



AURORA
Public Library District

ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2023 – JUNE 30, 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This year was a time of sustained growth, change, and celebration at the Aurora Public Library District. Our new bookmobile finally arrived in October 2023, with a vibrant color scheme that anticipated our new brand, which was unveiled in June 2024. Those two major events bookended a year that saw incredible growth in every measure of library use – more people visited our libraries, more people attended our programs, more books were checked out, more questions answered, more public computers were used than any year since 2019.

As good as these numbers are – and they are great! – the impact that the library had on the community this year is the real story. A grant from Comcast made possible a series of classes in English and Spanish that teaches computer and software skills, so that participants have the skills they need to advance their careers and improve their lives. Lawyers in the Library partners with local legal aid organizations to bring pro bono help to residents who need help navigating the legal system. Storytimes in many languages are regular offerings at all of our locations, because connecting kids and their adults with the joy of reading makes the biggest difference of all.

There's so much happening at your library, and through it all we're planning for the future. The library board approved a new strategic plan in October 2023, and you'll start seeing our new mission, vision, and strategic directions in the next few months. We also spent a lot of time planning for Eola Road Branch renovations, and construction will begin in fall 2024.

So many good things are happening, and we look forward to so much more progress in the coming year.

HIGHLIGHTS

Building an Inclusive Library

Menstrual Products at all Library locations

With grant funding from the ZamZam Foundation and the Aurora Public Library District Foundation, APLD is proud to offer free menstrual products at all facilities beginning in **September 2023**. Products can be found in all restrooms, welcoming customers to take whatever they need.



Community Voices

September 15, 2023 APLD launched Community Voices, a library initiative to provide space for community members to share their individual stories. The mission of Community Voices is to celebrate diverse experiences, foster connections, cultivate empathy, and nurture a sense of belonging at the library. Our first exhibit highlighted Hispanic Heritage and featured 12 Aurorans including State Representative Barbara Hernandez and Claudia Urrutia owner of Quinta de los Reyes. The exhibit was followed by a panel discussion in partnership with local Aurora business, Nide Jardin.



Building New Partnerships & Nurturing Existing Ones

The library continues to seek out new partnerships with local businesses, organizations and the city whether it's through a partnership in programs, library visibility at community events or cross promotion. A few events include an Inclusive job fair in April 2024 which welcomed several local organizations to the library's atrium and a partnership with the Colombian Express Consulate which had customers arriving at 4 a.m. ready to receive passport, ID, and notary services.



HIGHLIGHTS

Connecting the Community to Evolving Services & Technologies

Open Computers & Faxing

Wanting to break down barriers, APLD launched open computer labs and free faxing for all customers. Having an open computer lab allows for shorter waits and for anyone to use our computers regardless of library card status.



Comcast Grant

In partnership with Family Focus, the library was awarded a \$30,000 grant from Comcast to provide additional computer education to library customers and Family Focus clients. Weekly classes began in May 2024, with Comcast providing laptops to individuals who complete the course.

Digital Archives

May 2024 the Aurora Public Library District's treasured collection of historical photographs became accessible online through the Illinois Digital Archives (IDA). This digital initiative made Aurora's unique history available to a wider audience than ever before.



Solar Eclipse

On **April 8, 2024** the library celebrated the solar eclipse by hosting a live viewing of the eclipse. The weeks leading up the library distributed 7,000 solar eclipse glasses.

HIGHLIGHTS

Engagement & Communications



New Website

The library launched a new website in **August 2023**, featuring a fresh, clean design, enhanced accessibility options, and a virtual tour of the Santori Library.

New Bookmobile

The library welcomed our 6th Bookmobile with a pop-up party on **October 2, 2023**. Its official opening was Friday, October 6, 2023 where a ribbon cutting ceremony welcomed the Bookmobile to the Aurora community. Included in the month-long festivities was a check presentation with State Representatives recognizing a \$400,000 grant, a Bookmobile ride-a-long with popular podcast show, Good Morning Aurora and an exhibit highlighting the history of bookmobiles in Aurora.



New Brand

June 1, 2024 the Aurora Public Library District launched a new brand! This 7th logo in APLD's history, includes a fox that embodies progress and innovation. In addition, the Foundation's new logo mirrors the library's logo symbolizing partnership and a shared vision. The new brand also



includes APLD's first ever mascot, a fox!

Community members submitted names and with over 300 name submissions, Rory was chosen as our furry little friend's name. Along with the new brand, a transition plan was delivered to all staff welcoming all departments, branches and services to transition to its new look in an unified

Within 2 weeks of the public announcement most public facing items were updated including staff name tags, website and flyers.



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AURORA
Public Library
FOUNDATION

STATISTICS

MATERIALS

921,047

Items Circulated | 0.7% increase

401,872 Collection Size

461,465

e-Materials Circulated | 15% increase

88,513 e-materials Collection size

DIGITAL SERVICES

24,858

Database Sessions
26% increase

749

Makerspace Appointments

52,383

Internet Sessions | 24% increase

31,263 Santori Library, **18,312** Eola Road Branch, **8,277** West Branch

PROGRAMS & EVENTS

61,088

total attendees at APLD
programs and events

46% increase with 36% more programs

3,108

programs offered

1,175 programs at Santori Library with **23,645** in attendance

931 programs at Eola Road Branch with **16,443** in attendance

409 programs at West Branch with **3,118** in attendance

185 Live Virtual Programs with **1,395** in attendance

CUSTOMERS

8,294

new library cards
65% increase

577,525

Visitors | 35% increase

229,983 Santori Library
268,581 Eola Road Branch
74,092 West Branch
4,869 Bookmobile

RESERVATIONS

17,556

Study Room Reservations | 25% increase

10,019 Santori Library, **5,606** Eola Road Branch, **1,931** West Branch

702

Meeting Room Reservations

414 Santori Library, **243** Eola Road Branch, **45** West Branch

692

Notary Appointments

122 Santori Library, **522** Eola Road Branch, **44** West Branch, **4** Outreach

1,243

Curbside Pickups | 17% decrease

917 Santori Library, **243** Eola Road Branch, **83** West Branch

508

Home Deliveries with **8,290** items delivered

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

77,108

Questions Answered | 19% increase

37,443 Santori Library, **29,411** Eola Road Branch, **9,256** West Branch, **998** Outreach

SOCIAL MEDIA

6,064

Facebook fans | 8% increase

1,545

Spanish Facebook fans | 11% increase

1,688

Instagram followers | 18% increase

440

Instagram followers | 9% increase

1,004

YouTube Subscribers | 5% increase

WEBSITE

235,000

Website Visitors | 9% increase

704,000

Website Visits | 92% increase

CHAT

483

Tickets | 173% increase

1,598

Chats | 157% increase

1,753

Views to our FAQ | 35% increase

STAFF

158

Staff Members | 5% increase

f Top posts



Thank you to Representative Barbara Hernandez and Bill Foster for visiting the new Bookmobile this morning! Join us tomorrow at the Santori Library for the official opening ceremony at 4 p.m. and see it for yourself 📖 #APLibraryIL #AuroraIL

181 likes and reactions

FOUNDATION

Autumn Toast

The Aurora Public Library Foundation was thrilled to host donors to our new Bookmobile for an appreciation event at the library in October. Our Autumn Toast was a great opportunity to show appreciation for the generosity of our community and the success of the new Bookmobile!

Winter Gala

Our Annual Winter Gala on December 7th was a wonderful success. 150 Guests enjoyed an evening with the Dueling Pianos and wonderful food and a lively auction! The main sponsors for the event were Alarm Detection Systems and Studio GC. Through the support of generous donors, we were able to raise over \$40,000! These donations were used to support grants to library staff for programming! This year we honored Mr. Jim Pilmer and Ms. Cheryl VonHoff for their service to the community and support of the library's educational mission



Mission Grants to the Library

The foundation board of directors was proud to provide the library with over \$25,000 in program funding through our mission grants winter cycle. Some of the programs funded were the new My First Library Card program, the Literacy Packets program, Light of Learning Scholarships, Community Voices exhibit, and support for staff appreciation and development.

Shop for a Cause

We were proud to once again partner with Wyckwood House in Aurora. We raised over \$5,000 for low sensory services as part of our "The Excitement is Building: Branch Renovations". This year, the committee added in a fashion show led by women business leaders in the community and partners and staff from the library!



New Board Leadership

The Aurora Public Library Foundation board would like to thank outgoing President, Christina Campos and Vice-President, Will Wong for their leadership over the years. In May the board voted in a new Executive Board.

- o Melissa Rinaldi – President
- o Maria Manzo – Vice President
- o Nicole Benziger – Secretary
- o Nisha Floyd – Treasurer

From July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, greater than \$750,000 was received in charitable giving and in kind donations. As of June 30, 2024 the Foundation's endowment was a little greater than \$4.3 million.



AURORA
Public Library District

THANK YOU

The Aurora Public Library
District's Board of Trustees,
Foundation Board of Directors
and Staff thank you for
another great year!