



HONORING LEGACY THROUGH COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AND CONVERSATION

On February 18, Local History Librarian Antoine McDonald participated in the Monroe County 7th District Court Black History Month program at the Henrietta Public Library. As a member of the planning committee, he helped shape a program honoring Arturo Alfonso Schomburg and his lasting impact on the preservation of Black history and culture.

McDonald shared remarks on the Archive of Black History and Culture in a conversational, interview-style format that engaged attendees and brought a strong sense of storytelling and accessibility to the discussion.

COLLECTION UPDATES

CONNECTIVITY CLOSER TO HOME

Stephanie Lane, MiFi Manager for the Wired for Opportunity Program, and RPL Circulation Supervisor Chad Cunningham led three in-person training sessions to prepare branch staff for the rollout of 15 branch-specific MiFi units at each location. These new units will fill holds exclusively at their owning branch. While patrons will continue to have access to the larger pool of MiFis at Central, the addition of site-specific units is expected to reduce wait times and improve local access. The training covered circulation procedures and in-house management responsibilities ensuring staff are fully prepared to manage the expanded service effectively.

HISTORIC BLACK PUBLICATIONS GAIN GREATER ACCESS THROUGH NEW PARTNERSHIP

Librarian Erin Clarke collaborated with Librarian Antoine McDonald to transfer print copies of Ebony and Essence from the Arts & Literature stacks to the Strong Museum, where they will become part of a special collection. This effort enhances the visibility and accessibility of these significant publications for research purposes. McDonald further expanded the collection by contributing copies of Jet magazine from his personal holdings, strengthening the depth and value of the archive

STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

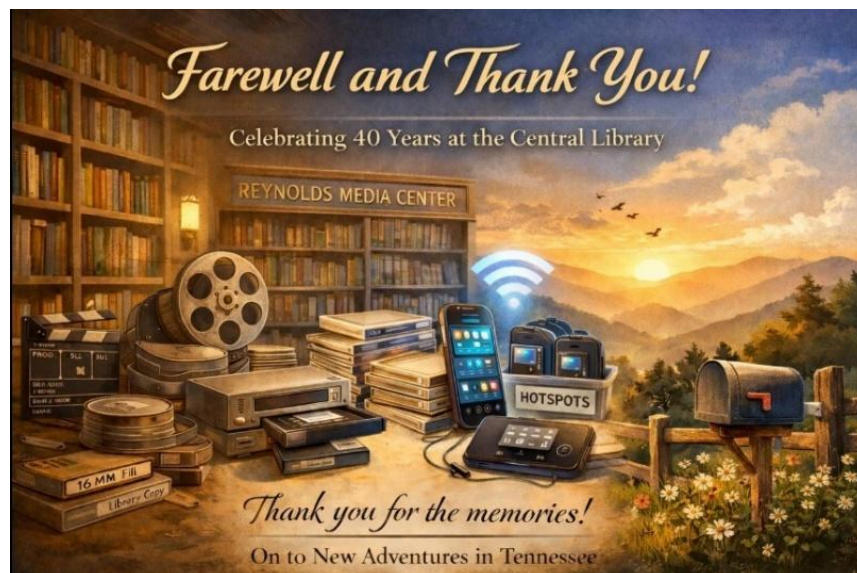
GOING FULL-TIME AT CITY HALL

Congratulations to part-time Mail Clerk, Suede White. He will be leaving the shipping department in March to take on a full-time position in the City Hall mailroom. RPL will miss Suede's affable presence during mail runs between Rundel and BLB. We wish him the best of luck!



SO LONG TO OUR FRIEND, JOE!

RPL said a fond farewell to Reynolds Media Center Supervisor Joe Born upon his retirement at the end of February. Joe will be missed after 40 years of bringing his wisdom and kindness to the patrons and staff of the Central Library.



COMPASSION IN ACTION

Lyell Branch Library Assistant Natasa Prelevic was recently recognized after a patron shared positive feedback with another City division. The patron recalled how Natasa provided exceptional service to her and her autistic children several years ago and said she has never forgotten the support she received. The message underscores the lasting impact of thoughtful, consistent library service.

