Rochester Public Library Strategic Plan 2016-2020
June 2018 Update

Priority 1 – Education & Engagement

Increase use and support of our libraries among our diverse populations.

- Provided library cards in a convenient way to students from the Rochester City School District and RCSD Offices of Adult Continuing Education Services (OACES). (All locations)

- Raising a Reader staff provided access to books and information to 460 families throughout the city with primary concentration on the RMAPI (Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative) areas. (Central Library Children’s Center)

- Immigrant teens learned about the citizenship process, history of the United States, Basic English for the interview portion of the citizenship exam, and practice for the written and oral exam. (Maplewood Community Library)

- Technology classes were offered at Wheatley for six of the last 12 months. During those six months of classes, 183 individuals were helped with general technology assistance and 36 individuals had resume help sessions. Patrons have reported that they have found jobs, or are having an easier time navigating the web for opportunities. Longtime tech help and resume roundtable attendee, Lillie McIntyre, is elated to have finished her REOC training and Home Health Aide certification, and thanks the efforts of Wheatley staff in her accomplishments. Equifax’s breach affected many in the community, so we’ve had a busy time helping folks with recovering their credit reports and taking steps to ensure that their personal information and credit information are protected through Equifax’s security products. (Phillis Wheatley Community Library)

- We began issuing Young Explorer’s cards to children ages 0-5. This card introduces young children and their families to the library.
Promote learning, provide fun and deliver creative and innovative educational experiences for our diverse populations.

- Solar eclipse glasses were provided to thousands of people who visited all 11 RPL locations to view the eclipse in August, 2017. Staff partnered with the Rochester Museum & Science Center to provide information for people on how best to view the eclipse. (All locations)

- A giant, inflatable colon exhibit raised awareness of the importance of colon cancer screening. (Central Library Science Division)

- The suffrage exhibit, “Because of Women Like Her... Winning the Vote in New York State,” opened on June 2 with a very successful First Friday event in the Rundel Memorial Building’s Harold Hacker Hall. Approximately 175 people attended. This was followed by numerous tours. While much of the planning and negotiation to put this exhibit together was done in the previous fiscal year, the Local History and Genealogy Division and the Office of the City Historian capitalized on that effort and created traveling exhibits that are still touring the area and have attracted over 60,000 viewers. After this exhibit, there has been an increased request for our staff to host tours and to deliver presentations to school groups. Some are known to be a direct result of the theme of these exhibits and we believe others are a result of the more visible presence these have given us in the broader community. By continuing to provide high quality user experiences, we believe we can maintain the awareness of the division and its material and human assets. (Central Library Local History & Genealogy Division)

- TASC (Test Assessing Secondary Completion) instruction at Arnett began in October 2017. From October to March, 56 hours of tutoring were provided. Instructor Jim Lynch reports that student Kathy G’s math score improved 100 points since working with him. (Arnett Branch)

- Yoga classes have been offered and paired with storytime to provide families with fun, new ways to combine movement and learning. (Charlotte Branch) Yoga classes have also been offered for teens (Arnett) and seniors (Lyell) with good results.
• A Gamer's Nostalgia (AGN) and imagineYOU created two podcasts which talked about the gaming lifestyle, gaming technology and what the youth are looking forward to in gaming. The youth of imagineYOU enjoy being a part of this project which allowed them to practice their digital skills in front of and behind the camera.

https://youtu.be/pCJPEbI2TUk

• Music performances were added to the line-up of programs. These performances included Doug Stone Jazz and the Eastman Jazz Youth Orchestra. Attendance was good for all performances, although the Youth Orchestra was the highest attendance with 64 in the audience, including Gap Mangione. (Monroe Branch)

• Teens and families packed Teen Central to meet Aesha Ash, a Rochester native who became a premier ballerina with an international career in dance. During her visit, she tackled subjects like race-based objectification, lack of diversity in the ballet world, negative body image problems, and body shaming from instructors. She displayed photographs that show her pride in community and her personal and professional drive that helped her soar beyond criticisms and discouraging voices. Participants could see how determination and perseverance can take a personal toll, but also yield amazing successes. Ash’s struggle was gritty and personal, but also very relatable as something every young person can achieve and emerge victorious at the end. (Central Library Teen Central)
Expand our visible presence in our communities.

- Craft It Forward classes provided handmade items for the Wilmot Cancer Institute, Willow Domestic Violence Center, Lollypop Farm, and Hillside Children’s Center. (Central Arts & Literature Division)

- RPL launched its first website, Roccitylibrary.org. This website focuses on resources and services provided by the Central Library of Rochester & Monroe County and Rochester Public Library branches. The primary message delivered through the website is RPL’s tag line, “More Than You Think,” highlighting that the library is more than a building full of books. (RPL Communications Office)

- RPL launched its new logo independent from the Monroe County Library System logo. (RPL Communications)

- A marketing analysis and plan were developed with assistance from Causewave Communications. (RPL Communications Office)

- Monthly calendars are distributed to a variety of venues, such as RocTheFuture/The Children’s Agenda, Excellus, City Hall, and County Office Building. New banners were hung on the front of the Rundel Memorial Building. (RPL Communications Office)

- The second Books by Bike debuted in July, 2017 and attended several community events over the summer and participated in the Votetilla Parade. (Phillis Wheatley Community Library)
Priority 2 – Sustainability & Resources

Create and maintain essential library relationships.

