TO: RPL Board of Trustees  
FROM: Patricia Uttaro, Director  
DATE: March 27, 2019  
SUBJECT: Monthly Report – March 2019

**Action Items**

**Agreement, Investment Management Services (Harrison)**
The RPL issued a Request for Proposals for management of the RPL endowment in fall 2018. It was posted on the RPL and City websites and sent to six local investment firms. Four responses were received; an evaluation committee comprised of trustees, staff and City treasury and budget representatives evaluated proposals and interviewed three firms (Alesco Advisors, LVW Advisors and Manning & Napier Advisors). The committee has recommended Alesco Advisors based on cost, experience of the staff assigned to the RPL’s account, and investment approach. Alesco will be utilizing Fidelity for custodial services under the agreement. The recommended agreement term is five years, effective April 1, 2019, with a five-year option to renew. Payment of fees documented in the included attachment are derived from the endowment. The document also includes information regarding the firm, principals and RPL liaison.

**Board Action Requested:** Approve a professional services agreement with Alesco Advisors, for a five-year term beginning April 1, 2019, inclusive of investment management and custodial services at the fee structure provided.

**Amended NYS Library Construction Grant (Harrison)**

In September 2018, the RPL Board approved an application to the NYSED’s Division of Library Development for the Rundel East Terrace Reconstruction Project. In early 2019, the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York rejected use of NYSED funding in the overall project allocation given other funding allocated to the project through other sources. As a result, NYSED supported re-purposing of the $269,100 for other qualifying work at the Rundel building.

The RPL shall resubmit the application for the Rundel Silt Removal project. The river water reservoir as part of the Johnson Seymour mill race is used to dissipate heat from the building from a rooftop chiller system. A valve historically used to clear sediments has failed; as a result, river sediments have reduced reservoir depth with the chiller system experiencing an 82% reduction in capacity. As the chiller was replaced in 2012 with an estimated life span of 20-25 years, it is a priority to protect the RPL’s investment and operations.

Excavation and removal of several feet (about 2,800 cubic yards) of silt will occur when the raceway is closed off by RG&E. The failed valve will be replaced in-kind. In addition, the gangways over the raceway for access to the reservoir are original to the building and are structurally unsound and will be replaced. The total estimated construction cost for the project is $530,000, inclusive of site access, excavation, disposal and/or storage, and reservoir valve and ramp replacement. Project funds were allocated as cash capital in the FY19 budget.
Board Action Requested: Approval of an amended NYS Library Construction grant application with NYSED support of $269,100, Library/City matching cash capital funds of $260,900, and total estimated construction costs of $530,000 for the project.

Amendment, Chevo Studios (Harrison)
In August 2018, the RPL Board approved an agreement with Chevo Studios for design and installation of public art ($250,000) as a component of the Rundel Terrace Reconstruction project. Owner/Principal Andy Dufford and his team spent the fall working with the project design team to collaborate on the main installation as well as a secondary installation funded through the Friends and Foundation of the Rochester Public Library. Chevo Studio’s work with the design team resulted in several innovative approaches to the terrace landscape as a whole, including a grate design for a lighted “runnel” through the terrace that will be included as an alternate in the project bid.

Mr. Dufford and Bayer Landscape architecture developed concepts for stone seating in addition to the planned seating in the landscape wall and cantilevered deck area. RPL administration supports additional seating and recommends the allocation of Fenyvessy trust funds to support the work. As Chevo Studios will be responsible for the transport and placement of stone for the main installation, it is recommended that the stone seating be included in Chevo Studio’s work scope, versus the additional cost for overhead through the General Contractor’s contract. The allocation will not exceed $35,000 from current trust balances.

Chevo Studios has received feedback from staff, the public, and three guided public forums held by the RPL for the main installation; as part of the original agreement, a final proposal will be submitted to the RPL in April. We will share the final proposal with the Board next month.

Board Action Requested: Approval of an amended agreement with Chevo Studios and the Library/City for an additional $35,000, funded from the Fenyvessy trust fund, with a revised not to exceed total of $285,000 for the project.

Professional Services Agreement, Early Literacy Training (Uttaro)
As part of a family literacy grant, training has been identified for RPL and MCLS children’s services staff for the use of music to support social and emotional development during early literacy programs, as well as ways to market to families and community organizations. The MCLS Children Services Consultant has identified Christopher Holt to provide program training, based on his previous training and programming experience in the early childhood community and the recommended training focus area (music engagement). Mr. Holt will be paid a sum of $2,000, inclusive of travel, supplies and materials to be retained for use by the MCLS. The training will occur in April 2019, and is funded by family literacy grants received by MCLS and incorporated (transferred) to the FY19 RPL Operating budget.

Board Action Requested: Approve a professional services agreement with Christopher Holt, for the services described, for an amount not to exceed $2,000.

Branch Staff Development Days (Reeves)
RPL Branch Administration proposes closing all RPL branches three times a year to allow staff the opportunity to work on various projects in their branches such as collection development/weeding, shifting entire collections, team building, training, re-arranging floor plans, and planning. The closed dates for Lincoln will include the Toy Library.
The recommended dates are:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>End Date</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Arnett</td>
<td>May 24, 2019</td>
<td>October 4, 2019</td>
<td>March 27, 2020</td>
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<td>Charlotte</td>
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<td>Lincoln</td>
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<td>Monroe</td>
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<td>Sully</td>
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<td>Wheatley</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winton</td>
<td>May 10, 2019</td>
<td>September 20, 2019</td>
<td>March 13, 2020</td>
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**Board Action Requested:** Approval of closing RPL branches three times a year for staff development activities beginning May 2019.

**RPL Branch Retreat (Reeves)**

RPL Branch Administration proposes closing all RPL branches on April 18, 2019, for a branch retreat to plan work related to the Branch Facilities and Operations Plan. All full-time and part-time branch staff are invited to attend. The retreat will be led by Patty Uttaro and Tolley Reeves. The primary goal of the retreat is to discuss the Branch Facilities and Operations Plan recommendations, solicit feedback and assist staff with steps towards implementation.

**Board Action Requested:** Approval of closure of all RPL branches on April 18, 2019.

**Additional Hours at Monroe Branch (Reeves)**

The Monroe Branch Library is requesting permission to open the branch for three additional hours on Saturday July 2, 2019, from 7-10 pm for a special event. The staff will present an “Escape Room” for the community on this date and provide security coverage during the time of the event.

**Board Action Requested:** Approval for three additional open hours and security coverage on July 2, 2019, at the Monroe Branch.

**Acceptance of Erie Canalway Grant (Uttaro)**

Rochester Public Library was recently awarded $3,700 from the Erie Canalway Grants program to fund the creation of new content on the Erie Canal for the Rochester Voices website. Historical Researcher Michelle Finn wrote the grant and will supervise the project, which involves hiring an educational consultant to develop the content using primary source materials from the library collection and other collections in the area. The content will be digitized, interpreted, and described into curriculum lessons for 4th grade history classes. (See below for information on the press conference where these grants were announced.)

**Board Action Requested:** Accept the Erie Canalway grant in the amount of $3,700.

**Acceptance of RPL Private Events Policy**

RPL is beginning to actively market the space in Hacker Hall, Gleason Auditorium, and the Dorris Carlson Reading Garden for private events after library hours. Previous Board action in the fall authorized a revised meeting room policy, noting that private and after-hours events would be codified in this separate policy for approval. The new policy addresses permits, fees and contractual obligations for the use of the space. The fee table includes a price discount for not-for-profit organizations. Any waiving or
negotiation of fees will be at the discretion of the Library Director. Please refer to the policy documents included in this packet.

**Board Action Requested**: Acceptance of the RPL Private Events Policy and included fees.

**Report Items**
*Patricia Uttaro, RPL Director reporting*

**Recommended Reading/Viewing**

**Upcoming Events**
Friday, March 29 – Kick Colon Cancer Press Conference, 11:00 am in the BLB Atrium
Friday, April 5 – Stonewall: 50 Years Out Opening Reception, 6:00 – 9:00 pm in Hacker Hall
Tuesday, April 9 – National Library Worker Appreciation Day – Branches will receive lunches (pizza or sandwich trays) and Central staff will enjoy ice cream from 1:00-2:00 pm. Trustees are welcome to join staff at your favorite Branch or at Central.