THIS IS WHY YOU CALL THE LIBRARY

Library Assistant Joel Harr answered a call from a patron who wanted to know if the library had a German medieval manuscript called *The Nuremberg Chronicle*. While Harr was fairly sure that our collection of actual medieval manuscripts from the 15th century was probably limited, he did a search to see what he could find. Alas, MCLS does not own the manuscript. However, after talking to the patron some more, Joel went to the wilds of the internet and discovered that the patron could download a free ePub of the English translation of *The Nuremberg Chronicle* from the University of Wisconsin.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S CORNER: EMILY CLASPER

TRUSTEE CALL TO ACTION

Contact [Congressman Morelle](#) to share your opinion of the newly introduced **HR 7661**. This bill would withhold federal funds from any public classroom or school library accused of having “sexually oriented” materials on their shelves. **HR 6440, the “Right to Read Act of 2025”**, on the other hand, would expand access to materials and protect constitutional rights and protections for school libraries.

RECOMMENDED READING

Spectrum News: [How New Yorkers will be impacted after passport processing stopped at all nonprofit libraries](#)
Courthouse News Service: [Blind man who was told to read library sign cleared to fight San Francisco](#)
Governing: [Libraries Are Becoming Telehealth Hubs in Rural New Mexico](#)
Publisher's Weekly: [‘Same Ingredients, Different Recipe’ in Proposed U.S. Book Ban](#)

IMPORTANT DATES

March 24, 6:00–7:30: Robert's Rules and Board Meeting How-Tos (Training) Fairport Public Library [REGISTER](#)

April 2, 6:00–7:30: Robert's Rules and Board Meeting How-Tos (Training) Gates Public Library [REGISTER](#)

April 16, 5:00–6:30: Trustee Handbook Book Club: Hiring and Evaluating the Library Director with Brian Hildreth, [REGISTER](#)

April 19–25: National Library Week

April 24, time TBA: MCLS Legislative Breakfast, Central Library

April 24, 1:00: Screening of *The Librarians*, Central Library

May 21, 5:30–7:00: Director's Choice Book Discussion: *The Correspondent* by Virginia Evans [REGISTER](#)

UPCOMING LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

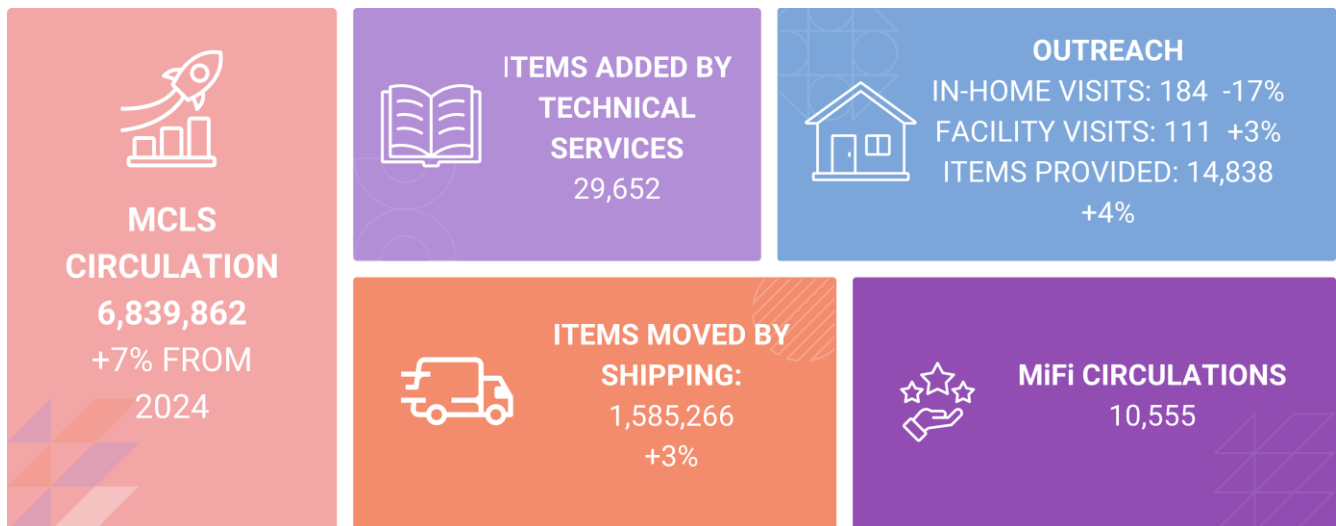
[Find Upcoming Library Programming Here](#)

DIRECTOR'S UPDATES

February may be a short month, but this one was packed full of efforts to plan for the future, strengthen partnerships, and prepare both RPL and MCLS to navigate what will likely be a challenging fiscal year.

