New York
Public
Library

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND INTERNATIONAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS AND THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON LIBRARIES

Oversight: New York City Public Library Systems' Capital Needs & Planning

December 10, 2014

Good afternoon. I am Tony Marx, President and CEO of The New York Public Library (NYPL). I'd like to start by thanking Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Majority Leader and Committee Chair Jimmy Van Bramer, Chair Costa Constantinides and Chair Julissa Ferreras, as well as the entire City Council for your strong support of New York City libraries.

More than a century ago, a pioneering partnership was formed between New York City, the City's libraries, and among the most generous philanthropists our nation has known, Andrew Carnegie. These partners had a simple yet ambitious dream—to build a public library within walking distance of every New Yorker. The dream was realized, and generations of New Yorkers—including former Secretary of State Colin Powell and Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor—credit their neighborhood library with improving their lives and making our city a beacon of opportunity.

Today, NYPL's 88 branches continue to offer access to books, but they have also become proactive forces in their communities, providing expanded opportunities for success—from free

Wi-Fi and computer access to job search help, resume writing services, and other key educational programs.

Yet, despite public libraries' ever more important role in keeping neighborhoods strong, funding for libraries has not kept up, particularly for capital needs. As a recent report by the independent Center for an Urban Future (CUF) notes: "New York City's public libraries are serving more people in more ways than ever before, and have become an increasingly critical part of the city's human capital system; but they have been undervalued by policymakers." I'm joined today by the directors of each of our branch networks along with many branch managers. Together, these dedicated librarians are here to attest to the essential role that our libraries play—and to the dire capital needs that many of our branches face.

For our capital projects, there is no doubt that we have benefited from support from individual Council Members, Borough Presidents, the Speaker, and the Mayor across our system's 92 locations. Over the past 10 years, with your support, we have completed over 150 projects valued at $253 million. Another $354 million is currently invested in ongoing branch capital projects across the system. Thanks to your generosity, we have an array of important projects underway, including a major renovation of the Woodstock Library in the South Bronx, a second phase of renovations at the Schomburg Center in Harlem, and new library buildings at Westchester Square in the Bronx, Charleston on Staten Island, and Roosevelt Island. We are also looking forward to our Midtown Campus project, which will provide a much-needed renovation for our largest circulating branch, Mid-Manhattan Library, which serves over 1.4

million New Yorkers a year from all five boroughs.

In all this, we are engaging the public to ensure we create libraries that meet New Yorkers' needs. We are convening community meetings, conducting surveys, and displaying signage to educate the public on our plans and solicit input. We recognize it is more important than ever to work with our communities to design the spaces and develop the programs that serve them.

Despite this progress, far more must be done to ensure that our critical infrastructure needs are addressed. In addition to the projects just described, we still face nearly $600 million in urgent capital needs across our system. Taken together with the city's two other library systems, and according to the CUF report, this number rises to over $1 billion. However, on average, the three systems receive approximately $80 million in capital funding commitments each year from all sources.

To remedy this, we must work together to establish a dedicated capital funding stream that allows for long-term planning. At NYPL, the average age of our libraries is 67 years old, with many branches dating back more than 100 years. And each year we must go to our elected officials to ask for capital funding. Of course, you are great partners in this work, but since this process is based on the discretion and funding ability of individual elected officials, decisions are not based on an informed assessment of priorities. We do not have the opportunity to properly address critical and ongoing infrastructure needs or to plan ahead.

With a stable stream of funding, we can plan more effectively for our long-term needs, and at NYPL we can deliver these projects as pass-throughs more cheaply and expeditiously. Supported by over a decade of data, we are confident in our ability to manage capital projects in a responsible, cost-effective, and timely manner, ultimately realizing the greatest possible benefit to New Yorkers. There is a tremendous opportunity for us to think more creatively about how to manage and deliver on capital projects, and we're eager to work with our partners in city government to explore new solutions.

Our Plan: Renovating Branches, Addressing Critical Needs, Updating Technology

This fall, the city's libraries were asked to submit a 10-year capital plan to the City outlining our needs for the next decade. We proposed a three-tiered approach to investing in libraries: fully renovate branches in high-need neighborhoods, create a critical maintenance needs fund to catch up on decades of inadequate capital investment, and establish stable funding for targeted, system-wide technology upgrades in our libraries.

Renovating Branches: We are committed to fully renovating or replacing 10 branches over the next 10 years—five in the first five years of the plan, and five more in the second. Sites will be selected by an internal review of branches in the highest need areas and aligned with communities of interest for the City, including East Harlem, Hunts Point, and Western Staten Island. At Hunts Point, which is in Tiffany Alston's network, a dilapidated former custodian's apartment awaits a renovation to become a vibrant community space. Similarly, at Fort Washington Library in Upper Manhattan, network leader Sumie Ota can tell you that users need us to find the funding to turn unused space on the third floor into public areas. With

proper funding, we can begin design work on all five projects immediately, and would expect to break ground on all five branches within 18 months.

The impact of capital investment on our communities is immediate and powerful. Following the recent major renovation of our Washington Heights branch, we saw a 107 percent increase in program attendance, a 47 percent increase in visits, and a 45 percent increase in circulation. Two more of our network leaders, Gesille Dixon and Dawn Chance, can let you know that similar dramatic boosts were seen following recent major renovations at Seward Park in Chinatown and Kingsbridge in the Bronx. Other communities deserve the same opportunities.

Critical Maintenance Needs: To prioritize and plan for maintenance spending, NYPL is undertaking a new study of all needs across our 88-branch network, paid for through private funds. Following this nine-month review, we will be able to list by year the projects we plan to undertake, including: ADA Compliance upgrades such as ramps, accessible entrances, and upgraded elevators and bathrooms; exterior and structural work such as roof replacements and facade restorations; essential health and safety upgrades, including sprinklers and upgraded fire alarm and security systems; and lastly, HVAC upgrades, including new boilers and other upgraded heating, ventilating, and air conditioning systems. Many of our branches are in desperate need of investment. At Richmondtown Library on Staten Island, Network Manager Yolanda Gleason is here to make sure that we get the support we need to fix chronic leaks in public areas and woefully inadequate public restrooms.

Technology Upgrades: Today, access to computers and the Internet is a basic necessity. For many of the over 2 million New Yorkers in the digital dark, libraries are the sole source of light. As my colleagues here can tell you, before and after we close each day, our users rely on WiFi leaked from our buildings. When the branches open, there are lines for every computer. To continue with this critical support, libraries need a steady stream of funding to upgrade and increase our Wi-Fi capacity; refresh the technology we offer, both hardware and software; improve user experience through enhanced technology, such as self-service offerings; and to continue to refresh core networking infrastructure. These investments allow us to keep pace with such great demand.

For more than a century, NYPL's network of 88 neighborhood libraries across the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island have served as powerful engines of individual and community empowerment and development. But they require capital investment to ensure they can continue to provide all New Yorkers with the tools—and the essential public spaces—they need and deserve. Once again, thank you for all your support on this very important issue, and for this opportunity to testify. We remain available to answer any questions you may have.

Brooklyn Public Library

Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations
Committee on Libraries

December 10, 2014

Good afternoon. My name is Linda Johnson and I am the President and CEO of Brooklyn Public Library (BPL). Thank you to Speaker Mark-Viverito, Chairmen Van Bramer and Constantinides as well as the entire City Council for your defense of our City's public libraries. It is my pleasure to testify today on the immense capital construction needs facing our libraries.

Last night we hosted BPL's 11th Annual Power-Up Awards, which granted $30,000 in seed money to aspiring Brooklyn-based entrepreneurs. Institutions such as Bogota Latin Bistro, Greenlight Bookstore and Green in BKLYN, as well hundreds of other small businesses, all began in a Brooklyn library. This type of business development programming as well as our early childhood literacy programs, adult learning and ESOL classes, job-readiness trainings and tech literacy workshops are in high demand. But to deliver these services we need reconfigured libraries containing flexible spaces, meeting rooms, adequate seating, current technology and improvements as simple as electrical outlets to plug in laptops and other devices -- all features lacking across the aging infrastructure of Brooklyn's libraries. At the same time, we are working to keep our physical plant from crumbling after decades of minimal investment.

Recently the Center for an Urban Future's issued a report, *Re-Envisioning New York's Branch Libraries*. The crux of this report is that our libraries are not adequately suited for the way today's New Yorkers work, learn or even spend their leisure time. There are 59 branches in Brooklyn, of which 70% are over 50 years old and 28% are over 100 years old. As I have stated previously to this committee, Brooklyn's libraries require over $300 million in unfunded capital

renovation, just to return them to a state of good repair. Almost every one of our locations requires over $1 million in capital repairs and over a quarter of our branches have over $5 million in outstanding needs. Attached to my testimony is an appendix of our capital needs, broken down by branch, with council districts noted. Sadly, no district is spared, from Greenpoint to Coney Island, from New Lots to Red Hook. Despite the heroic work our staff performs every day to inspire and enrich our neighborhoods, our buildings are failing.

The severity of last winter cost the Library over 500 hours in unplanned closures, 441 of which occurred in January alone as our aging boilers could not meet the demands placed on them. Most alarmingly, our New Lots Library, home to an important adult literacy center, was shuttered for nearly two weeks in January and February. Though this summer was relatively mild, we struggled to keep HVAC systems running beyond their useful life. Sunset Park, Red Hook and Marcy Libraries had air conditioner problems last summer, while Brooklyn Heights continues to operate with no functioning HVAC in most of the building. The problems extend to our branch's aging roofs and facades: as the new CUF report mentions, the staff at Brighton Beach Library moves a bank of computers every time it rains to prevent water damage.

While the task of repairing heating and cooling systems and leaky roofs may sound daunting, we cannot stop at merely bringing our branches into a state of good repair. When the Council and the Administration increased BPL's expense allocation this fiscal year by $2.8 million, we were able to use the funding as well savings from internal efficiencies to hire 27 staff members and open libraries an additional 202 hours per week. We are grateful to the Council for this accomplishment. While it is tremendously exciting to open our doors for longer hours, these doors often lead to spaces which fail to meet the needs of patrons and, frankly, are uninspiring.

Each Brooklyn neighborhood has its own character, but every one of them places multiple demands on limited branch space. Our libraries require flexibility to meet these myriad needs. We must be able to transform a branch throughout each day to accommodate computers for job seekers, social areas for older adults, rooms to host story times and spaces for community events. Eight of Brooklyn's branches were designed in such a way that 40% or more of their footprint accommodates back-office functions, areas that would be better used to serve the public. Despite the appetite our patrons have for new technology, over half of our branches are unable to accommodate more than ten people using electrical outlets at the same time. Many of them have only a handful of publicly accessible outlets while three branches have none. Our staff members do the best they can with this limited space – from hosting programs in storage rooms to using free space on shelves near outlets as laptop desks. Our stakeholders deserve better.

We, like the Center for an Urban Future and others, envision a solution: the first large-scale investment since the 1960s to not only remedy Library infrastructure but also create modern and flexible libraries that inspire and encourage our patrons to reach higher. All of us at BPL, especially our Board of Trustees, are thankful for the increase in capital funds we received this year. But the $18 million we received from the Council, Administration, and the Borough President will not solve the magnitude of the problem we face. To this end, we were pleased to submit to the Administration a proposed ten year capital plan of $375 million to modernize Brooklyn's libraries. The long-term, comprehensive investment in libraries we envision in the plan would allow us to bring our libraries into excellent condition and stop the expensive and inefficient technique of applying short-term fixes to buildings with complex needs.

We recognize that we are asking for a significantly higher level of investment over the next ten years than we have requested since the 1960s. We also take seriously our obligation to

help meet this challenge. We have begun looking for new sources of funding, developing new models for building libraries in conjunction with other uses, and finding new partners to achieve financially viable strategies to create new libraries.

Right now, BPL is one of 13 applicants being considered in the final round for grants by the Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund, a joint program of the New York State Office of the Attorney General and Department of Environmental Conservation. We are seeking $5 million in grant funds to plan and construct a new 6,500 square foot addition to the overcrowded Greenpoint branch, complementing planned capital repairs. We will add a second floor which will house the Greenpoint Environmental Education Center, increasing public space by more than 80% and providing Greenpoint with a hub for environmental programs, information and library collections as well as records of local environmental organizations. With this new center, residents of Greenpoint will be able to attend seminars, forums and events to become personally involved in the environmental projects and initiatives of our City. This project is an example of the type of creative funding sources we are seeking to create a better suited library and structures and services far greater than we could achieve with the current level of City funding we receive.

Working with the Economic Development Corporation, BPL is planning to build a new library in Brooklyn Heights and, in so doing, generating resources for branches across the borough. This fall, we selected Hudson Companies as our development partner for the new Brooklyn Heights Library, a project we expect will generate more than $40 million to repair BPL branches with urgent capital needs, create 114 units of affordable housing, and give the residents of Brooklyn Heights a new state-of-the-art branch, which they will have a voice in creating at the same location. The new library will be one of the largest in the BPL system and will be part of a mixed-use building at the site of the current branch. Beginning in 2015, BPL will conduct

workshops seeking community input for the design of the new library. Hudson Companies has entered into an agreement to rent a temporary site on the library's behalf just blocks away from the branch, ensuring uninterrupted library service throughout the construction period.

A portion of the funds generated by this project has already been earmarked for three of our beautiful but crumbling Carnegie branches: Walt Whitman, which will receive $6 million for upgraded infrastructure and branch modernization; Washington Irving, which will receive $4 million for upgraded infrastructure; and Pacific, which will receive $3.5 million for a new entry and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. With the funds generated by the Brooklyn Heights project, we can finally begin to make the investment these century-old architectural gems require to meet the diverse needs of our patrons.

Our Sunset Park Library is another branch in desperate need of repairs. In addition to a new roof and boiler, the branch needs an air conditioner as its HVAC system failed this summer and has been temporarily replaced by loud, portable chillers. While the library consistently falls in BPL's top 10 branches for attendance and circulation, it has only 12 electrical outlets for the public, lacks a true children's area and is only 12,200 square feet. Between our partnership in Sunset Park with the Department of Small Business Services' Workforce1 Center and the requirements of our ESOL conversation series, extensive programming for youth and teens with special needs, technology training and the tremendous demand from this bustling community, the neighborhood has outgrown its branch.

Currently, we have only $2 million available to upgrade the infrastructure and make modest interior repairs, but these will not address the larger issue plaguing the branch. To build the library Sunset Park needs and deserves, BPL has proposed partnering with the Department of

Housing Preservation and Development and the Fifth Avenue Committee, a not-for-profit housing developer, to redevelop the property with a library and 100% affordable housing.

This partnership proposes a new two-story library of over 20,000 square feet with 50 units of affordable housing above it. This collaboration will allow BPL to nearly double the size of this library for the cost of fitting out the space, much less than the price of building a larger branch through a stand-alone project. Under the current proposal, Fifth Avenue Committee will purchase the development rights from the City of New York, rebuild the core and shell of the larger library as well as create the housing, and return ownership of the new library branch to the City once construction is complete. As we go down this path we are working to fully understand this community's diverse needs and desires.

Whether seeking new sources of funding or pursuing innovative redevelopment models, we are trying to do our part to rise to this capital challenge. These strategies, together with a large and long-term investment by the City of New York, would finally allow the City's best human capital development resource – our libraries – to truly fulfil their missions. I am pleased by the Council's focus on this pressing issue and the growing recognition that we must collectively rise to this challenge. I thank you for the opportunity to testify today and would be happy to answer any questions.

	A	B	N
2	Brooklyn Public Library		
3	Estimated Unfunded Capital Needs		
4	October 2014		
6			
7			
14	All Branches		301,926,020
15			
16			
17	1	Arlington (District 37)	6,001,020
18		ADA Bathrooms	500,000
19		Exterior Renovation	1,500,000
20		Interior Renovation	3,000,000
21		New Furniture & Equipment	600,000
22		Plumbing system	401,020
23			
24	3	Bay Ridge (District 43)	1,750,000
25		Boiler	750,000
26		HVAC	1,000,000
27			
28	4	Bedford (District 35)	1,750,000
29		Boiler	750,000
30		Windows	1,000,000
31			
32	5	Borough Park (District 39)	5,200,000
33		Interior Renovation	3,500,000
34		New Furniture & Equipment	700,000
35		Windows	1,000,000
36			
37	6	Brighton Beach (District 48)	4,700,000
38		Interior Renovation	2,000,000
39		New Furniture & Equipment	500,000
40		Boiler	750,000
41		Exterior and Windows	1,200,000
42		Safety and Security Enhancement	250,000
43			
44	7	Brooklyn Heights (District 33)	9,275,000
45		Boiler Replacement	750,000
46		HVAC System replacement	3,600,000
47		Lighting Upgrade & BMS controls	825,000
48		Safety and Security Enhancements	500,000
49		Site Drainage and Waterproofing	600,000
50		New Elevators & Machine Room	1,000,000
51		Roof & Roof Bulkhead replacement	2,000,000
52			
53	8	Brower Park (District 36)	8,600,000
58		Acquisition estimated cost	3,000,000
59		ADA Bathrooms	500,000
60		Roof	850,000
61		Boiler	750,000
62		HVAC and controls	850,000
63		Interior Renovations	2,000,000
64		New Furniture and Equipment	500,000
65		Safety and security enhancements	150,000
66			
67	9	Brownsville (District 41)	3,650,000
68		Interior Renovation	2,500,000
69		New Furniture & Equipment	600,000
70		Façade Rehab	350,000
71		Safety and Security Enhancement	200,000
72			
73	10	Bushwick (District 34)	4,050,000
74		Boiler	750,000
75		Exterior Rehabilitation	600,000
76		Interior Renovation	2,000,000
77		New Furniture & Equipment	500,000
78		Safety and Security Enhancement	200,000
79			
80	11	Canarsie (District 46)	2,100,000
81		ADA Bathrooms	500,000
82		Boiler	750,000
83		Roof	850,000
84			
85	12	Carroll Gardens (District 39)	6,350,000
86		Exterior Renovation & Windows	1,000,000
87		Boiler	750,000

	A	B	N
2	Brooklyn Public Library		
3	Estimated Unfunded Capital Needs		
4	October 2014		
6			
7			
88		Interior Renovation	3,000,000
89		New Furniture & Equipment	750,000
90		Safety and Security Enhancement	250,000
91		Windows	600,000
92			
93	13	Central (District 35)	67,750,000
94		EXTERIOR REHABILITATION	
95			
96		Window Replacement	7,000,000
97		Building Façade	4,000,000
98		Roofs	4,000,000
99		Parapets	2,000,000
100		Exterior Roof Access Doors Replacement	3,000,000
101		Renovate/replace skylights	700,000
102		Exterior Lighting	400,000
103		Dweck Entrance Canopy	150,000
104		Exterior Exits and Plaza Cheek Walls	2,000,000
105		Exterior Sitework and Landscaping	700,000
106			
107		INTERIOR REHABILITATION	
108			
109		Grand Lobby and Entry Lobby Restoration	
110		Restore all wood finishes	1,300,000
111		Ceiling and Wall Restoration	2,000,000
112		Lighting	500,000
113		Glass Block Wall Restoration & Waterproofing	750,000
114		Escalator upgrade	2,000,000
115			
116		Art and Music	1,750,000
117		Language and Literature	1,750,000
118		Multilingual Center	750,000
119		Science and Industry	1,750,000
120		Social Sciences	1,750,000
121		Building-wide Furniture and Equipment	2,000,000
122			
123		INFRASTRUCTURE	
124		New flooring finishes throughout	3,000,000
125		ADA Bathrooms - All levels	4,000,000
126		Abatement	1,000,000
127		Plumbing upgrade	3,000,000
128			
129		HVAC	
130		Air Delivery System	6,500,000
131		Environmental Controls for Decks	3,000,000
132			
133		ELECTRICAL	
134		System upgrade	7,000,000
135			
136	14	Clarendon (District 45)	2,950,000
137		Interior Renovation	1,500,000
138		New Furniture & Equipment	400,000
139		HVAC and controls	850,000
140		Safety & Security Enhancements	200,000
141			
142	15	Clinton Hill (District 35)	2,850,000
143		Interior Renovation	1,500,000
144		New Furniture & Equipment	500,000
145		Roof	850,000
146			
147	16	Coney Island (District 47)	3,950,000
148		Second floor Interior Renovations	1,000,000
149		New Furniture and Equipment	300,000
150		Exterior Rehab, new Lintels and windows	1,800,000
151		Roof	850,000
152			
153	17	Cortelyou (District 40)	1,000,000
154		Roof	850,000
155		Safety and Security Enhancement	150,000
156			
157	18	Crown Heights (District 40)	4,850,000

	A	B	N
2	Brooklyn Public Library		
3	Estimated Unfunded Capital Needs		
4	October 2014		
6			
7			
158		Acquisition estimated cost	2,200,000
159		Boiler	750,000
160		HVAC	850,000
161		Roof replacement	850,000
162		Safety & Security Enhancement	200,000
163			
164	19	Cypress Hills (District 37)	750,000
165		Boiler	750,000
166			
167	20	Dekalb (District 34)	3,500,000
168		Exterior Renovation	1,200,000
169		Safety and Security Enhancement	300,000
170		Basement Renovation	1,000,000
171		Window Replacement/Restoration	1,000,000
172			
173	21	Dyker (District 43)	3,500,000
174		New Windows & Masonry Restoration	1,000,000
175		Interior Renovation	2,000,000
176		New Furniture & Equipment	500,000
177			
178	22	East Flatbush (District 42)	4,100,000
179		Exterior Restoration and Windows	1,000,000
180		Interior Renovation	2,500,000
181		New Furniture & Equipment	600,000
182			
183	23	Eastern Parkway (District 35)	7,850,000
184		Arched Window Rehabilitation	1,000,000
185		Boiler	750,000
186		Hazardous Material Abatement	400,000
187		HVAC	1,000,000
188		Interior Renovation	3,500,000
189		New Furniture & Equipment	600,000
190		Restoration of Chimney Stack	600,000
191			
192	24	Flatbush (District 40)	900,000
193		Abatement and restoration of finishes	500,000
194		Safety and security enhancement	400,000
195			
196	25	Flatlands (District 45)	3,400,000
197		ADA Compliance - Entrance	400,000
198		Interior Renovation	2,500,000
199		New Furniture & Equipment	500,000
200			
201	26	Fort Hamilton (District 43)	-
202			-
203			
204	27	Gerritsen Beach (District 46)	1,500,000
205		Façade Restoration and windows	1,500,000
206			
207	28	Gravesend (District 47)	4,300,000
208		Boiler	750,000
209		HVAC and controls	850,000
210		Interior Renovation	2,000,000
211		New furniture & equipment	500,000
212		Safety and security enhancements	200,000
213			
214	29	Greenpoint (District 33)	3,250,000
215		Boiler	750,000
216		Interior Renovation	2,000,000
217		New Furniture & Equipment	500,000
218			
219	30	Highlawn (District 44)	2,650,000
220		Boiler	750,000
221		HVAC and controls	850,000
222		Roof	850,000
223		Safety & Security Enhancements	200,000
224			
225	31	Homecrest (District 48)	4,850,000
226		Acquisition estimated cost	2,200,000
227		Boiler	750,000
228		HVAC	850,000

	A	B	N
2	Brooklyn Public Library		
3	Estimated Unfunded Capital Needs		
4	October 2014		
6			
7			
229		Roof	850,000
230		Safety and Security Enhancement	200,000
231			
232	32	Jamaica Bay (District 46)	2,700,000
233		Boiler	750,000
234		HVAC	850,000
235		Roof	850,000
236		Safety and Security Enhancement	250,000
237			
238	33	Kensington (District 44)	-
239			
240	34	Kings Bay (District 48)	4,050,000
241		Boiler	750,000
242		Exterior restoration	1,200,000
243		HVAC	1,000,000
244		Roof	850,000
245		Safety and Security enhancement	250,000
246			
247	35	Kings Highway (District 48)	-
248			
249	36	Leonard (District 34)	5,700,000
250		ADA Compliance - Entrance & Bathrooms	1,200,000
251		Façade Restoration	1,200,000
252		Historic Window Restoration	500,000
253		Interior Restoration	2,000,000
254		New Furniture & Equipment	600,000
255		Safety and Security Enhancement	200,000
256			
257	37	Macon (District 36)	600,000
258		Rear retaining wall	600,000
259			
260	38	Mapleton (District 44)	2,850,000
261		Exterior restoration	1,200,000
262		HVAC	1,000,000
263		Windows and doors	450,000
264		Safety and Security Enhancement	200,000
265			
266	39	Marcy (District 36)	3,500,000
267		ADA Compliance - Bathrooms	500,000
268		Boiler	750,000
269		Exterior restoration	1,200,000
270		Roof	850,000
271		Safety and Security Enhancement	200,000
272			
273	40	McKinley Park (District 43)	6,350,000
274		ADA Compliance - Bathrooms	300,000
275		Boiler	750,000
276		HVAC	850,000
277		Interior Renovation	2,000,000
278		New Furniture and equipment	500,000
279		Plumbing system	350,000
280		Roof	850,000
281		Safety & Security Enhancements	200,000
282		Windows & Doors	550,000
283			
284	41	Midwood (District 44)	2,800,000
285		Boiler	750,000
286		HVAC	1,000,000
287		Roof	850,000
288		Safety & Security Enhancements	200,000
289			
290	42	Mill Basin (District 46)	3,750,000
291		ADA Compliance - Bathrooms	500,000
292		Boiler	750,000
293		Exterior, windows and doors	600,000
294		HVAC	850,000
295		Roof	850,000
296		Safety & security enhancements	200,000
297			
298	43	New Lots (District 42)	5,350,000