**Early Grade Literacy Work**
In March 2018, I took on the role of co-chair of a team for Roc the Future that was tasked with planning the work of a community team that will work with the RCSD and community in general on improving early grade reading for our youngest students. That work is coming to an end, as the team prepares to wrap up and recommend some strategies for the outcome team. One of the results of this work is an interest in examining a product from Renaissance Learning that includes Accelerated Reader and MyON, two well-known online reading tools. Over the next few weeks, Tonia Burton and I will be working with the City and RCSD to come to an agreement about how to use these tools. We will engage the RPL Children’s Librarians as well as Site Supervisors to discuss how the tools could be used in the libraries. I am grateful to Dr. Reeves for stepping in as part of the Roc the Future Strive Together Leadership Team, which will examine early grade literacy in Rochester as part of a national accelerator grant. I was not able to join this team as the monthly meetings, held in different cities, conflicted with monthly MCLS Directors’ Council meetings.

Also in 2018, I worked with a team convened through United Way to explore ways to provide better access to quality summer learning programs for families and children. Led by Christina Dandino from the Greater Rochester After School Alliance and Stephanie Fitzgerald from United Way, the group brought together representatives from various agencies that offer summer programs, including the YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, Horizons, Monroe County Youth Bureau, RCSD, and Rochester Works. A result of this work
is a new project with RIT Computer students who are building an online program locator specifically for summer learning programs. This website will be hosted by the Monroe County Youth Bureau and will provide easy, one-stop access to quality summer programs. Working with the students to plan this project has been an interesting and fun experience.

**RPL Strategic Plan Progress**

**Sustainability & Resources**

Erie Canal on Rochester Voices – On March 1, Director Uttaro and Historical Researcher Michelle Finn attended a press conference in Fairport where they accepted a $3,700 grant from the Erie Canalway Corridor Fund that will help create a new curriculum topic for *Rochester Voices* that will focus on the Erie Canal. Finn wrote the grant, which was one of several awarded to agencies in western New York. At the event, staff from Cornhill Navigation approached Finn and Uttaro to discuss the possibility of partnering with the Central Library on a new venture they are trying this summer: carrying bicycles on the canal boats that guests can use to explore various stops along their tour route. Captain LJ Fisher was especially interested in the possibility of having a stop at the Central Library.

Library Advocacy Update – February 27, was Library Advocacy Day in Albany. There were 49 advocates who traveled by bus to Albany for a day of meetings rallying for library funding. It was very busy and
noisy at the capitol this year as several other non-library groups were loudly chanting in the Plaza, causing delays getting through security, which in turn caused our group to miss several appointments. The teens who traveled with us from Greece, Webster, Central, and Irondequoit were superstars in the meetings. The legislators were very happy to listen to their library stories and they all spoke eloquently. Despite all the disturbances, the tight schedule, and the snowy ride back, everyone seemed to have a good time. Several teens from Teen Central traveled with Dr. Reeves and Antoine McDonald, pictured with Senator Robach.

**Stewardship & Curation**

*Tonia Burton Named a Library Journal Mover & Shaker* –  

We are happy to share the news that Tonia Burton has been selected as a 2019 Library Journal Mover & Shaker! This annual award recognizes the best and brightest library staff from all over the world. Tonia is recognized for her extensive and impactful work in early literacy and community collaborations, including her transformation of the Central Children’s Center, leadership in the City of Rochester Americorps grant, implementation of Raising a Reader, and her work with WXXI and Exploration Stations. We are fortunate to have Tonia as part of our team.

**Facility and Capital Updates**

This spring will see many activities for the RPL with several construction and design projects underway or beginning in the coming months. The City’s draft Capital Improvement Program (CIP) includes full capital project and annual allocation requests, and incorporates design services for a Lincoln Branch Library renovation, the first tier of priority projects under the Branch Facilities and Operations Plan. The final CIP will be shared with all proposed operating budget changes in May. Several project updates are as follows:

- **Rundel structural repairs, Phase IV/South Avenue** – To ensure a viable base bid, the following are alternate options in the current public works bid advertisement for contractors: irrigation system, landscape lighting, replacement of bus shelter and bench seating on East Terrace, runnel, limited removal of concrete under the river wall, seating for two of three planter areas, a deduct for the third planter, and decorative concrete (exposed aggregate) as opposed to standard concrete. While these will be disappointing changes if not all are added to the awarded contracts, they do not demonstrably shift the final project from what was presented in public hearings and presentations. The deck, river theater and art installations remain the same. The RPL and City will wait for bid results to prioritize alternates as we can.

- **Rundel Loading Dock Replacement** – Shipping and Delivery has been relocated to space on Canal Street in the Susan B. Anthony neighborhood, while Testa Construction completes the replacement of the Rundel loading dock elevator and dock doors. This project is currently underway and will be completed by mid-April.

- **Master Space Plan Phase 4, Technology Center** – Edge Architecture has continued to meet with an internal team to develop the design of this final phase of the Central Library Master Space Plan project in the lower link level of the Bausch & Lomb building, with public bid scheduled for mid-April. Construction is anticipated to begin in June with completion by end of September 2019.

- **Rundel Silt Removal Project** – An overview of the project was provided as part of the NYSED grant approval; the RPL and the City of Rochester have engaged LaBella Associates to assist in the environmental testing and early agency planning involved with the project. Silt removal will require coordination with New York State and Rochester Gas & Electric due to the work occurring via the Johnson Seymour Mill Race.

- **Technology updates** – The FY20 round of the Federal E-rate program includes bids for new network cabling at five branch libraries (Douglass, Maplewood, Monroe, Wheatley, Winton) due to cabling age and changes in technology use since original installation. Participation in a cabling bid was open
to all MCLS members with cabling older than 15 years (and no plans for building renovations in the foreseeable future). These projects will receive up to 85% reimbursement, with the balance of furnish and installation costs funded at the member level.

Social Media

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Central Library Updates

Assistant Directors Sally Snow & Tolley Reeves, EdD, reporting

Arts and Literature, Nanci Nugent reporting

Programs

- Hanging Birch Succulent Planters – Some of our most popular classes are taught by Kathleen Rullo, owner of Jardin Terrariums. Rullo was back to lead a class on making a rustic hanging log planter. For this project students learned the ins and outs of succulent handling and care, then they used a hollowed out log with fungi to plant their succulent. Rullo provided whimsical and creative objects to add to their succulent such as small fake mushrooms and other small plants. Students added finishing touches with hardware and a string to hang.

- Lifespan – Melissa Manczuk of the Arts and Literature Division hosted another craft class at Lifespan. The group of talented crafters created 3-D paper hearts. The participants used scrapbook paper and glue to make their hearts. They loved how pretty the hearts looked and how easy the craft was. One woman, Dorothy, said that she came specifically because she knew Manczuk was teaching the class and she loves it when she comes to teach.
Kente Cloth and Adrinka Symbols of Ghana – Nita Brown, local owner of MansaWear, gave an informative and lively lecture on the history of Kente cloth and some of its symbols. Kente is a silk and cotton fabric that comes from the word kenten, which means basket. Brown, who is from Ghana, spoke on the history of the cloth and how it is made. The cloth is made on a strip loom which produces a narrow band of cloth about four inches wide called ntomaban. Several of these strips are arranged and hand-sewn together to create a cloth of the desired size. Most kente weavers are men. She spoke about the Adrinka symbols that are used extensively in fabrics and pottery. These symbols have decorative functions but also represent objects. She described the messages that often convey traditional wisdom such as aspects of life or the environment. Brown who was dressed in a traditional Kente cloth gown said Kente was often worn for royal or sacred ceremonies but can be used now for clothing or other objects.

Beginning Pastel Drawing – Pastels can be an intimidating medium to work with due to the dust and sometimes muddy effects they create. Artist Gail Johnson brought her expertise with pastels to students who were not sure how to use these colorful sticks. Johnson taught library patrons basic pastel techniques such as blending, feathering, and how working with the edge of the pastel can give varied effects. As students were leaving the class some remarked, "I feel a lot more confident using pastels now," and "Gail was a patient and friendly teacher."

Writing to Heal – This new literature program was taught by Anais Salibian who culminated her seven-week writing class to help people who are dealing with health problems, grief, job loss, past trauma, or life transitions. Here are a couple of comments from people who took this class: "Way back in the old days, a wrestler could advertise that he was “willing to take on all comers,” meaning he’d wrestle anyone who showed up, regardless of weight or gender or anything else. These library writing classes are kind of like that – all kinds of people show up. This makes them interesting as well as a challenge to teach sometimes. Anaïs Salibian was certainly up to the task, handling potentially sensitive issues with a deft touch. She made it look easy, but that is only because she is so well versed in the genre of writing and healing."