One of the biggest areas of work was beginning the development of the Monroe County Library System's next Five-Year Plan of Service. As part of that effort, our team developed and launched a survey for our member libraries to gather feedback on how well MCLS has met the goals of the current plan and to collect ideas and priorities that should shape the next one. Getting this input early will help ensure the new plan reflects the real needs and experiences of our member libraries.

I also participated in the MCLS Directors' Retreat, where I presented a 2025 Year in Review highlighting many of the accomplishments we've seen across the system over the past year, the challenges we've worked through, and the opportunities ahead. The retreat also gave us time to gather additional feedback for the Five-Year Plan and included some media training, which was a helpful opportunity to strengthen how we communicate about the work libraries do and the impact we have on our communities.



Another major focus this month has been budget preparation during a particularly lean fiscal year. Developing a responsible budget under these circumstances requires a fair amount of creativity and careful prioritization. The coming year will likely involve continued problem-solving, some rethinking of how we approach certain services, and finding new ways to maintain strong library service while operating within tighter financial limits. Supporting staff morale while we work through these challenges will also remain an important priority.

I also spent time addressing several ongoing operational issues, including continuing to work through the outstanding questions surrounding the status of the MCLS Staff Association. At the same time, we have been bringing training and informational resources into the system to help staff feel prepared should any ICE-related enforcement activity occur in our library locations.

Advocacy and partnership work also continued throughout the month. I met with a number of community partners, including the Monroe County Youth Bureau, Rochester Museum & Science Center, Literacy Rochester, and the Father Tracy Advocacy Center, to maintain and strengthen collaborations that support the work of our libraries. I also continued my work with the City's Opioid Response Team, contributing the library perspective to ongoing community response efforts.

It wasn't all hard work, though. I did get a chance to have some fun attending the "Mayor's Madden" eSports tournament at the beginning of the month and watch the teens play football against each other and against Mayor Evans. And I even found time to have coffee with former director Patty Uttaro, which was a lovely opportunity to reconnect and reflect on how our libraries continue to grow and evolve, and what a privilege it is to be entrusted with the responsibility of being the Director.



~Emily

CENTRAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE: SARAH LEHMAN

Advocacy Day

Along with Associate Director Jennifer Smathers and Deputy Director BJ Scanlon, I traveled to Albany at the beginning of the month to meet with State Legislators and representatives for the annual Library Advocacy Day. We spoke with representatives on statewide topics such as challenges with Civil Service guidelines, the Governor's proposed budget and upcoming legislation related to libraries.

RocPaint

We are very excited to welcome RocPaint back to the Central Library at the end of March to introduce a new mural in the Link. I met with RocPaint in February to walk through the Central library to look at possible locations for the new public art piece and we settled on a wall in the Lovenheim Technology Center. RocPaint will be conducting the survey at the beginning of March to get feedback from patrons and staff on what they would like to see included in the mural. Library staff will meet with RocPaint staff in mid-March to see a proposed rendering of the piece and installation will be in late March to early April.

School to Career Opportunity Taskforce

The Mayor has requested a new taskforce to develop recommendations that address low employment rates among young adults in Rochester as well as a lack of candidates for entry-level jobs for employers. I have recently joined to represent the library and offer recommendations on ways that the library may be able to assist in filling this gap. With representatives from multiple services fields throughout the city, as well as employers, the discussions so far have been very enlightening. I look forward to working with this group and am interested in what recommendations will ultimately be presented to the mayor for review.

Shadowing of Media and Tech Center Staff

With the retirement of Joe Born from the Reynolds Media Center, we began with plans to merge the Media Center staff with the staff of the Lovenheim Technology Center under current supervisor Jay Osborne. In order to appropriately re-delegate responsibilities among the staff and to best leverage the talents from each team, I have been shadowing each staff person from both groups for 2 hours (one hour on a public service desk and one hour off desk). I have been able to get valuable insight into the daily work that is being done in each division and look forward to using this data to maximize the service we are able to provide to patrons.