	A	B	N
2	Brooklyn Public Library		
3	Estimated Unfunded Capital Needs		
4	October 2014		
6			
7			
299		Elevator	500,000
300		Boiler	750,000
301		Interior Renovation	3,000,000
302		New Furniture & Equipment	600,000
303		Windows	500,000
304			
305	44	New Utrecht (District 43)	4,750,000
306		Interior Renovation	4,000,000
307		New Furniture & Equipment	750,000
308			
309	45	Pacific (District 39)	10,200,000
310		ADA Compliance - Entire Branch	3,000,000
311		Boiler	750,000
312		Exterior Restoration	600,000
313		HVAC	1,000,000
314		Interior Renovation	3,000,000
315		New Furniture & Equipment	600,000
316		Safety and Security Enhancement	250,000
317		Windows	1,000,000
318			
319	46	Paerdegat (District 46)	5,350,000
320		Acquisition estimated cost	2,200,000
321		ADA Compliance - Bathrooms	500,000
322		Boiler	750,000
323		HVAC	850,000
324		Roof	850,000
325		Safety and Security Enhancement	200,000
326			
327	47	Park Slope (District 39)	3,000,000
328		Roof and Restore skylights	1,000,000
329		Exterior Rehab and Windows	2,000,000
330			
331	48	Red Hook (District 38)	3,200,000
332		Exterior Rehab	1,500,000
333		HVAC	850,000
334		Roof	850,000
335			
336	49	Rugby (District 45)	1,100,000
337		Exterior Fence and Sitework	500,000
338		New Furniture & Equipment	600,000
339			
340	50	Ryder (District 44)	5,050,000
341		Boiler	750,000
342		Exterior Rehab	1,200,000
343		Interior Renovation	2,500,000
344		New Furniture & Equipment	600,000
345			
346	51	Saratoga (District 41)	5,150,000
347		Abatement	350,000
348		Interior Renovation	3,000,000
349		New Furniture & Equipment	600,000
350		Roof	1,000,000
351		Safety & Security Enhancements	200,000
352			
353	52	Sheepshead Bay (District 48)	10,050,000
354		Acquisition Estimated Cost	2,000,000
355		ADA Compliance - Entire Branch	1,000,000
356		Boiler	750,000
357		Exterior Rehab	750,000
358		HVAC	850,000
359		Interior Renovation	3,000,000
360		New Furniture & Equipment	600,000
361		Plumbing & Exterior Drainage System	250,000
362		Roof	850,000
363			
364	53	Spring Creek (District 42)	2,650,000
365		Boiler	750,000
366		HVAC	850,000
367		New Roof	850,000
368		Safety & security enhancements	200,000

	A	B	N
2	Brooklyn Public Library		
3	Estimated Unfunded Capital Needs		
4	October 2014		
6			
7			
369			
370	54	Stone Ave (District 41)	2,400,000
371		New Windows & Doors	500,000
372		Public Self Service Improvements	100,000
373		Repoint & Rehab Limestone	600,000
374		Roof	1,000,000
375		Side Entry Steps	200,000
376			
377	55	Sunset Park (District 38)	4,750,000
378		Swing Space	750,000
379		Branch Modernization	4,000,000
380			
381	56	System-wide Technology	2,000,000
382			
383	56	Ulmer Park (District 47)	5,100,000
384		Boiler	750,000
385		HVAC	850,000
386		Interior Renovation	3,000,000
387		New furniture and equipment	500,000
388			
389	57	Walt Whitman (District 35)	6,500,000
390		ADA Compliance - Bathrooms	500,000
391		Boiler	750,000
392		Exterior Rehab	1,000,000
393		HVAC	1,000,000
394		Interior Renovation	2,500,000
395		New Furniture & Equipment	500,000
396		Safety and Security Enhancement	250,000
397			
398	58	Washington Irving (District 37)	7,650,000
399		Boiler	750,000
400		Exterior Rehabilitation	2,000,000
401		HVAC	1,000,000
402		Interior Renovation	3,000,000
403		New Furniture & Equipment	700,000
404		Safety and Security Enhancement	200,000
405			
406	59	Williamsburgh (District 33)	4,850,000
407		Boiler	750,000
408		Exterior Rehabilitation	1,200,000
409		HVAC	1,000,000
410		Landscaping, Fence & Sitework	500,000
411		Safety & Security Enhancements	200,000
412		Windows	1,200,000
413			
414	60	Windsor Terrace (District 39)	3,200,000
415		ADA Compliance - Bathrooms	600,000
416		Interior Renovation	2,000,000
417		New Furniture & Equipment	400,000
418		Safety & Security Enhancements	200,000
419			
420			

New York City Council - Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations and Select Committee on Libraries
Oversight - New York City Public Library System's Capital Needs & Planning, December 10, 2014, Council Chambers, City Hall
Testimony by Veronika Conant

Thank you for calling this hearing. I am Veronika Conant, a retired academic librarian, member of the Committee to Save the New York Public Library, and past Pres. of the West 54 - 55 Street Block Association, active during the disastrous sale of the Donnell Library.

Recommendations, inspired by the Center for an Urban Future Report:

- Create a 10 year, $1.1 billion capital fund for NY's public libraries
- Create a prioritized list of capital funding needs.
- Group by types: HVAC repairs/replacement, boiler repairs/replacement, roof repairs/ replacement, etc. and go in order of highest priorities first
- Get approval from the City to do each type jointly and try to lower the cost for the combined projects. Streamline these and do the same for each, wiring, etc.

Priorities:

1. Get the 42nd Street Library back to normal functioning as soon as possible :
   a) Upgrade the already existing HVAC and sprinklers in the seven floors of book stacks, and return the 3 million books from off-site storage. Even at the high estimate of $46 million for 160,000 square feet of stacks, the unit cost is $287.50 per square foot. If DDC can do it for $150 per square foot, the cost would be $24 million. b) Repair the Reading Room, now closed for over 1/2 year, and restore the excellent and architecturally significant unique book delivery system for readers as soon as possible. While it is appreciated that NYPL will reconfigure the space in other parts of the 42nd Street Library, we want to be assured no space will be taken away from what is needed to allow the book delivery function and to provide air conditioning, humidity controls and sprinklers for the book stacks.

2. Complete the second Bryant Park Stack Extension (BPSE), started during Vartan Gregorian's Presidency, with the goal of doubling storage for the collection. Even at the high estimate of $20 million for storing there 1.8 million items, unit cost is about $11 per item. At the lower, $9 million estimate, we originally heard, unit cost is $5.50 per item, more cost effective than ReCAP. 42nd Street has room to store 3.5 million books inside the building and 3.1 - 3.2 million in the two BPSEs, totaling 6.6 - 6.7 million items stored with easy access in the most cost effective way.

3. Renovate and, using available air rights, enlarge Mid-Manhattan, creating additional, valuable space in a beautiful new library for NYC.

4. Do not sell SIBL (the Science, Industry & Business Library) at 34 St & Madison Ave, created in 1996 for $100 million, expensively furnished, already wired and equipped with hundreds of computers. It can become a perfect Computer Center. Five floors had already been sold for over $60 million. All it needs is longer opening hours than the present 51 hours per week, a relatively inexpensive investment. (By comparison, Mid-Manhattan is open 88 hrs per week).

Do not sell any public libraries at a time when more people than ever use them.
5, Streamline branch library needs and repair HVAC systems and boilers first, to keep libraries open year round, then do roof, elevator repairs and wiring, also make every library building accessible to the disabled and elderly.DDC has done very good work, if streamlining can bring prices down and shorten completion times all the better.
6. The Donnell Library, is still under construction. Can it be enlarged, and if that is not possible, can the 28,000 square foot space be redesigned to a better configuration, providing adequate seating, quiet space, room for the collection and staff, wired for many computers and technology, plus an auditorium. It functioned very well as a regional library, an idea, recommended by CUF.
There is need for several major libraries in Midtown where population density is very high:
Donnell, SIBL, Mid-Manhattan and 42nd Street serve a very large population, they are also very accessible by public transportation and close to several colleges, schools.

Andrew Carnegie donated in 1905 $ millions to build 65+ free, circulating branch libraries in NYC on the condition that the City agrees to pay for utilities, and rent if the land is not owned, and maintain them in perpetuity. This agreement has not been kept for decades, there is a great deal of deferred maintenance, leading to major capital needs. Having a baseline capital funding established for regular preventive maintenance could avoid the state of deterioration currently existing and would be much more cost effective with benefit to all. Thank you.

Veronika A Conant, M.L.S. retired from Hunter College Libraries
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I have two strong disagreements with the Report:
1. **Maximize Public Space**.
What matters in a library is not public space but its content, the collection, how many people can be seated at tables and workstations, the number of librarians and support staff, computer access, use of technology, having both quiet and meeting space and hours open. Space is needed for both the collection and staff, they are the essence of a library. Librarians need peace and quiet to think, work, learn and develop, allowing them to assist library users in the best possible way. It is also important for staff morale.

2. **Floating Book Ops** is a bad idea. There are too few resources present for local patrons, they need to order most of what they want and wait for its arrival. This is ineffective and discourages library use. It is good to have centralized cataloging and preservation, imaging. But local librarians know their collection and the specialized interests and needs of their users. Therefore, they should remain active in book selection.Having every request go through the Library Service Center, LIC, is not necessarily a cost effective operation in a large, congested city. If a book, requested at 79th Street is at 96th Street, then the book has to be packed, taken by truck to LIC, go through an enormous book sorter, get packed again and sent to 79th Street and then back. Can a cost benefit study be done about Book Ops? Fairway on W 74 St sometimes delivers my food to W 54 St by bicycle.

Testimony of Charles D. Warren of the Committee to Save the New York Public Library before the New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations, jointly with the Subcommittee on Libraries. December 10, 2014

I am Charles Warren and I represent the Committee to Save the New York Public Library (CSNYPL), a citizens group that has sought to keep the popular Mid-Manhattan Branch as a library rather than a real estate deal, keep three million books in the stacks of the Central Library at 42nd Street, and maintain the Science Industry and Business Library (SIBL), the library closest to the CUNY Graduate Center.

With the support of thousands of New Yorkers, students, librarians, celebrated authors, union leaders, elected officials, and others we insisted that the $300 Million price tag for the Central Library Plan (CLP), which escalated to $ 500 million, was too high. Thanks to our efforts and the elected officials who recognized the wasteful folly of this plan, we have stopped it.

The election of 2013 brought a new energy to our city government and the abandonment of NYPL's destructive and extravagant Central Library Plan gives us all the opportunity to set a better course for the future. Base-line budgeting for the operating budgets of the three library systems is a positive step. And now, we welcome the opportunity to rethink the capital spending budget for our city's libraries. As you know the many years of under-funding have left a pressing need for intelligent planning and stable funding.

The Center for an Urban Future has performed a great service in its careful study of the branch libraries and I want to add to that with some comments about what NYPL is calling the Midtown Campus, a scheme that encompasses its research library on 42nd Street and the popular Mid-Manhattan Library across 5th Avenue. I urge you to see that these two libraries are intertwined with and complimentary to the citywide network of neighborhood branches. Their central location and unique resources extend their importance beyond NYPL's three borough system – they serve the whole city.

Public money and Private control – Is that a public/private partnership?

To citizens of New York it seemed the $ 151 Million contributed by New York City to the Central Library Plan was conjured from thin air; $ 100 Million from the Mayor; $ 50 Million from the City Council; $ 1 Million from the Manhattan Borough President. This money was granted when NYPL claimed it did not yet have even schematic designs. There were no public hearings, there was no public input. Now, most of this sum remains in the adopted FY 2015 capital budget. What is it for?

The NYPL Midtown Campus includes the Central Library at 42nd Street and the Mid-Manhattan Branch, but it fails to mention the Science Industry and Business Library, (SIBL) just a few blocks away.

Will the city council follow the old pattern where it grants $151 Million for a vaguely described plan being developed in secret? We need to know what our tax dollars are paying for. We must not stand for a partnership where the money is public and the decisions are private.

Just last week NYPL conducted a survey about plans for the Midtown Campus, but the survey omitted key questions. They did not ask:

- Does it make sense to leave the stacks empty for want of modern climate controls?
- Which Midtown Campus building is best suited to which library service?
- Should SIBL be sold or made part of the Midtown Campus?
- What balance should we strike between books and electronic services?

Instead, all the poll questions were skewed to avoid these important choices and reinforce a narrow set of pre-determined outcomes. This cannot be presented as meaningful public consultation.

If NYPL will not ask difficult questions, we must. And we must add a budget question: What is the best, most resilient, least destructive, and most economical way of achieving the public's objectives for the library and the city? Long term capital plans should encompass all parts of all NYPL buildings.

Mistakes made with and insular process

NYPL is a not-for-profit corporation with a $ 1.1 Billion endowment. I often disagree with its president, Tony Marx, but I have no doubt that he is motivated by the same devotion to the library and the city that motivates the CSNYPL. I know the NYPL trustees are similarly well intentioned. We should applaud their extraordinary generosity and hard work. But insular decision-making at NYPL has led to a series of bad consequences:

- Ten years and countless millions wasted on the Central Library Plan.
- The fiasco of Donnell Library, where the anticipated real estate bonanza for NYPL has not been realized. Money from the sale of this beloved and busy neighborhood library has been chipped away at by bad deals, long delays, and millions spent to rent substitute space for years. In the end an irreplaceable neighborhood library of about 90,000 square feet will be replaced with a largely subterranean space 1/3 its size.
- SIBL was built at the cost of about $ 100 Million. It is a commercial condominium owned by NYPL, not by the city. But many costs associated with this facility were funded with NYS bonding authority. Should NYPL now be free to sell it without city approval? NYPL is now silent on the future of this huge investment in the "library of the future" (focused on CD-ROMs and an object lesson for those thinking they can predict the course of fast changing technology).

An on-going example of private planning with consequences for public funds is the Research Collections and Preservation Consortium (ReCAP) in Princeton, New Jersey. NYPL continues to spend its capital funds to construct and expand its remote storage facility there. These substantial capital investments are represented as "private funds." and they are being made outside of New York City. Meanwhile, NYPL refuses to invest in its stacks, the uniquely efficient shelf system at the heart of its city owned 42nd Street building. Without public input, it has decided to leave the stacks empty, warehousing this space like a landlord waiting for an uptick in the real estate market.

Is it efficient to shuttle books back and forth from Princeton on a continuous basis? Is it environmentally responsible? Is it good for the preservation of the books? Is it good for New Yorkers? The answer seems to be that ReCAP is paid for with "private funds" and so it is not subject to city oversight. But "private funds" spent in New Jersey are dollars that are not spent on New York City facilities, and job that go out of New York. That leaves more needs to be met by city taxpayers and a bigger hole in the capital budget.

The public was barely consulted on these decisions, or consulted after they were set in motion. They have real consequences for library services and a real impact on the city's capital expenditures. We need reform.

Make all information available to all

In order to make informed decisions about capital projects, the City Council and the public need access to cost and other information for past, present, and future projects. Decision-making is hobbled when public cost data are disclosed, but private cost data are concealed. NYPL leaders promise openness but fail to disclose important information.

For example: At the June 27, 2013 hearing before State Assembly Committee on Libraries, NYPL CEO Anthony Marx testified about CLP:

> .... we understand that this plan needs an independent cost estimate and we will provide one as soon as we have an actual architectural design that can be assessed. We are as eager to [do] that as quickly as possible...., but we have to get it right. We also understand the public interest in having a cost estimate done by independent actors of what it would instead cost to make the current stacks work at state of the art preservation or for that matter to renovate the current Mid-Manhattan on site.... We will provide that information. We would love to do it sooner it looks at this point like we won't have all of that complete till the fall. As soon as we have it we will make it public.

What was finally disclosed in the Wall Street Journal, as CLP was being scrapped, was that its cost had ballooned to $ 500 Million, that fitting out the unused storage under Bryant Park would cost $24 million (rather than the $ 8.5 Million NYPL estimated earlier) and that the cost to provide proper environmental controls in the stacks was estimated at $ 46 Million. No estimates were supplied for renovating the Mid-Manhattan Library, no professional cost-estimator was identified, nor was detail supplied. Indeed, the plans and specifications that formed the basis of these estimates have never been disclosed.

The failure of NYPL to fulfill its promise leaves the City Council and the public in the dark. We are deprived of important information and cost data needed to assess alternatives or estimate present capital plans for these buildings.

A closed book from an institution devoted to information access

Partial, selective disclosure of information is a pattern with NYPL. Its trustees' meetings are open to the public, but much of the substance of those meetings is hidden within the briefing books provided to the trustees and not made public. I have asked Carey Maloney, the Council Speaker's new representative to the NYPL trustees, to make his copy of these briefing books public, I have made the same request to the Comptroller's staff. It should not require a quarterly Freedom of Information Act request to make public the substantive information underlying public meetings. Failure to disclose this information makes a mockery of open board meetings.

Pass-through contracts and NYC Department of Design and Construction

As this Committee knows, there are existing tools to require greater disclosure for the construction of city owned buildings. In a hearing held by this committee on April 28, 2014, the role of the NYC Department of Design and Construction (DDC) in library construction projects was examined. Testimony by Commissioner Peña-Mora and his deputy David Resnick emphasized the safe-guards and requirements for transparency in the DDC process. Under questioning, they compared this openness to the lack of transparency when pass-through contracts are used.

At the September 17, 2014 NYPL trustee meeting Anthony Marx claimed that pass-through contracts allowed the NYPL to deliver library projects at half the cost in half the time (compared to DDC). If this can be verified, it is a remarkable record of efficiency (even considering the lack of Wicks law requirements in pass-throughs contracts) and the city might want to fill vacancies at DDC from the staff of NYPL. But only NYPL has the data to support their claim.

We need to reform the rules for pass-through contracts so the use of some private funds does not cast a veil of secrecy over public building projects. I urge you to use the expertise within the DDC to find a more transparent process for these contracts. Absent greater transparency, our tax dollars are spent without sufficient public scrutiny or safe-guards.

Our Position on the capital budget

We support base-line budgeting. We support increased funding for NYPL and the other library systems. We support budget reform that allows for long term planning. These measures are needed to strengthen New York's libraries.

But reform must accompany these increases and improvements in funding.

When we met with Peter Hatch from the Deputy Mayor's office he indicated relations between the city and NYPL had entered a new era. But we cannot rely on better inter-personal relationships alone. With increased funding for operations and capital projects we must have greater openness accountability and transparency at NYPL. Citizens must be able to participate in decisions about both long and short term plans and we need mechanisms within the government to oversee library expenditures of both public and private funds. These libraries are our buildings. In return for more a more consistent stream of public funds, we must demand a more public planning process.

We urge the following reforms:

- Make increased and long-term capital funding contingent on greater openness and better oversight of NYPL.
- Require advance notice and periods of public comment on NYPL capital expenditures whether funded by the NYC or "privately" by NYPL.
- Reform pass-through contracts to provide better oversight and transparency.
- Use the government's three appointed representatives as a conduit of information between the NYPL trustees and the public. Require a quarterly public report from the Speaker's representative providing an independent account of NYPL plans.
- Require the disclosure of all information presented at NYPL trustee's meetings.
- Require disclosure of past cost estimates relating for the Central Library Plan

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C.M.PYLE : Testimony at the Hearing on Midtown Manhattan New York Public Library, held by the New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations and Select Committee on Libraries
Wednesday, December 10, 2014

How have our Libraries and other Cultural Institutions (including Universities) fallen into the hands of those (no doubt well-meaning) who never use Libraries, who may seldom have time away from their financial concerns to read books on Culture and Thought, whose primary interests and work are in Management, Finances and Real-Estate Development, who may have little or no time or inclination for **Intellectual Life**?

How has the running of Intellectual Resources become the province of Charming People who earn fabulous sums by converting our Cultural Institutions into venues for concomitantly fabulous parties, and other fund-raising events? Were these not once the province of our City's Government? I think of the remarkable School and University System of before and after World War II, which so many of us profited from; I think of the equally remarkable Library System of the same period, again, a hugely Democratic, but also (and because) professionally-run benefit of living in and paying taxes to New York City.

Surely the famed anti-intellectualism engrained in this country is in part responsible, as is the emphasis of recent decades on monetary values over ethical and educational values. But why have we allowed this secondary by-product, Money, to overwhelm those primary moral, cultural and educational values?

The natural Sciences are still somewhat respected (probably for utilitarian reasons), and I have said before in these hearings that Scholarship is the Science of the Humanities and that Libraries are the Laboratories of Scholarship. I even publish on these topics in the context of Intellectual History. Yet Scholars (and, increasingly, Scientists) are not being included in the administrative makeup of formerly great cultural institutions, including the Main Research Branch of the New York Public Library at 42nd Street. Managers with mere MBA degrees are. These are degrees in Manipulation: Manipulation of Facts and Manipulation of Fancies, but, above all, Manipulation of People -- in order to extract monies from wealthy, but often not highly educated and often anti-intellectual, donors.

We Scholars put years into our Serious Professional Training. The Ph.D. in History or Literature or Philosophy is no less onerous than Medical or Legal Higher Education. We learn techniques of Scholarship, in order to unearth and pass on new Knowledge to Students and other Curious People. This is a kind of Archeology of Thought. It is the basis of any Culture.

And the work it entails requires BOOKS, not only online scans of texts (so easily corruptible and ephemeral, whose accuracy is always in question). LIBRARIES are repositories of BOOKS. They require funds to be maintained and professionally curated; this is how Libraries are run. Books are the Reagents, the Test Tubes, the Experimental Objects of our Research. Libraries were created to curate those books, to have them overseen, as they were within recent memory, by Experts in Particular Scholarly Fields, like Slavic Studies or Renaissance Studies.

Digital access is a miracle, as I have said before (when its accuracy permits accurate searches). But what do we do when -- apart from the enormous scanning errors encountered -- the electricity fails? Many of the great Greek Philosopher Epicurus's fragments have come to us only because they were carved into a philosopher's wall in Egypt. Books are not even that permanent (nor was much of that wall), but digital data in the Cloud is truly written on air. Please allocate funds to restore our Formerly World-Renowned Research Library to its proper function of professionally preserving and disseminating Thought and Culture.

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Center for an Urban Future
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TESTIMONY OF DAVID GILES
RESEARCH DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR AN URBAN FUTURE

HEARING BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL AFFAIRS, LIBRARIES AND INTERNATIONAL INTERGROUP RELATIONS

REGARDING THE CAPITAL AND PLANNING NEEDS OF NYC'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2014

Good afternoon. My name is David Giles and I am the Research Director at the Center for an Urban Future, an independent policy organization that publishes studies on how to grow and diversify New York's economy and expand economic opportunity. I am excited to speak to you today about one of the city's most important and underappreciated public institutions.

At a time when New York's elderly population is one of its fastest growing demographics, youth unemployment is higher than it's been in decades, and almost everybody is looking to upgrade their skills in an economy that values technology and English literacy above all else, community libraries have an important and unique role to play.

With 207 branches across the five boroughs, almost everybody is in walking distance of one, and with new and expanded educational programs, attendance is at an all-time high, growing 62 percent over the last ten years. In 2013, branch libraries greeted 36 million visitors, or approximately 160,000 every day they were open.

But New York's three public library systems have struggled to keep their buildings in a state of good repair, much less up-to-date in meeting the space and technology demands of today's users. In a recent report, the Center for an Urban Future documented $1.1 billion in capital needs across 178 branches, or 86 percent of all library locations. Fifty-nine branches across the city have at least $5 million in basic repair needs.

The most common state of good repair problems involve malfunctioning mechanical equipment, leaky roofs, overburdened electrical distribution systems, and a lack of accessibility for the elderly and physically disabled. In all, 64 branches across the city need HVAC repairs or replacements, 55 need roof repairs, 55 need to be made ADA compliant, 35 need boiler repairs or replacements, 32 need electrical system upgrades, and 23 need new elevators.

Reconfiguring layouts and adding basic service amenities to meet modern usage patterns and needs is another widespread problem. Far too many branches struggle to provide enough space for people to sit down and plug in their laptops and other mobile devices, for example. Out of the 45 branches we visited for our site surveys, 58 percent (or 26 locations) had plugs for ten devices or fewer, and 18 percent (or eight locations) had plugs for just one or none at all. In some cases, even very popular branches had a

dearth of electrical outlets for patrons working on their own devices. The McKinley Park branch in southern Brooklyn, which ranks in the top ten citywide in both circulation and visits, doesn't have a single place for patrons to plug in. In Queens, the popular Jackson Heights branch can accommodate only three devices at any one time, and all of those outlets are clustered in just one corner of the library.

Yet another thing most libraries are struggling to provide is sufficient space for onsite activities—including seating at desks and physically separated rooms for classes and workshops. In our survey of over 300 New York City librarians, not being able to accommodate onsite activities registered time and again as a top complaint: 87 percent of respondents indicated that their community rooms were insufficient to meet patron needs; 74 percent said they lacked sufficient space to ensure a quiet working environment; and 60 percent said their branch struggled to support people who wanted to work in groups.

New York's capital funding process is largely to blame for this state of affairs.

Unlike most other agencies, libraries don't receive a guaranteed capital budget to make systematic repairs, but instead raise funds from individual elected officials on a year-by-year and project-by-project basis. Nearly 60 percent of the libraries' total capital budget comes from individual city council members and borough presidents through the discretionary funding process. The average for city agencies is just 6 percent.

Because discretionary dollars are limited, the libraries have to piece together funds from a wide variety of different sources, and they often have to break up projects into smaller, more manageable parts in order to get the construction and repair process underway. More than three quarters of the branches that have received capital upgrades since 2010 still have major repair needs that have gone unaddressed; 64 percent of those branches have needs totaling $1 million or more.

Doing everything in this piecemeal way makes it difficult to do long-term planning, since so much of the libraries' planning capacity is geared toward raising funds for projects and figuring out how they can be stretched to cover their needs.

In "Re-Envisioning New York's Branch Libraries," we at CUF recommended that City Council and the Administration work together to repair and improve this process. Several important action items include the following:

- Increase Administration capital funding for the city's libraries, so that they don't rely on the discretionary funding process to the extent that they do now.
- Increase lump sum appropriations to allow the libraries to make repairs across the system rather than building-by-building and project-by-project.
- Revisit capital eligibility requirements for libraries that place an undo burden on the capital planning and construction process and aren't necessary for ensuring the financial integrity of the city's capital fund.
- Streamline the procurement and contracting process so that DDC and the libraries can make capital improvements in a more timely, cost-effective manner.
- Create a Director of Libraries inside City Hall to help oversee library investments and align those investments with city policy priorities.

However, with the city's libraries, one opportunity stands above the rest. As discussed in our report, there would be enormous benefits to creating a true, long-term capital plan for the libraries. With a firm financial commitment from the Administration and perhaps also City Council, the libraries could raise additional funds from philanthropy, as the Seattle Public Library did in the late 1990s when it launched a capital campaign to rebuild every library in the city. On the basis of a $200 million government bond, the Seattle Public Library was able to raise 30 percent in additional funding from private sources—that's $60 million…in Seattle!

Moreover, a long-term capital plan would allow the city to better align library investments with important city policy priorities, including the de Blasio Administration's ambitious new housing, resilience and workforce development initiatives.