After “I Do”: Perspectives on Marriage in Literature – In honor of Valentine’s Day, the Division hosted this four-part group with St. John Fisher College Professor Emeritus David Sanders. Participants read and discussed written works reflecting a range of perspectives on marriage. The group enjoyed discussing poetry and prose with an expert facilitator who drew insights from a diverse group of people.

Learning to Lie: A Fiction Writing Workshop – Local author and writing teacher Gail Hosking taught this workshop for writers learning how to create stellar fiction through specific and concrete details. The group rewrote inept pieces of fiction writing, revising them to avoid clichés and to dramatize rather than summarize, and learned what makes a good story.

Taking Your Blog to the Next Level – This class was taught by Jane Sutter, owner of Sutter Communications and an expert blogger; this was a continuation of the Introduction to Blogging class that took place in November. This more advanced class was geared toward bloggers or aspiring bloggers who want to learn how to build traffic and interaction and make money from their blog. Jane taught proven tactics that achieve results and shared case studies of how expert bloggers achieve success.


**Business & Social Sciences, Darlene Richards reporting**

**Meetings**
Sarah Bishopp Vélez joined several other Center for Urban Entrepreneurship (CUE) partners to discuss the development of the UniteUs database which will help agencies track small business clients. The meeting was led by project manager Lomax Campbell, Director of the Mayor’s Office of Community Wealth Building. At a subsequent meeting, participants saw a demo of the software and were universally impressed with the progress. The group reconvened after the demo to discuss specific details of how the database would need to be structured, as well as the next steps to take. It was agreed that the CUE and the Office of Community Wealth Building would move forward and start the process of purchasing the database.

**Programs**
- The BizKid$ program returned to the library for 2019. Sixteen children and teens along with nine counselors and instructors visited during Winter Break to learn how to write a basic business plan. Sarah Bishopp Vélez gave a brief introduction to the library’s resources, including sample business plans, and then the entire group used Teen Central’s computers to do some market research. A big thank you to Dennis Williams and the rest of Teen Central’s staff for accommodating the large group!

- Take Your Child to the Library Day – The 4th floor chose to host a Plinko game for Take Your Child to the Library Day on February 2. The kids answered simple questions pertaining to the law as part of the game. Renee Kendrot set everything up, which included creating the questions and borrowing Children’s Books that contained answers to the questions. Since Kendrot was not able to be here for the day, Cynthia Dana assisted patrons with the Plinko game.
Tax Program – Florence Morris and Brad Stanley from the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance have been working together for 5 years to assist patrons with tax filing. February started off great with Brad and his two staff members serving 42 clients and successfully preparing 34 tax returns. Their best day was 16 clients, many of whom were referred by the 1st floor and CASH staff.

Grants Consulting
Darlene Richards had grant appointments with nonprofits including Water for South Sudan, Director for Advancement for the Hillel Day School, the Executive Director of Cameron Ministries, a return visit from a patron from the Friends of Two Saints Church and his friend, who is looking for funds for historical preservation, and a woman from a church in Genesee County, also looking for funds for historical preservation.

Small Business Consulting
Sarah Bishopp Vélez, and the Business Division as a whole have handled many small business research questions this month! Some of the topics include ambulatory services, accounting, consulting, boat repair, and pet boarding.

Children’s Center, Tonia Burton reporting

Outreach and Community Contacts
- The Rochester Academy Charter School borrowed dozens of materials for their recent project-based learning unit on African Civilizations (6th Grade) and the Black Panther Movement (7th Grade).
- Hazen and Powell visited seven preschool classes at the Metro YMCA. Powell offered a storytime session at Lincoln Branch attended by Early Pre-K students from Peter Castle Family Resource Center.
- Jennifer Byrnes, Science and History Division Supervisor, set up visits from Pediatric Interns at the University of Rochester Medical Centers in the Pediatric LINC program. Throughout the semester residents are visiting the Children’s Center and learning about the resources and services that can be shared with patients at the clinics. One resident was very excited about creating a prescription to visit the library, Burton is working with the School to make this happen.

Programs
- February was a flurry of programming! Our annual Take Your Child to the Library Day event was a success.
• Our Girl Scout troop continued to meet every Wednesday this month. Participants have completed three badges, including a money manager badge. In this photo, Girl Scouts of Western New York facilitator Krystal Osei is leading girls in an activity about budgeting for needs and wants. Next month, participants will be learning about customer service and entrepreneurship as they prepare to sell cookies. At the end of March, newscaster Kaci Jones from NEWS10 NBC will be speaking to the girls about her career as part of our effort to expose children to a variety of careers and fields of study and help them feel empowered to explore new topics.

• In our Crafting with Yarn program kids made pompoms and god’s eyes and did some finger knitting, loom knitting and a little traditional knitting too.

• Families came to the Connect 4 Tournament to challenge each other for bragging rights and prizes. Kids loved going head-to-head on the giant Connect 4 set-up borrowed from MCLS. More large-scale game tournaments are in the works for the future.

**Circulation/Information Services, Chad Cunningham reporting**

New Borrowers – 207  
Access cards – 2  
Notarial Acts – 101

**Programs**  
Brian DiNitto taught 12 computer classes. 42 people attended.

**Circulation Anecdotes**  
One of the options on the fine wheel this month is “Sing Baby Shark.” A woman spun the wheel and landed on “Sing Baby Shark.” She didn’t know the song so she made up one of her own. It was, in the desk staff’s opinion, a better song.
Information Anecdotes

- One of the more enjoyable aspects of our work is to see the social environment that is created in our computer lab area. Patrons will interact with us and with other patrons regarding many topics, but often about jobs. This month we had some patrons trading their experiences with different temp agencies. This can be very helpful for patrons to know who is a reliable agency, who is not, who has the most work available, etc. In this instance, patrons spoke about the agencies that were not helpful to their workers. It is very rewarding to be involved with patrons in this way and to help them to feel comfortable sharing information that can be so helpful to others.

- Another interesting social aspect to work in the computer lab is how some patrons will help mentor younger patrons they interact with on the computers. One patron, in his fifties, has done this previously and this month was helpful again to a young man who had some temper issues. The older patron spoke to him at length about the importance of keeping his temper in check and suggestions about how to go about doing it. They spoke for quite some time and the younger patron showed his appreciation for the counsel.

- A deaf woman called the Information Desk through the Relay Service to inquire about finding resources in the library. She set up an appointment and came into the library the next day with a deaf friend. DiNitto assisted them in setting up an appointment to have their taxes completed by CASH on the day that ASL interpreters were available. DiNitto also assisted her in finding Khmer language resources at the library and helping one woman download a Khmer-language novel onto her computer.

Local History & Genealogy, Christine Ridarsky reporting

Exhibitions

The Stonewall: 50 Years Out Exhibit Planning Team, led by City Historian/Historical Services Consultant Christine L. Ridarsky, met three times this month and continued to refine the narrative framework for the exhibit and to identify images and objects to be displayed. Historical Researcher Michelle Finn and Librarian Brandon Fess also participated. The opening reception, sponsored by the Out Alliance, is 6 – 9 p.m. April 5, in Hacker Hall and includes hors d’oeuvres, cash bar, and 1960s-70s-era music by DJ Solid Bear. The exhibit will be open during and through the end of Pride Week, closing on July 20, 2019.

Ridarsky, with assistance from the Friends & Foundation of RPL’s Executive Director Ned Davis, secured a $15,000 sponsorship from Trillium Health, Dr. William Valenti, and James Wolf. She raised an additional $2,000 from project partners (Asbury First United Methodist Church, Third Presbyterian Church, Landmark Society of Western New York and a private donor) and secured in-kind contributions of goods or services valued at approximately another $3,000 from Human Rights Campaign of Western New York, the Out Alliance, and the Empty Closet. FFRPL also secured media sponsorship packages from WXXI, City Newspaper, and the Rochester Business Journal, as well as the production services of Dixon-Schwabl, which produces 15- and 30-second public service announcements to be distributed to local television stations.

In support of the exhibit, FFRPL has contracted with Talking Pictures, LLC on behalf of the library to implement a new project to collect picture-based oral history stories from people who identify as LGBTQ+ or as LGBTQ+ allies. These “PixStories” will be publicly accessible through a kiosk in the exhibit, as well as online through various formats. They will be created using an application that Talking Pictures developed as an oral history collection tool, which has exciting possibilities for library projects beyond the Stonewall exhibit. We invite anyone who is interested in helping to collect stories to contact Finn, michelle.finn@libraryweb.org.
We have also contracted with a local queer artist of color, Adrian Elim, to produce photographic portraits of at least 20 people representing the diversity of Rochester’s LGBTQ+ communities. These portraits will be a focal point within the exhibit.

