

2020 Strategic Plan Annual Report

Many of our original plans for 2020 had to be changed after the pandemic forced the library's closure in mid-March. We're proud of how the staff swung into action, launching new services as quickly as possible.

1. Foster diversity, equity, and inclusion

The Anti-Racism Task Force met 4 times with Compass Consulting Services. Focus groups in the community were postponed due to COVID.

Adult Services Librarian John Piche transitioned the popular 1619 Project program series to an online platform.

Noble Branch Manager Constance Dickerson ascertained a core African-American collection for the Noble Branch.

Youth Services Librarian Kornela Bogdanowicz completed a diversity audit of the reference storytime collection. Youth Services Librarian Cheryl Taylor and Youth Services Associate Shamekia Chandler also did diversity audits of other parts of the collection.

With assistance from Library Board Member Gabe Crenshaw and the Friends of the Library, we arranged for the installation of the Black Excellence Mural at the Coventry Branch parking lot.

In June, Library Board of Trustees authored a letter on racial equity in the wake of the killing of George Floyd by police in Minneapolis.

2. Seek opportunities to promote an environment of safety and security for the community

Safety Services Manager Kevin Echols and Facilities Manager Tim Pasbrig worked with Branch Managers Constance Dickerson, Pat Gray and Sara Phillips to reconfigure all buildings for lobby services. We ordered cloth masks, gloves, goggles, hand sanitizer, cleaning spray, plexiglass and thermometers. They also oversaw the placement and installation of signage, saw horses, floor markings and sneeze guards, which were donated from CH-UH schools.

Security Officer Delcresha Box took ongoing security and safety education courses.

Graphic Designer Victor Cimperman designed new COVID specific signage for all branches.

The Coventry sidewalk was replaced and a bicycle repair station was installed.

Bi-polar ionization was added to HVAC systems at Lee Road, HKIC and University Heights Branches. This was seen as an effective way of reducing virus spread.

Communications Manager Sheryl Banks distributed COVID safety information and updates on mask wearing and other library COVID policies frequently preparing a new code of conduct for the pandemic.

Dementia-Friendly training was offered to the staff and public.

Fiscal Officer Debbie Herrmann and Accounting Assistant Kim Austin supported training of Census and Election workers by making the library meeting rooms available to them.

3. Be proactive in facilitating communication and be a bridge builder for community concerns

Facebook and Zoom storytimes were created and presented by all Youth Librarians and Associates throughout the system. This work was coordinated by Youth Services Manager Sam Lapides.

Thirty new hotspots were purchased by the library and the CH-UH School District distributed them to students in need. These hotspots will be loaned to the students throughout the entirety of the school year.

All of the Library's Summer Reading programs were transitioned to an online platform, Beanstack.

Noble Youth Associate Danielle Maynard and Noble Youth Librarian Mary Looby compiled a list of Digital Resources for Children and Families, in addition to creating a page for our website.

Adult Services Manager Chuck Collins organized the adult services staff to provide email and phone reference for the public while IT Manager Matt Hoffman created a computer use plan for COVID safety and reconfigured the HKIC . Web Developer Colin Tomele created the Online Reference form, so customers could contact staff and created new form for hotspots, and kept the website updated with current information about services, hours and safety measures.

Circulation Services Manager Ty Emerson developed a plan to offer curbside material pickup. Every single Circulation employee at all four branches worked tirelessly to provide curbside service once we re-opened in June.

Community Engagement Associate Isabelle Rew wrote, designed, and sent multiple weekly e-newsletters to keep customers engaged and informed.

These staff members initiated at least 10 customer welfare check phone calls during the closure: Molly Garfield, Marlene Lapars, Mary Ann Rodewald, Elizabeth Tkachev, and Nancy Zelman. Meanwhile, Coventry Circulation Assistants Lisa Gordon and Jennifer Herchek wrote more than 30 letters to Coventry customers.

Special Projects Manager Maggie Kinney organized “no contact” food pantry distributions outdoors with staff and volunteers in partnership with Greater Cleveland Food Bank throughout the year.

Noble Adult Librarian Steve Sanders curated a list of COVID resources specifically for the Bhutanese community.

Noble Adult Librarian Amia Wheatley created a library services guide which was distributed at the April Food Pantry.

Adult Services Librarian Jen Mihalik prepared a resource list and booklists for online sharing.

Adult Services Association Kate Atherton created an e-comic book to share pandemic stories in place of the cancelled Pekar Comic Book Fest.

Adult Services Librarian Ellen Paulini Rich developed and facilitated a virtual book discussion with the Senior Center.

Technical Services Supervisor Jenny Greene facilitated online Knitting Nights.

Adult Services Librarian Andrea Lynn coordinated online Matchmaker content.

University Heights Youth Associate Michele Graham adapted a BINGO game for adults to post on social media.

The Continuing Education Department continued doing regular podcasts and Appy Hours on Facebook. They also conducted one-on-one tech help appointments.

The library partnered with Heights Community Congress to plan Heights Conversations on Race and partnered with the City Club and other libraries to presented 5 Days of Democracy virtual programming.

4. Be a bedrock for community workforce development

Technology Trainer Jackie Mayse ordered 40 more circulating hotspots to meet increased demand.

Technology Trainer Joe Kaiser updated the department's Resume ToolKit, which is now available on the library's Job Search and Unemployment Resources page. He also focused on workforce development in two library tech blogs.

The Continuing Education Department launched virtual resume review service for customers.

Niche Academy database was purchased and added to our website to help users with databases and other online services. We also purchased the Northstar digital assessment tool, which allows customers to test themselves on various digital competences.

All staff were kept on the library payroll during an eleven week shutdown for the pandemic. Then we helped move staff whose hours were curtailed to Shared Work Ohio, which covered the library for unemployment payments. This required a great deal of work from HR Manager Laurie Marotta and Deputy Fiscal Officer Amy Gerson. The library employs over 110 people.