Like schools, library investments should factor prominently in city upzonings and accompany major new housing developments that increase neighborhood density and put stress on vital community services.

They should also figure prominently in the city's resilience and storm preparedness plans: After Superstorm Sandy, libraries in Queens, Brooklyn and Staten Island played important roles in the recovery, as residents came to the libraries to charge their phones, share information and retrieve blankets and food—and as Red Cross workers came to print out maps and plan their house-to-house checks. But the libraries in these communities were also severely damaged and their role in the recovery dramatically hampered.

Investments that were part of a long-term plan would better position these vital community assets to serve both residents and first responders in case of another storm. And given the sheer number of libraries in or near city evacuation zones, this should be a priority for officials at all levels of government. According to a recent analysis using library and Office of Emergency Management data, 74 different branches are located within York City evacuation zones, including 12 inside Zone 1. Meanwhile, 75 additional branches are within a half-mile walk of the evacuation zones.[1]

Together, these 149 branches have over $600 million in capital needs.

Now is the time for the city to think ambitiously about its libraries and reverse decades of neglect.

The de Blasio Administration's recent accomplishments in pre-K expansion and park equity—and it's ambitious goals with respect to affordable housing and workforce development—show that it is serious about quality neighborhoods, affordability and skills development for those New Yorkers who have fallen behind in today's knowledge economy. A bold new plan to re-invigorate the city's branch libraries would strengthen these efforts even more.

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[1] Leah Meisterlin and Special Project Office.

Queens Library

Enrich your life

Statement by Bridget Quinn-Carey, Interim President and CEO Queens Library

New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations

Jointly with Subcommittee on Libraries

Oversight - New York City Public Library Systems Capital Needs & Planning.

DECEMBER 10, 2014

Good afternoon. I am Bridget Quinn-Carey, Interim President and CEO of the Queens Library. Before I begin my testimony, I want to thank Speaker Mark-Viverito, Majority Leader Van Bramer, Council Finance Chair Ferreras, Library Subcommittee Chair Constantinides, Queens Delegation Leader Weprin and the entire City Council which has consistently supported the mission and programs of the Queens Library. We applaud your leadership.

The Queens Library also applauds the city's leadership in turning a spotlight on the growing economic inequities that stifle the potential of far too many New Yorkers. Together with Mayor de Blasio, the City Council has continually opened new doors of opportunity to unleash that potential. Today, my colleagues and I come before you representing the greatest equalizers for all New Yorkers - our City's libraries. Together, we open our doors to provide the broadest range of services to the broadest range of New Yorkers. Whether it's teaching English to our new immigrant population, providing after-school services every day or providing job assistance to unemployed New Yorkers, there is a free program in the public library. And we have had the biggest impact in helping to close the great digital divide by opening the wonders of the internet to more New Yorkers than any other institution.

Right now, our libraries are not able to give New Yorkers the full benefit of what we have to offer. The lack of reliable capital budget support has limited our ability to provide the level of services we know is needed and could deliver if our basic capital needs were met in a way that allows us to plan effectively. We all know that emergency repairs cost more than planned repairs, and that we are able to give the taxpayers the best value when we have the resources to make needed capital upgrades strategically.

The average branch library is 61 years old, with a quarter of the branches built over a century ago. They are heavily used. Collectively, NYC's public libraries logged more than 35 million visits last year, creating a great deal of wear and tear. The vast majority of libraries are poorly configured to meet the new demands on our libraries and of the digital age—with too few electrical outlets, too little space for classes, group work, or space for individuals working on laptop computers.

The Center for an Urban Future's "Re-Envisioning New York's Branch Libraries" report has detailed the stifling effects of long-term disinvestment in capital funding for branch libraries. In the five boroughs, we have more than $1.1 billion in unmet basic capital needs. Between fiscal years 2004-2013, the city spent $503 million on capital improvements for the libraries. During this same time period, city capital expenditures for cultural institutions totaled $2.1 billion, and capital funding for parks and recreational facilities totaled $4.4 billion. We support those investments and seek to have libraries on equal footing.

Currently, our piecemeal year-to-year funding requests must compete for local support against a broad range of unique needs within each Council District and Borough. This approach does not allow us to effectively plan restoration projects, to replace aging systems on a routine basis and to assure continued public service. Majority Leader Van Bramer has correctly noted that Councilmembers do not have the allocations available to fund high cost projects including total building renovations, expansions and new facilities. Those projects should be within the purview of a comprehensive strategic program.

Therefore, we are indebted to the Mayor and the City Council for including libraries in the City's Ten-Year Capital Budget Strategy. Each library system has submitted plans that

address the unique needs of our systems. Our plans will bring the libraries into a state of good repair, create the necessary spaces to provide full-service library programs, and support the goals of equality, sustainability, resiliency and growth.

The Ten-Year plan we have submitted will build upon the substantial capital projects that we have recently completed, including the new Glen Oaks Library, the new Teen Center at Cambria Heights, and renovated libraries at Bayside, Fresh Meadows and Queensboro Hill. We also restored library facilities damaged by Hurricane Sandy, including those at Arverne, Broad Channel, Seaside, Howard Beach and Peninsula which is now under construction and scheduled to reopen in the spring.

Key projects underway include a brand new Elmhurst Library, an expansion of the Kew Gardens Hills Library, the full renovation of the Central Library, and the expansion of the Rochdale Village Adult Learning Center; New library buildings in Hunters Point and Far Rockaway, are now in design. Additional upcoming projects include the full renovation of the Glendale Library, the expansion and renovation of the East Elmhurst Library and interior renovations of the Richmond Hill and Woodhaven libraries.

Despite our progress, many unmet capital improvement and maintenance needs remain across the borough. These include both critical infrastructure such as roof replacements, elevator and ADA upgrades, as well as expansions and renovations, which many communities have long sought.

Many of the City's libraries are simply too small. Across the five boroughs, 100 branch buildings are 10,000 square feet or smaller, and 75 of those are less than 8,000 square feet.

Although small buildings pose problems in every borough, 41 of our 65 service locations in Queens are less than 10,000 square feet. It is impossible to squeeze full-service library programming, classes and collections into these spaces.

Demands on and for library space will continue to grow. The City projects that the population of Queens will increase by more than 300,000 people by the year 2030. Young people represent a growing population with critical service needs. We know that we can best serve our teen population –one of the populations in which libraries are able to make the most impact–

when we give teens their own space. For instance, in Cambria Heights, we recently opened a 4,000 sq. ft. teen center, complete with a tech lab, group study area and a recording booth and that is drawing young people from all over the area into the library. But not all our libraries have room to house such a state-of-the-art teen area. Areas in Queens that have traditionally been industrial space are now becoming residential, and there is no library nearby. We need to serve these new communities. We know that in order to both serve our existing customers and adequately handle an influx of new residents, our existing infrastructure must grow accordingly.

That's why our ten-year capital strategy goal is to ensure that every Queens Library facility will be accessible, safe, technologically advanced, cost-effectively built and maintained, flexible and a good fit for the community served.

Over a ten-year period from 2016 to 2025, Queens Library seeks to enhance and enrich its library infrastructure by making capital improvements to 60 of our library locations, allocating over $418 million over the course of the plan. This will require approximately $41 million in capital funding per year.

These improvements will promote the growth of our infrastructure and increase its equity, resiliency, and sustainability, so that we can: fortify our existing buildings and build new ones with modern enhancements, incorporate energy-efficient materials and green architecture to save money, reduce our energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, and increase our institutional capacity to better serve our nearly 929,000 active borrowers, our program attendees, and the greater population of Queens.

The plan includes two brand-new libraries in emerging communities; six replacement buildings; indoor and outdoor renovations; new heating and cooling systems, and other environmentally-friendly innovations; and expanding technological services for our customers. An average of $24 million a year will be spent on the development of new facilities; $17 million a year will be spent on necessary reconstruction and ensuring a state of good repair; and $25 million over ten years for technology.

Our Ten-Year Capital Plan is directly influenced by the policies set forth by the City's administration. Throughout our plan, each capital improvement has been clearly linked to the Mayor's policy priorities of Equity, Growth, Resiliency, and Sustainability.

To guarantee equity, our goal is to ensure that Queens Library facilities provide equal access to innovatively designed libraries that meet the unique needs of our borough's individual communities.

We will build new community libraries in Hunters Point and Willets Point that will provide services and programs to residents in these emerging and planned communities. The overburdened libraries in the surrounding neighborhoods will then be able to serve their existing communities more effectively and efficiently.

In addition, we will replace five existing buildings to help meet the demands for public space and to deliver full-service library programs to our diverse customer base.

Queens Library served as a lifeline to many of the communities affected by Hurricane Sandy. The improvements we make to our infrastructure (as well as the new buildings we construct) will take into account the role that our City's libraries play in times of disaster. Several of our renovations will make our existing libraries in flood-prone regions more resilient to extreme weather conditions.

A major part of our resiliency efforts will be ensuring that all capital improvements are built with an eye towards cost-effective maintenance.

Energy efficiency and helping to compensate for the effects of climate change are two of the City's top priorities over the next ten years and beyond. Queens Library has created its own energy-saving initiative, our —Flip the Switch Campaign—, funded by the Department of Citywide Administrative Services Division of Energy Management. The improvements to our infrastructure during our Ten-Year Capital Plan will further help to achieve the Mayor's sustainability initiatives.

Renovation and construction efforts will continue to utilize sustainable architecture practices. For instance, the new doors and windows at our Woodside, Forest Hills and Howard

Beach locations will be energy-efficient. Thirteen of our libraries will receive new roofs designed to reduce energy and heating loss, while they protect our valuable collections, furnishings and equipment from the elements.

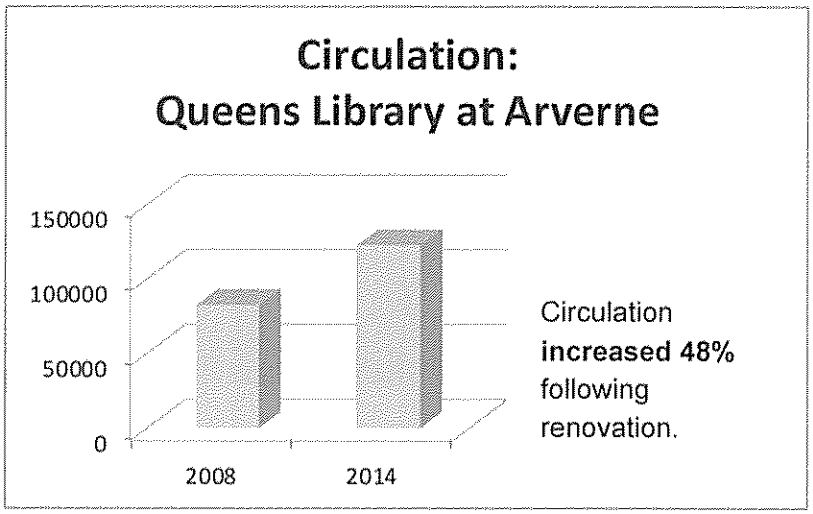
Our Ten-Year plan proposes to upgrade and install new heating, ventilating, and air conditioning units at 14 of our libraries. At two of our largest libraries, a cooling tower will be installed (Flushing) and a Building Management System will control and monitor mechanical and electrical equipment, increasing that building's energy efficiency (Central).

As you can see, our accomplishments have been many but so too are our needs. Today, the three library systems have the opportunity to join with the Mayor and the City Council to create a new model that addresses the legacy of unmet needs and ensures a capital program that will be sustainable. Thank you to the Mayor and the City Council for this forward-thinking and forward-looking approach to addressing the library's capital needs.

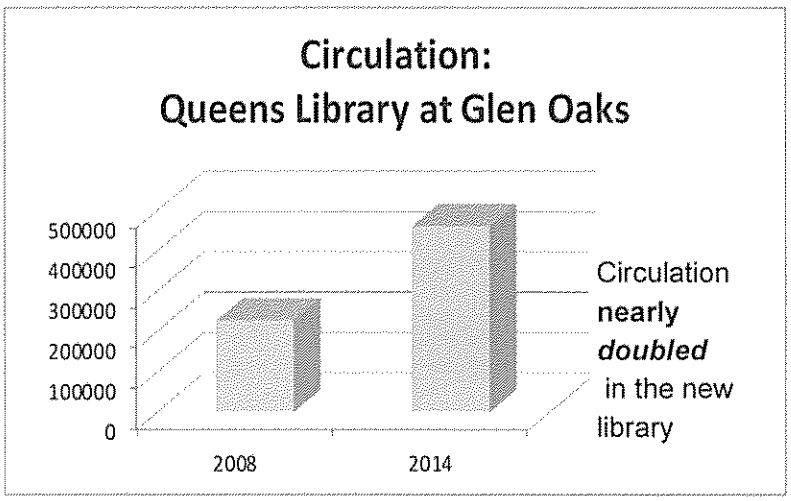
Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I look forward to our continued work together.

How Do Capital Improvements Affect Usage at Queens Library?

Renovated Libraries:



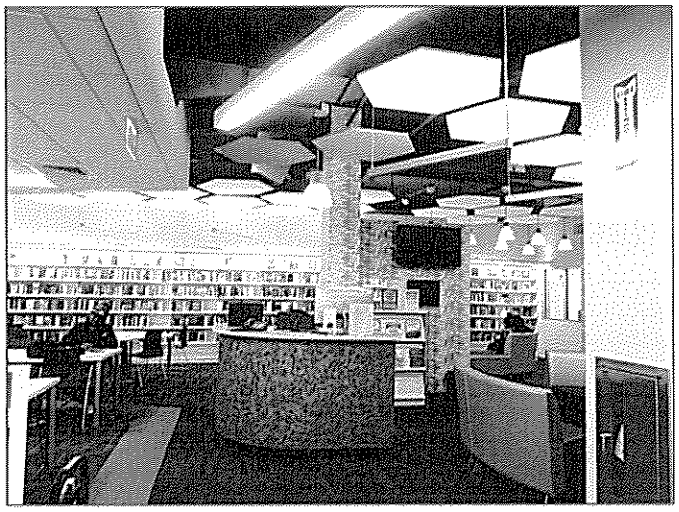
New Libraries:

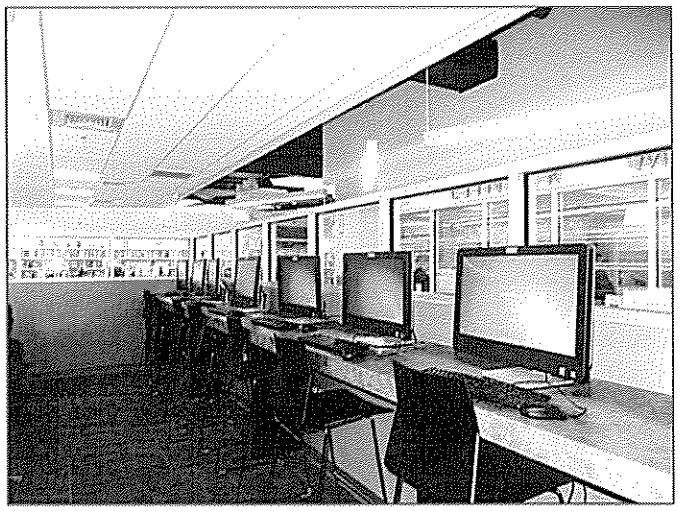


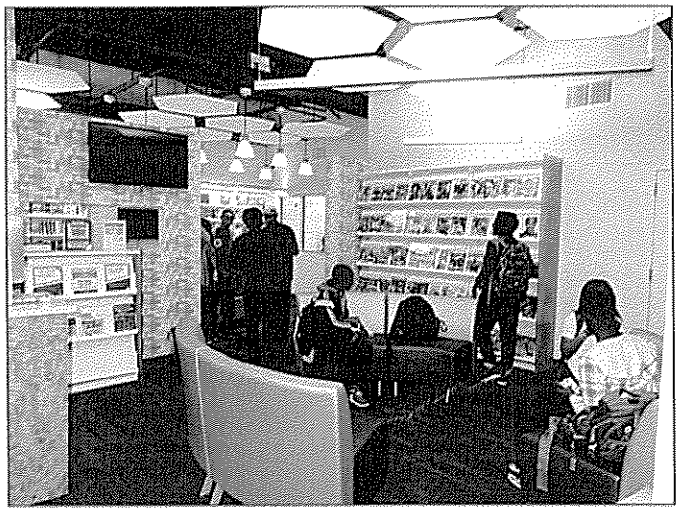
How Do Capital Improvements Affect Usage at Queens Library?

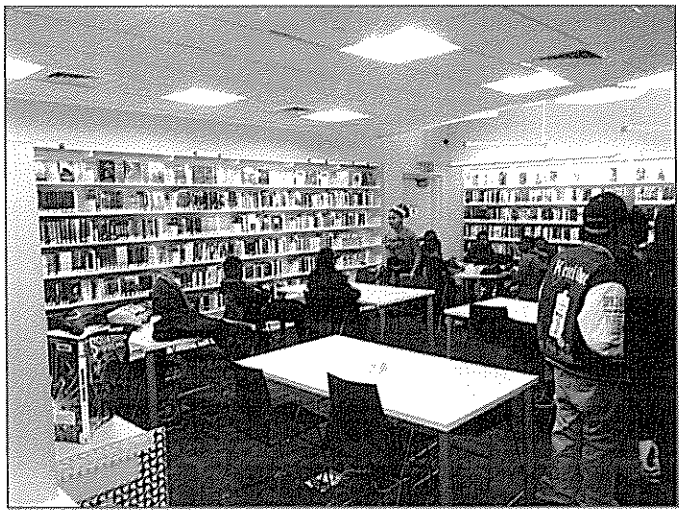
The new Teen Space, Queens Library at Cambria Heights:

The "coolest" place in the community!









Testimony: Oversight – New York City Public Library Systems'

Capital Needs & Planning

December 10, 2014

Julie Sandorf, President of the Charles H. Revson Foundation

Good Afternoon. My name is Julie Sandorf and I am the President of the Charles H. Revson Foundation. I want to thank Chairman Van Bramer and Chairman Constantinides for inviting me to speak to you today.

The Revson Foundation operates a variety of grant programs in the areas of Urban Affairs, Education, Biomedical Research, and Jewish Life, and some of the most innovative and successful projects that we have funded in New York City have centered on the public libraries.

When the five largest book publishers refused to sell e-books to libraries, we supported NYPL in leading a nationwide effort to secure free access to digital materials for all library patrons. We financed the creation of a new Department of Outreach Services at Brooklyn Public Library so it could form partnerships with outside organizations and better reach underserved groups throughout the borough. When Lincoln Center wanted to extend its world-class arts and culture beyond its campus, we funded performances in branch libraries across Queens.

People are often surprised by the Foundation's commitment to public libraries because there's a common misperception that public libraries have become obsolete in the digital age. However, as anyone who has spent time in a public library in NYC knows, this couldn't be further from the truth. That's why, in 2011, we commissioned the Center for an Urban Future to document how New Yorkers are using their public libraries.

The report, *Branches of Opportunity*, showed that not only do millions of New Yorkers use their public libraries every day, but that usage has reached record levels. From providing access to internet and job-assistance programs to English language classes, early childhood education, and literacy workshops—public libraries are filling critical gaps in the city's educational infrastructure, the breadth of which is unlike that of any other institution, public or private.

What makes this usage particularly extraordinary is that the City's public libraries are suffering from decades of neglect and underinvestment, which has resulted in $1.1 billion in capital needs.

As detailed in the Center for an Urban Future's most recent report, *Re-Envisioning New York's Branch Libraries*, the average branch library is 61 years old, with a quarter of the

branches built over a century ago. Fifty-nine branches each need $5 million or more in basic repairs. The vast majority of libraries are poorly configured to meet the demands of the digital age—with too few electrical outlets, too little space for classes, group work, and space for individuals working on laptop computers. Of the forty-five branches that CUF researchers visited, 58% had outlets for 10 devices or fewer, and 18% had plugs for just one or none at all.

These numbers are staggering and directly affect the experiences of the millions of New Yorkers who rely on the critical services of the city's public libraries. We have heard from many New Yorkers first-hand and would like to share what they have to say about the state of their public libraries. These quotes are pulled from submissions to the NYC Neighborhood Library Awards, an awards program honoring branch libraries, co-sponsored by the Revson and Stavros Niarchos Foundations.

A patron in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn wrote her library is, "...in dire need for more equipment. In the winter they have to shut down because they have no heat, in the summer their hours are cut because they don't have air conditioning. These are basic necessities for the workers and for the users of the library too."

Clare in the Bronx explained how her children go to the library every day after school to do their homework but, "Whenever it rains, the library gets flooded, especially in the children's section. Arriving families are turned away; it would be so nice to have funds to make the necessary upgrades for flood prevention."

A patron from Sunset Park described how, "Last summer the AC broke down and was out for almost 3 weeks. Then they installed two units that eliminated 6 of the precious laptop computer plug which were already scarce. Our library needs the money more than most."

Throughout the city, librarians go above and beyond the call of duty to assist their patrons despite the many challenges that they face. Elizabeth, a patron of the Tompkins Square Library, wrote to tell us about her experience:

> "At the entrance to my library is a lift for disabled people; sometimes the lift does not work, and that's when I love our librarians most. They run down the stairs to take my returns and hand over the materials I want to take out. Sometimes I give them the names of favorite authors, and then they deliver books to me for my approval -- that's what I call service!"

In nomination after nomination, New Yorkers of every stripe describe how critical their neighborhood libraries are, how they consider them to be second homes, and how much help they need.

The city's public libraries are already at the forefront of organizational and technological innovations—from allowing patrons to borrow WiFi hot spots to forming partnerships with city agencies and nonprofits to bolster their reach. But we know they could be doing so much more if they weren't worrying about their leaky roof or inadequate heat.

The philanthropic community has great interest in supporting the diverse range of programs and services offered at the public library, but the basic infrastructure needs to be in place to accommodate the innovative new projects and programs that will attract private investment. The city must live up to its commitments to equal access to education and opportunity for all. New York City is known throughout the world as the place where dreams are made and where anything is possible. As the leaders and policymakers of this city, you have the ability to ensure that all New Yorkers have access to the resources they need to make their own American dream come true by supporting the city's public libraries. Thank you.

Bed-Stuy parents protest library's early close

Marcy Library has shut down at 1 p.m. since the air conditioner busted in mid-July. Expanded hours begin in October, but protesters say they've waited too long.

BY Doyle Murphy
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS
Wednesday, September 24, 2014, 7:27 PM

Doyle Murphy Protesters want the city to restore longer hours at the Marcy Library in Bedford-Stuyvesant.

LONG story short — these parents are sick of clipped hours at their neighborhood library.

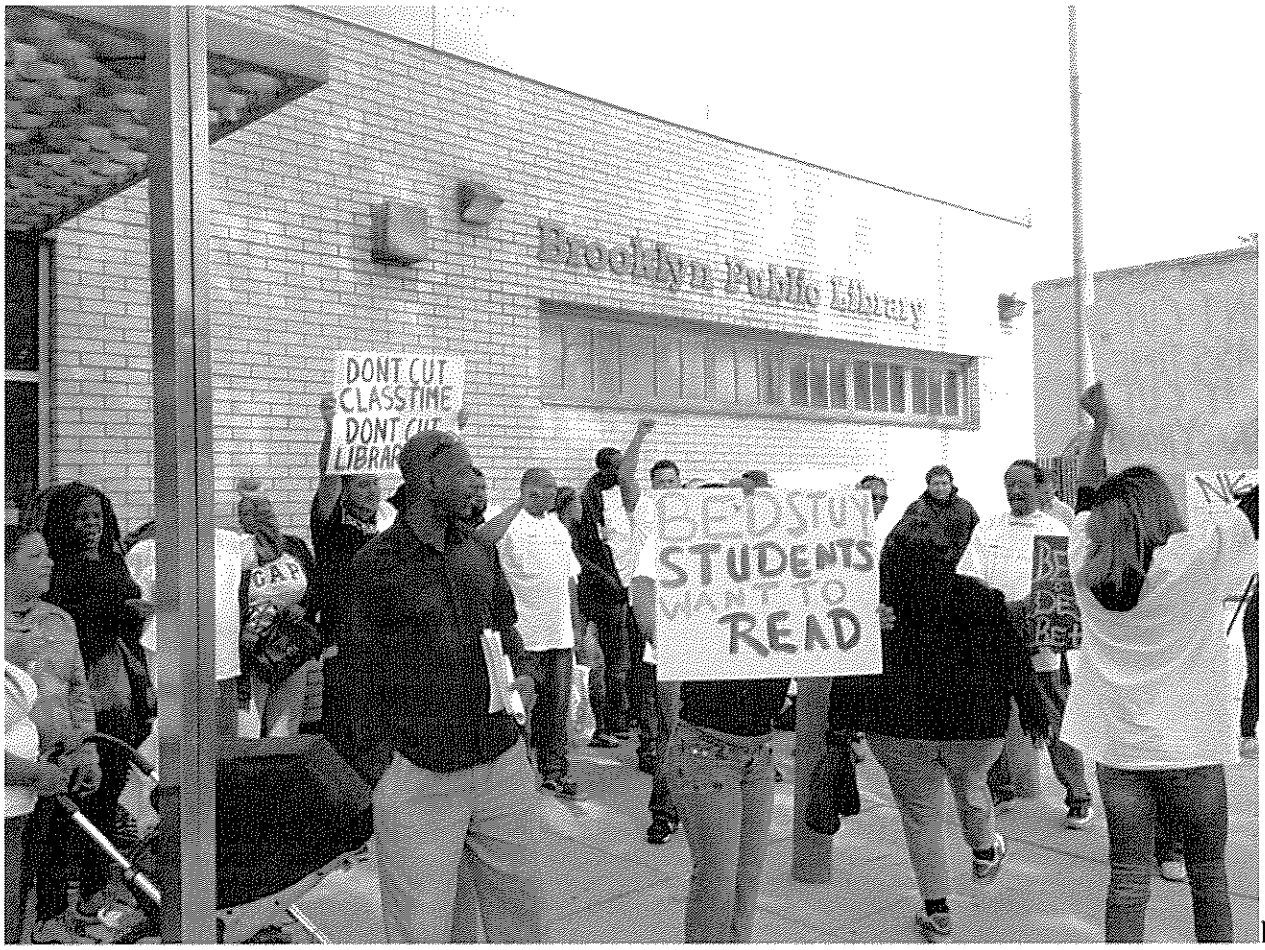
Nearly 50 parents and education advocates from Bedford-Stuyvesant protested Wednesday outside the Marcy Library, which has been closing at 1 p.m. since mid-July due to a busted air conditioner.