Finally, Ridarsky arranged to participate in a pilot project with The Community Learning Lab, an upstart Rochester-based company with a non-profit arm designed to provide a web-based content management system for curating educational materials and developing community-based learning modules. We will use the platform to develop a digital version of the Stonewall:50 Years Out exhibit and to allow partners and community members to contribute additional content to a virtual archive on Rochester’s LGBTQ+ history. Because we have been accepted as a pilot participant, there is no cost to the library. Our pages have not been built yet, but you can view The Community Learning Lab here: https://www.communitylearninglab.org. If you click on Curated Collections, you will see a holding spot for Stonewall: 50 Years Out.

Community Outreach/Meetings

- In support of an effort to establish a public history center at SUNY Geneseo, Finn participated this month in a daylong symposium on the Geneseo campus that brought together public historians, college professors, students, state and education officials, and other stakeholders. Finn was part of the panel that led a discussion on how the proposed Public History center might serve local historians, students, and the college, highlighting Rochester Voices as an example of a public history project that successfully leverages student internships to accomplish its goals. A couple of students who attended this symposium expressed interest in working as interns for Rochester Voices in the future.

- Ridarsky was interviewed by Nathan Miller of the City Communications Bureau for a forthcoming CityWise broadcast about plans for the historic Broad Street aqueduct.

- Ridarsky gave a short TED-style talk on the “Top 10 Things You Probably Don’t Know About Rochester History” to the staff of the University of Rochester’s Advancement Department. It was a highlight of the department’s annual retreat.

- Ridarsky and Pepe met with Grant Holcomb, former director of the Memorial Art Gallery, and Rochester History editorial board member Marjorie Searl to discuss an article Holcomb is writing about Ed Crone, the real-life Rochesterian who inspired the character Billy Pilgrim, the protagonist of Kurt Vonnegut’s novel Slaughterhouse-Five. This year marks the novel’s 50th anniversary, so we are hoping to be able to publish the article soon.

Social Media

- The Local History and Genealogy Division contributed content for 15 social media posts in February: 4 on Twitter, 6 on Facebook, 2 Facebook Events, and 3 blog entries on www.rochistory.wordpress.com. The reach of these posts was 10,766. This includes 7,098 on Facebook, 1,131 on Twitter, and 3,668 on our blog; 486 people engaged with Local History posts on Facebook, 9 on Twitter, and 155 on our blog.

- Library Assistant Emily Morry contributed one blog entry: “Out of the Loop Pt. 4: A Look at the Neighborhoods of the Inner Loop.” Her post “Down on the Corner: Taverns and Transformations in the Bull’s Head Neighborhood,” posted on January 31, is also included in the above statistics.

- Substitute Librarian Christopher Brennan also contributed one blog entry: “The Doctor Who Would Come: Anthony Leopold Jordan.”
Volunteer/Intern hours
Volunteers from the Rochester Genealogical Society contributed 33 hours in January and assisted 16 patrons. We were also assisted by five volunteers (Kevin Allen – 12.25 hours; Kayla Jackson – 19.5 hours; Karen “Kaye” Knoll – 2 hours; Nancy Martin – 7.75 hours; and Ira Srole – 26.75 hours), three college interns (Josue Cuevas, University of Rochester – 5.5 hours; Mason Lezette, RIT – 28 hours; and Katie Keegan, RIT – 2 hours), and one intern from Monroe BOCES (Ethan McBride – 15 hours). In all, volunteers and interns contributed 151.75 hours.

Reynolds Media Center, Joseph Born reporting

Reference
During the month of February, RMC handled 1,468 reference questions and 353 non-reference transactions for a total of 1821.

Circulation
In February, RMC rented 11 pieces of equipment and circulated 11,604 items or 54% of the Central Library’s total circulation of 21,532 (before renewals from Catalog Plus, Classic Catalog and Telephone are added).

Hoopla
Hoopla circulations for February totaled 1169:
- 305 Movies/TV
- 484 Audiobooks
- 100 Music
- 188 eBooks
- 92 Comics
336 patrons used the service during February with 55 new users registering and 80 patrons using all seven circs (24%). The average cost was $2.10/item.

Presentations
Joseph Born presented a talk entitled “Advances and Trends in Technology and Media: Past, Present and Future” for the Tuesday Topics program sponsored by FFRPL on February 12 in the Kate Gleason Auditorium.

Science & History Division, Jennifer Byrnes reporting

Meetings
Jennifer Byrnes and Nurse Barb met with Jacqueline Compagnoni of the Behavioral Health Care Collaboration, a group focused on Medicaid reform and decreasing unnecessary mental health visits to the emergency room. They discussed doing training on dealing with people in crisis/de-escalation and identifying community partners who may be able to come to Central if someone is in crisis but does not warrant a mental hygiene arrest.

Programs
- Citizen Science: Great Backyard Bird Count. June Summers of the Genesee Valley Audubon Society spoke about the Great Backyard Bird Count, why it’s important, and how to identify local birds.
- The division hosted a program for MCLS staff on nonviolent communication with Kit Miller, director of the Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence.
• We have finally been added to Rochester Regional’s Mobile Medical Unit’s schedule. They will be here every other Friday from 1:00–4:30.

Health Central Use
• LROC – 65
• Volunteer Legal Services Project – 22
• Nurse Barb – 33
• STI Testing – Not available at this time.
• 360 Collaborative Network Referrals – 3

Consulting
The Carlson Center for Intellectual Property assisted the following: 25 in person, 4 by email, 2 by mail 3 by phone. There were four Patent Virtual Assistance Center appointments. There were 97 webpage views

Anecdotes
• Byrnes’ all-time favorite show is Law & Order, so she was super excited to assist the NYS Police with identifying a logo on a bank robber’s clothing!
• Steve Nash was approached by a patron who is writing a book about the life of a World War II Army officer. The patron was delighted to find out that Central owns the multi-volume series United States Army in World War II by the United States Army Center of Military History. In addition, the patron asked for the July 3, 1938 issue of Life magazine which contained a pictorial article on the soldier and other West Point Military Academy seniors who were married the weekend of their graduation.
• Nash was contacted by a local governmental office inquiring about the “POW/MIA Chair of Honor.” Central is the only organization in Monroe County that has a chair on display.

Teen Central, Dennis Williams reporting

Programs
• Teen Central hosted several Chess tournaments this month. The patrons would like to see another month-long tournament where they can compete for winnings.
• Girls Who Code was run every Saturday this month. The volunteer teachers are University of Rochester students who are part of their in-house coding program.
• Shawn Dunwoody, Healthi Kids, the City of Rochester, and the library have been collaborating on an installation known as the Play Walk. Part of the installation includes getting buy-in from the teens that will be using the area on Court Street from the library over to REOC and The Strong. The library has provided space and expertise for the kids to collaborate on the project, helping to teach them about budgeting, different career paths, and being creative. Dunwoody and other professionals have worked with the kids each week one-on-one, to help them not only find their voices but to expand their knowledge.
• Rochester Institute of Technology approached us last month for a program they wanted to do in the library called “The Mock Trial.” Their goal is to teach kids about law and how it works in the justice system. While they signed up for the Kate Gleason Auditorium, they found they much prefer to use the teen space. We made that happen for them. Craig Carson and several other lawyers helped the kids learn how to build an argument and understand the rules surrounding a courtroom atmosphere.

• The Saturday photography class in imagineYOU is a big hit. Jeffery Bostic, Digital Media Specialist, works with students to build basic camera skills. Nothing captures the attention of tweens and teens like photography and video...except maybe more video games.

• YA Librarian Antoine McDonald’s workout programming and Black History Month programs have been extremely successful. In February, he conducted several health and fitness programs, during which he made smoothies with the teens to promote healthy eating and to provide healthy alternatives. He now also uses this time as an extension of what used to be Teen Talks Tuesday where various topics that the teens bring up concerning life, school, relationships, etc. are discussed.

• McDonald accompanied some of the teens to Albany, NY for Library Advocacy Day. It was a great opportunity for teens to get out of Rochester and visit a new place for a great cause. Their visit to the New York State Legislature went very well and they did a great job of articulating why the library is important to them and the role in which the Teen Center specifically has played in their lives.

imagineYOU Media Lab
imagineYOU added two new e-sports computers, including headphones and webcams for Fortnite and other high-level computer games. Teens have already started to enjoy the new computers and spend time competing.

Virtual Reality
The Oculus Rift VR station was offline for a short time. It has been replaced and remains very popular, especially with families who visit together on Saturdays.