~Sarah

COMMUNITY LIBRARIES DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S UPDATES FROM BJ SCANLON

Training

I participated in training on ICE operations in public libraries presented by Scott Duimstra, Director of the Hennepin County Library System in Minnesota. The session provided helpful context and guidance for library leadership on responding to potential federal enforcement activity in public spaces.

Community Partnerships

The League of Women Voters has expressed interest in continued engagement across RPL branches and other MCLS member libraries. I met with Mary Micket to discuss the creation of a digital form that can be shared system-wide to offer program opportunities to libraries.

Father Tracy Advocacy Center (FTAC) is expanding its services into the Lyell Branch Library; they met with the team during the Branch Meeting. FTAC is already working with Lincoln and Central libraries and has partnered with a street medicine provider through His Branches, which is helping provide critical care and outreach services to vulnerable community members. Service to Lyell is expected to begin May 1.

Update on the University of Rochester air quality project. A Purple Air sensor is scheduled to be installed at the Arnett Branch Library in March, with additional libraries expected to follow. This project will help researchers gather localized air quality data and is supported through grant funding. The sensors will contribute to a broader network that allows the public and researchers to monitor air quality in real time. Check out their [air quality map](#).

Health and Safety Walkthroughs

In coordination with City of Rochester HR, we are ramping up health and safety walkthroughs at all branch locations. Walkthroughs have been scheduled across the system, and we are making good progress in completing them and identifying any areas that may need attention or improvement.

Grants

Katy Hasselwander and I have worked together to prepare materials for a grant application to the James Rippey Charitable Trust, which will be submitted through FFRPL. The proposal seeks funding to support enhanced children's and teen programming, staff training, and youth transportation, helping expand access to library services and opportunities for young people across the community.

Arts

Progress continues on the Monroe Branch Library teen mural project, while the City of Rochester's RocPaint Division has also begun a community survey related to a potential exterior mural at the Lyell Branch Library. I connected them with LOCA (Lyell Otis Community Association), who have been strong advocates for expanding public art in the neighborhood and are interested in helping shape the project with community input.

Additionally, I will be serving as a reviewer on the City of Rochester's ArtsBloom committee. The committee selects projects for funding that support arts and cultural programming across the city. This work will help expand opportunities for arts programming not only in libraries, but also in R-Centers, parks, and other community spaces.

~BJ

Jessica Williams

[REDACTED]
Rochester, NY 14626
[REDACTED]

September 25, 2025

**Selection Committee
Rochester Public Library
Rochester, NY**

Dear Members of the Selection Committee,

I am writing to express my interest in serving on the Rochester Public Library Board. As a seasoned Bank Manager with a strong record of leadership and community engagement, I am eager to bring my financial expertise, strategic insight, and passion for public service to furthering the library’s mission of providing access, education, and opportunity for all.

In my professional role, I have developed a deep understanding of fiscal oversight, organizational management, and customer service excellence. These skills have prepared me to make thoughtful contributions to board discussions and governance, particularly in the areas of financial stewardship and strategic planning. I understand the importance of balancing resources responsibly while ensuring that the needs of the community remain at the center of every decision.

Beyond my banking career, I actively serve on the Do the Right Thing Board, where I collaborate with fellow members to support youth achievement and community recognition. This experience has deepened my commitment to serving Rochester through organizations that create meaningful impact and foster stronger connections across our city.

I am especially drawn to the Rochester Public Library because of its vital role in advancing literacy, lifelong learning, and equitable access to resources. I would be honored to contribute my leadership, financial acumen, and dedication to community service in support of the Library’s continued growth and success.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the opportunity to contribute to the Rochester Public Library Board and to work collaboratively with fellow members to strengthen this essential community institution.

Sincerely,

Jessica Williams

Jessica Williams

Objective

Seeking a position in which my experience can be a positive influence on the company. I am interested in a position where I am able to utilize my work experience to the fullest. My main goal is to help the company be operationally sound.