- In February, more than 30 advocates attended Library Advocacy Day in Albany. (RPL/MCLS Communications Office)

- As part of the Barnes and Noble award that Children’s Librarian Rosa Diaz won earlier in 2016, Corduroy the Bear stopped by Lincoln one Saturday afternoon. Corduroy took photos with families, participated in story time and helped the kids make crafts. Corduroy also stopped back to the Toy Library to participate in the Teddy Bear Picnic which was held in conjunction with his visit.

- In early 2017, Director Uttaro, Youth Services Coordinator Derrick Coley, and Children’s Consultant Tonia Burton became involved with GAMES ROC, a “think tank” assembled by the Rochester Downtown Development Corporation that looked for ways to integrate the exciting technology and innovation work happening in the Downtown Innovation Zone with community organizations. Coley made a connection with Second Avenue Learning, which helped establish the Game Changers project at the Sully Branch. Sully and Second Avenue staff have worked with a group of youth to engage them in testing a series of Martha Madison STEM learning video games. The youth have learned about the video game development process and the Second Avenue staff have been able to incorporate youth feedback directly into the games. (Sully Branch)
• Lincoln participated in the 2018 City Clean Sweep. A large group of volunteers turned out for the day and staff had to keep retrieving more shovels and brooms for all the help. Mayor Warren and several other City Officials stopped by during our project to meet with our volunteers. (Lincoln Branch)

• The initial Family Arts Day introduced families to the Arts in Downtown Rochester. This collaboration with the Growing Downtown group led by Vivian Palladoro helped introduce the abundance of arts activities available to families. There were performances, children's activities, giveaways, refreshments and more! (Sully Branch)

**Secure ample funding and resources.**

• With support from the Reynolds Library Board, GoChip Beam video hotspots are added to the collection. Each GoChip Beam holds five movies or one season of a television show which can be viewed by up to eight devices at a time. (Central Library Reynolds Media Center)

**Demonstrate the value of our libraries to our communities.**

• An Annual Report to the Community for 2017 was developed and distributed. (RPL Communications Office)

**Priority 3 – Stewardship & Curation**

**Develop, support and appreciate staff**

• Pages working in the Reynolds Media Center were regularly performing work outside their job descriptions, so these positions were upgraded to Clerk/Typist titles. This provides better compensation which reduces job turnover and increases the pool of candidates for open positions. (Central Library Reynolds Media Center)

• Timothy Ryan was named one of the American Library Association’s winners of this year’s *I Love My Librarian Award*. Ryan was recognized for his leadership in transforming lives and communities through education and lifelong learning. He is one of only 10 librarians in the country this year to receive this national honor. (Sully Branch)
Manage our operations and facilities responsibly and create a positive experience.

- In the past 9 months, Local History and Genealogy has committed to the physical reorganization of its staff and collections. This reorganization is accomplishing several major improvements to the conditions under which our collections are housed and our ability to efficiently serve our users. Our most valuable assets are in the best archival environment we have available. We are moving our second most valuable collections into our second most well-managed physical environment. This aids the preservation of these materials and facilitates a move of staff into an area closer to the reference desk. Currently, reference staff occupy the offices farthest from our patrons. We are moving the division supervisor's office to the office closest to the reference desk. This room's door opens directly onto the reading room's floor. We will also be moving our special collection staff to an office immediately adjacent to the reading room. Our services and collections most often require a staff member to identify, retrieve, or instruct patrons in the use of many of our resources, making our staff the starting point for most work done in the division. Since our staff members are the asset that our patrons need most frequently, making them more accessible will help us provide better service with fewer staff. (Central Library Local History & Genealogy Division)

- Thanks to a donor and artist Richmond Futch, a beautiful mural celebrating books was installed last fall near Arnett's entrance and received much positive publicity. Since then, new donors have come forward and 12 more book spines are currently being installed, again by Futch. (Arnett Branch)

- In the fall of 2017, gardens along the north side of the building were refreshed with new trees and ground cover plants. In addition, benches and a new bike rack were also installed. (Frederick Douglass Community Library)

Provide access to an evolving variety of collections, programs, services and technologies based on community needs.

- We began loaning out “things” in addition to books. Those things include ukuleles, sewing machines, craft kits, looms, science kits, fishing poles, and Kindle Fire e-readers. (Central Arts & Literature, Science, and Media Divisions; Sully Branch)
• Local writers are supported by the Rochester Writes series of classes and readings, supplemented by the bi-annual publication of Rundelania, a digital literary journal dedicated to the publication of original poetry, short stories and essays. (Central Arts & Literature Division)

• A virtual assistance program for patents was developed in partnership with the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office. This service allows inventors to speak to USPTO staff for free using videoconferencing technology. (Central Library Science Division)

• Health Central provided access to Nurse Barb and University of Rochester medical students who provided biometric screenings. Health Central also facilitated library-wide training on Narcan administration, and brought the mobile Dental Unit to Central. (Central Library Science Division)

• The Local History and Genealogy Division has struck an aggressive posture regarding the digitization of our pre-1850 newspapers. In the next few months, we hope to complete the final steps in making the searchable full text of 15 19th century newspapers available on the RPL website. This enormous project has resulted in approximately 60,000 pages of digitized material previously available only on microfilm or in print format. It would be difficult to overestimate the value of this accomplishment. As we continue to expand this effort to include newspapers from the second half of the 19th and early 20th century, we anticipate this set of materials will greatly increase the traffic to our website. As more and more users expect to access materials remotely, the Local History and Genealogy Division has put a digitizing plan in place to meet that expectation. (Central Library Local History & Genealogy Division)

• Winton purchased a variety of Launchpads (self-contained learning tablets) and added them to the collection for circulation. The Launchpads come in a variety of age levels and subject areas, such as math, language, shapes and colors, brain games, music and more. (Winton Branch)