Glass Room
The glass room has been converted into a second, more amateur, studio. It has been used for karaoke, music production, video production, and photography.
**Branch Library Updates**

*Assistant Director Tolley Reeves, EdD, reporting*

**Strive Together Leadership Team**

This month I joined the Roc the Future Strive Together Leadership Team. Led by Roc the Future Executive Director Jackie Campbell, this team also includes RCSD staff and will meet in various locations across the country through the year as part of an accelerator grant. Strive Together is a national movement to improve outcomes for kids in communities across America through collective impact. As a member of the team, I’ll be working with other community organizations in Rochester to improve early childhood literacy. As part of this work I am serving, along with Patty Uttaro and Tonia Burton, on a local team addressing early grade literacy outcomes.

**Branch Safety Inspections**

Workplace inspections are currently being conducted throughout all RPL branches. Joan Lee and I are working with Jeffery Moore, Safety Coordinator for the City of Rochester to assess work spaces and identify safety issues such as overcrowded and messy workspaces, safe rooms, and other issues. A final report and recommendations will be provided once inspections are completed.

**Branch Administration Reports**

**Branch Services, Pat Connor reporting**

**Programs**

Notary Public services have begun at the Lincoln and the Maplewood branches. Both branch supervisors report that they have spoken with patrons interested in returning during the scheduled time periods when Pat Connor will be there to notarize. Connor notarized documents for patrons at both Lincoln and Maplewood in February. In addition, she was able to notarize for a Lyell patron while she was there as a Branch substitute since she carries her notary public materials with her. A weekly drop-in at Lyell has been added to Connor’s schedule and will begin in March. It is anticipated that sessions at Lyell and Lincoln will end once the branch supervisors become Notary Publics soon.

Plans for the RESTORE Sexual Assault Awareness Month program were finalized with the Branch Supervisors. Nine of the ten branches will be participating in the project with posters or display boards in the library along with a box to collect anonymous messages for survivors. Danielle Donofrio of RESTORE will then collect the messages and make a poster for display during the month of April.

*(Priority #1 – Education and Engagement)*

**Community Outreach**

Connor participated in the Urban Suburban Youth and Family Services Fair at the East Rochester Jr/Sr. High School. She met with many families and again provided information about the libraries and what the Rochester Public Library has to offer. Of great interest at both Outreach events was the Empire Pass. Many did not know that the passes were available to borrow with their library card and were planning on looking further into the service. Along that line, in the last few days she had Facebook conversations with a friend who manages a library in the Pioneer Library System and she has now purchased a pass for her patrons.

*(Priority #2 — Sustainability and Resources)*

Preliminary contacts were made with Lia Anselm and Jen Lenio concerning RPL’s participation in Celebrate City Living being held on Saturday, April 13, 2019. An email was sent to library employees asking them to consider helping at the event.
Community Meetings
Connor attended three neighborhood association meetings—Charlotte Community Association, Maplewood Neighborhood Association, and Beechwood Association. Information about the neighborhood libraries was distributed and she sent branch supervisors the information that she had learned at the meetings. Connor also represented the Rochester Public Library at the Rochester City School District School Librarian’s Council.

Anecdotes/Other
On February 27, Connor boarded a bus at 6:30 a.m. to travel with librarians and library supporters to the New York Library Association’s Advocacy Day at the State Capitol in Albany. This was the first time that she has attended this event and she was amazed and enthused by the hundreds of library supporters from around New York state who converged at the State Legislature Building to speak with state senators and assembly members about funding of libraries. She had the pleasure of attending a meeting with Assemblyman David Gantt’s representative which also included several young people from Teen Central at the Rochester Public Library. To say she was impressed would be an understatement. These young people gave heartfelt accounts of what the library and Teen Central means to their lives and she was very proud to have them representing her library.

Outreach & Adult Services, Xandi DiMatteo reporting

- This month Xandi DiMatteo concentrated on compiling a program inventory of the RPL branches. She had never done a project of this nature and tried to gather data that would be a useful indicator of what worked and what could be improved. She created a questionnaire to guide her interviews of staff for consistency, she was very willing to be flexible and happy to get input from adult services staff. During her time talking to, and learning from, branch staff she discovered a lot about different categories for adult programs.

- DiMatteo wanted to get a sense of what was valued in each community and used a rating system to gauge how well attended programs were. Every branch had a different quantity that measured a baseline for a well-attended program. Sometimes programs declined in attendance and were cancelled or were just being established and the audience was building.

- It was clear that branch libraries and their communities support each other in important ways: whether it is with a food pantry, winter clothes exchange or talented volunteers who donate time and skills – resources are being exchanged generously. DiMatteo asked about challenges to programming, strategies to improve programming, and what was currently working well. She had an informal exchange of what was working in some libraries and might translate in other libraries during her interviews. It was suggested that she compile a document of VAPS and Community Partners that offer free programming. She also spoke to Evanna Disalvo at Maplewood Library, and the two will visit OACES on March 11, to promote RPL resources and services.

Anecdotes
On February 9, Pat Connor, Kim Whittemore and DiMatteo did outreach at Winterfest at the Port of Charlotte. They promoted all RPL with a focus on Charlotte to members of the community. They also promoted services of MCLS - the Empire Pass was a big hit. When DiMatteo interviewed adult programming staff at Charlotte Library, they had someone specifically mention coming in because of the outreach at Winterfest. It’s always nice to get positive results from outreach efforts!
Safe to Be Smart Program, Derrick Coley reporting

The Arnett site
- For Black History Month, Shetora Banks facilitated *The Hate U Give* movie for teens in the Arnett library community room. The movie was very emotional to some of the teens and led to a fruitful discussion about how to deal with police officers in Rochester and how good citizens behave. The teens also discussed what racism looks like in Rochester, at school, and in their neighborhoods.
- Banks showed teens how to use fruit and beverages to make fruit cups as a healthy snack.
- She also created a scavenger hunt using famous African-Americans in the past and present with fact sheets and photos.
- Banks treated all the youth to a variety of African-American cuisine from the Diamond Soul restaurant and catering service.

The Phillis Wheatley site
- For Black History Month, Lyndicscha Bostick-Beckford facilitated a field-trip to the Memorial Art Gallery. She and Docent Delores Jackson-Radney escorted the youths through many of the African-American art pieces. The youth were treated to a poem about Harriet Tubman by Jackson-Radney.
- Youth made their own personal strawberry shortcake during February’s Mix and Mingle celebration. Bostick-Beckford had all the ingredients pre-made, so teens only needed to follow directions to make them.
- The University of Rochester gospel choir visited the Phillis Wheatley branch for Black History month; Bostick-Beckford quickly gathered many of the youth to hear Negro spirituals and the stories behind the songs.

The Maplewood site
- Mark Dixon facilitated movies for Black History Month with youth. He presented *Hidden Figures* a film about African-American female mathematicians at NASA. Dixon had over 30 youths of all ages in the Maplewood community room watching the film. They were all treated to pizza and refreshments during the movie and a question and answer session at the end. Dixon said, “Many of the teens did not know that African-Americans had anything to do with sending men to the moon.” Many male youths were surprised that women were so good at math.
- Dixon continues to assist teens with job searches and work permit applications.

The Lincoln site
- Vera Haygood facilitated a Black History Trivia Night with prizes and snacks shared with the participants. She created a bulletin board for the contest which featured many famous African-Americans, past and present, for review.
- She continues to use gaming as a bridge to youth and a way for teens to get to know each other. Many of the males are sports gaming in teams or in groups on Playstation-4 and on the desktop computers using Roblox. Haygood still plays a variety of board games with the teens and often challenges them to think about real-life situations and problem solving while playing with her.
- She continues to provide job search and application assistance to teens and homework help as needed.

The Sully site
- George Carter facilitated an arts and crafts program for Black History Month. The youth used a variety of supplies, like famous African-American inventors in the past, to come up with sunglasses that light up, lighted wands, glow in the dark bracelets and wrist bands.
- Carter also facilitated a Black History Month Bingo game with a DJ and boards with the names of famous Black Americans past and present.
• He played the Jackie Robinson biography movie 42 for the youth, who enjoyed popcorn and refreshments during the film.