Work Experience

09/25-Present

Duties:

NexTier Bank

AVP, Branch Manager

Responsible for completing and reviewing the branch's audit processes. Branch liaison for audit processes. Completes various audit processes daily, and I also provide on-the-spot coaching to employees in regards to operational processes. Provides leadership, by conducting team meetings regularly and informing staff members of updated procedures. Responsible for volunteering, and building relationships within the local community that foster growth. Creates a positive work environment daily by assisting and leading coworkers.

02/22-04/25

Duties:

Summit Federal Credit Union

Branch Manager

Responsible for completing and reviewing the branch's audit processes. Branch liaison for audit processes. Completes various audit processes daily, and I also provide on-the-spot coaching to employees in regards to operational processes. Provides leadership, by conducting team meetings regularly and informing staff members of updated procedures. Creates a positive work environment daily by assisting and leading coworkers.

07/21-02/22

Duties:

Kinecta Federal Credit Union

Assistant Branch Manager

Responsible for building relationships within the branch network as well as the community. Assisted current and potential members with their financial goals, while providing excellent customer service. Actively coached staff with sales behaviors in order to achieve team goals. Fills in for Branch Manager absence. Continuously provides leadership, by conducting engaging team meetings. Creates a positive work environment daily by assisting and leading coworkers to achieve their career goals.

05/17-07/21

Duties:

ESL Federal Credit Union

Assistant Branch Manager

Responsible for building relationships as well as assisting members with their financial goals, while providing excellent customer service. Continuing to increase my development around Business Banking by going out on Business calls, and Business departmental visits. Actively coaching tellers as well as Relationship Bankers with sales behaviors in order to achieve team goals. Fills in for Branch Manager absence. Monitors branch lobby activity while minimizing wait times. Provides leadership, by conducting team meetings and coming up with fun engaging and interactive activities. Creates a positive work environment daily by assisting and leading coworkers as well as myself to success.

10/15- 05/17

Duties:

Northwest Bank

Assistant Manager

Responsible for completing transactions accurately in a timely manner while taking initiative to inform customers about new products and services. Motivated team by implementing creative sales contests resulting in the team's success. Completed the schedule to ensure that the branch was properly staffed at all times. Ensured that the branch was compliant by completing operational tasks daily. Handled and managed customer complaints to ensure that there was a positive customer experience. Responsible for networking within the community while building lasting business relationships. Accountable for guiding tellers to success while completing my assigned duties.

04/15-10/15 **Dorschel Lexus/Infiniti** **Financial Analyst**
Duties: Responsible for processing and verifying legal documents of vehicles to finalize sales deals. Responsible for preparing and processing title and tax documents for vehicles. Responsible for processing financing for automobiles for customers while responding to banks and customers in a courteous and timely manner.

06/14-04 /15 **Doan Dodge** **Title Clerk**
Duties: Responsible for processing and verifying legal documents of vehicles to finalize sales deals. Responsible for preparing and processing title and tax documents for vehicles. Verifying and analyzing free and clear title issues. Responsible for answering and responding to customers courteously on all issues relating to titles and registration.

07/06-06/14 **Citizens Bank** **Banker**
Duties: Responsible for letting customers know about new promotions and products that fit their needs while giving superior service. Responsible for building valuable relationships with customers while exceeding sales goals.

SPECIAL SKILLS

Team player, Strong communication skills, Superior sales and service skills. Exceptional ability to analyze information and make individual assessments/recommendations. Adaptable, dependable as well as experienced and ready to further my career. Notary Public. Medallion Certified

Accomplishments

Regularly volunteers within the Rochester Community, volunteering at Encompass Resources, Vertus

Executive Board Member of Do the Right Thing Program

Previous Secretary of South East Area Coalition

Previous Membership Committee Representative at Notable Networkers

Previous Treasurer and Vice President for Notable Networkers

Previous received perfect audit scores from previous financial institutions

Previous Mentor at ESL Federal Credit Union, has received several employee of the month and fraud prevention awards, consistently receives kudos from employees as well as members

Previously participated in Workshops regularly (Outbound Calling, New Account, Observation Coaching)

Previous member of the Webster Chamber as well as the Membership Committee for the Webster Chamber

Previous Mentor for Dress for Success, a Non-for-Profit Agency

Successfully Completed Emerging Leader Program within ESL

Recognized at Citizens Bank for having the highest sales achievement for personal bankers of the New York State in 2013

Participated in First Niagara Acquisition at Northwest

COMPUTER SKILLS

Proficient in Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint, Word

JEAN-PAUL SCOTT

██████████ | Rochester, NY 14607 | ██████████ | ██████████

SUMMARY

Highly effective educator with 30 years of English Language Arts experience, including Adjunct Faculty teaching ENG 101 (College Composition), skilled in developing high-quality instruction for diverse learners across secondary and community college settings.