"With the library's shorter hours, we're losing valuable time that could have been spent on school work," said Keba Austin, a 19-year-old mother who studies for her GED at the public library.

The branch at the corner of Dekalb and Nostrand Aves. — which used to close between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. — has been shuttering at least four hours earlier than usual.

Furious book lovers clutched signs that read "Bed Stuy Students Want to Read" and chanted "Let us in!" as library employees locked the doors and left for the day.

The reduced hours were only temporary and ends Oct. 1, library spokeswoman Emma Woods said.



Doyle Murphy Marcy Library has closed at 1 p.m. this summer due to busted air-conditioner.

"At the Marcy Library, not only are normal hours about to resume, but the branch will now go from five to six day service on October 5 as part of Brooklyn Public Library's new expansion of hours across the borough," she said.

Its air conditioner is expected to be fixed in 2015, and $822,000 has already been set aside for the job, library officials said.

Protesters said it shouldn't have taken so long, and they'll be watching to make sure the library keeps it word.

"This isn't our first time at the rodeo," Tenika Boyd of StudentsFirstNY said. "We've been talking to them for a long time."

dmmurphy@nydailynews.com

FOR THE RECORD

State Senator Velmanette Montgomery
25th New York Senatorial District
Ranking Democratic Conference Member, Children & Families

December 10, 2014

Comments to the NYC Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations Regarding Capital Needs and Funding

Chairman Van Bramer and Members of the Committee:

I thank you for the opportunity to address you this afternoon as you consider not just the upcoming annual budgets for our libraries, but in a larger sense their future purposes.

I am a very strong proponent of libraries. I believe they are one of the most vital elements of an informed electorate and educated society. Making information available free of charge to all people regardless of age, race, citizenship, education , or economics, is central to a thriving democracy. This has been their purpose for hundreds of years and I am confident they will serve this necessary function for centuries to come...if we, as elected officials, are wise stewards of this public asset.

We must establish a steady funding stream for our libraries. We cannot continue to allow the executive branch to propose a figure in the budget and then depend on the Council to scramble to restore

Committees: Children & Families (Ranking Member,) Crime Victims, Crime & Correction, Agriculture, Education, Finance, Health, Rules
District Office: 30 Third Avenue, Room 207, Brooklyn, NY 11217
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Albany Office: Legislative Office Building, Room 903, Albany, NY 12247
Tel (518) 455-3451, Fax (518) 426-6854
Website: www.nyssenate25.com
Email: montgome@nysenate.gov

necessary funds. In recent years we have seen our library budgets repeatedly slashed, and then been told the only way to save our libraries is to sell them. Or to just sell part of them for purposes that will undercut the primary focus of the libraries. If we were to substitute the word "children" for libraries, what would that say about our custodial skills? To save them we have to sell them? Really? To save libraries they have to become rehearsal studios and theaters? For libraries to continue, they must become something other than libraries?

I do not oppose progress, but I do oppose change based on dubious assertions offered by parties who stand to benefit from certain changes. Libraries are for books and studying. They are not rehearsal studios. Those are not a good fit. I am not persuaded that traditional books are obsolete. And neither are scientists, who have repeatedly shown in studies that the experience of reading from a book is profoundly different than reading from a screen, and far superior for transmission and retention of information. And children prefer books!

We have heard this song before when publishers were assuring us that the future was audio books. Thank God we didn't listen to that!

I urge you to exercise caution in your funding considerations. We have to save our children, and save our libraries. We have to save the future and not throw away precious public assets in favor of fads and unproven but well-funded theories.

We have to endow our libraries. They are tools for our citizens, and not tools for bargaining. I have every confidence that you will weigh carefully the many options available to you and the seriousness of the responsibility with which you have been charged.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sen. Velmanette Montgomery

Sen. Velmanette Montgomery
25th District.

Citizens Defending Libraries

Michael D. D. White
Co-founder

62 Montague Street, Apt. 3E
Brooklyn, New York 11201
W: (718) 797-5207
E-mail Backpack362@aol.com

December 10, 2014

James G. Van Bramer, Chair
Committee on Cultural Affairs,
Libraries and International Intergroup Relations
Council Chambers
City Hall
New York, NY 10017

Re: Oversight - New York City Public Library Systems' Capital Needs & Planning.

Dear Committee:

Libraries have had hundreds of years, actually thousands, to get what they do right, and New York City's Libraries, despite unconscionable underfunding, are a success story. They are packed with people already, something you don't need to slap glass windows on to their sides to see, even if that is the latest architectural fashion.

There is nothing wrong with experimentation or new ideas, but it is potentially extremely foolish and financially wasteful to rush to overhaul, with new so-called "models," many system libraries all at once, shutting out any chance for public reaction as we proceed, and increasing the danger of damage from ill-considered fads.

There are already identifiable problems: Basement libraries in mixed-used developments (usually vastly shrunken libraries in the first initiatives we've seen) are perpetually sentenced to grow no further while departing from the 'monumental' tradition of library architecture that declare libraries as important in and of themselves, beacons to their community.

Promoted somewhat deceptively as *"economic," "redeveloping"* libraries is frequently the opposite, far from cheap, with much to be lost. Selling and vastly shrinking the beloved, destination Donnell Library, the NYPL netted less than $38 million. Alternatively, the NYPL would have lost *millions* on this *"redevelopment"* if it were replacing Donnell full scale. Similarly, a self-cannibalizing sale of the Brooklyn Heights Library is proposed to *"raise funds,"* but we can only believe that the reason the BPL wants to reduce this central destination library to such a tiny size (essentially the same as what's now proposed for a new Sunset Park Library) is that otherwise the uneconomic character of the sale would be blatantly clear to everyone.

We are not going to say that video games (increasingly recognized as a respected cultural art form) or cooking schools don't have a place in libraries. They may if libraries grow, but we *are* going to say that such things should *not replace* the time-perfected, traditional and basic functions libraries have long served. Also, do we really think that libraries are Swiss Army knives needing to be all things to all people?

Further, when it comes to "mixed-use" projects, let's be aware of how bundling benefits to be dispensed to the public (affordable housing, artist studios or cooking schools, fill-in-the blank), with libraries which were once considered, all on their very own, a basic essential public service, forces the public to start viewing these as competing goods. What can be dressed-up as a *"win win"* scenario can actually be a *"lose or lose,"* divide-and-conquer scenario with everyone eating up everyone else's subsidy. The public can thereby be drawn into expecting sacrifices, especially of our libraries, more of this city's escalating spiral of political and wealth inequality. We admonish you to remember that all the initial proposals to surface involved *shrinkages* of libraries. One 'for instance' in this vein, is how the private Spaceworks company was set up to shrink library space (like Red Hook and Williamsburg) based on the view that NYC library space is *"underutilized."*

The second, recent Center for an Urban Future report is far from gospel. NYPL President Marx expressing reservations about the report to his board said the *"old isn't necessarily bad. . . Some of our most beautiful libraries are some of our oldest and they've been beautifully renovated, and some of them are close to our hearts. I can think of some that really are gems."* - We should remember that the Center for an Urban Future did not do its own real estate analysis: They got it from the libraries who, in turn, in the case of BPL, got it from a former Forest City Ratner Sr. Vive President Karen Backus, who prioritized for the BPL deals adjacent to Forest City Ratner property. Also, the proposed escalating priority of *'programming'* over *'books'* results from a reversal of the statistics from the Center for an Urban Future report provided a year prior. (By the way, running supplemental electric service through a building to provide additional electric outlets is not difficult, not a reason to rebuild a library.)

We are pleased that the recently released proposal for the Sunset Park Library is the first plan since Citizens Defending Libraries has been in existence that looks to increase, not shrink, the size of that library, in this case to 20,600 square feet. However, even this proposal has flaws:

- The branch library will lose, in perpetuity, any options for future growth
- The community will have to go through a period of disruption and not having a proper library (with Donnell it's verging on a 7.5 year period), which disruption would be unnecessary if the library shifted to an alternative nearby site
- The public is subject to division as competing benefits are dangled
- Competitive bids are being sidestepped
- Especially given the uncertainties of the funding estimates and vagaries of construction the chances of being forced into accepting a bait-and-switch are severe.

Citizens Defending Libraries is reluctant to make any proposals for the *"redevelopment"* of

libraries so long as we perceive that such proposals are likely to be abused, but if libraries are, in fact, to be redeveloped and the land they sit on recycled, *"leveraged"* into real estate sales, the way to do it when it is truly necessary and appropriate is to first build new, bigger, better libraries at nearby comparable sites. This could be funded with a revolving fund, primed with city capital dollars, that in the scheme of things would not be very large sum, which would be replenished as the older library properties are then vacated and sold. Libraries would be redeveloped in sequence, not pell mell and *en masse*. This would also avoid community disruptions and a multitude of other problems, including the need for getting into the thicket of "partnerships." . . . . As much as the private sector vaunts so-called *"public-private partnerships"* they are a stew presenting too many risks of crony capitalism.

Sincerely,

Michael D. D. White
Citizens Defending Libraries

We attach the following for guidance and reference. The attached indicates much of what needs to considered if libraries are to be *"redeveloped"* as well as pitfalls we face if such *"redevelopment"* is infected with the wrong mind set and motivations:

1. Citizens Defending Libraries Letter of Support
2. A Proposed Statement of Principles that applies to the Sunset Park Plans or and potentially to the redevelopment of any library.
3. A Noticing New York article from August indicating some of the things that ten years worth of minutes of Brooklyn Public Library disclose about the history and genesis of the BPL's real estate plans.
4. An Open Letter to Brooklyn Public Library President Linda Johnson (October 15, 2014) requesting an answer to a question concerning the unrecognized cost to the public of selling and shrinking the Brooklyn Heights Library
5. Press release about Citizens Audit and Investigation that Citizens Defending Libraries is conducting.

Support and Sign-On Letter: Full and Adequate Library Funding, A Growing System, Transparency, Books and Librarians

To: *Mayor de Blasio, and all responsible elected officials, including but not limited to the New York City Council and Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, the NYC Comptroller, Public Advocate, Borough Presidents, NYS Attorney General, State Senators, and State Assembly Members.*

Libraries need to be fully and adequately funded. They are a basic city service, creating opportunity, underpinning democracy, and available to all New Yorkers. The cost of funding libraries is a small fraction of the city's budget, an exceptional bargain, given the economic, social and other benefits libraries deliver.

The Center For an Urban Future reports that *"More people visited public libraries in New York than every major sports team and every major cultural institution combined."* Walter Cronkite observed: *"Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation."* Isaac Asimov said: *"When I read about the way in which library funds are being cut and cut, I can only think that American society has found one more way to destroy itself."*

1. Mayor de Blasio's first budget established a baseline, halting the Bloomberg administration policy of annually repeated cuts. We welcome the new policy, with the stipulation that the funding must, in the end, be sufficient to cover the real operating costs and urgent capital needs for preservation and maintenance of the library system's infrastructure.

2. The Bloomberg administration's defunding of city libraries came at a time of increasing public use and population growth-and also at a time of increasing wealth. Nevertheless, the defunding continued, providing a pretext for staff reductions, selling library buildings, and shrinking library space. We call for a different dynamic: the library system should grow with the growing city.

3. Transactions like the sale of the Donnell Library, the proposed sales of branch libraries in Brooklyn and the now abandoned Central Library Plan must be subject to a much higher level of public scrutiny, one they have not yet received. A lack of transparency, and consequent lack of oversight by the public and its officials, gives rise to unanswered questions about the large salaries many library administration officials receive and the roles that they perform when they receive them. It also gives rise to many deeply troubling uncertainties about proper, equitable and effective use and allocation and distribution of funds. Selling and shrinking libraries can be astoundingly and unjustifiably costly in many ways, without providing any real public benefit.

4. Library books must be returned to the libraries from which they have been removed, both branch libraries and research libraries. While electronic resources should be provided, that must be in addition to books, not to replace them. Books are the core asset of libraries; readers and scholars demand them, and acquisition of a reasonable number of new books should be funded.

Sale and shrinkage of libraries does not occur in a vacuum. Stewardship of public assets, public commons, and shared spaces has been declining in today's world, where we see the effects of wealth and political inequality everywhere. Selling and shrinking libraries, not protecting our public assets and putting their resources out of reach leads to a vicious cycle of decreased democracy and opportunity, leading to more wealth and political inequality.

For these reasons, we the undersigned support and demand the proper funding of New York City's libraries.

Organizations

Citizens Defending Libraries
The Committee To Save The New York Public Library
Library Lovers League
Citizens Action of New York
Central Brooklyn Independent Democrats
First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Brooklyn-Weaving The Fabric of Diversity Committee
Lynn's Kids International
Brooklyn For Peace
The Cobble Hill Association
The DUMBO Neighborhood Association
Boerum Hill Association
Park Slope Civic Association
Park Defense Fund

Candidates and Electeds

Zephyr Teachout- Candidate for Governor of New York State (Democrat)
Howie Hawkins- Candidate for Governor of New York State (Green Party)
Brian Jones- Candidate for Lieutenant Governor of New York State (Green Party)
Doug Biviano- Candidate for 52nd NYS Assembly District (Democrat)
Pete Sikora- Candidate for 52nd NYS Assembly District (Democrat)
Jo Anne Simon- Candidate for 52nd NYS Assembly District (Democrat)
Jamie Kemmerer- Candidate for 22nd NYS Senate District (Democrat)
Rubain Dorancy- Candidate for 20th NYS Senate District (Democrat)
Jesse Hamilton- Candidate for 20th NYS Senate District (Democrat)

Proposed Statement of Principles Concerning Any Possible Redevelopment of Library-
- Sunset Park Branch? -
From Citizens Defending Libraries - *November 3, 2014* (more information available on web)

1. **Bigger and Better, *Not Smaller,* Libraries.** Library use is way up. The city is growing and is wealthier. New libraries should be bigger, better, *not* shrunk. So, for instance, the existing Sunset library has one full street level floor plus additional floor space below ground. A new library should have more space, more above-ground space, probably including at least two full above-ground floors.

2. **Effective and Rigorously Fair Competitive Bid.** The BPL should not do deals that hand out library property without competitive bids. It should get the best deal from competing developers. Sunset Park should not establish that crony-capitalistic arrangements that hand-off deals to those with an inside track are acceptable here and throughout the rest of the city.

3. **Ensure *Net Gain* for the Public, *Not Losses.*** Many library sales, like Donnell, and now apparently also Brooklyn Heights, turn out to be net losses for the public when the numbers are calculated although others may profit. Numbers should be rigorously reviewed to ensure such deals are off limits.

4. **Avoid Disruption- Construction of New Library At Nearby Site Preferred Course of Action.** Closing libraries for redevelopment involves extended periods of time without library services and multiple moves (plus it increases the likelihood the public will get a replacement library it likes less.) (Donnell closed 2008 and won't reopen until at least the end of 2015.) The alternative of moving to a completed replacement library at a nearby site avoids this.

5. **Don't Simultaneously Close Multiple Libraries.** If libraries are going to be redeveloped, multiple libraries should not close simultaneously. Slated for closure now: Brooklyn Heights, parts of Grand Army Plaza, Red Hook? What others?

6. **Keep the Library's Books.** In terms of use, use of books, mostly the physical books, has gone up more than anything else (59%). Libraries need to continue to be a place to find and browse book collections.

7. **Don't Reduce Staff or Librarians.** The BPL is proposing to use redevelopment of libraries (e.g. the Brooklyn Heights Library) as an excuse to keep cutting back on librarians and staff, we think without recognizing their significant value.

8. **BPL's Mission Should Be To Be a *Library*, Not a "Development Agency."** If the libraries can be sold off and traded for other public benefits then we may loose them altogether as public officials play people off against each other for community essentials.

9. **Designated Spaces for Different Uses (Including Public Meeting Spaces).** We reject the idea that shrunk-down library space should be made to "flexibly" do double-, triple- or quadruple-duty creating noise and other problems and believe libraries should, for instance, provide separate community meeting spaces.

10. **No Hand-offs of Library Assets or Space to Private Companies Like Spaceworks.** The library space we are demanding should be *library* space, not handed off to private companies like Spaceworks for other uses (even "not-for-profit").

11. **Air Conditioning Problems?** Every time the BPL (or NYPL) wants to sell or redevelop a library suspicious air conditioning problems crop up that need to be better explained.

12. **Total Transparency + Let the Community Catch Up.** The BPL has been working on plans to sell and shrink libraries like Sunset Park for redevelopment going back to at least 2006. The BPL should be disclosing and give the public time to catch up with everything it was doing in the past including, for instance, releasing for review the "Revson Study" that called for the Sunset Park Branch to be treated as a *"Mixed Use Real Estate Opportunity."* This meant the library was nearly denied $1,390,000 in construction improvement funds back in 2009.

Para recibir la traducción al español de este documento, que estará disponible de aquí a dos días, favor de enviar un correo electrónico a: MDDWhite@aol.com. Gracias.

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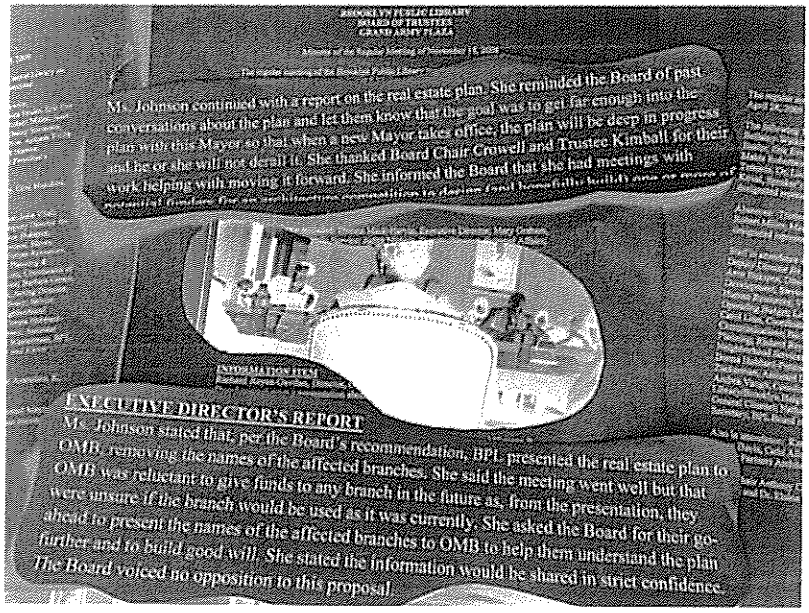
Noticing New York

SUNDAY, AUGUST 31, 2014

A Multiplicity of Scoops: An Astounding List of Things You'd Discover By Reading The Brooklyn Public Library's Minutes- All About Its System-wide Plans To Sell And Shrink Libraries!


Ms. Johnson continued with a report on the real estate plan. She reminded the Board of past conversations about the plan and let them know that the goal was to get far enough into the plan with this Mayor so that when a new Mayor takes office, the plan will be deep in progress so he or she will not derail it. She thanked Board Chair Crowell and Trustee Kimball for their work helping with moving it forward. She informed the Board that she had meetings with

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Johnson stated that, per the Board's recommendation, BPL presented the real estate plan to OMB, removing the names of the affected branches. She said the meeting went well but that OMB was reluctant to give funds to any branch in the future as, from the presentation, they were unsure if the branch would be used as it was currently. She asked the Board for their go-ahead to present the names of the affected branches to OMB to help them understand the plan further and to build good will. She stated the information would be shared in strict confidence. The Board voiced no opposition to this proposal.

Here's a bulleted road map to the multiplicity of scary, documented scoops that you need to know are in Noticing New York's new article: August 31, 2014, **Mostly In Plain Sight (A Few Conscious Removals Notwithstanding) Minutes Of Brooklyn Public Library Tell Shocking Details Of Strategies To Sell Brooklyn's Public Libraries.**

Each one is potentially a major story in and of itself, but collectively.

. . .

Noticing New York has sourced, from the Brooklyn Public Library's own board of trustee minutes, a history of how the BPL plans to sell

BLOG ARCHIVE

- ▼ 2014 (19)
  - ► December (1)
  - ► November (2)
  - ► October (3)
  - ► September (2)
  - ▼ August (2)
    - A Multiplicity of Scoops: An Astounding List of Th...
    - Mostly In Plain Sight (A Few Conscious Removals No...
  - ► July (1)
  - ► June (1)
  - ► April (2)
  - ► March (2)
  - ► February (2)
  - ► January (1)
- ► 2013 (61)
- ► 2012 (64)
- ► 2011 (76)
- ► 2010 (42)
- ► 2009 (169)
- ► 2008 (88)

ABOUT ME

NOTICING NEW YORK

NOTICING NEW YORK &

and shrink Brooklyn's libraries, secretly turning them into real estate *"opportunities"* that would *"support economic development."*

Here's what you can discover from the minutes of the Brooklyn Public Library that constitute *BREAKING NEWS*, because, before this, the public *just didn't know*.

- How **influential and strategically placed were a married couple, David Offensend and his wife Janet Offensend**, with the New York Public Library and Brooklyn Public Library respectively, so as connect and interrelate in terms of timing, approach and purpose, the sale and shrinkage of NYPL libraries in Manhattan with the sale and shrinkage of libraries in Brooklyn?
- **Profound Secrecy!**: What were the BPL's instructions about *keeping secret* the names of libraries affected by its real estate plans? What did it instruct should be kept in *"strict confidence"* in this regard and what information was kept from the public and those funding libraries?
- **A problem for incoming Mayor Bill de Blasio?**: What is known about plans to lock his administration into the BPL's secret library sell-offs? During his campaign to be elected, candidate de Blasio called for a halt to the sale and shrinkage of New York City libraries, including those the BPL was targeting in Brooklyn.
- **How small** has the BPL considered making libraries? To what *postage stamp-size* could libraries be shrunk and what did the BPL have in mind in this regard? . . And what name did it give to what it considered to be the *model* it would promote?- In what (lucky?) neighborhood was the first such *model* library intended to appear?
- How many *critical mentions* (and in how many different ways) do **First Deputy Mayor Patti Harris and Deputy Mayor for Economic Development Daniel Doctoroff**, Bloomberg's principal henchmen when it comes to real estate and development deals, come up in this saga of targeting libraries as real estate *"opportunities"*?
- A real estate strategy plan was formulated that prioritized at the top of its list for sale *two libraries* both immediately adjacent to Forest City Ratner property- **What former Forest City Ratner Vice President did the BPL hire to formulate that strategy?** What is to be known about how and why the firm was chosen?
- **Air conditioning breakdowns?**: In the summer of 2012 the air conditioning in the Brooklyn Heights Library *`broke down `* along with other air conditioning systems of libraries across the BPL system- This was just before library sales were to be announced. Who was hired to handle this *`emergency'* and on what terms, exactly how long before it happened?
- **Brazenness?** In 2012 Sam Roberts of the New York Times praised the library heads for their instinctive and open sharing of information as BPL president Linda Johnson was, in fact, withholding information about the library sales. How

NATIONAL NOTICE are both independent entities managed by Michael D. D. White of Hop-Skip Enterprises. Michael D. D. White is an attorney, urban planner and former government public finance and development official. *** Noticing New York covers New York development and associated politics. National Notice covers national policy and economic issues *** Contact: MichaelDDWhite(at)gmail.com

VIEW MY COMPLETE PROFILE

did Ms. Johnson react to Mr. Robert's praise?

- What's being proposed with respect to the issuance of **tax-exempt bonds for the libraries?** Why are powers being given to the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York in this regard and what did now **City Club President Michael Gruen** say in 1995 about the building of tall towers that could be relevant to the subject of libraries today?
- **Eminent Domain** is a powerful tool that enables private owner's property to be seized against a property owner's will. It's a tool that *private* developers love to have put in their hands by *public* officials- Find out about eminent domain being a part of the BPL's strategic real estate plan and what libraries that might affect.
- What is the mysterious **"Revson Plan"** that identifies libraries to be turned into development projects and *could possibly prevent your community's library from being renovated?* Why does this plan exist if there is a separate strategic real estate plan to identify projects for sale?
- What were the **first Brooklyn Libraries** to be viewed as real estate deals, and how far back in the last decade was that?
- For which library that the BPL included in its strategic real estate plan did City Councilman **Domenic Recchia** find funds?
- What consultant(s) did the BPL get to tell it in a *'needs'* study that the BPL **should be engaged in *"support for economic development"*?**
- **How many consultants does it take** to say that pursuing real estate deals *changing* libraries is a *bright idea?* . . . And how *after-the-fact* will their *justifications* be provided?
- What consultant got the better part of **$1 million** for its work to *justify* selling off libraries?
- What consultant assessing the condition of real estate in the library got what instruction about continuing to work to make their report a **more convincing argument** for selling libraries?
- What telling relevance does **Mayor Bloomberg's promotion of sugary drinks** (that's right, *promotion*) have to do with this history respecting the sale of libraries?
- What are the BPL's likely troublesome goals with respect to entering into **private partnerships** and with what big, well-known developer did the BPL enter an odd-sounding partnership as one of its first?
- When Brooklyn libraries were in jeopardy from system-wide sale plans what did Borough President **Marty Markowitz** tell the public that would persuade them quite the opposite, and why should he have known better?
- What **unknown knock-down drag-out fight did the Queens Library have with Mayor Bloomberg** just as Bloomberg was leaving office about whether the powerful exiting mayor would be able to appoint, and leave behind him, a top aide on the Queens board?
- There has been a **massive story covered by the media at great length** concerning charges that the Queens

Library is *`mismanaged.'* What could you read here that may convince you that when you thought you knew enough to understand this heavily-reported story, you actually didn't?

- What *is* and *isn't* in the minutes about how the BPL is **getting rid of books**?
- What *is* and *isn't* in the minutes about how the **Brooklyn Heights Library that the BPL has prioritized to be sold**?
- How **little scrutiny** did the BPL board give to selling off of libraries and how *little objection* did its trustees raise?
- Before the plans to sell Brooklyn libraries proceeded, what legislation was passed in Albany to restructure the BPL board, giving Mayor Bloomberg much greater **mayoral control** (like with NYC schools)?
- What thought might have been given to the question of whether **ethics laws** and considerations would be violated by *BPL board trustees selling libraries to pursue real estate development objectives*?
- How much do the New York State sunshine laws, like the Open Meetings Law, allow us to **discover about the way power works when real estate deals like the selling off of libraries are being worked on in secret?**
- What does the sale of libraries have to do with the stories involving the sale of a number of other public assets up for dismantling: **Long Island College Hospital, Brooklyn Bridge Park, South Street Seaport, NYCHA's public housing, New York City schools, NYU's expansion through Greenwich Village?**

Yes, it's a multiplicity of multiplicity of scary, documented scoops that you need to know are in Noticing New York's new article, each an arresting story on its own and certainly deserving of even further investigation and follow-up. .