Teen Central site
• Lydia Williams-Hylton and John Hylton have noticed a decrease in the level of gang activity and fighting at Teen Central as they have reestablished patron relations policies. Hylton and Williams-Hylton continue to have calming programs each day like coloring, playing Uno, board gaming, ping pong tournaments and friendly talks with staff. Hylton and Williams-Hylton said this technique weeds out unproductive teens who are just looking to make trouble. Along with this, imagineYOU has expanded its gaming capacity with high powered desktop and virtual reality gaming for teens. There is plenty of stuff to do in Teen Central besides trouble!
• Both Hylton and Williams-Hylton have been assisting many teens with job applications and teaching them how to interview, which resulted in five out of six teens being gainfully employed in February.
• Williams-Hylton rewarded two female teens for doing well in their academic and personal lives. The teens show their report cards and receive gift cards.
• Williams-Hylton hosted Black History Month coloring sheets with a variety of past and present heroes and themes. Hylton held an inclusion tournament in which the teens had to approach a person they did not know in Teen Central and invite them to join.
• Hylton and Williams-Hylton welcomed the second meeting of Experience FiberArt Inc. The FiberArts staff showed the teens how they can make a timeline quilt or print personal pictures on fabric without sewing.
• Also, they conducted Black History Month interviews with community members including students, library staff, Rochester Police Department officers and others.

Arnett Branch, Bruce Tehan reporting

Programs
• Ginger Brewer-Bennett and Arnett Friends organized an Eastman Pathways Concert held on February 9. It was big hit. It introduced top notch performers playing a variety of music with not so common instruments. There was even a chance to meet and greet the musicians. Additionally, a lot of students discussed their interests outside of playing instruments. Surprisingly, the top answer was reading and going to the library. Music to a librarian’s ears! The event was attended by community members, staff, parents and patrons. Once again, the students did an outstanding job.
• Brewer-Bennett helped to organize visits from ELITE Choice on February 4, 18, 19, 26, and 27. The representative, Jackie, provided information to library patrons and those seeking answers to Medicaid’s CDPAP program. Jackie stated that she will be coming to Arnett for future events and will be willing to help plan any community events. Jackie stated, “I love coming to Arnett. The feedback and the atmosphere is very welcoming.”
Anecdotes/Other
Cholewa’s Raising a Reader programs continue to be a joyful time in her week. The level of observation and discussion she has been getting from the class of four-year olds, is quite amazing. They are obviously engaging with the story and thinking about the implications for the characters actions. They also remember the stories she has read to them from week to week and will compare them without prompting, as she reads them.

Charlotte Branch, Paul Tantillo reporting

Programs
• The schools’ winter break was the week of February 17, and we got the expected bump in library visits. The children’s room was busy with parents and grandparents looking for ways to occupy the kids’ free time productively. Along with our usual offerings we had a party featuring the ever-popular Disney film Frozen.
• The Red Cross conducted a preparedness awareness program for children called The Pillowcase Project in which participants, in addition to learning preparedness, decorated and filled a pillowcase with first-aid and other supplies necessary for a home emergency kit.
• There was also some family BINGO and a chance for kids to play with some new tech toys.
• The most notable program we offered during winter vacation was Magnetic Magic, conducted by a science education programming group called Mad Science. A very professorial Professor Pluto (complete with lab coat) led the kids in several very cool experiments using magnets. We had three sessions of this program – one for small children, one for elementary/middle school, and one for teens and ‘tweens. All were well-attended. We were pleased with Mad Science’s performance and will have them back.
• In February, Local Historian Marie Poinan presented a program for us. Poinan, along with former Charlotte Librarian Maureen Whalen, is the originator of our local history series. Her topic was “Booze, Beer and Bootleggers” and she discussed the business of smuggling alcohol from Canada that thrived on Lake Ontario during Prohibition. We had the largest turnout we’ve ever had for an adult program, with an audience of 44 people.
• On February 5, a presenter from the Monroe County Department of Health and Human Services conducted an information session for prospective foster parents. The Foster Care unit has been doing these sessions for about a year at libraries and other venues, and I believe this was the fourth time they’ve presented at Charlotte.

Anecdotes:
• Charlotte librarian Kim Whittemore, along with branch outreach librarians Pat Connor and Xandi DiMatteo staffed a table at the Lakeside Winter Celebration at Ontario Beach Park on February 10. This festival is a popular and very well-attended event and they were busy for their entire shift meeting residents and boosting the library. They talked up services and distributed information, books, and children’s novelties. DiMatteo was later telling me how she converted one reluctant would-be patron by telling him about the library’s empire passes which offer free admission to state parks. He was astonished and impressed that the libraries offer such a service. I, in turn, was amused to hear the story. I well know how enthusiastic and ebullient DiMatteo is... the patron never stood a chance!
Later in the month I had a meeting with DiMatteo about adult programming. She’s trying to get a feel for what kinds of programs the branches are offering, what’s working, and what new opportunities we can take advantage of. *(Priority #1 Education and Engagement: Expand our visible presence in our communities)*

**Frederick Douglass Community Library, Erin Clarke reporting**

**Programs**
- This month Sarah Ngo focused on creating challenges for the kids to do together using the iPads. A specific game was using Toca Boca Hair Salon and the kids had to design a hairstyle using a theme assigned them. The kids have so much fun using their creativity.
- Douglass had more Nazareth students assisting each week with WXXI. They made thaumatrope optical toys popular in the 19th century) using recycled materials and we designed snow forts with straws and marshmallows.
- Caitlyn Stahovic-Barnes reports that on Saturday, February 2, Douglass participated in *Take Your Child to the Library Day*. Visitors took part in movies, a craft, and filling out advocacy post cards to be sent to Albany for Advocacy Day on the 27. She also provided materials to make valentines for the Make & Take craft this month.
- Two local history lectures for adults were successful despite bad weather and parking issues. Multiple patrons thanked Erin Clarke for offering these lectures, and we were able to use the shared space and the pull-down screen and projector. Clarke based her decision to offer more lectures on feedback from the Douglass section of the Hester Street Branch Facilities & Operations Plan *(page 57, #1 Patron Request)*.

**Lincoln Branch, Sarah Lehman reporting**

**Programs**
- February saw some fun programming at Lincoln, especially during February break. Our kids were kept busy with craft projects, movie nights, scavenger hunts based on Black History Month, an African Drumming class and activities to learn more about the nation’s leaders to celebrate President’s Day.
- We were excited to have a bilingual group from Eugenio Maria de Hostas battle a Rochester snowstorm to walk to the library and learn more about how the library works. We were very appreciative to have help from Margaret Paige in hosting the class with their visit and creating a great scavenger hunt for the group to complete during their visit! The children were all able to sign up for library cards during their visit, and pick out one book to take home with them.
- Teen Librarian Jacob Bigelow reports that the Rochester’s Black History Wall of Fame again garnered a lot of public interest. Several copies were made for individuals to take and present to their local churches and community groups. Because of the low turnout on the day of the program we shifted from a Trivia Night to a Discussion Group and had a great dialog about Rochester’s and the United States’ Black History. Notable quote from a Teen: “Why don’t more people know about them?!”
- Bigelow reports that he used the Map of Rochester to illustrate the Underground Railroad and our modern-day connections to the historical points on the map for the coming year. One of the many things we believe is that Black History should not be relegated to a single month. The display has been useful in illustrating early Rochester history and facilitated several discussions with teens and adults about Black History.
Early in the month of January, I received exciting news that the individuals in charge of the Recreation Center program Roc Paint chose the Lincoln Branch to be one of the sites for a youth created mural this year. The murals are planned by a local artist and area youth are hired to complete the work. This year the program is working with Sarah Rutherford, who created the beautiful ‘Her Voice Carries’ project with the Memoria l Art Gallery. Sarah will be working with this year’s youth to create three panels that can be installed in the Lincoln Library sometime in May. We are incredibly excited to work with this program and see the amazing creations they come up with!

Toy Library

- In the Toy Library, the preschool science topics were a successful way to encourage visits from the Hillside's UPK and EPK classes, as well as weekly visits from homeschoolers and other area daycares. February topics included Magnets, Hibernation, and the Five Senses.
- We also had three school field trips. School #50 visited for the fourth consecutive year and Toy Library staff presented a program on hibernation using a collection of teddy bears and other props to act out the book Don't Wake the Bear. We also had visits from Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School and the Carlson YMCA UPK class. (Priority #1 Education and Engagement: Promote Learning and Provide educational experiences for our diverse populations)
- On Feb 21, Toy Library staff visited the Pirate Toy Fund and selected 200 new toys. Many of the toys were instantly incorporated into our pretend play settings, while some were selected for use in our summer program. We were excited with the quality of the toys we were able to select.
- Charges and returns are zooming in and out of the Toy Library. We suspect that due to the harsh winter weather, many patrons elected to return toys to their local branch rather than make the trip here. There are days when we are overwhelmed with sanitizing and checking returns, but we are doing our best to keep on top of it.