EXPERIENCE

Monroe Community College – Adjunct Faculty

State University of New York | Rochester, NY

September 2025 – Present

Courses taught: ENG 101 College Composition I.

Instruct diverse student populations in Composition I, emphasizing clarity, revision, and critical thinking.

Guide students through the full writing process, from invention to polished academic essays.

Foster inclusive, discussion-based classrooms that supported student engagement and retention.

Provide individualized feedback and conferencing to support developing writers.

Greece Central School District – Substitute Teacher

Greece Central School District | Greece, NY

September 2024 – September 2025

Courses taught: Provide per diem instructional services for high school level subject areas;

Long term (15 weeks) position planning and delivering Strategies for Success curriculum to high school sophomores at Greece Athena.

Greece Athena High School – Secondary English Language Arts Teacher

Greece Central School District | Greece, NY

September 2004 – June 2024

Courses taught: Advanced Placement Language & Composition (10 years), Advanced Literature and Composition (2 years), Dual Credit English 12 with Finger Lakes Community College, in addition to Regents English Language Arts (ELA) for Grades 7 through 12.

Leadership: Hosted new high and middle school ELA teachers for classroom shadowing to illustrate effective classroom management by request of District Mentor Teacher. Presented at 2023 GCSD New Teacher Orientation on methods of effective classroom management.

Mentored/supervised multiple student teaching and shadowing experiences for future teachers from a variety of local universities.

Professional Development: Grading for Equity, Social Media Literacy, Restorative Practices, Pillars of Culturally Responsive Education, facilitated Staff Community Circles.

Faculty Advisor for student-led clubs and organizations including the Trojan Tribune School Newspaper (4 years), MasterMinds Academic Quiz Bowl (4 years), MOSAICS/Equity Club Advisor (2 years).

Greece Athena High School – Varsity Cross-Country and Track & Field Coach

Greece Central School District | Greece, NY

December 2007 – November 2023

Coached a combined 36 seasons as Head Coach: Varsity Girls Cross-Country (13 years), Varsity Girls Track & Field (7 years), Varsity Boys Track & Field (7 years), Varsity Indoor Track & Field (7 years), and Co-Ed Modified Outdoor Track & Field (2 years).

Collaborated with Greece Central School District Mindfulness teachers to incorporate visualization strategies, vision boards, and yoga to existing Girls Varsity Cross-Country program. Supplemented athletic training with selected readings and reflective writing.

Participated in the first Monroe County Sportsmanship Summit with coaches, Athletic Directors, and student-athletes from throughout Section V.

Regional Summer School Program Teacher

Monroe #2-Orleans BOCES | Spencerport, NY

July 2009 – August 2021

Planned and delivered English Language Arts instruction to students grade 7 to 12 in both traditional six-week and credit recovery summer school programs.

Charter School of Science and Technology – Lead English Language Arts Teacher

Edison Learning Inc. | Rochester, NY

September 2002 – June 2005

Middle School English Language Arts. Developed and delivered middle school English Language Arts instruction to inner-city students resulting in a doubling of the performance on the NYS Grade 8 Regents exam compared to comparable students within community.

EDUCATION

St. John Fisher University | Rochester, NY.

Master of Science-Education Administration.

State University of New York College at Brockport | Brockport, NY

Master of Science-Education.

Bachelor of Science-English/Secondary Education.

SKILLS

Advanced oral and written communication skills for instruction, feedback, and collaboration

Highly skilled in analyzing performance data for use in bridging achievement gaps

Proven ability to motivate both high-achieving and developing learners to pursue ambitious academic goals

Effective collaborator with experience contributing to and strengthening instructional teams

HOBBIES

Exploring my community through running, walking, writing, reading, and gardening.

Volunteering at local road races.