. . Collectively they interrelate to tell a stark story about how our public officials have strayed far and dismally from the standards the public is entitle to expect.

POSTED BY NOTICING NEW YORK AT 12:33 PM

LABELS: BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY, BRUCE RATNER, DAVID OFFENSEND, DOCTOROFF, EMINENT DOMAIN ABUSE, P. HARRIS

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Citizens Defending Libraries

WHY IS NEW YORK CITY PLANNING TO SELL AND SHRINK ITS LIBRARIES?

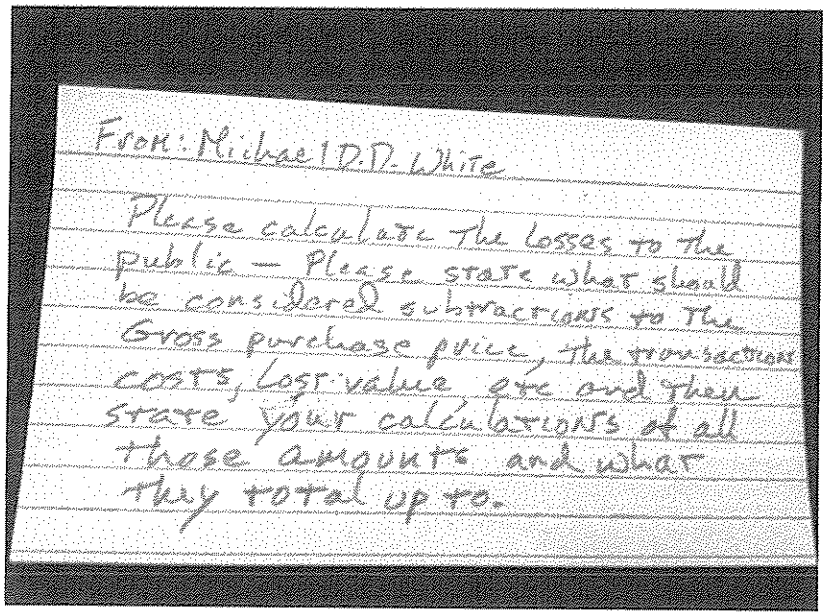
Defend our libraries, don't defund them. . . . . fund 'em, don't plunder 'em

Mayor Bloomberg defunded New York libraries at a time of increasing public use, population growth and increased city wealth, shrinking our library system to create real estate deals for wealthy real estate developers at a time of cutbacks in education and escalating disparities in opportunity. It's an unjust and shortsighted plan that will ultimately hurt New York City's economy and competitiveness.

It should *NOT* be adopted by those we have now elected to pursue *better* policies.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2014

Open Letter To Brooklyn Public Library President Linda Johnson


From: Michael D.D. White

Please calculate the losses to the public — Please state what should be considered subtractions to the Gross purchase price, the transaction costs, lost value etc and then state your calculations of all those amounts and what they total up to.

It was not announced beforehand that questions from the public would be invited as part of the October 7th :Community Advisory Meeting. When the public arrived they were told that if they wanted to submit questions they should be on an index card provided for that purpose with the name of the submitter written at the top.

October 15, 2014

Linda E. Johnson, President
Brooklyn Public Library
10 Grand Army Plaza

SELLING OFF OUR LIBRARIES?

Citizens Defending Libraries Resources and Main Page

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How You Can Take Action

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Library Hearings & Forums (Reports & CDL Testimony)

PRESS RELEASES/MEDIA ADVISORIES

PHOTO GALLERIES- PAST EVENTS

CARTOONS, IMAGES, VIDEOS

Elections/Candidate Recommendations

Brooklyn, New York 11238

Re: *Request for answer to question concerning the unrecognized cost to the public of selling and shrinking the Brooklyn Heights Library*

Dear Ms. Johnson:

Tuesday, October 7, 2014, was the first "Community Advisory Committee" meeting concerning the proposed sale and shrinkage of the Brooklyn Heights Library where the meeting was officially opened up to *(oral)* public questions. This was unexpected. Although the public was invited to ask questions with an apparent expectation on their part that they would be answered, we write concerning a question that was asked and that remains unanswered concerning the unrecognized cost to the public of selling and shrinking the Brooklyn Heights Library.

Michael D. D. White, a co-founder of Citizens Defending Libraries asked the following question of you:

> *Please calculate the losses to the public associated with the library sale.- Please state what should considered subtractions to the $52 million gross purchase price the BPL will receive for selling and shrinking the Brooklyn Heights Library, the transaction costs, the lost value, etc. and then state your calculations of all those amounts and what they total up to.*

Mr. White and Citizens Defending Libraries apologize if, while soliciting your response to such questions, we have displayed any inappropriate anger or impatience respecting what we view as the BPL's efforts to under-represent the value of what it is selling, and to over-represent what it is actually getting back in return. We always want our actions to serve, as best they can, our foremost goal of protecting our valuable public assets.

In your response to Mr. White you said that you didn't think he was interested in hearing an answer to his question. Mr. White insisted that he was and we assure that we do want the answer requested. While Mr. White noted he has offered his own calculations, he asked for yours.

We do not believe that you can dismiss as inconsequential the fact that you are selling, without replacement, exactly 66.33333% of the publicly owned space in a 63,000 square foot library building under the vague rubric that the space not being replaced is *`not accessible*

BLOG ARCHIVE

▼ 2014 (39)

► November (11)

▼ October (1)

Open Letter To Brooklyn Public Library President L...

► September (3)

► July (2)

► June (1)

► May (2)

► April (4)

► March (4)

► February (2)

► January (9)

► 2013 (32)

CONTRIBUTORS

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to the public.' (The BPL is also proposing to dispose of additional significant property used by the library and the public at the site.) All space has value, existing current use value as well as other obvious potential value. Publicly owned assets should not be sold without identification and assessment of their value. BPL should, as the federal government does, supply an inventory of any assets you wish to treat as surplus and you should state assessments of the assets inventoried.

For instance, BPL should (supplying floor plans to make your calculations interpretable and verifiable) state how you have measured and give values about any such space you are regarding as subject to elimination because it is, in your term, `not accessible to the public' providing specifics, more or less as follows: [INSERT XX] square feet of [FOR INSTANCE "office space used by" INSERT X# "librarians and off limits to the public."] Value is: [INSERT XX.].

To inform the public with the information requested we ask that you do so for all of the space you are deeming *`not accessible to the public'* with statements about why you decided to consider the space *`not accessible to the public,'* and who it is used by including without limitation any of the following:

- Office spaces.
- Conference room spaces such as the conference room on the second floor
- Auditorium space.
- Librarian desk and shelving space, such as the front desk space where librarians deal with the public.
- Entryway space.
- Custodial and closet spaces.
- Bathroom spaces.
- Elevator space.
- Stairway space.
- Hallway spaces, for instance the space used for circulation and exhibition displays.
- Above-ground bookshelf space.
- Below-ground bookshelf space.
- Storage space that is not shelf space.

It is entirely reasonable for the public to expect that such inventory would be supplied *prior* to sizing a replacement library, *prior* to asking the public to participate in envisioning and contributing its ideas for what the design and content of a replacement library should consist of, *prior*, in fact, to concluding that the assets should be discarded, and even *prior* to concluding that the library should necessarily be sold at all.

Similarly, as the BPL now plans to *also remove* from the Brooklyn Heights Library the space and assets that you have deemed to categorize as space and assets of the Business and Career portion of the Brooklyn Heights Library, we believe it is also entirely reasonable to expect that an inventory of all those assets with their assessed values should be similarly supplied to the public.

That's just the space *interior* to the Brooklyn Heights Library. Also needing to be inventoried with value assessed is all the other property at the site used by the library and the public *exterior* to the building.

Let us stress that all of what is being given up, and all that is sacrificed by not replacing the existing library with one equivalent in size and with equivalent assets is a loss for the public in this equation.

Aside from those assets lost, there are the expenses associated with selling and shrinking a library that must additionally be netted out from the gross price to assess where the public comes out in the end.

For instance, it was noted (for the first time) during the course of the CAC meeting, that although no space is being added to the Grand Army Plaza Library to take in and receive the transfer to it of the Business and Career Library from the Brooklyn Heights Library there will be costs associated with that consolidating shrinkage that include the cost of construction at the Grand Army Plaza premises. This was one cost Mr. White asked about in his question, asking you to provide a figure associated with the loss. No figure has provided.

Mr. White also pointed out that, per the BPL's press release, the BPL is calculating that building a new shrunken replacement Brooklyn Heights Library would cost $10 million, but Mr. White noted that using figures associated with building the replacement shrunken Donnell Library, the replacement cost is more likely to easily exceed *$15 million.* Given the cost overruns for the Donnell construction reported after the meeting that figure is now up to an easy *$15.75 million.*

The developer, volunteering, stepped in to answer the question Mr White asked on your behalf. We do not believe it is appropriate that the developer should be the one answering the question of what losses the public is suffering as the developer has a vested interest in portraying these losses as being as minimal as possible.

The developer answered that the losses to the public are calculated by the New York City Economic Development Corporation and that the developer covers all the public's losses. We don't believe that the EDC has, in fact, calculated the total of all of these public losses on the BPL's behalf nor required the developer to cover them. We also believe that it would be inappropriate for the BPL to delegate such calculations of public losses concerning our libraries to an agency like the EDC with such a different mission. It is also an agency that many would consider to have been subject to *"regulatory capture"* which results in developer-driven transactions.

We acknowledge that both you and the developer spoke about how the developer is paying additional amounts, another *$18 million* according to the developer, to cover some losses and costs to the public on this transaction that the developer construes as equivalent to increasing his real purchase price. In this respect, you ventured to observe this includes the developer paying the rent for a very small temporary (8,000 square foot) library space at Our Lady of Lebanon. But that partial coverage of a larger public loss with an immediately self-canceling theoretical increment to the $52 million purchase price (i.e. add the rent amount to the purchase price and then immediately subtract it out again as the public loss it is) is not what we are asking you about because we are asking about the *uncovered* losses. . . Those *uncovered* losses include the insufficiency of the temporary space. During the years of construction the public will be at least 13,000 feet shy of having a library even the size of the vastly shrunken 21,000 square foot library the BPL is proposing. One calculation for just that uncovered public loss alone comes to *$6.37 million*.

While answering the question on your behalf the developer represented that EDC was requiring that the developer cover an allocable portion of the monies that the BPL has paid to the consulting firm of former Forest City Ratner Vice President Karen Backus in connection with the sell-off. BPL's initial first payment to Ms. Backus was *$925,000*. We must ask whether this is, in fact, true and ask for further details about the specific amounts involved. (The evening of the meeting the developer represented that Ms. Backus was also a personal friend of his.)

Also, what of the other consultants involved? Booz and Co. assessed and justified the real estate sell-off plans for the NYPL (including the disastrously ill-advised sale of the Donnell Library and the

Central Library Plan with its $500+ million price tag for library sell-offs and shrinkage) and has now done months of work for the BPL. What of the Ivy Group?

The above were the subject of Mr. White's as yet unanswered question. As there was an apparent offer on your part and perhaps the developer's to supplement the answer requested by stating the costs the developer is incurring, the aggregated $18 million the developer was characterizing as an addition to purchase price, we would love to receive details about those amounts too.

The BPL's own offered calculations of public loss should hardly be considered a determinative final evaluation given the BPL's record of pursuing its planned real estate deals over the years with various stratagems that included secrecy. Nonetheless, we feel that the BPL should have done its own calculations of the public losses that subtract from whatever gross cash price it is receiving in connection with the sale and shrinkage of the library. The BPL's calculations would at least provide a starting point or reference for the public's own evaluation.

We think that BPL assessment and figures respecting all of these obvious losses should have been available and ready at the Community Advisory Committee. They should, we think, have been available long beforehand. As they have not yet been furnished we request and express our interest in receiving the information now.

Sincerely,

Carolyn E. McIntyre
Co-founder
Citizens Defending Libraries

Postscript Additional Questions:

After the Community Advisory Committee meeting concluded you lingered, offering information in a group that included the developer and Citizens Defending Libraries co-founder Carolyn McIntyre. There you made several statements:

- You said Spaceworks, incorporated at the end of the Bloomberg administration with one of its primary missions being to take over, as *"underutilized,"* space in New York City libraries, is *"not a private corporation."*

- You said that Spaceworks, whose Executive Director is Paul Parkhill, is *"part of the Department of Cultural Affairs."* We are aware that at a recent City Council hearing (9/29/2014) about proposed legislation that would involve representatives of the real estate industry in planning cultural matters in the city, the NYC Commissioner of Cultural Affairs Tom Finkelpearl spoke with praise about Spaceworks (as he did at a Land Use Committee meeting in the Red Hook Library where Spaceworks proposed to take over 2,000 square feet of that small, 7,500 square foot library), but we did not hear Mr. Finkelpearl say that Mr. Parkhill reports to him or works under him in his department. Similarly, when Mr. Parkhill introduced himself at that hearing as the Executive Director of Spaceworks, one of the many non-profit groups in attendance that day, we did not hear Mr. Parkhill describe Spaceworks as being part of the Department of Cultural affairs although we are well aware that Spaceworks has received funds from the Department of Cultural Affairs, something that we have raised questions about the appropriateness of.

- You said that it is wrong and unfair to describe the Spaceworks takeover of space at Brooklyn libraries as being a *"selling of library space"* and that you do not know why people are referring to it as such. We are quite aware that Spaceworks and the BPL have sought to characterize the Spaceworks takeover of space at public libraries in the mildest possible terms, characterizing them as only *"licenses,"* something we have criticized as a disingenuous maneuver to downplay the legal relationship, especially when walls separating space to be possessed are being built and Mr. Parkhill, a self-described real estate expert, describes, in public meetings, the boundaries of possession at the Red Hook Library as the *"demise"* lines. As leases are a form by which real estate is possessed and a way in which such interest are bought and sold we don't see why you say it is wrong and unfair to call attention to these *"long-term"* transfers of space from the library (subsequently *"subleased"*) as a form of sale.

Since you made the above three statements very emphatically and did so while expressing their veracity to the President of the Brooklyn Heights Association and a number of individuals who where there to represent various of our elected officials and whereas it would appear that the above statements are not true, it seems important that corrections be made for the record. Do you agree and will you make them?

CC: Senator Velmanette Montgomery
City Councilman Steve Levin
Congress Member Nydia Velázquez
Assembly Member Joan Millman

Mayor Bill de Blasio
Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams
Public Advocate Tish James
New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer
Community Advisory Committee Meeting

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From: Citizens Defending Libraries <backpack362@aol.com>
To: cemac62 <cemac62@aol.com>; MDDWhite <MDDWhite@aol.com>
Subject: Press Release: Citizens Audit and Investigation of Brooklyn Public Library- FOIL Requests
Date: Mon, Sep 15, 2014 10:44 pm

PRESS RELEASE & NEWS ADVISORY

New York City

WHAT: Citizens Defending Libraries announces commencement of a Citizens Audit and Investigation of Brooklyn Public Library- Issuance of Freedom of Information Law requests
WHEN: Tuesday, September 16, 2014, 5:00 P.M.
WHERE: Grand Army Plaza Library, 10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, New York, 11238 (Take the 2, 3 train to Grand Army Plaza).

Citizens Defending Libraries will hold a press conference and rally Tuesday, September 16, 2014, at 5:00 PM outside the Brooklyn Public Library Grand Army Library (just prior to the BPL's trustees meeting) to publicize that . . . .

. . Citizens Defending Libraries is commencing a Citizens Audit and Investigation of library sell-offs and shrinkages in Brooklyn. To launch its audit and investigation Citizens Defending Libraries is, this week, issuing Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) requests to the Brooklyn Public Library together with similar requests to a number of government agencies and entities.

The purpose is to probe more deeply into recent disclosures about the BPL's secret real estate and development plans; those recent are revelations themselves the result of diligent citizen inquiry.

A citizens' review of a decade's worth of minutes of the Brooklyn Public Library trustees meetings obtained for the benefit of Citizens Defending Libraries recently disclosed far more than was ever previously publicly known or revealed to the press, including many shocking revelations about how the BPL has been secretly planning for many years to sell off and shrink Brooklyn public libraries pursuant to creation of a *"Strategic Real Estate Plan."* See Noticing New York: Sunday, August 31, 2014, Mostly In Plain Sight (A Few Conscious Removals Notwithstanding) Minutes Of Brooklyn Public Library Tell Shocking Details Of Strategies To Sell Brooklyn's Public Libraries.

The FOIL requests that Citizens Defending Libraries is issuing seeks further significant details about the many matters that the history chronicled in the BPL minutes bring to light, including:

- **Links back to Forest City Ratner.** How a firm run by a former Forest City Ratner Vice president was hired in 2007 (apparently without bid) to put together the BPL's *"Strategic Real Estate Plan"* and how the BPL trustees specifically wanted more work to be done by that consultant to "strengthen the argument" for the real estate plan, making it more convincing. (The two libraries the plan prioritized for sale with announcements at the beginning of 2013 were both next to Forest City Ratner Property.) The initial payment to the firm run by the former Ratner Vice President was $925,000.

- **Many Highly-paid Consultants.** How many highly-paid consultants were hired with, or without competitive bid, in efforts to support and implement the BPL's library real estate plans and how much, in total, were they paid? FOIL request to the BPL asks about more than nine consultants and what they were paid, including Booz & Co, which was involved in vouching for the NYPL's real estate plans when it sold the beloved Donnell Library for a pittance and implemented the Central Library Plan that collapsed embarrassingly last May.

- **A New *"Economic Development"* Mission For the BPL.** It asks about the Ivy Group, a consulting firm, who in doing a *"community needs assessment"* assured the BPL that *"economic development"* should be part of its mission.

- **Affected Libraries.** The FOIL request asks for details about plans for the following libraries that have been discussed as being for sale, shrinkage, *"redevelopment,"* or otherwise already specifically mentioned as being part of the BPL's real estate plans:

  - Brooklyn Heights Library
  - Pacific Branch
  - Sunset Park Branch
  - Red Hook Branch
  - Williamsburg Branch
  - Brower Park Library
  - Midwood Library
  - Gravesend Library
  - Clinton Hill Library
  - McKinley Park Branch and another seven or eight leased libraries being acquired with or without the formal threat of eminent domain.

- **Enforcement of Secrecy.** Information is requested how the library sales, no doubt expected to be objectionable to the public, were kept secret, including from those public officials responsible for funding the libraries, with the New York City Office of Management and Budget being informed of which libraries were affected by the real estate plan only after its objection to being kept in the dark and only after the BPL trustees decided to require OMB to hold such information in *"strict confidence."*

- **Plans to Lock In new de Blasio Administration.** Communications about the BPL goal of locking the next elected administration into the Bloomberg administration pursued real estate plan per BPL president Linda Johnson's reminder to the trustees that the intention was for the plan be *"deep in progress"* so that the next administration *"will not derail it."*

- **Breakdowns and System-wide Air Conditioning Contract.** The public has been suspicious about how widespread air conditioning breakdowns and problems have been cited as an excuse to sell and shrink libraries. The FOIL request asks about a system-wide air conditioning contract with a particular firm that was given a system-wide five-year contract for the BPL's HVAC needs before the breakdowns started.

- **Parallel Library System Plans/The Offensends.** The FOIL requests communications between the library systems about the plans being pursued in parallel by the NYPL and BPL for the sale and shrinkage of libraries, including asking for communications between *David Offensend* overseeing library sell-offs and sales at the NYPL as *Chief Operating Officer* and *Janet Offensend*, his wife, a *key trustee* added to the BPL's board at the same time the BPL was getting underway with very similar plans.

There is much more covered* in the FOIL requests which Citizens Defending Libraries is making available on its web pages, together with section headings in bold for ease of reference purposes.

Citizens Defending Libraries is strongly of the opinion that these matters ought to be under investigation by our public officials (as in some cases they may already be), including the following:

- The *new* Mayor's Office
- The New York City Comptroller
- The State Comptroller
- The New York State Attorney General
- The New York City Public Advocate
- The City Council
- The New York State Department of Education
- The State Legislature
- The Federal government.

Nevertheless, Citizens Defending Libraries does not believe it should simply assume that any of the public officials or offices above will be investigating these matters soon enough or with sufficient vigor that the public, Citizens

Defending Libraries included, should not itself undertake immediate and vigilant follow-up to investigate further what has already been uncovered.

(* **Other matters asked about in the on-line FOIL requests being submitted by Citizens Defending Libraries FOIL requests include:** * Communication with New York City Landmarks Commission for its inventory and survey of BPL libraries that are potentially eligible for designations as landmarks, * Communications with NYC's Department of Design and Construction respecting the condition of the Brooklyn Heights Library and DDC's several repeated assessments of the adequacy of the air conditioning system, * Communication- or the absence thereof- with NYS Department of Education pursuant to regulations about BPL's intent to transform its libraries and system through real estate plans and transactions, * Communications with select individuals (including certain politicians) or groups about promoting the library sales and shrinkages, * Communications about legislation enacted in 2007 reconstituting the boards of the BPL and its foundation and effectively giving Mayor Bloomberg more control (S6233/A9160 introduced June 2007 and signed into law by the governor as Chapter law 569 on August 15, 2007), * Drastically diminishing book counts, * Communications respecting conflicts of interest and their handling, * Communications about Spaceworks, the private company created by the Bloomberg administration in 2012 which has as one of its principal missions the privatization and shrinkage of New York City public library space it characterizes as *"underutilized,"* * Communications with development agencies about economic development and real estate plans of the BPL, including communications with the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York about issuing bonds, * Communications with respect to the fact that BPL president Linda Johnson does not have the qualifying credentials to be a library director under the state education law, * Communications with respect to the BPL's accommodation of Mayor Bloomberg's desire for the BPL to sell Snapple on at Brooklyn's libraries.)

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Follow us on Twitter: @defendinglibraries

For photos and videos of prior Citizens Defending Libraries rallies opposing the sale, shrinkage, underfunding of New York City libraries, and elimination of books and librarians in the year and a half since its founding, see:

PHOTO GALLERIES- PAST EVENTS

http://citizensdefendinglibraries.blogspot.com/2014/01/photo-galleries-past-events.html

# # #

Citizens Defending Libraries
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My library is a:

Safe haven for kids & teens

Second home for seniors

Gateway for immigrants

Career service center

Neighborhood hub

Champion of literacy & culture

Shelter from the storm

Smart community investment

Compiled and edited by Sylvie Abdullah, Ben Creed, Maria Marcantonio, and Emily Miller

Designed by Elana Schlenker

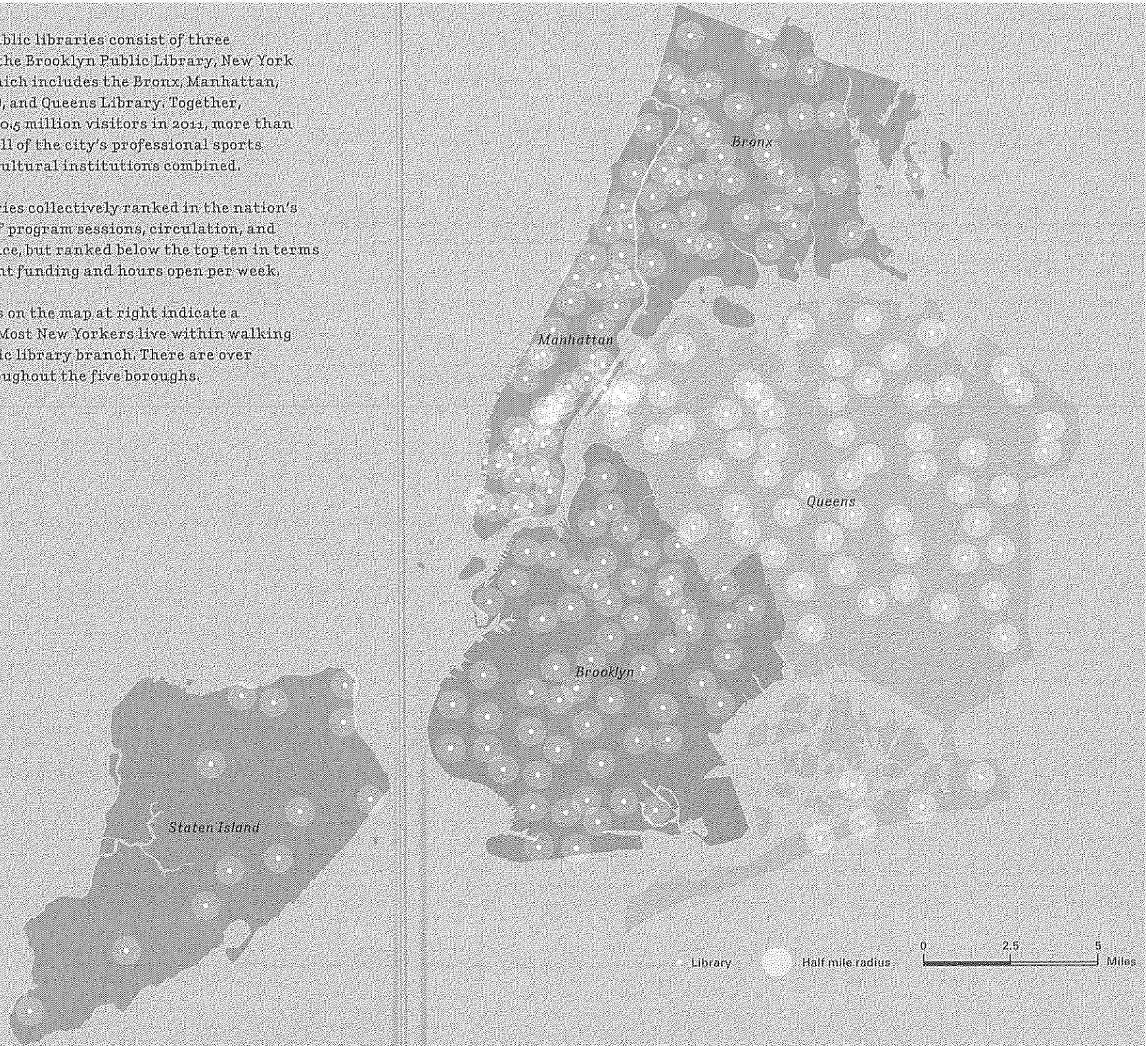
Photographs by Ross Mantle unless otherwise noted

CHARLES H. REVSON FOUNDATION

New York City's public libraries consist of three distinct systems: the Brooklyn Public Library, New York Public Library (which includes the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island), and Queens Library. Together, they served over 40.5 million visitors in 2011, more than were received by all of the city's professional sports teams and major cultural institutions combined.