Lyell Library, Shamika Fusco reporting

Programs

- During Black History Month we hosted a variety of activities such as: movie nights, trivia games, book discussions, book giveaways, created book displays, and crafts. Our Wednesday Movie Matinee feature was Black Panther; our Friday Family Feature movie of the month was Ruby Bridges. Fun Fact: our clerk, Stephanie, is married to one of Ruby Bridges’ distant relatives. (Priority #1 Education & Engagement)
- National Bubble Gum Day! Patrons were able to snack on a piece of free Dubble Bubble and learn a few fun facts about gum! A mason jar full of gum was put on display and patrons could try and guess the right amount. The winner took home the jar of bubble gum.
What a busy day we had on National Take Your Child to the Library Day! We made crafts, played games, and provided other activities like face painting. Families were encouraged to sign up for a Library Card. *(Priority #3 Stewardship & Curation)*

Last Friday Coffee and Cookies - We put the pot on! Patrons joined us for a light snack. This month’s Coffee and Cookies program fell during February recess, so some of our teen patrons participated as well.

In collaboration with Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Incorporated, the library hosted a social justice program based on the book *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas which was turned into a movie. Participants were encouraged to read the book prior to watching the movie. After viewing the movie, participants were asked to go around the room and answer a series of feedback questions pertaining to the movie. Discussion was encouraged. *(Priority #1 Education & Engagement)*

In order to stay active and engaged on social media, on Tuesday and Thursday we post different trivia questions to allow patrons to win free books. This month we gave away the books, *How Dare the Sun Rise, Trombone Shorty, Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down*, and *Bee-bim Bop!* *(Priority #3 Stewardship & Curation)*

Despite the cold weather, students are eager to prepare for the TASC program. Jim Lynch does a great job engaging with students and keeping their interest. Jim always checks into Lyell’s Facebook social media page, which is a great way to maintain a consistent social presence. *(Priority #1 Education & Engagement)*

Jennifer Cherelin reports that she was able to wrap up her social justice book discussion on the book *Black Klansman*. Most of the participants have been able to successfully complete the book. Jennifer says, “For *Black Klansman* Social Justice Book discussion group: bringing messages from the book, which takes place undercover, shedding light on racism of ‘70’s and bringing our discussion parallel and full circle to its relevance to the racism we see today- as Spike Lee alluded to specifically during his Oscar speech! This happened in our discussions during each listening. It has been an extremely powerful experience holding this book discussion group with the specific patron engagement and involvement. We will watch the film together in March.” *(Priority #1 Education & Engagement)*

**Anecdotes/Other**

- After spending an immense amount of time with a patron and her daughter to prepare a school assignment for *Tuck Everlasting* the Mom was so personally grateful for our assistance that she offered to purchase us both (Cherlin and Fusco) lunch.
There is a significant amount of gratitude and appreciation individually by our Hispanic patrons for Cherlin’s interactions with them in their language and the time and effort she has taken with them. This is recurring and happens almost daily, both with Hispanic and non-Hispanic library patrons.

Maplewood Community Library, Johann Buran reporting

Programs

- Our new Children’s Librarian, Susan Potera, is a huge fan of open crafting which means providing supplies and letting the youth decide how they want to use the material. As had been the tradition in February, the kids would be expecting supplies to make Valentines. Potera made sure to have ready supplies, including card bases and various hearts available through the entire first half of February. There were more than fifty participants in making Valentine’s Day cards. After the Valentines, which were all flat paper and coloring implements, during break week, there was open crafting involving more 3-dimentional supplies such as pom-poms and google eyes. Fun was had by all. (Priority #1 Education and Engagement: Promote Learning and Provide educational experiences for our diverse populations)
- Potera reports that February Break started with a scavenger hunt of Presidents. Pictures of Presidents (with their names) were hidden around the room and could be matched up to their names on a sheet. Bonus prizes were given for putting the selection of Presidents into the order they held office. Other activities for the week included an afternoon with the Nintendo Switch and LEGO. Thursday was the most active day with five programs, planned and impromptu: dominoes, LEGO, paper airplanes, soccer, and finger knitting.
- The Storybook Cook visited Maplewood with her February Valentine Day treats. The tweens and teens decorated heart shaped cookies with frosting and different toppings including sprinkles, chocolate chips and cut fruit. They also made parfaits and create other Valentine themed treats. The teens and tweens enjoyed the program and liked eating their creations even more. They requested more programming with food.

Outreach

- DiSilvo met with Captain Dolores Minaya of the Salvation Army who came to ask advice. She has applied for a grant from the Salvation Army to start ESL classes accompanied by programs for children at the North Clinton site. DiSalvo invited her to come back and select some “free materials” from donations and discards. She came back on Thursday and was happy with what we could offer. She expects the program to begin in August and will invite DiSalvo to participate on an occasional basis. DiSalvo also offered to share tips for teaching ESL with her and the volunteer when they are ready.
- DiSalvo talked about variations of color names (reds such as burgundy, maroon, and wine) with the Nepali women at RRRS (Rochester Refugee Resettlement Services). She showed them how adding e at the end of a word changes the vowel sound (win, wine).
- DiSalvo met with the clients of the Wachuku Foundation. They read three of the high interest low reading level book series that Maplewood owns in the hour. This seems to be a good strategy with that group. (Priority #1 Education and Engagement: Expand our visible presence in our communities)

Anecdotes

- There is a new group of college students from St. John Fisher that started to work with children who are in first through third grade using the Seeds of Success program. From their class syllabus, “Seeds of Success: A Resiliency Education program is designed to build resiliency in children grades 1-6
residing in the City of Rochester, NY impacted by poverty, trauma, and other challenges. Over the course of the semester, St. John Fisher College service-learning and community service students will serve as ‘guides’ and read books and run activities on topics like autonomy, persistence, and goal setting. Resiliency enhances a child’s ability to cope with adversity and life stressors, which then leads to positive relationships and academic success.”

- There were several volunteers from Aquinas who helped during break week. One volunteer from Aquinas decided she wanted to create a crafting class for the children. Another teen came to help her with the small group. We limited it to ten children who wanted to try to sculpt using super light air-dry clay. The super light air-dry clay is non-toxic and doesn’t need to be baked to hold the form that is sculpted. The children enjoyed playing with the clay as it was easy to mold and there was a wide variety of colors. Some created baskets and other made interesting sculptures. It went so well that we will try it again

**Monroe Branch, Mary Clare Scheg reporting**

**Programs**

- Margaret Paige, Children’s Librarian reports that on Saturday, February 2, and throughout the following week we collected about 25 advocacy postcards in support of libraries. The Storybook Cook helped us kickoff our event in preparation for Library Advocacy Day in Albany. *(Priority #1 Education and Engagement: Increase use and support of our libraries among our diverse populations)*

- Random Acts of Kindness-Each person may choose a slip with a Random Act of Kindness to perform. After doing so, they fill out the slip and place it in the box to enter our drawing. The winner receives a $10 Barnes and Noble gift card.

**Outreach & Community Involvement**

- Margaret Paige led story times in the “Dolphins” and “Dinos” classrooms at St. Paul’s Child Care Center on February 14 and 28. On February 28, each lead classroom teacher had the opportunity to apply for an institution card for their classroom. At future visits Paige will receive book requests from teachers at the center, checking them out on their institution card, and bringing them to the classrooms. *(Priority #1 Education and Engagement: Expand our visible presence in our communities)*

- Also, Paige has scheduled dates for story time visits in two Kindergarten classes at #23 school. Paige will also be bringing books for the teachers to check out and use in the classrooms. She’ll bring books to share related to their current study topics: goldfish, snails, and worms.
• We’re going to Read & Rock in March! Our goal is to get patrons in to read at least five collective hours of “Reading & Rocking” in the Children’s Room’s large rocking chair.

Anecdotes/Other
Every Friday afternoon, Don, one of our patrons, brings day old bread and rolls for the Food Truck. This is left over from his job. He works for a nonprofit. This is very popular with our patrons. Some of them now stop in when they know the bread will be on the Food Truck.

