

**Library Board, Santa Monica Public Library
Secretary's Report
May 2023**

Citywide:

In a community-wide collaborative effort this year the Santa Monica Public Library's **Santa Monica Reads (SMR) program** welcomes the City of Santa Monica, Santa Monica College, and Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District for a reading of Heather McGhee's book *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*. For information on the citywide events, programs, book discussions scheduled go to https://smpl.org/Citywide_Reads.aspx.



Santa Monica Reads is proudly sponsored by the **Friends of the Santa Monica Public Library**. Free copies for adults and young readers are available to those planning to participate in the Santa Monica Reads programs, while supplies last.

City Council Items Update:

Staff are working with Cultural Affairs Division to finalize plans for the **Santa Monica Poet Laureate** program requested by City Council as a 16 item. This item will likely return to Council this summer in the form of a resolution that sets parameters for the program. Once approved, staff will work with the Library Board and Arts Commission on the application and selection process.

The item previously discussed at last month's meeting regarding the exploration of **honoring Lloyd Allen** by renaming the Pico Branch or VAP will take a pause, as City Council intends to listen and receive more community feedback on recommendations for next steps. We will continue the discussion at our June or July Library Board meeting.

Santa Monica Public Library Operations:

Operations

The **Main Library** had its soft opening of the **2nd Floor 'Workspace'** on April 17. Located in the former Computer Commons at Main Library, the Workspace currently offers 18 tables with power and USB outlets that SMPL patrons can reserve with their library card. The Workspace is staffed with a Library Assistant I and a Library Services Officer. This is part of continued efforts to reactivate library spaces!



Programming

May is Mental Health Awareness Month and AAPI Heritage Month!

In the month of April, libraries across the nation celebrated [National Library Week](#) - *Celebrating Literacy for All*. SMPL welcomed Councilmember Jesse Zwick a guest reader at Tuesday Tales at the Fairview Branch, to welcoming crowds of teens at the Fierce Friday Yallwest YA Author event at the Pico Branch to the culmination of hard work, true collaboration, and community involvement with the Arts and Literacy Festival at Virginia Ave. Park. As a Library and community, we value our freedom to read and access information. This week has demonstrated the importance of reading, connecting, and promoting literacy for all ages, but especially for our youth and families.



Fairview Storytime with Councilmember Jesse Zwick! Patrons were treated to an Earth Day storytime including songs and transitions led by Librarian Myleen DeJesus. The duo also shared a poem to celebrate National Poetry Month to the large crowd!

Fierce Friday at Pico Branch Library! This year's event featured 16 young adult authors. Staff were excited to be able to host the event after COVID shutdowns. Estimated attendance was 300. Attendees were able to meet their favorite young adult authors and have their books signed. On Saturday, Library staff continued their support at YALLWEST and staffed a booth. Attendees were able to obtain library resources and place a Banned Books Trivia activity. Staff reported that this year's author line-up was diverse with people across the spectrum of ethnicities, and LGBTQIA+ authors. George M. Johnson, author of *All Boys Aren't Blue* which has been the second most banned book in the last two years was also in attendance.



Library Board Chair Judith Meister and Librarians Robert Graves, Gia Forsyth, and Susan Lamb checking in crowds of young people readers.

This year's **Arts & Literacy Festival** took place on April 29th. The Library staffed a Book Giveaway Booth, where staff were able to connect with kids and families. Book giveaways were sponsored by the Friends of the SMPL. Leading up to the festival, craft supplies with a construction theme were placed at the branches for little ones to enjoy when visiting the library.



SMPL celebrated **National Poetry Month** with Poetry at the Santa Monica Pier, as part of their monthly Locals' Night series. West Hollywood Poet Laureate Brian Sonia- Wallace created custom poems on his vintage typewriter, on the spot, for Santa Monica residents and visitors alike, as well as one for the Library (photo attached). The program garnered articles in the [Argonaut](#) and [Santa Monica Close-up](#).



In recognition of **National Financial Literacy Month** in the month of April, SMPL partnered with Virginia Avenue Park to present a financial literacy workshop series "Managing Your Money". Workshops were offered in English and Spanish, covering topics from managing debt to fraud prevention.



Earth Day kicked off with a Butterfly Celebration at Montana Ave Branch. Youth librarians lead a story time that drew 61 participants, mostly families with young children from the neighborhood. Participants then made butterfly rings, puppets, bookmarks, and origami with Library staff; planted seeds with Community Gardens volunteers; learned about the Library's RED Kits, Sustainability kits, City Recycling, and more at a resource table. Many attendees said it was their first visit to the Library and several asked if we had programs for babies. A family attended mentioned they drove from Redondo Beach to attend the special Earth Day celebration Storytime!



Collection Resources

The Collections, Technology and Patron Support Team is happy to report that **Newspapers** are returning to the library's collection, beginning in July!

The **Zip Books Pilot** is underway. In the month of April, it received 36 requests but only 21 met the criteria and were processed. Materials were ordered and shipped to patrons.

The new **Online Library Card Registration** service is now available to adults who reside within Los Angeles County. https://smp1.org/Online_Registration.aspx. Staff are working on broader marketing efforts but are happy to have been able to have a soft launch and begin offering this service.



After many years, the OverDrive app is officially discontinued. All users are encouraged to switch to **Libby** as their reading app which still connects users to their library of favorite books, audiobooks and magazines. Collections and Technology staff worked hard to update Libby to be able to easily access titles previously available through the OverDrive app.

Submitted by Erica Cuyugan, Director of Library Services