In 2011, NYC libraries collectively ranked in the nation's top ten in terms of program sessions, circulation, and program attendance, but ranked below the top ten in terms of local government funding and hours open per week.

The shaded circles on the map at right indicate a half-mile radius. Most New Yorkers live within walking distance of a public library branch. There are over 200 branches throughout the five boroughs.



Contents

2 Introduction

My Library is a:

4 Safe Haven for Kids & Teens
10 Second Home for Seniors
16 Gateway for Immigrants
20 Career Service Center
24 Neighborhood Hub
30 Champion of Literacy & Culture
34 Shelter From the Storm
38 Smart Community Investment

42 2013 NYC Neighborhood Library Awards
43 Acknowledgments & More Information
44 Endnotes

Introduction

Located in every neighborhood and open to all, New York City's public libraries are priceless community assets. They help to acculturate new immigrants, educate and entertain children beyond the school day, prepare job-seekers for the 21st century knowledge economy, provide computers and internet access to the millions of residents without it at home, and make the world's cultural and literary treasures available to everyone—regardless of age, income, or nationality.

Universally beloved and highly utilized, neighborhood libraries embody our most essential democratic values, doing more to level the playing field for all New Yorkers than any other city institution, public or private.

In the summer of 2013, the Charles H. Revson Foundation and WNYC's Brian Lehrer Show sponsored the first NYC Neighborhood Library Awards. Over 4,300 residents from every borough nominated their local branches by responding to four questions: What are the main reasons you visit your local library? What does your library do to serve people in the community? How does your library create a welcoming environment? And why should your library win an award? Five winning libraries and five finalists were each awarded cash prizes, which were used for everything from toddler furniture, a projector, and a live jazz series, to cooking classes, a microphone for talent shows, and hundreds of books.

The thousands of nominations submitted for virtually every library in the city are testaments to the fact that all of NYC's libraries are doing vital work for their communities and deserve to be recognized. The stories you'll read in the following pages come from these nominations, written by children, seniors, immigrants, adult learners, artists, entrepreneurs, parents, and students representing the city's many diverse neighborhoods. Together, they illuminate the myriad ways that local libraries enrich the lives of millions of New Yorkers and strengthen the social fabric of the city.

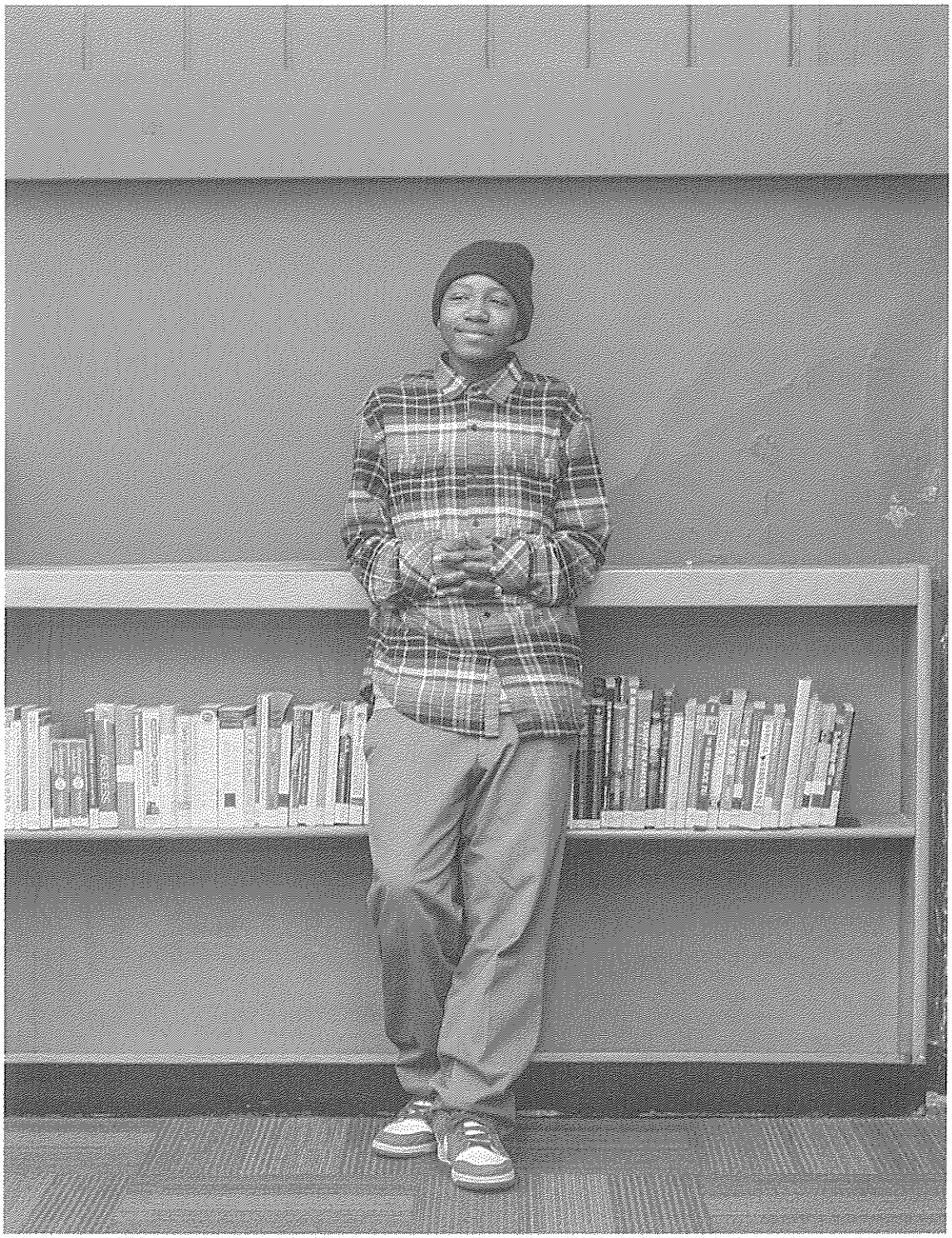
Julie Sandorf
President, Charles H. Revson Foundation
May 5th, 2014

SAFE HAVEN FOR KIDS & TEENS

Libraries are an invaluable resource for children, teens, and parents, providing a safe haven and wealth of activities for young people in communities where other after-school programs are nonexistent or prohibitively expensive.

Ronnie, a teenager in Alphabet City, Manhattan:

I visit this library mostly for advanced reading materials on the sciences and classic literature. I also like to involve myself in African-American history. I enjoy the work space where I can do my homework and chill out in a cool, quiet environment. The library is in a mostly poor neighborhood, so if people want to stay out of trouble they mostly come to the library, which is a pretty smart idea. But it's not like the library is a stranger to the community. I mean it's like a hotspot for people who need to get things done or who just want to relax.



Daniella, a student in Brooklyn:
The Sheepshead Bay Library is one of my favorite places to go to. I call it: My Second Home. I always feel welcome here and everybody respects everyone, especially us children. There are so many fun programs, so forget about getting bored here. I am 11 now and am participating in library book discussions, poetry workshops, arts and crafts, talent shows, and sidewalk chalk art competitions. The library made me love reading and art.

A student at P.S. 235 in Brooklyn:
Without the Canarsie Library I would be lost in school since I use the computer there, I get school books and I study there. I am a straight "A" student and the library helped me with my path to success.

Jasmin, a student in the Bronx:
I come from school and do my homework in the Belmont Library because it's peaceful and I'm less likely to get distracted. This is where I go to look for books and where I get my research for papers for school. Everyone is so welcoming, and it feels safe to be in this library and it's *clean*. To me basically it's a safe heaven, a place where I just can catch a breather and read a good book because that's what I like to do.

Lindsey, a student in Staten Island:
I have six other people in my house hogging the internet so I spend a lot of time in this library for internet access. I try to come to the library as often as I can to do my homework. Whenever I need help with reports I know that the friendly staff will help me. I love visiting the library to find new books, just this week I read three. When you walk into this library you feel the troubles of the day melting away. It is truly a second home to me.

↑ **Interactive programs for infants and toddlers are hugely popular.**

1,100,000
Number of children who attend public schools in New York City

300,000
Number of children in New York City who need a spot in an after-school program

#1
New York City libraries are the largest employers of teens in the city

↑ **Many libraries have special computers for young children.**

Photo credits: This page, right, Queens Library. Opposite, Jonathan Blanc © NYPL

Daisy, a high school student in Queens:
I am a teenager who *loves* to read. So the obvious reason why I go to the Langston Hughes Library is for books. Reading is my everything. I usually read about teenage problems but I also read about religion. I also take my sisters to events for girls. My sister suffers from a reading disorder problem and when she attends these events she feels motivated to keep trying her best to read better.

Oswald, a student in the Bronx:
The library is the only place I can go after school that is safe and I don't have to worry about trouble.

Malvina, a teacher in the Bronx:
In the cultural desert that is this part of the Bronx, this library is a true beacon and sanctuary. It is particularly important for high school students who use it, long after their school is closed for the day. It is a godsend that the Baychester Library is so close.

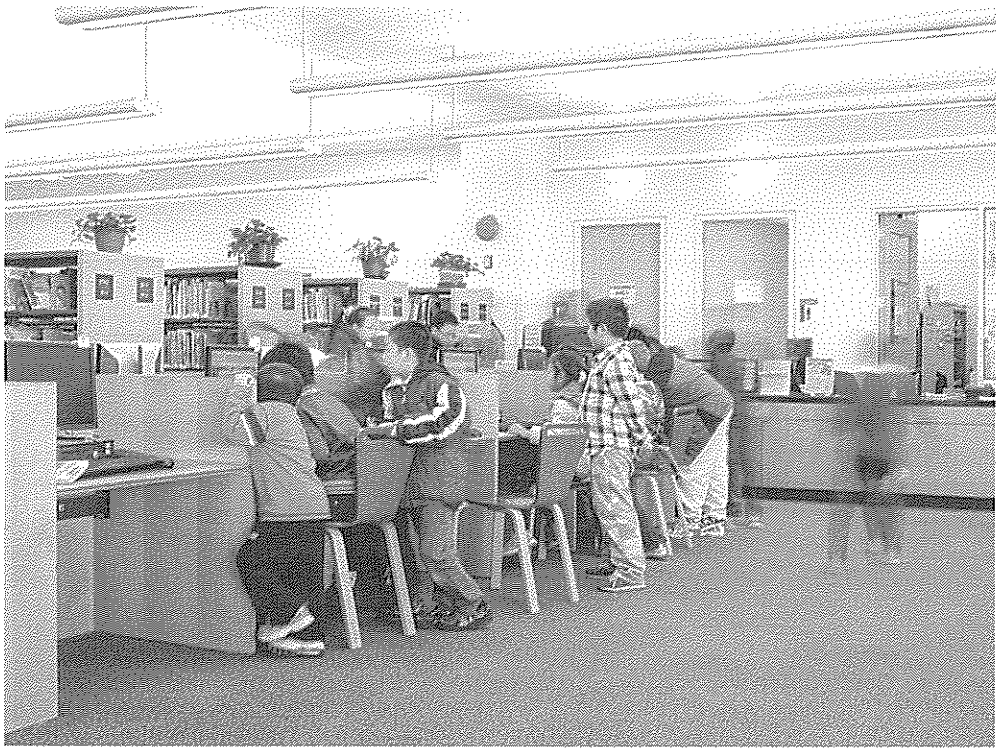
Claudia, a parent in the Bronx:
There are free music classes for kids at the Mott Haven Library on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. There were so many kids playing the cello, violin, clarinet and working with music teachers. I thought this was inspiring: in the south Bronx, kids are learning music.

Camille, a high school student in Brooklyn:
I am a teenager whose life was totally transformed thanks to the library. As an intern for three years, I've been able to go from a shy, not very social girl with low self esteem, to a confident person and assertive worker. I am very grateful to this branch for aiding and supporting me, exploring and highlighting my hidden talents, and learning how to be confident in myself.

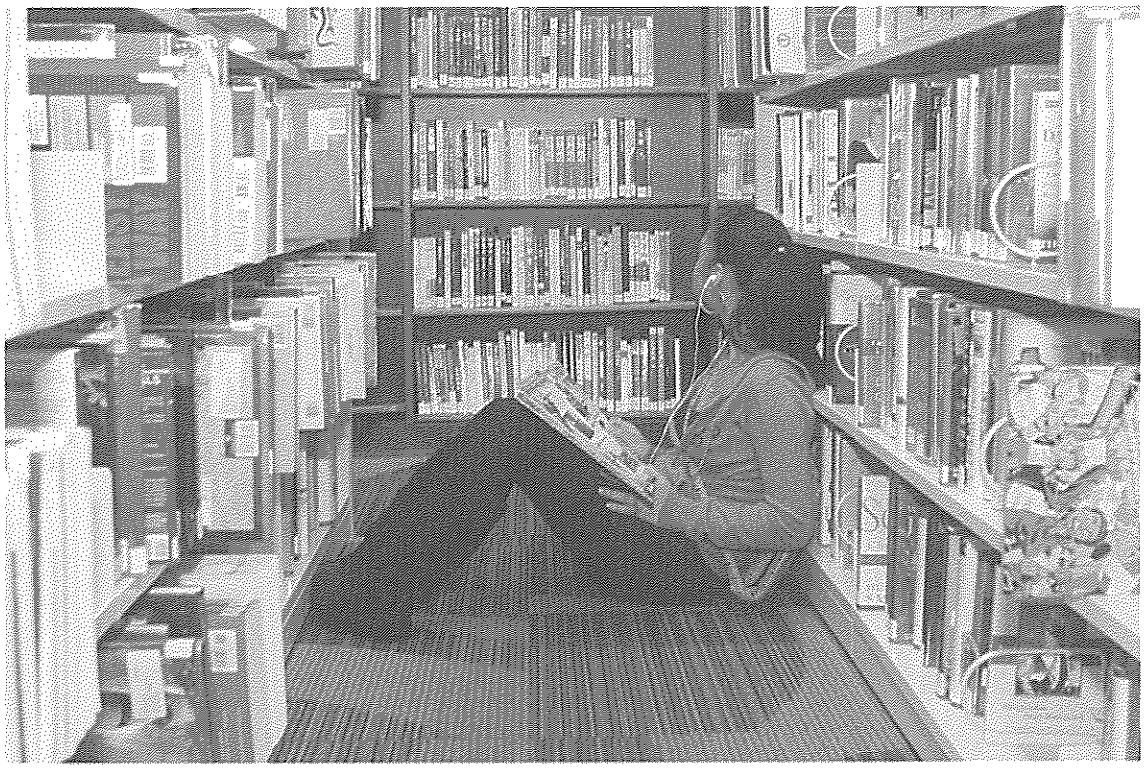
An artist in Brooklyn:
I use the Leonard Library primarily for its children's groups that it provides. I am unemployed and a stay-at-home dad, and those groups are one of the only things my son and I can afford to do. I don't know what I would do without it.

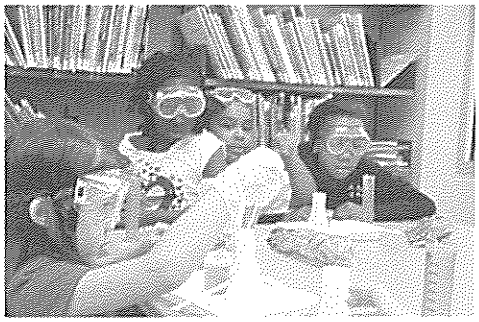
LIBRARIAN STORIES
Kim in Brooklyn:

There was a young teen, about 14 or 15, and she wanted to run away from home. There wasn't a script for dealing with patrons with such inquiries, but I know she came to the safest place she knew, her neighborhood library. We talked about resources the library offers, books and websites for dealing with traumatic experiences, and why she felt the need to run away. She still felt like she needed to leave home, and ultimately I called the police. I used my best judgment, as they are better trained in dealing with situations like this.



Safe Haven for Kids & Teens





↑↑ For some teens, the library is the only place where they can find quiet time to themselves.

Photo credits: This page, top, Queens Library; bottom, Jonathan Blanc © NYPL

Johanna, a student in Ozone Park, Queens:
I visit this library because of the free tutoring. It really helped me with my grades in math. I also come for the Boost program because of its activities. The internet access is wonderful because sometimes my computer at home crashes and is unuseful.

Regina, an immigrant in Brooklyn:
I took my sister to this library when she was four. She protested the whole time—until she attended their arts and crafts group. She is now nine, and begs me to take her to the arts and crafts group that she stopped going to once she started school. She asks to visit the library to read, which for a child with dyslexia is an enormous accomplishment.

SECOND HOME FOR SENIORS

New York City's seniors need places near their homes where they can easily access cultural resources, participate in intellectually engaging activities, and spend time with people of all ages—which is why so many treasure their neighborhood libraries.

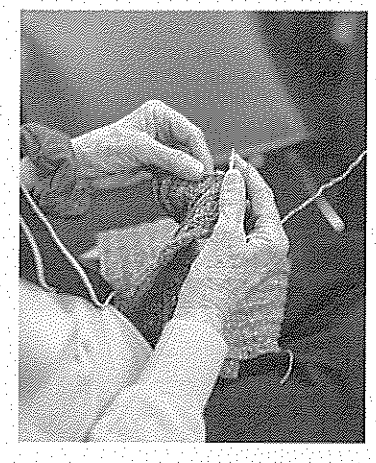
Claire, a senior in Flushing, Queens:

As a senior who wants to stay active, the library is my anchor and go-to place. I go there for so many reasons—to pick up local papers and keep on top of issues and happenings in my community, attend concerts and events, do research for online college courses at CUNY, as well as pick up the latest Star Trek novels for relaxing reading. I took a beginning Mandarin class so that I can now sing karaoke in my largely Asian senior center by using romanized pinyin.

Bonnie Sue, a senior in Queens:
I am homebound and enrolled in the Mail-a-Book program in Queens Village. I am an avid reader and I always have multiple books that they have mailed to me. Not only do they send me books, but they have teleconferencing calls several times a week and Skype programs. The calls allow me to meet new people, socialize and listen to lectures.

Whenever you speak to anyone at Mail-a-Book, the conversation is warm and pleasant. I can call them for any problem and they are willing to find programs that would help me. Because of Mail-a-Book I am not sitting there looking at the four walls and TV. The isolation of the homebound is no longer a problem for me. Instead I am busy, busy, busy!

Selma, a senior in Windsor Park, Queens:
Having access to reading materials is very important to this 94-year-old. Traveling into Manhattan has its difficulties for me, so the special cultural events at my branch are greatly appreciated (music, art, book readings, etc.).



↑↓ **Three generations of knitters in Rockaway Beach meet at the library every weekend.**

↘ **Libraries offer a variety of exercise classes designed for seniors, such as zumba, chair yoga, and ballet.**

998,000
Number of seniors living in New York City

↑35%
Expected growth rate of the city's senior population over the next 20 years

Lorraine, a senior in Manhattan:
This library and its librarians have been a personal support to me since the loss of my partner of 42 years. We both visited St. Agnes for all of those years. The current staff has been particularly attentive and supporting since my loss with their sympathy and friendship. This has provided me with the energy to continue my life in an atmosphere of welcome and belonging.

Theresa, a senior in Brooklyn:
I *must* tell you about my Kareem, the computer guru at the Mill Basin Library. What would I do without Kareem? Kareem has (in my opinion) a CBB Degree (Can't Be Beat) in Computer Operations. I needed to do some research on cars at the beginning of the year. Who showed me how to access car websites, download data pertaining to cars and take tours of the interiors of various models of cars? Kareem did! I now own a 2013 vehicle as a result of Kareem taking the time to show me how to do research on the models of interest.

Photo credit: This page: Jonathan Blanc © NYPL

LIBRARIAN STORIES

Linda in the Bronx:

An elderly Hispanic lady approached me at the information desk inquiring about computer classes in Spanish. At the time we only offered classes in English, but I told her I would do a one-on-one class with her on a Saturday morning if she was willing to try despite the language barrier. Bright and early Saturday morning, she appeared at the branch with her laptop in hand, ready to go. To my amazement, she grasped everything I taught her. The following week she returned with six other Spanish-speaking seniors, all eager to learn how to use the computer. Every time she comes to the library now she asks, "Do you remember me? I'm the lady who didn't know how to use the computer."

Betsy, a retired social worker in Manhattan:

During the first two years of my retirement, the Yorkville Library has served multiple purposes for me. Primary among them was using the library's computers to complete an online Medicare D form and to evaluate medical resources for my parents, who are in their nineties. Weekly computer classes have enabled me to fulfill volunteer responsibilities for non-profit organizations. I participate in the weekly book discussion group and attend lectures on health, financial and other issues. These experiences and resources have been integral to increasing my sense of self worth, and perhaps have, in part, staved off or delayed the onset of dementia.

↑ **Angel, a senior in the Bronx, uses Career and Education Information Services (CEIS) at the library.**

2 in 3

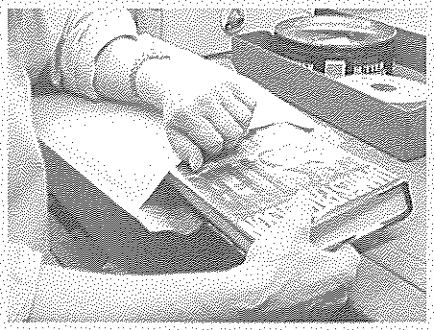
Immigrant seniors have limited English proficiency

95%

Seniors living in NYCHA housing who lack broadband internet access at home

→ **Seniors are well-represented in the computer and technology classes offered at virtually all library branches.**

↓ **The Mail-A-Book program is a lifeline for the homebound.**



Carolyn, a senior in Queens:
The Knit Club at Fresh Meadows Library has grown tremendously. It is so popular there's hardly enough chairs when the whole gang is here. There's a cooperative atmosphere as members work together to make afghans for the hospitals, hats for preemies and slippers for soldiers. I am often reminded of that song from the old TV show 'Cheers': Sometimes you want to go/Where everybody knows your name/And they're always glad you came.

Jennifer, a library volunteer in Manhattan:
I teach a unique ballet class to older adults, which has become unexpectedly popular. The class started with a handful of students, and now we overflow the large community room with our 67th Street ballerinas, ages 50 to 87, from places as diverse as Thailand, Inner Mongolia, India, France and New York City.

Zelda, a senior in Manhattan:
The library makes me feel welcome and assists me, a senior with multiple handicaps (sight, hearing, balance). They help me feel like a wanted individual.

Twin sisters in Brooklyn:
We visit the library several times a week for workshops, as well as special events such as presentations by doctors on important health issues and representatives from Medicare. As a result of one of the medical presentations, we went for follow-up colonoscopies, which we had been putting off scheduling.

Susan, a senior in Queens:
At the Friday knitting and crocheting class I get instruction as well as mingle with one of the best groups of ladies in Queens. I find this meeting to be very beneficial emotionally. I lost my husband two years ago and this group was right there for me.

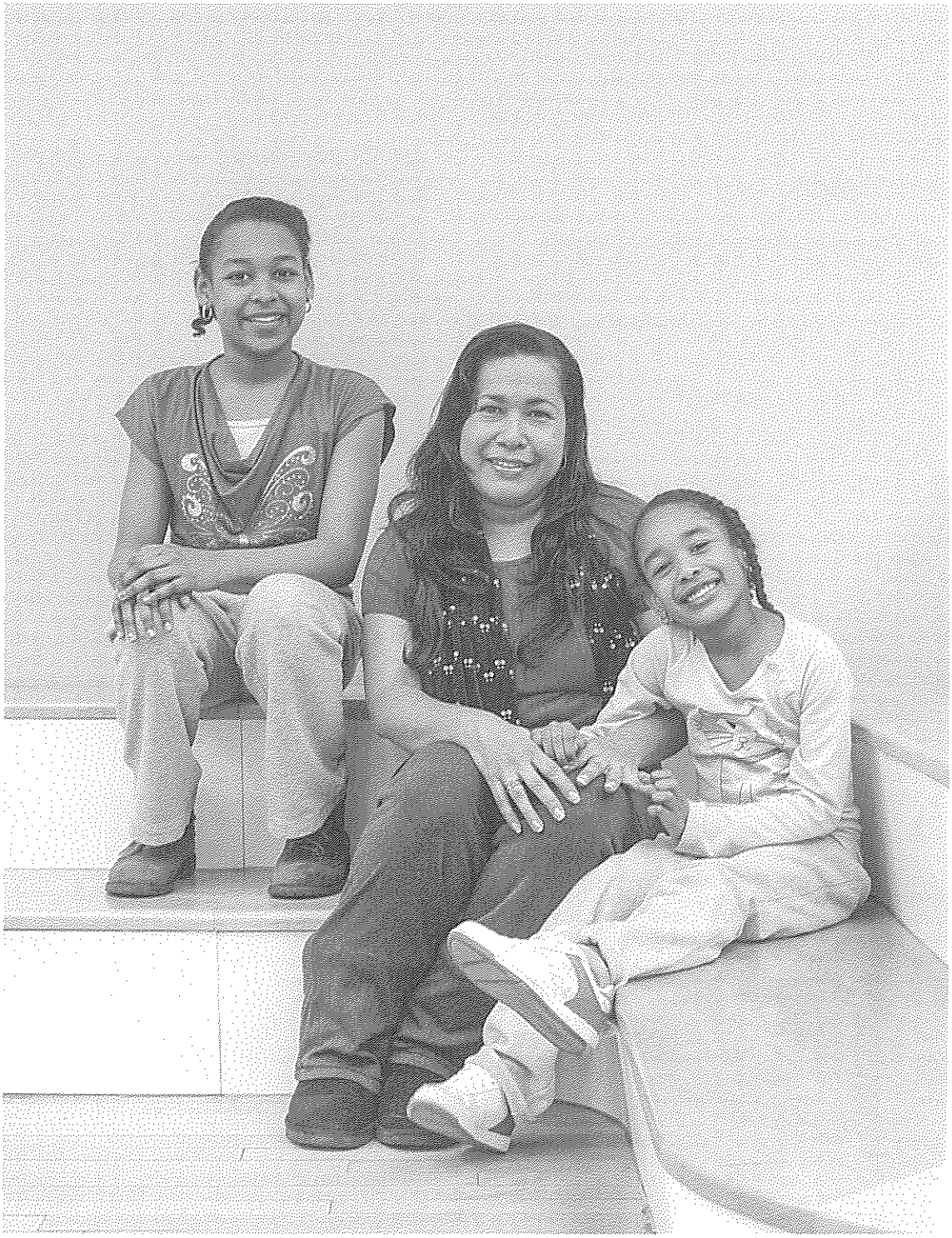
Photo credit: This page: left and right, Queens Library

GATEWAY FOR IMMIGRANTS

The public library is the largest provider of services to immigrants in New York City. With free English classes, citizenship preparation, job search assistance, and a vast array of foreign language materials, it's no wonder that the first thing many do upon arrival in the city is go straight to their local library.