Sully Branch, Maria Heeks-Heinlein reporting

Programs
• Tim Ryan continues to utilize virtual reality programming at the Sully Branch as a means of providing entertaining and educational programming that is used to enhance the current school curriculum and provide a greater understanding of various topics and subjects’ young adults are learning in school. However, this month, after several teens expressed interest in joining the Air Force after they graduated, we decided to experience some VR flight simulation. This month, the teens at the Sully Branch experienced Ace Combat 7 VR. Ace Combat 7 VR allowed our teen patrons to discover the wonders of being an elite fighter pilot. They got to become an ace pilot by taking down enemies through tactical dogfighting, while experiencing the exhilaration of flying freely in a fully immersive world. ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=28&v=xm6kMXglRFo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=28&v=xm6kMXglRFo)) In the month of April, the teens at the Sully Branch will get to experience the sinking of the Titanic and the discovery of its wreckage all in virtual reality. (Priority #1 Education and Engagement: Promote Learning and Provide educational experiences for our diverse populations)

• Safe to Be Smart staff George Carter invited Children’s Librarian Jen Nesbitt to join his wonderful Black History programs this month. He included some younger kids and the children’s staff in the Black History Bingo event, which involved dancing, glow sticks, a DJ and bingo at the Rec Center. The second program took place at the library and involved delicious African American soul food. The kids were happy to be included in such fun programs to celebrate Black History Month.

• Another highlight this month was a visit from our friend Mayukwa Kashiwa of Building Families First. Nesbitt arranged for him to present an African dance and drumming program and it was a big hit with the kids. Ms. Gliwinski from the school even brought over some African costumes for the kids to wear during the program. Mayukwa is a good friend to the kids at Sully.

• Our Harry Potter Program is running strong this winter. We took some group photos of the different Hogwarts houses and enjoyed some butterbeer. Slytherin has been very motivated to earn points for their house. One girl has taken on a leadership role and is rallying her troops to keep doing activities and earn more points. She would make Voldemort proud with her ambition! (Priority #1 Education and Engagement: Promote Learning and Provide educational experiences for our diverse populations)

• A funny moment occurred in a kindergarten story time this month. One of the kids came into the room, and upon seeing Nesbitt getting things ready, she asked, “Woah, do you actually live here?”

Anecdotes/Other
• Maria Heeks-Heinlein was part of the planning team for the Monroe County’s Recruiting on the Road Job fair. Over 300 people attended this event. While at the event, she was able to speak to many people about the library and the services we offer. One woman said that she loves all the
things Sully does for the community, and that she is very happy we are here. A few days after the job fair we received a phone call from a man that received library information at the event. He said that he has been looking for computer classes, and he did not even think about checking with the library. He said that he was looking forward to attending computer classes at the library. (Priority #1 Education and Engagement: Expand our visible presence in our communities)

- We worked with Literacy Rochester (Literacy Volunteers of Rochester) to bring a job prep event to Sully the day before the job fair. Literacy Rochester sent out 1200 postcards to the neighborhood homes to let them know about the job prep event, and they are also going to send a follow up post card to the neighborhood to let them know about the weekly services they offer at Sully. A teenager attended this event, and was not prepared to make a resume, but he did have a conversation with one of the volunteers about preparing to enter the work force.

- The Friends and Foundation of the Rochester Public Library purchased the Sully Branch a replacement 3D printer. We are very excited about this fantastic printer and we are looking forward to printing files for patrons again. Staff have been learning how to use the computer in February, and we will begin showing patrons how this printer works in March. We are so grateful to the friends for their support of our library.

**Phillis Wheatley Community Library, Lori Frankunas reporting**

**Programs**

- Homework tutor Miss Charly is such a great help to the children. Since the beginning of the school year until now, Mohamed can now write his spelling list into sentences with little or almost no help at all. His little sister can do simple math equations all by herself.

- Our Valentine’s cookie decorating went over very well. All the children were able to make at least two cookies. They covered them with frosting and then lots of sprinkles and sour gummies. Most of the frosting ended up all over the little kids’ hands and then in their mouths.

- We made many different art projects for Black History Month. We learned about Bessie Coleman; the first African American woman to have a pilot license, Mae Jemison; the first African American woman in Space, and Alma Thomas; an African American artist, as well as many more.
• When Reverend Lori from Montgomery Center came, we talked about and made freedom quilts. We discussed what they were and the stories that they told. The children each made one for themselves. They acted out how it would have felt like to be a slave and how they worked together to survive. They compared it to how we now must work together to make our community better. This was also the same day that we had the Eastman student Gospel Choir. The children were able to participate and listen to music of freedom.

• Mix and Mingle went very well. The children were excited for strawberry shortcake. A few did not know what it was, but when I mentioned that there was ice cream involved they gobbled it up. (Priority #1 Education and Engagement: Promote Learning and Provide educational experiences for our diverse populations)

• Phillis Wheatley had our first ever paint night, which was hosted by Deniqua Belcher. Participants were given a canvas to paint the selected portrait.

Anecdotes/Other
• A sweet elderly lady came in to check on her card. She said she hadn’t used it in 20 years. The last time she checked on it, there was a fine from a book her grandson had borrowed. We checked and she was still in the system and there was no fine on her card. Hallelujah, she said, I can get a new library card. We issued her a new card and she was so happy!

• A patron came to check out the “Essential Chaka Khan” cd. We were the only library that owned it. She was so happy we had it. She said “Now if there is a blizzard tomorrow, I’ll have something great to listen to.” She left with a smile.

• One Patron who attended the Gospel performance, expressed happiness over the event, and shared that she was so happy that she came, because she hasn’t been to a gospel performance in years. The students who performed in the U or R gospel choir said that they have never been to this public library despite being within the area of their school. They were provided with a tour, many sharing that they viewed the library as beautiful and that they were surprised about being able to check out 10 DVDs and as many books as they wanted with a library card. The choir shared that they enjoyed their experience at Wheatley and that they would love to come back to perform again.
Winton Branch, Kathy Wolf reporting

Programs

- One never knows what one will get with programming. We just started up again with story times in February after the holiday break. We are really working on building the attendance. We advertised the fact that story times would be restarting in February on our January program flyer, we posted on Facebook, and we created a sign to put outside for those people driving by. Our first story time was February 5; it was a Rhyme Time for very small children aged 0-3. We were happily surprised that 37 people showed up. We hoped to garner similar numbers on Thursday or the following week, but only 6 people came. It’s a process! (Priority #1 Education and Engagement: Promote Learning and Provide educational experiences for our diverse populations)

- Last summer, the Happy Pirates were supposed to perform, but because of a communications glitch, they did not show up. They offered us a free program, which we took them up on over February Break. They did a wonderful performance where everyone, parents included, was engaged. There was singing, dancing, and general mayhem! Everyone had a blast. In fact the blast was so great, that it knocked out electricity throughout the entire neighborhood, and we had to close early. The good news was that the show was almost over when the electricity went out.

Anecdotes/Other

Finnerty helped a deaf woman for over an hour helping her to print something on the computer. She was trying to print a shipping label and could not remember her password. Finnerty called the company she was trying to reach to ask them to send the label to her email account, thus resolving the issue on behalf of the woman. After the encounter the woman signed to Finnerty that she had a big heart. (How appropriate for Valentine’s Day!)
Selected Meetings & Outputs, February 16 – March 15 (Uttaro)

Standing Meetings
City Senior Management Team (weekly)
RPL-MCLS Management Team (weekly)
Brie Harrison; Sally Snow; Ana Suro, Tolley Reeves, Tonia Burton – one-to-one meetings (monthly)
FFRPL Executive Director Ned Davis (monthly)
City Chief of Staff, Alex Yudelson (monthly)
Monroe County Assistant County Executive, Michael Molinari (monthly)
Central Library All-Staff Meeting (monthly)
MCLS System Services and Operations Committee (monthly)
New York State Library – Division of Library Development conference call (monthly)
Public Library System Directors’ Organization (PULISDO) conference call (monthly)
Lyla Grills, Penfield Public Library mentoring meeting (monthly)
Tonia Burton, MCLS/RPL Children’s Services Consultant (now a direct report; monthly)
City Dept. of Environmental Services Commissioner, Norm Jones (bimonthly)

Other
Director of Historical Resources & City Historian, Christine Ridarsky
Sokol High School Literary Award Reading Committee
Baker Tilly Consultants on new City strategic plan results
Nick Buron, Chief Librarian & Senior Vice-President of Queens Library, conference call
Roc the Future Executive Team Meeting
Early Grade Literacy conference call (twice)
Mary Ann Mavrinac, Dean of River Campus Libraries, University of Rochester
Library Advocacy Day, Albany
Cynthia Dana, Central Patron Services Manager
Erie Canalway Heritage Corridor Press Conference
Community Program Locator Development meeting with RIT at GRASA
Marisol Ramos Lopez, trainer & consultant
RPL Trustees Hamilton & Benjamin and FFRPL Executive Director Davis
City Education Team Meeting
NYLA Public Libraries Section Board conference call
Early Grade Literacy Team meeting
Except When It Isn’t: The Line Between Service & Safety RRLC workshop
Genesee Country Village & Museum Board Meeting
RPL Managers Retreat

Email Activity
February 2018

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