



ANNUAL REPORT FY2018

Berkeley Public Library

www.berkeleypubliclibrary.org





Explore and enjoy the Central Library's newly updated first floor space named **The Commons**. You'll find a wide array of comfortable seating and table options (reader seats, carrels, low tables, high chairs, and soft seating), increased electrical outlets to support device charging, and a 12-laptop lending machine for immediate, self-service access to technology.

The Commons was made possible by a generous donation from the Berkeley Public Library Foundation, which included a grant from Bayer.

STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS

Berkeley Public Library (BPL) participates in the nationwide Public Library Survey administered by the [Institute for Museum and Library Services](#), an arm of the federal government. Based upon BPL's reported outputs on such things as circulation of library materials, number of library visits, program attendance, and public Internet computer use, [Library Journal designated Berkeley Public Library a four-star Library](#) in December 2017. Of the 7,409 libraries considered by Library Journal, BPL is one of only 259 libraries awarded a star rating, and is one of only 13 California libraries so awarded. The following statistics highlight the accomplishments of staff during the 2018 fiscal year and help describe the value of the Library for community members.

During the 2018 fiscal year 1,036,994 visits were made to the [five Berkeley Public Library facilities](#).

The number of registered borrowers is 110,100.

The Library is much more than its books! However, Berkeley Public Library patrons highly value the Library's high-quality collections and they remain a central element of what the Library provides. In 2018, patrons checked out 2,038,220 items-- 45,345 more than the previous year. This was fueled by increases in use of new downloadable and streaming content developed as a result of findings from a June/July 2017 patron survey of over 4,200 community members.

BPL's print book collection grew in size by 11%, to 477,328 physical books. The Library added about 50,000 individual print books to the collection during the year. The Library invested significantly in the print collection as part of a staff-driven process to update and refresh book offerings. Librarians were significantly involved in selection of materials for their branch and Central Library [collections](#) through a refresh and replacement project in which librarians identified and updated high-use print collections such as cookbooks, adult fiction, and children's natural history books with the titles sought by BPL patrons.

One highlight is that use of the [Tarea Hall Pittman South Branch](#) collection increased by over 23,500 check outs. Use of other branch collections remained similar to 2017, while circulation of the Central Library's physical collections dipped slightly. About 60% of circulation of physical items was from the four neighborhood branches.

The Library held 2,324 public programs with a total attendance of 53,155 people (an average of about 23 attendees per event). This includes story-times, cultural programs, author talks, craft programs, film discussions, and much, much more! Just under two-thirds of all program attendance occurred at the branches rather than at the Central Library. The Neighborhood Branch Improvement Project has enabled the Library to better reach community members where they live. Each branch now has dedicated space available for programming and this has resulted in expanded use of the branches for programming and increased departmental investment in branch programming.

Outreach efforts reached 24,160 people and included such things as staff performing story-times at shelters, and visits to elementary and preschools, community fairs, and farmer's markets. [The Library on Wheels](#), BPL's bicycle outreach vehicle, plays a key role ensuring access to information, books, and story-times by visiting community events to provide library services.

SERVICE AND PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Berkeley Public Library offers dynamic, participatory, fun, and educational public programs for all ages. Primary goals of such public programming include the following:

- Support for children's school readiness
- Building a love of reading for all ages
- Providing new experiences and opportunities for patrons to learn new skills and information
- Community members have an increased awareness of the Library's dynamic resources, collections, and services
- Support for parents and caregivers
- Building literacies of all kinds (cultural, social, textual, etc.)
- Fostering of individual connections to the community
- Providing access to non-commercial, community based, free experiences
- Leadership opportunities for teens



Musical Instrumental Petting Zoo at West Branch

The Library is particularly committed to programs that allow community members the opportunity to share interests and learn from each other.



CORNERSTONES
STEM @ Berkeley Public Library

In 2018, after significant work behind the scenes, the Library inaugurated the public-facing phase of [Cornerstones at Berkeley Public Library](#), an initiative designed to engage people in experiential learning and reawaken a sense of wonder about

the natural and physical world by way of STEM programming and collections. During the kickoff month of April, patrons of all ages attended more than twenty STEM programs including planetarium shows, insect labs, STEM play-dates, and science festivals, demonstrations, and lectures. The Cornerstones initiative is continuing through 2018 and beyond, as STEM programming has become an integral part of the Library's offerings at all locations.



STEM Event at
Claremont Branch

The Library initiated a second English Conversation Club at the Central Library (based upon the one offered at the West branch) that allows new English learners to practice their spoken English in a safe, fun, and social environment facilitated by Library staff and volunteers.



English Conversation Club at Central Library

Thousands of community members attended cultural events celebrating Berkeley's diversity of interests and backgrounds. Celebrations of Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage month, Chinese Lunar New Year, LGBTQ Pride month, national Comic Book Day, and much, much more were extremely well-attended, especially at the neighborhood libraries.



Free Comic Book Day at North Branch

The Library's [Tool Lending Library](#) initiated programming to help community members learn new skills. This includes a fixit clinic (also held at North Branch) that drew dozens of people together to help each other with DIY repair of small appliances, and a knife sharpening class.

In 2018, children's story-time left the walls of the library, travelling to Berkeley parks, farmer's markets, family shelters, and more. This year, more than 20,000 people attended Berkeley Public Library story-times in and outside of our facilities.



Hamiltunes Sing-a-long at Claremont



Stuffed Animal Sleepover Storytime at West Branch

Film programs included a range of themed series, including films adapted from books, Shakespeare adaptations, films about local social history, and films featuring food for both children and adults.

Berkeley Builds Readers, administered by [Berkeley Reads](#), the Library's Adult and Family Literacy Program, places trained literacy volunteers into early childhood learning centers to provide high-quality early literacy experiences. In 2018, a second cohort of volunteers completed their training, thus doubling our Berkeley Builds Readers programming capacity.



Berkeley Builds Readers Literacy Volunteers

The Tarea Hall Pittman South Branch celebrated installation of a new sign and initiated a social justice series honoring the Ms. Pittman's activism. In 2018, the series of quarterly programs included poetry and spoken word performance as well as discussions about gentrification and the environment.



The Library's Collections Coordinator and the Central Library Teen Services Librarian initiated a collaboration with BUSD to enable BUSD middle and high schoolers to easily access and checkout BPL's eBooks on the [Overdrive platform](#). Working with librarians from the school district, the Library greatly expanded the size of its teen e-audiobook collection and this has resulted in significant increase of both access and use of the Library's digital collections.

RESPONDING TO COMMUNITY NEEDS AND INTERESTS

Through an inclusive, staff-driven process, the Library established a Customer Service Philosophy that guides Library staff's approach to everyday interactions with community members and each other. Simultaneously, the Library has integrated User Experience (UX) principles into space design, public communications, and graphic design practices. The Central Library's new first floor lounge, called The Commons, which provides more than 40

additional seats to the library and includes a laptop checkout machine, was designed by a team of staff who used UX to guide the project plan. These principles are also being integrated into plans for updates to the rest of the Central Library.

In 2018, The Library signed on to the [Urban Library Council's Statement on Race and Social Equity](#) that commits the Library to operational practices to better serve all community members and remove barriers that restrict access for some. As a result, the Library initiated plans to transform the Library's fines and fees schedule to ensure access for all community members; this resulted in a decision to model overdue fee practices for adult materials after the successful "fine-free" practices BPL has used for Children's materials for decades. As a result, over ten thousand library card holders once restricted from using the Library due to overdue fines are now able to check out materials from the Library.

From the Urban Library Council's Statement on Race and Social Equity

As leaders of North America's public libraries, we are committed to achieving racial and social equity by contributing to a more just society in which all community members can realize their full potential. Our libraries can help achieve true and sustained equity through an intentional, systemic and transformative library-community partnership.

The Library initiated sending monthly email newsletters to Library patrons as a result of survey indications that email is the preferred manner by which people learn about community events. Response to these emails has been mainly positive and, in many cases has resulted in overflow attendance to programs highlighted in the emails.

The Library's 2015-18 Strategic Plan has ended and, in the interim period prior to initiation of a new strategic plan, the Library is working to align the department's interim priorities with those identified in the [City of Berkeley proposed 2018-19 Strategic Plan](#) (see item 2). The three priorities identified from that plan are the following:

- Provide state-of-the-art, well-maintained infrastructure, amenities, and facilities
- Champion and demonstrate social and racial equity
- Provide excellent, timely, and easily-accessible service and information to the community

These priorities align with the work of the department described above and recent and ongoing efforts to improve the Central Library facility.



BUDGET SUMMARY

The services and programs offered by the Library are supported by funding from the local Library Services Tax, private and public grants, awards from the California State Library, and the generous monetary gifts and donations received from individuals, businesses, organizations, and trusts.

Fiscal Year 2018

(July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018)

Year-end report (Library Tax Fund)

Final total income \$19,418,617

Final total expenses \$17,319,513

Ending fund balance (estimated) \$7,435,186 (net of reserves)

Milestones: FY 2018 was a year for the Library to look forward to and plan for major upcoming building repair and renovation work at the Central Library. The Library Tax Fund ending balance, at its highest level ever, is deliberately planned to fund interior space planning improvements and upgrades to all public spaces throughout the five floors of the Central Library. In addition, the Bancroft wing of the Central Library will undergo extensive exterior repair work to the building's stucco facility.

Projections: FY 2019, closes out the FY 2018 and FY 2019 biennial budget cycle. The Library expects fiscal year 2019 to be marked with a focus on further exterior and interior building improvements at the Central Library following finalization of plans for installation of a dedicated lounge space featuring borrowable laptops in-house from a self-service kiosk, and facility maintenance work started in late fiscal year 2018 to preserve and sustain the Library's most prominent physical structure and to address and improve upon public safety concerns. Customer service enhancements throughout the system are envisioned as the Library migrates to a new integrated library system focused on improvements to the patron experience for the borrowing of library materials and accessing of e-materials.



Historic Reading Room
at Central Library