Maiela, an immigrant in Staten Island:

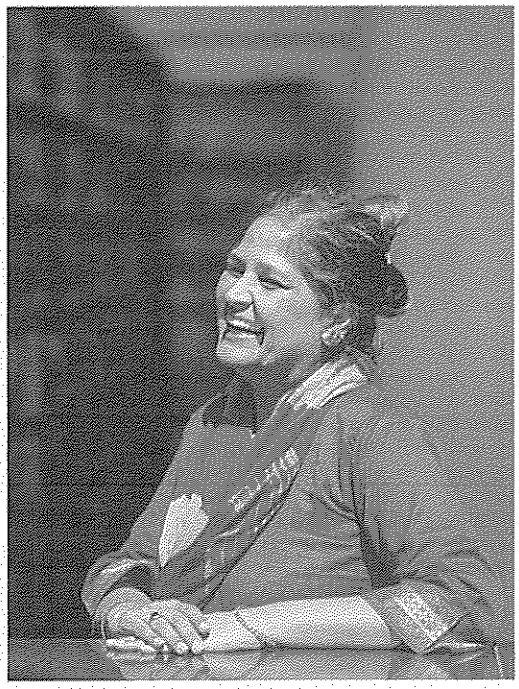
When we came to this country, Anaeli, my elder daughter, was 4 years old. It was a bit difficult for her to adapt to this new culture and to communicate in another language. During her first years of school, her reading level was very low. Now she is in fourth grade, her reading level has increased hugely. This year she was the super-reader of the school. This award has increased her love of reading even more. If we didn't have the library perhaps my daughter's progress would not be the same.



Jing, an immigrant in Manhattan:
For new immigrants, English classes provided by the library are extremely helpful for them to get information, make new friends and improve English. Many of my classmates from the library's English classes have found better jobs, got citizenship or entered colleges. My father reads Chinese newspaper everyday there. The rich collection in Chinese literacy helped him a lot when he first arrived in New York from Beijing.

Jurate, an immigrant in Queens:
I learned English reading books from the Woodhaven Library, now my sons borrow books from this library. My mother-in-law took English classes for beginners and jewelry making classes. She had hard time when she first came from the foreign country, but this library made her feel that she belongs.

An immigrant in Manhattan:
I never thought when I first came to this country that I will find people that wanted to help me without asking me for anything. Since the moment I had my first class (ESOL) I felt very welcome. I think helping the community to be integrated is amazing. I just have been here for four months and my English is getting better and better.



↑ Damini, a librarian in Flushing, serves a large immigrant community.

↓ ESOL students learn the words for fruits during a hands-on lesson.

3,000,000
Number of immigrants living in New York City

60%
City residents who are either immigrants or children of immigrants

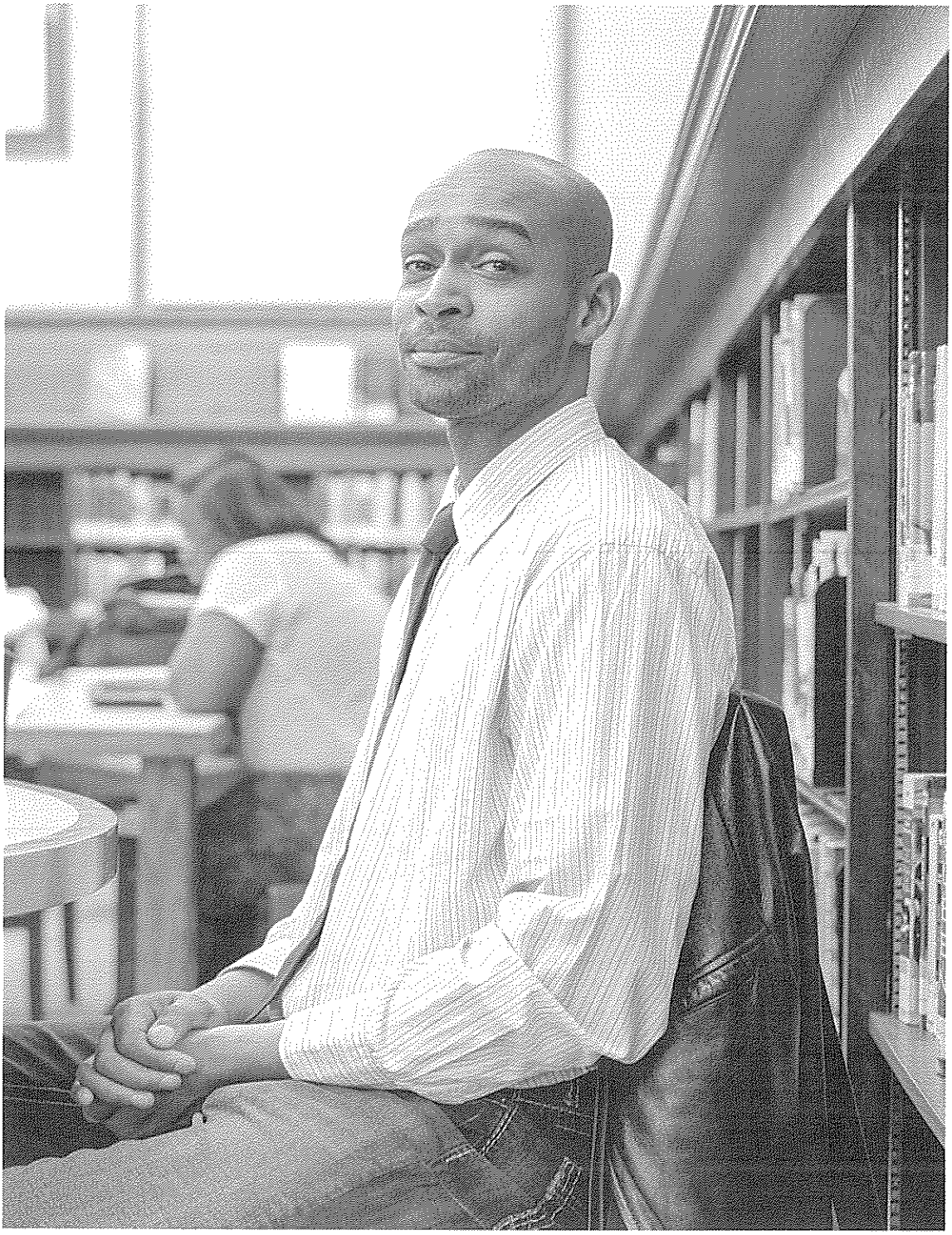
23%
New York City residents who are not English proficient

Yunona, an immigrant in Brooklyn:
Library help all of us who immigrate from different countries to survive and to come through the process of adaptation to new circumstances in new environment. I start to learn English and basic computer skills here. I became a register nurse and continue my education on Family Nurse Practitioner Program. When my daughter was a little girl, she attended all activities offered by the library, where she improve her skills in art. She graduated from LaGuardia High School for the Arts with the award in her major and got admitted to Pratt Institute to learn architecture. My father made a lot of friends participating in the chess class, and my mom learn knitting skills in the knitting class, making really nice clothes for family, friends, kids in the community shelter.

Vaughn, a student in Hollis, Queens:
Since the first day I landed in JFK as a 10-year-old immigrant to this very point in time as a relatively new U.S. citizen registering to vote for the very first time, the Queens Library system has been there for me and my family and many others like me.

Maggie, a student in Queens:
Before I enter community college, the Adult Learning Center in Flushing Library helped me a lot. I attend this program for around one and half year. I was not sure about my ability to study in college. The classes there helped me to build my basic English.

Rulx, an immigrant in New Lots, Brooklyn:
I been one year and six months in America. I learn English in this library. I take my advantage of opportunities. The main reasons I come are pre-GED class, use Wi-Fi, computer, take a book to read. I feel welcome when I coming in this library.



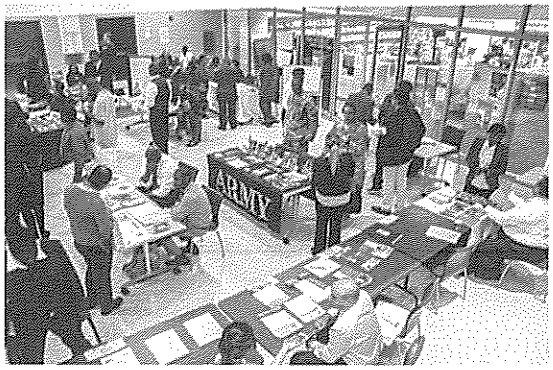
CAREER SERVICE CENTER

Branch libraries provide a lifeline to New Yorkers looking for jobs. Patrons can access the internet, hone relevant skills, polish their resumes, and receive personalized assistance with the search process.

James, a volunteer in Bedford–Stuyvesant, Brooklyn:

I'm a Resume Troubadour. I help people create a resume and cover letter for immediate use, usually within one hour. I also provide the best job-seeking advice that I can. I love working with people and contributing my talents to the community, and I'm grateful for this library for giving me the opportunity to do so.

Shonda, a resident in the Bronx:
The Woodstock Branch is a really amazing resource. Without this place I would have had nowhere to write my resume, and thus never would have gotten the job I now have, and would likely still be living on the street. I know there are countless others in the neighborhood that could echo this statement!



321,000
Number of New Yorkers who are unemployed

2,900,000
City residents who lack broadband internet access at home

9,300,000
Computer sessions logged by patrons in New York City libraries in 2011

↑62%
Increase in computer sessions logged by patrons of New York City libraries between 2007 and 2011

Anthony, a job-seeker in Brooklyn:
The Macon Library has been a home to me since I was 15 years old. I come here to study for the GED, or just chill out. I also meet with James. Since he helped me put together my resume, I've received two calls about jobs.

Jackie, an immigrant in Staten Island:
I have learned so much from the St. George Library, especially how to write a business proposal and get free advice from SCORE.

Judi, a library volunteer in Queens:
As a paraprofessional, I monitor two special education students who volunteer weekly at the library for vocational experience. They organize books, magazines and DVDs and have begun to take on additional duties. The library has afforded these diligent and dedicated special ed students of mine a worksite that enables them to acquire valuable skills.

John, a job-seeker in the Bronx:
The Grand Concourse Library is very helpful to the neighborhood. Everyone I know uses it. We'd be poorer without it. People I know found *work* because of this library.

Vreni, a teacher in Brooklyn:
When I wanted to make a career change and when I was unemployed, I turned to the library to figure out what other professions/jobs were out there and how to go about finding employment. During the time I was unemployed and was often needing assistance, the woman who sat at the info desk was incredible. She was very friendly, amazingly knowledgeable, and made an effort to help me find what I was looking for.

LIBRARIAN STORIES

Matt in Queens:

A lot of employment requires online application. One man was very frustrated trying to fill out an online form for a shipping/receiving position, similar to a job that he had for years. We were able to fill out the form, and I called to verify they got it. I learned from that experience that a lot of these skills people perceive everyone has, it's not true. Job information/tech services is a huge role for libraries.

↑ Jacqueline uses the career services office of her local library to assist in her job search.

↖ Branch libraries host job fairs featuring dozens of employers.

Regina, a job-seeker in Staten Island:
The library provides me with knowledge and information. I use the internet for work and job search. There are job fairs for the unemployed and financial seminars for everyone. It is probably the most important local community center that we have on the North Shore of Staten Island.

Rita, a blogger in Brooklyn:
I visit the Cypress Hills Library to look for part-time jobs, to search for information on the internet, and to check out a good book. It's helping me be an entrepreneur.

Keramesha, a job-seeker in the Bronx:
I don't have internet access at home. I visit the Parkchester Library for access to the job related laptops, which gives you extra time to complete applications online. I don't know what I would do if my library wasn't accessible.

Isidra, a resident of Brooklyn:
I remember needing help with my resume and two of the employees, Leah and Sharon, went out and beyond to help me have the best resume I needed for employment. Well, the following week I was hired at St. Lukes Hospital for an L.P.N. position thanks to Leah and Sharon ensuring my resume was a good one.

Jacqueline, a resident in the Bronx:
I came to the Career and Education Information Services Office at the Bronx Library Center for resume assistance and found so much more—encouragement, support and guidance. The staff helped me to believe in my skills and abilities once again. I know the right career opportunity is just around the corner.

NEIGHBORHOOD HUB

As rare "third spaces" that allow community members to interact with each other outside of their workplaces and homes, branch libraries help to make neighbors out of New Yorkers of every stripe.

Anindita, a social worker in the Bronx:

I provide domestic violence services mostly to South Asian women. We chose the library because it's a welcoming and safe environment. It has books in Bengali, Hindi, and Urdu, which makes everyone in the neighborhood feel like their existence is acknowledged. They see the library as a place for resources, a stepping stone to learn to navigate the larger system—help with domestic violence, but also careers and public benefits—a path toward independence and safety.

LIBRARIAN STORIES

Christian in Queens:

I got to know this guy in Jamaica, Queens who was just back in the neighborhood after doing some time in jail. He LOVED the respect and service that we gave him at the library. It meant a lot for him to be treated as a man with dignity. He even told me once, "You and my momma are the only two people keeping me out of trouble right now."

Dereck, a resident of the Bronx:

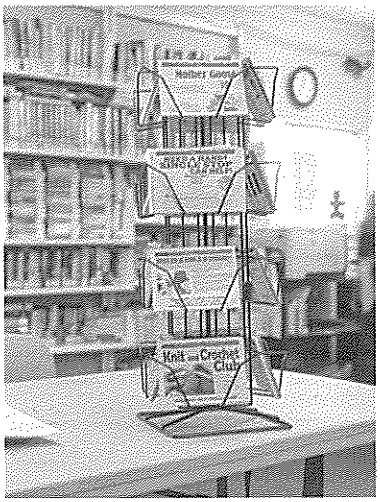
The Eastchester Library offers more than just an array of resources, it offers a portal of valuable interactions between the people of the community. It provides a gateway for individuals of different culture, ethnicity, and beliefs to come together and bring the community as a whole.

José, a resident of Brooklyn:

By helping deaf people like me by calling someone for my next appointment time and day. I am very appreciative with the librarians, their services are wonderful to me. I couldn't hear on the phone and struggle with IP Relays and on 711.com for deaf services. The librarians helped me to call my workers.

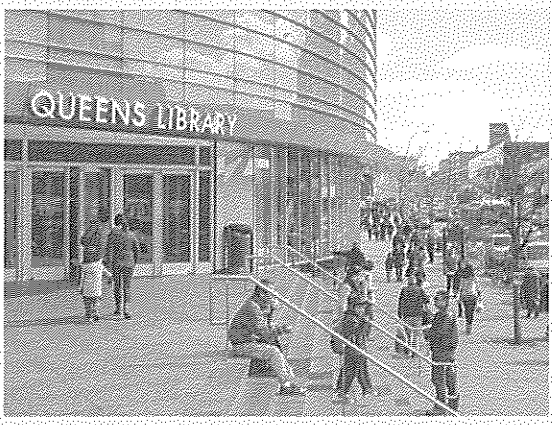
Fournier, a parent in the Bronx:

When I was and still is homeless they let me and my daughter sit down and relax until the library closes.



↑ The libraries offer thousands of free programs aimed at people of all ages, interests, and cultural backgrounds.

Joy, a senior in Windsor Terrace, Brooklyn:
This library offers me and my neighbors opportunities to learn about subjects we wouldn't otherwise know much about, one of which is each other. At this library, people of various nationalities (Albanian, Bangladeshi, Irish, Italian, Mexican, Pakistani, Polish) and religions find reading materials and classes that pave their way to a more informed and better life. It is one of the very few places where these groups of people mingle, and that promotes neighborhood harmony.



Irma, a retired teacher in Queens:
The library organized and planned an Open House with members of the business community and connected patrons with restaurant owners who provided samples of their ethnic foods to encourage members of the community to patronize their businesses.

A parent in Mott Haven, the Bronx:
I'm prideful that a library is in my community and the people are coming in and using it. It is our neighborhood community center. It keeps us socially connected. The neighborhood is a bit rough so coming to this library is my opportunity to escape some of the day to day drama. It brings people together from all walks of life in one space to enjoy programs, to learn, and to just escape from daily challenges of poverty, drugs, gun violence, and gangs.

Tori, a resident of Brooklyn:
The Cortelyou Library is at the very heart of this neighborhood; it stitches together all the various ethic and socio-economic strands of the neighborhood in a way that no other institution could. It's part of the glue that holds us together.

Debbie, a resident of the Bronx:
Quite frankly, the Jerome Park Library is the heart of the neighborhood. It acts as a meeting place of sorts for the community it so excellently serves. It is where one meets people one otherwise would not encounter.

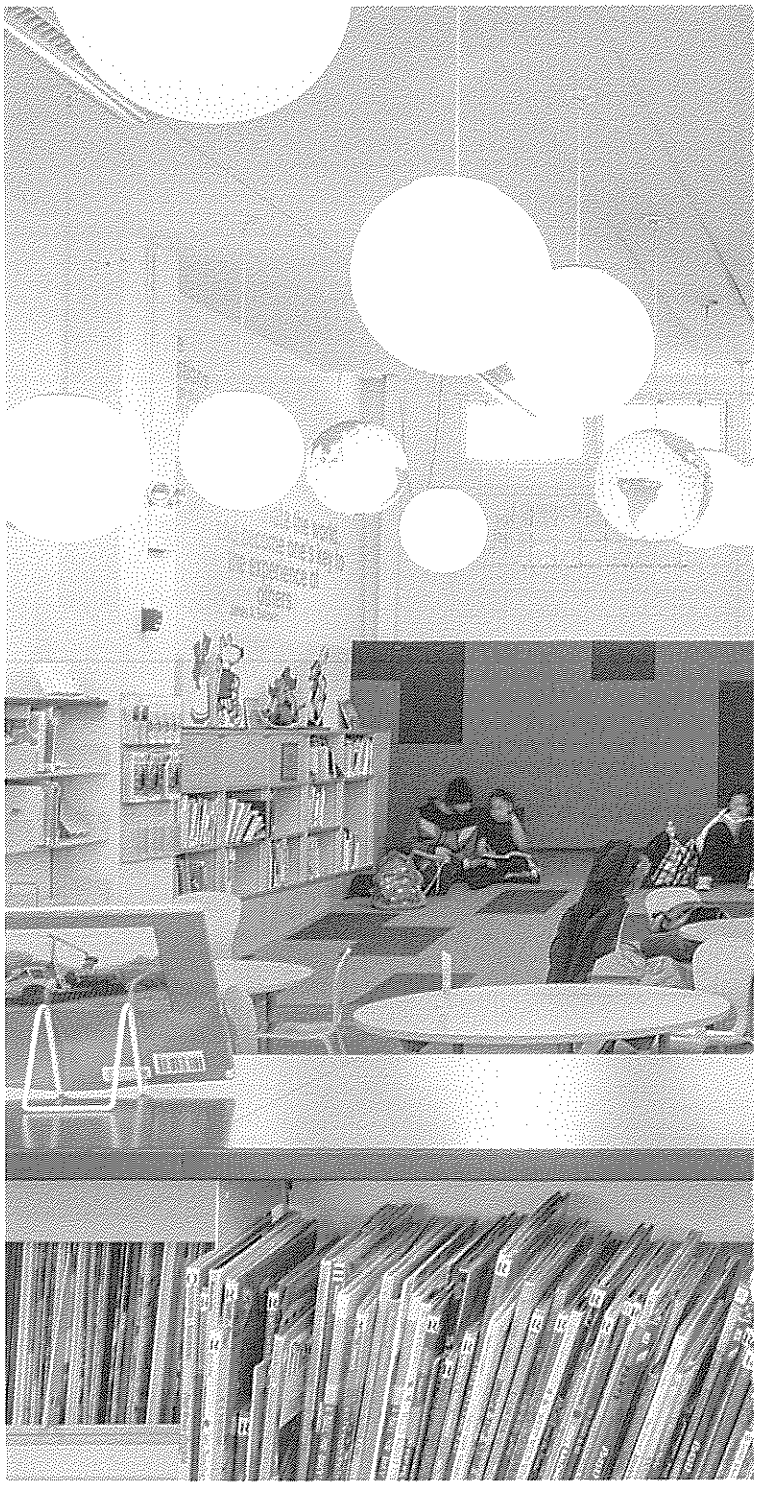
Debra, a community board member in Staten Island:
Staten Island has become home to a multiplicity of ethnic cultures. Library announcements and other fliers are available in several languages. There are summer reading programs, book discussions groups in both English and Spanish, knitting, English as a Second Language, a mah jongg group, as well as a program for tots. The library truly embodies community spirit with something for everyone.

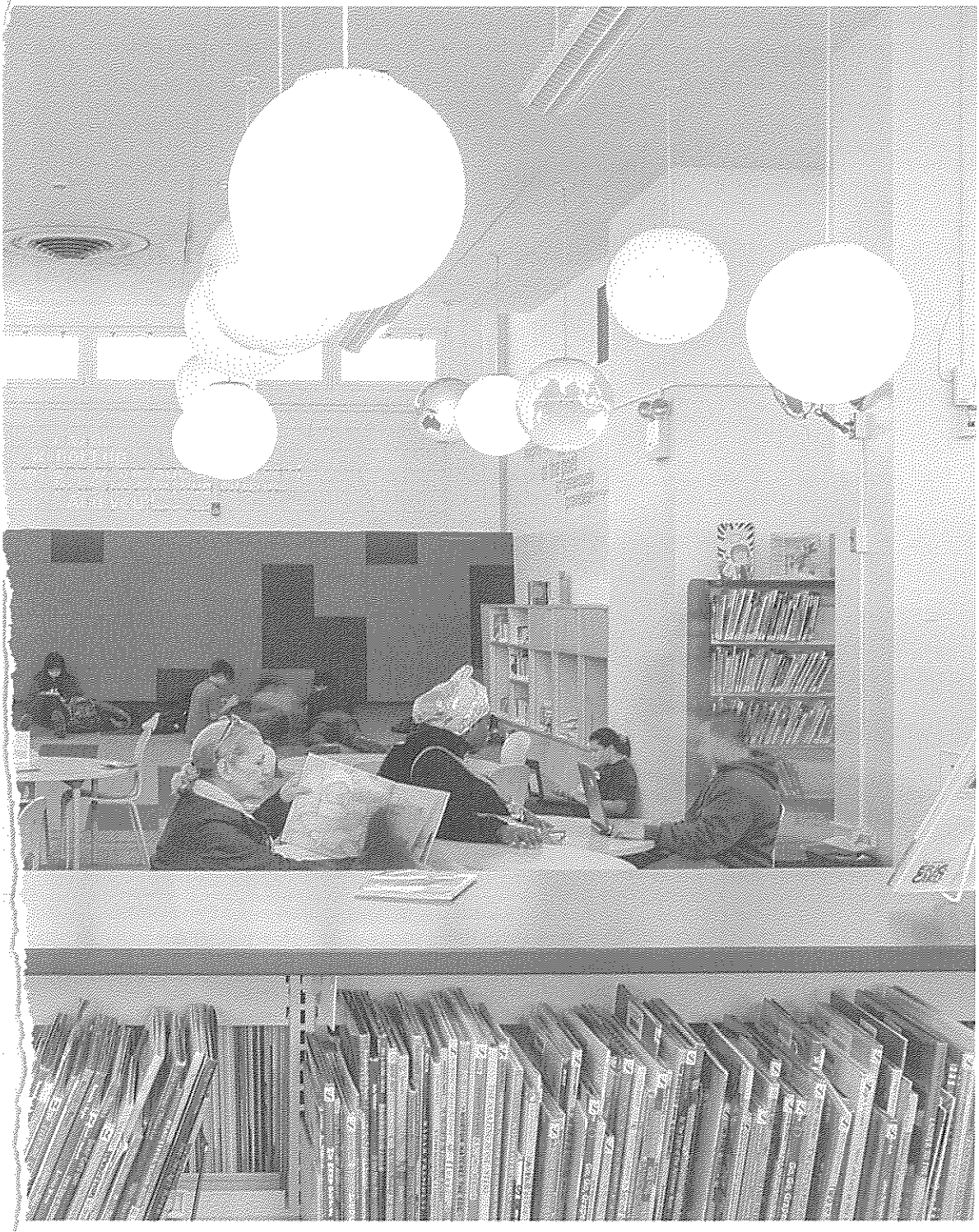
Phillipe, an immigrant in Brooklyn:
Library events are wonderful and help to create community in a city where that is sometimes missing. This library, like many others, serves as a modern-day town square in our neighborhood.

94%

Americans who say that having a public library improves the quality of life in a community

→ **Kids and families enjoy the children's reading room at Hamilton Fish Library in the Lower East Side.**



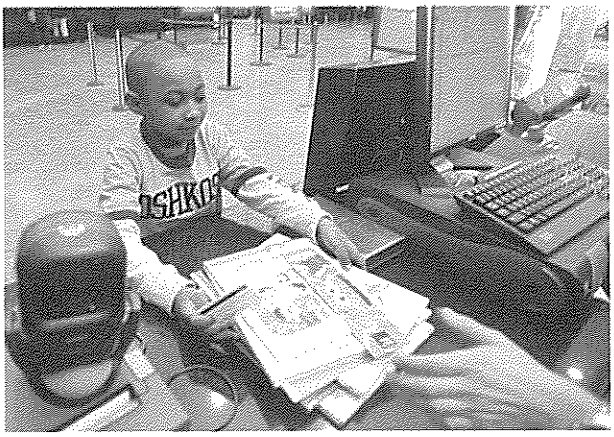


CHAMPION OF LITERACY & CULTURE

Libraries have brilliantly adapted to our wired age, providing patrons with internet access, computer courses, and an array of activities not traditionally associated with libraries. But the classic role of libraries as places where anyone can explore humanity's cultural and intellectual achievements remains as important and appreciated as ever.

Shluli, a Literacy Leaders program associate in the Lower East Side, Manhattan:

In the Literacy Leaders program at the library, high school students are trained to help first and second graders improve their reading and vocabulary by working together two or three afternoons a week. We build literacy skills through guided reading, discussions, and interactive programs on iPads. The kids especially love it when we send them out to the stacks to choose the books that they are most excited about.



↑179%

Increase in e-book checkouts across all three library systems in 2011

69,000,000

Number of items circulated in New York City's libraries in 2011

Amber, a teacher in the Bronx:
Adults in the South Bronx need access to information, work spaces, and services. We don't have many book stores, coffee shops, or other similar types of multi-use study and meeting spaces. The library is so powerful because it is open to all ages, cultures and incomes. Middle school kids shouldn't need to get on a train to Harlem, midtown or Parkchester to have a good selection of books and media on interesting topics.

Natasia, a resident of Jamaica, Queens:
I have no room in my budget to watch all the movies and read all the books and study all the things I'm interested in. But the library makes it possible for me.

Raisy, a student in the Bronx:
Since I love to read, I check out books about almost every topic, but I mostly like YA-fiction books. If the library wasn't there for me, I wouldn't be able to satisfy my hunger for books.

A parent in East Harlem, Manhattan:
My son Diego and I visit this library to borrow books to read right before bed time. Diego loves borrowing chapter books and exploring their science and non-fiction sections. It's our weekly tradition to stop by and spend time browsing through the different titles. We can't afford to buy books at Barnes & Noble or other book stores, my husband is unemployed so this branch has become a wonderful destination and resource for our family!

Suzanne, a parent in Carroll Gardens, Brooklyn:
The children's collection is excellent. Whatever we are studying at home, we can always find source material. The librarians are so friendly and helpful, sometimes even suggesting other books that might help in our studies. The easy access to a huge variety of children's books has played a large part in my son taking to reading early, and has encouraged his very real love of reading.

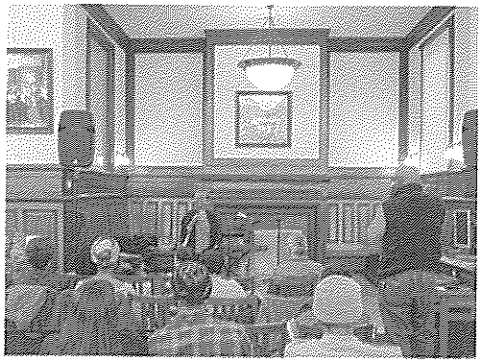


Photo: Philip Greenberg ©BPL

Local musicians put on a concert at Macon Library in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn.

Dragon Dancers perform outside the Seward Park Library in Chinatown.

1,500,000

Number of low-literacy adults living in New York City

Andrew, a former Brooklyn resident:
Once a week, my mother and I would walk to the Stone Avenue branch to borrow Babar, Madeline, and other assorted children's books. Those visits made me become addicted to the smell of the library, to books, and to amassing information in general. I am currently a professor in the CUNY system. I owe it all to these beginnings.

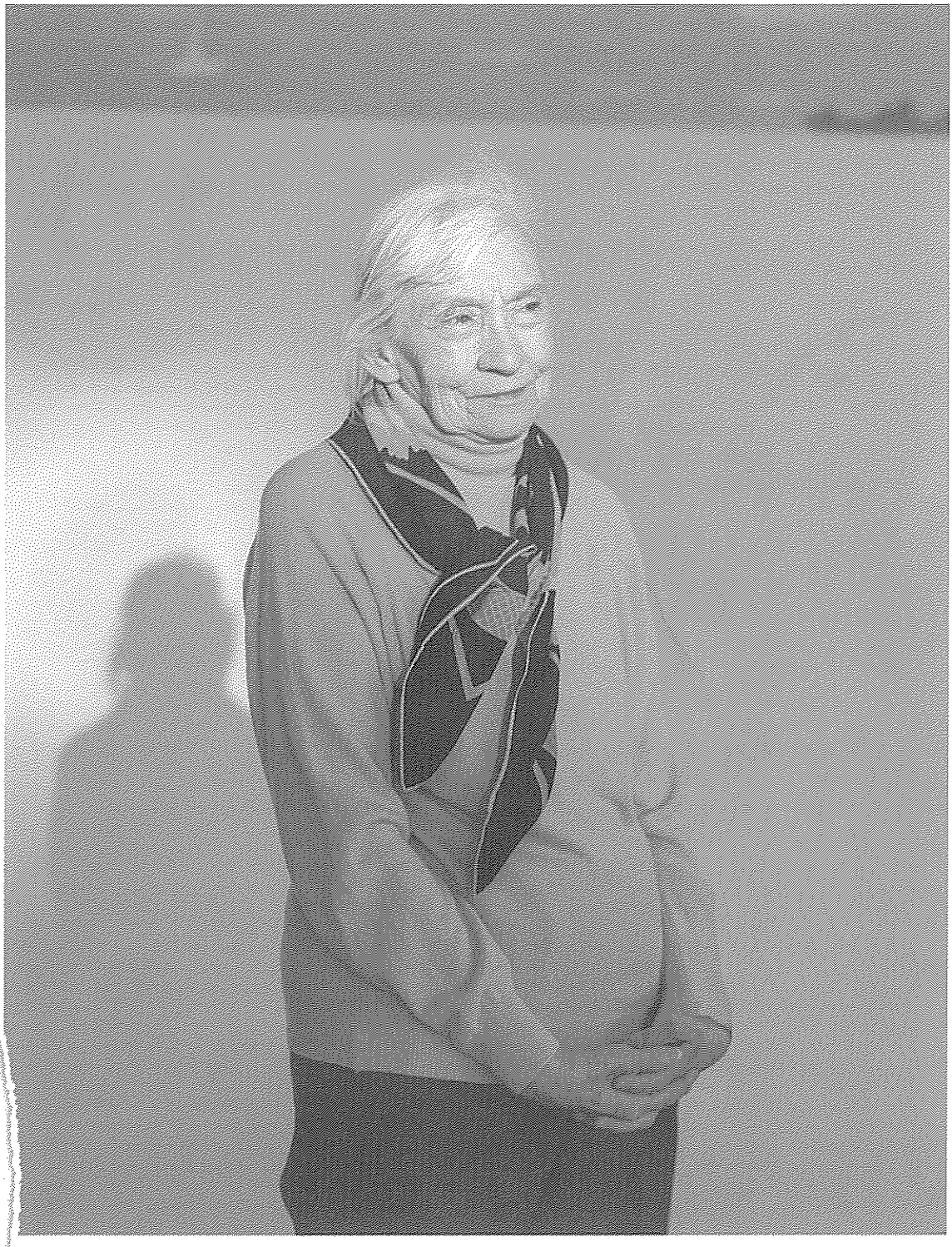
Bernard, an artist in Harlem, Manhattan:
This library has been a sanctuary for many Harlem residents. I belong to a book club: the Harlem Literary Society. I also enjoy the programming of artists and playwrights. The art displayed in the main reading area is gorgeous.

SHELTER FROM THE STORM

Superstorm Sandy was the deadliest hurricane of 2012; a storm surge topping nine feet hit New York City on October 29th. In its aftermath, libraries in heavily affected neighborhoods provided services and support to residents who had no other place to turn.

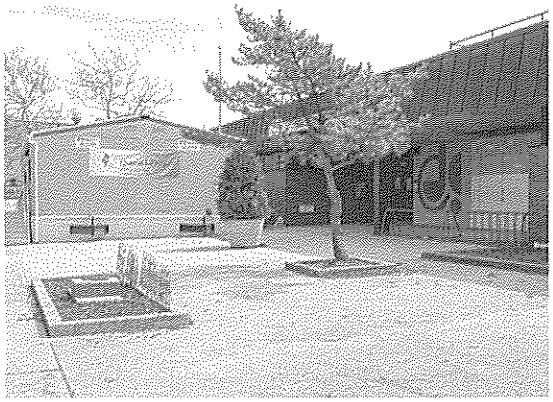
Catherine, a resident of Rockaway Beach, Queens:

What does the library do when a hurricane devastates the entire peninsula? Why you send in the Little Yellow School Bus! You wear your scarves and mittens in the cold and still do the job. At Christmas you bring stuffed animals, a balloon man, and books to keep the children reading. You set up a clothing table and direct people to hot food services, start children's programs, put out games, and help with forms for FEMA. And you do this six days a week for months while the community begins to recover.



Angela, an artist in Brooklyn:
The Far Rockaway Branch was the center for a huge number of people in the Rockaways who were living without electricity, phone service and resources in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. Not only did it function as a shelter and meeting point, but it was a food distribution center with more organization than any other center I found. There were lines around the block each day, and the library staff made sure all the food and supplies were divided into individual-sized portions and that the line moved in an orderly fashion. They not only knew what to do at the library, but they did it immediately and they did it right.

An immigrant in Brooklyn:
People who were affected so badly by the hurricane as we were, came to the Sheepshead Bay Library to restore themselves, attending programs and workshops: art of writing for stress relief, express your emotions through writing, art of positive thinking, some of those programs for our children and not only in English, but Russian and Chinese languages as well.



↑ **The Peninsula Library was destroyed by Superstorm Sandy in October 2012. It currently operates out of a temporary trailer.**

↙ **In the days immediately after Sandy, the Queens Library bus parked in the Rockaways provided resources, assistance, books and entertainment to a community in distress.**

$19 billion
Cost of damages in New York City caused by Superstorm Sandy

2,000,000
Number of New Yorkers without power immediately following the storm

30,000
City residents left homeless after the storm

LIBRARIAN STORIES

Rebecca in the Bronx:

After the storm half of Riverdale was without power, including my branch. My cell phone rang endlessly with calls from my team and the public asking when we could open. I believe that some people kept a watchful eye on the branch, because I received about ten calls telling me that the power was back on and that we could open. When we did open, my team and I welcomed our community with hot coffee, donuts, extra programs for bored children, smiles, outlets for charging devices, internet access, and free Wi-Fi.

A parent in Brooklyn:
When Hurricane Sandy occurred, the Kings Bay Library passed out vouchers for FEMA trying to be of assistance to those who lost homes and other valuable properties. They were trying to be of any assistance they could be.

A resident of Staten Island:
In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, the New Dorp Library staff sorted clothes and helped distribute food to community victims at a local relief center and also organized a financial relief workshop in the library itself.

A resident of Queens:
Arverne Library was hit hard by Sandy, however this did not stop them from being there for the community with coat drives, internet access, and FEMA assistance.

Troy, a GED instructor in Queens:
Arverne Library, though devastated by Hurricane Sandy, provides not just traditional library services to residents but also computers and internet access, training on a wide variety of subjects, help on resume writing and finding a job, GED test preparation, and Microsoft certification. Perhaps [more funding] could help expedite the restoration of the building so that the staff and community can reestablish much-needed programing to a community still crippled by Sandy.

A resident of Brooklyn:
Gerritsen Beach Library does more than lend books and provide free newspapers and internet access. It is an anchor in a neighborhood that was destroyed by Superstorm Sandy. Without this library there is no community, there is no place for residents to gather, talk about the community, and borrow books to take them to far away places.

Paul, a community group representative:
The Red Hook Library was inundated with 18 inches of water during Hurricane Sandy, and was closed for several months following the storm. In spite of its condition, the library was opened up as a warming center during the cold spell that followed the storm, as many Red Hook residents were without heat or electricity, and many more were rendered homeless by the flood.

Alice, a resident of Queens:
Peninsula Library is a tremendous resource to a very damaged community. The staff worked out of an unheated trailer for several weeks. They provided an island of sanity on a peninsula in chaos.

SMART COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

Despite budget cuts and perennially uncertain funding, libraries go above and beyond to serve their patrons. Additional resources would allow them to do even more.

Taneya, a librarian in Brooklyn:

I started my career as a journalist, but never lost my childhood desire to be a teacher, dancer, and an artist. Growing up, I envisioned a space where I could combine these loves with transformative social services—and I do that as a librarian. Malcolm X said the library was his alma mater, and that still resonates today. It's truly the "People's University." We offer hundreds of free resources, and see the tangible results in the community. For example, a winner of our business competition now partners with a local farmer's market to bring affordable healthy food to the neighborhood.

An artist in Sunnyside, Queens:
This library is an important resource. The past couple of years the hours that the library is open has been decreasing, and I believe that this is a detriment to our community. Students, seniors, and the general populace should be able to count on the library to be open seven days a week, and this is just not possible with the current state of library funding.

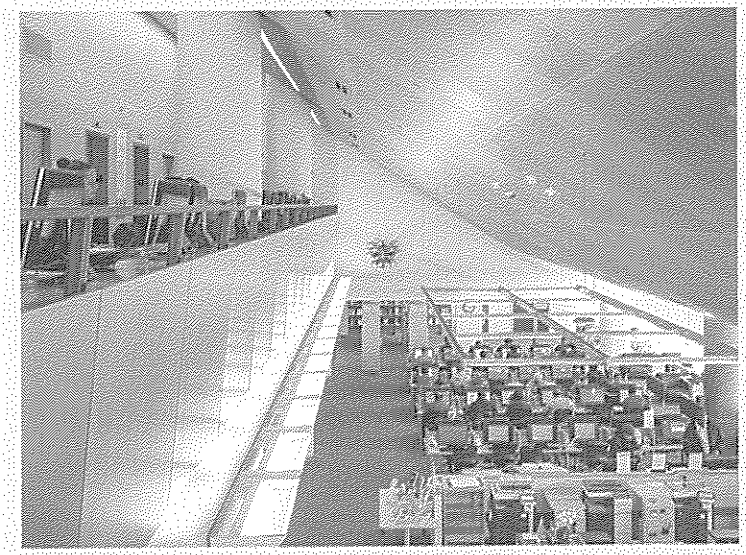
A resident of Harlem, Manhattan:
While this library does what it can, it is very over used, and very under serviced. Many people in the community use this library, and they need new services, more books, and to get a bit more up to date. Many people rely on that library for vital resources, so additional help is absolutely needed.

Clare, a parent in the Bronx:
My children go to the library every day after school to do their homework with classmates. Whenever it rains a lot, the library gets flooded, especially in the children's section. When this happens, arriving families are turned away and this always makes them frustrated and sad. It would be so nice to have funds to make the necessary upgrades for flood prevention.

Mary, a job-seeker in Manhattan:
We have a tiny branch in terms of the physical space but a huge branch in terms of positive impact! Not only does our branch try harder, it does so much with the little it has. More money would open up so many other wonderful possibilities! I know our staff to be hard working and imaginative. More money would enable them to make more of their dreams a reality!

Yomara, a resident of Manhattan:
Spanish Harlem doesn't have the fanciest library branch but they certainly have a lot of visitors stopping by and I know these funds could improve the branch. This is a neighborhood with a high density population, we have blocks and blocks of high rise public housing units. This would be a great place to invest money because it would reach a large number of low-income and working class people and uplift those who need it most.

Susan is the assistant manager of the Peninsula Library, which has not been rebuilt since being destroyed by Sandy a year and a half ago. Despite operating out of a trailer, it's still heavily used by neighborhood residents.



↑59%

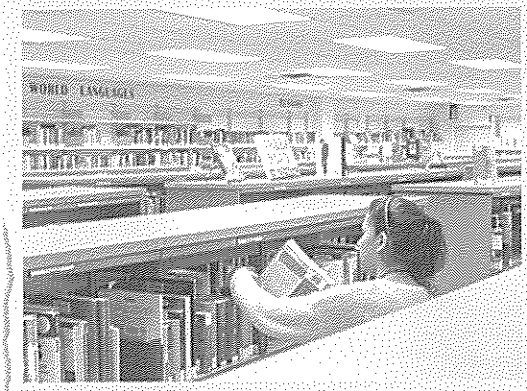
Increase in circulation experienced by New York City libraries from 2002-2011

↑40%

Increase in library program attendance over the same period

↓8%

Decrease in city funding for New York City libraries from 2002-2011



Brynne, a student in Staten Island:
Mrs. Amy and her staff at Tottenville Library are very friendly. They try their best to work with what they have but also have big plans. They decorate the library in many themes throughout the year. When you see all the little kids amazed at how it is decorated you can't help but smile. They are able to turn paper towel rolls into a giant elephant and turn the library into a jungle.

Susan, a parent in Park Slope, Brooklyn:
This library is heavily used and heavily loved by every member of this vibrant neighborhood, yet it clearly does not have the resources it needs and deserves. In the summer its air conditioning system roars ineffectually, and in all seasons it is just too under-furnished for all the people who love to spend time there. Its book selection is strong and thoughtfully assembled, but nowhere near the size and scope its patrons would like and would use. And yet the staff is so generous, so happy to see you, so undaunted in the face of meager resources that they deserve recognition and additional resources!

2013 NYC Neighborhood Library Awards

The inaugural NYC Neighborhood Library Awards recognized ten outstanding branch libraries:

Winners:

Corona Library *Corona, Queens*
Macon Library *Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn*
New Dorp Library *New Dorp, Staten Island*
Seward Park Library *Lower East Side, Manhattan*
Sheepshead Bay Library *Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn*

Finalists:

Aguilar Library *East Harlem, Manhattan*
Kings Bay Library *Sheepshead Bay/Gerritsen Beach, Brooklyn*
Parkchester Library *Parkchester, the Bronx*
Queens Village Library *Queens Village, Queens*
Tremont Library *Claremont/Bathgate, the Bronx*

The winners and finalists were selected by a panel of judges including R.L. Stine, author of the beloved Goosebumps series; Kurt Andersen, author and host of WNYC's Studio 360; Carla Hayden, CEO of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore and former president of the American Library Association; Fatima Shama, former NYC Commissioner of Immigrant Affairs; and Don Weisberg, president of the Penguin Young Readers Group.

Acknowledgments

We gratefully acknowledge Urban Librarians Unite and the Center for an Urban Future for generously contributing librarians' stories and infographics. Many thanks to Brian Lehrer and the staff at WNYC's Brian Lehrer Show for their partnership and support; to the NYC Neighborhood Library Awards judges Kurt Andersen, Carla Hayden, Fatima Shama, R.L. Stine, and Don Weisberg; to philanthropic advisory committee members Andrea Berman, Melissa Berman, Lori McGlinchey, Lisa Philp, Yulian Ramos, Lauren Weisenfeld, and Toya Williford; to the Brooklyn Public Library, New York Public Library, and Queens Library; and to the dedicated Revson staff members and trustees who made this project possible.

More information

If you'd like to learn more about the NYC Neighborhood Library Awards and how you can participate this year, please visit *nyclibraryawards.com*.

For more ways to get involved in supporting New York City's libraries, check out *savenyclibraries.com*.

To find out what's happening at your local library, visit *bklynpubliclibrary.org*, *nypl.org*, or *queenslibrary.org*.

For information on the Charles H. Revson Foundation, visit *revsonfoundation.org*.

Endnotes

Map — Center for an Urban Future, *Branches of Opportunity*, 2013. pp. 4, 26, 44-46

6 — **1,100,000 children attend public schools in New York City**
New York City Department of Education. Apr. 2014. <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/default.htm>.

300,000 children in New York City need a spot in an after-school program
Afterschool Alliance. *Study: New York City Afterschool Participation Far Exceeds National Average, But More Than One in Five City Kids Is Unsupervised in the Afternoons*. 20 Oct. 2010.

#1 New York City libraries are the largest employers of teens in the city
Center for an Urban Future, *Branches of Opportunity*, 2013. p. 22

12 — **998,000 seniors live in New York City**
Center for an Urban Future, *The New Face of New York's Seniors*, 2013. p. 3

35% Expected growth rate of the city's senior population over the next 20 years
Center for an Urban Future, *The New Face of New York's Seniors*, 2013. p. 3

14 — **2/3 of immigrant seniors have limited English proficiency**
Center for an Urban Future, *The New Face of New York's Seniors*, 2013. p. 3

95% of seniors living in NYCHA housing lack broadband Internet access at home
Center for an Urban Future, *Branches of Opportunity*, 2013. p. 19
(Based on a 2010 study by the Center for Technology and Government at SUNY Albany)

19 — **3,000,000 immigrants live in NYC**
NYC Department of City Planning, *The Newest New Yorkers: Characteristics of the City's Foreign-born Population 2013 Edition*. Dec. 2013. p. 3

60% of city residents are either immigrants or children of immigrants
NYC Department of City Planning, *The Newest New Yorkers: Characteristics of the City's Foreign-born Population 2013 Edition*. Dec. 2013. p. 198

23% of NYC residents are not English proficient
NYC Department of City Planning, *The Newest New Yorkers: Characteristics of the City's Foreign-born Population 2013 Edition*. Dec. 2013. p. 101

22 — **321,000 New Yorkers are unemployed**
New York State Department of Labor, *Labor Force and Unemployment Data*, Apr. 2014.

2,900,000 city residents lack broadband Internet access at home
Center for an Urban Future, *Branches of Opportunity*, 2013. p. 19
(Based on a 2010 study by the Center for Technology and Government at SUNY Albany)

9,300,000 computer sessions were logged by patrons in NYC libraries in 2011
Center for an Urban Future, *Branches of Opportunity*, 2013. p. 4

62% increase in computer sessions logged by patrons of NYC libraries between 2007-2011
Center for an Urban Future, *Branches of Opportunity*, 2013. p. 6

28 — **94% of Americans say that having a public library improves the quality of life in a community**
Pew Research Center, *How Americans Value Public Libraries in Their Communities*. Dec. 2013.

32 — **179% increase in e-book checkouts across all three library systems in 2011**
Center for an Urban Future, *Branches of Opportunity*, 2013. p. 10

69,000,000 items circulated in NYC's libraries in 2011
Center for an Urban Future, *Branches of Opportunity*, 2013. p. 4

33 — **1,500,000 low-literacy adults live in New York City**
New York City Coalition for Adult Literacy. Apr. 2014. <http://www.unhny.org/programs-and-issues/new-york-coalition-for-adult-literacy>

36 — **$19 billion in damage caused by Superstorm Sandy**
Kia Gregory and Marc Santora, "Bloomberg Outlines $20 Billion Storm Protection Plan." *The New York Times*, 11 June 2013.

2,000,000 New Yorkers were without power immediately following the storm
Deputy Mayors Linda Gibbs and Caswell Holloway, *NYC Hurricane Sandy After Action Report*. May 2013. p. 12

30,000 city residents left homeless after the storm
Michael Schwirtz, "Housing Nightmare Looms in Wake of Storm." *The New York Times*, 04 Nov. 2012.

41 — **From 2002-2011 NYC libraries experienced:**
59% increase in circulation
40% increase in program attendance
8% decrease in city funding
Center for an Urban Future, *Branches of Opportunity*, 2013. p. 5

New Yorkers from the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Staten Island and Queens share what they love about their neighborhood libraries

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☑ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: DARIUS RAMOS
Address: 837 VAN DUZER ST. STATEN ISLAND
I represent: STAPLETON BRANCH
Address: CANAL STREET

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JULIE SANDORF
Address: 55 E 59th St. NYC 10022
I represent: Charles H. Revson Foundation
Address: Same as above

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☑ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/10/2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: LISA GOLDSTEIN
Address: Washington Heights Library
I represent: NYPL
Address: 1000 St Nicholas Ave

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/10/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Tony Marx

Address: New York Public Library

I represent: 42nd Street & 5th Ave

Address:

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 10 Dec 2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: C. M. PYLE

Address: 470 West End Ave NY 10024

I represent: Scholarship

Address:

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: SANFORD M. COHEN

Address:

I represent: Dep't of Citywide Administrative Services

Address: 1 Centre Street

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/1/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: LINDA JOHNSON

Address:

I represent: BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Address: 10 GRAND ARMY PLAZA BKLYN, NY

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date:

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sen Velmanette Montgomery

Address: 30 Third Ave, Rm 207

I represent:

Address:

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date:

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Georgia Pestana

Address: 100 Church

I represent: Law Department

Address: 100 Church

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Both- Library Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Yuki Endo 11372

Address: 93-05 37 Av 5A Jackson Heights

I represent: Citizen Defending Libraries

Address: Long Island Bus Riders Union

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 448 _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: DEC 10 2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CHRISTABEL GOUGH

Address: 45 CHRISTOPHER ST NY NY 10014

I represent: SOCIETY FOR THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE CITY

Address: 45 CHRISTOPHER ST NY NY 10014

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Christine Zabriskie

Address: 46-46 45th St

I represent: Urban Librarians United

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/10/2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Veronika Conant

Address: 45 W 54 St, 7C, New York, NY 10019

I represent: Committee to Save the NYPL

Address:

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

Protect Libraries

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 12/10/2014 (1:06PM)

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michael D. D White

Address: 62 Montague Street

I represent: Citizens Defending Libraries

Address: Peter

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: RAMON ACEVEDO

Address: 320-57St St BKLYN

I represent: Village of Sunset Park

Address: SAME

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 10 Dec. 2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JACOB MORRIS

Address: 160 W 96 ST. NYC

I represent: _____

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CHARLES WERNER

Address: 210 W. 106

I represent: Com to Save NYPL

Address: _____

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jonathan Bowles

Address: _____

I represent: Center for an Urban Future

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Nefrititi Matos
Address: ~~New York~~ 40 W. 20th St., NY NY
I represent: New York Public Library
Address: " "

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: Dec. 10, 2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Elizabeth A. R. Brown
Address: 166 W. 86th St. PH 4
I represent: NYPC Committee to Save
Address: 42nd St.

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Chancy Fleet
Address: _____
I represent: New York Public Library - Heistell Library Staff
Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Bridget Quinn-Carey

Address: _____

I represent: Queens Library

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: David Giles & Jonathan Bowles

Address: _____

I represent: Center for an Urban Future

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Patricia Rettles

Address: 1396 Clove Rd SI NY 10301

I represent: Port Richmond Library - NYPL

Address: 75 Bennett St. SI NY 10302

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lucy Koteen

Address: 138 Lafayette Av, Brooklyn 11238

I represent: Me

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms