

The Library Leader

San Francisco Public Library Annual Report Fiscal Year 2019–2020

eLibrary Interest Explodes

With Covid Shutdown, Library Pivots to Provide Digital Access

From the moment San Francisco went into shelter-in-place mode in March, usage of the Library’s eResources skyrocketed. While stuck at home, residents made good use of the Library’s rich and varied collection of online resources, from streaming movies to music and magazines to books.

As Electronic Resources Librarian Daniel Matsumoto was quoted as saying in an [article about the upswing in eCirculation](#) that appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, “During the last two weeks of March we were getting 80 to 100 e-card requests a day. These are people who did not have regular library cards. They are surprised that the library is open, and even more surprised when they get online and realize there is so much content available.”

Overall, eResource usage has jumped 63 percent this year with some electronic resources increasing even more. Kanopy, the Library’s free streaming service for classic movies, documentaries and independent films, has seen its usage increase 105 percent. Hoopla, another streaming platform for movies, music and books for all ages, has seen its checkouts jump 84 percent. From Van Halen to the *Hamilton* soundtrack, folks are listening to what they like from the library more than ever.

As people turn to the library to save money, they are catching up on their magazine reading online thanks to Flipster and RBDigital, where they can read everything from *Vogue* to *Dogster*. And the always popular eBook providers like Overdrive, Axis360 and

SimplyE grew 50–100 percent or more in usage.

For those without library cards before the closures started, SFPL pivoted to a [quick access model](#) that enabled any San Francisco resident to obtain an eCard online so they, too, could enjoy the Library’s wide selection of electronic resources. From spring to fall, some 13,500 new library cardholders were added to SFPL’s users via the online application. And that interest remains strong, with some 50 to 70 new library card holders added every day.

ScholarCard, SFPL’s effort to make sure all pre-K–12th grade students have library cards, also brought immediate access to students during the pandemic. While in the past students needed to visit the library

SF public schools @SFUnified · Sep 2
This week @SFPublicLibrary emailed library card numbers to all SFUSD students! @sfusd_libraries is working with teachers to help students activate their cards, check out eBooks, place holds on print books & more. [sfpl.org/books-and-medi...](#)



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to access their library account, SFPL granted electronic access immediately, helping to support distance learning for 61,000 San Francisco Unified School District students as well as thousands more independent school students who reached out via their school librarians.

Those students are making great use of all the Library’s eBook, music and movie resources as well as Brainfuse, the Library’s live online homework help service, plus the vast array on online encyclopedias, dictionaries, biographies, math and reading practice resources and more. ■

Library Steps Up in City’s Time of Need

As employees of the City and County of San Francisco, all Library staff are required to work as a Disaster Service Worker to serve in a variety of capacities to support the City and its citizens in a time of extraordinary need. The last major crisis faced by the City was the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, but that does not compare to the arrival of the coronavirus, which instigated the largest disaster service response in the City’s history.

With the closure of our buildings, many staff found themselves furloughed; however, soon they were reassigned to various roles supporting all facets of the City’s disaster response.



SFPL staff at the SF-Marin Food Bank.

“A lot of people in SF are in need right now of basic food items and it feels good to be helping the SF Marin Food Bank meet this need... As a librarian I try to help people and I am glad for the opportunity to continue.”

— Casey Crumpacker, Eureka Valley/Harvey Milk Memorial Branch Manager

As Jen Woo was quoted as saying in a [May 13, 2020 article](#) in the *San Francisco Chronicle* by Sam Whiting, “One day, I am an adult services librarian at the West Portal branch. The next day, I am working in food prep, packing bags and boxes.”

This summer, fully half of all library workers were deployed as Disaster Service Workers to distribute food at food pantries; serve as monitors at hotels sheltering unhoused individuals and at testing sites; [perform contact tracing investigations](#) to help contain the spread of COVID-19; conduct community outreach to ensure that all communities were informed on the dangers of the virus and preventative measures; support the Covid Command Center’s communications and draft health guidance documents for the Department of Public Health,



George Tran packs 3-D printed face shields for distribution at local hospitals.

among other tasks. Staff from The Bridge, Information Technology department and Mobile Outreach Services even commandeered the Library’s 3D printers to produce face masks for the City’s frontline workers. “SFPL has been a tremendous partner in the City’s COVID-19 response.



Librarian Lisa Fagundes hard at work as a contact tracer.

From contact tracing to community outreach to monitoring test sites and hotels, library staff have made important contributions throughout the pandemic and we are grateful for their service,” said Dr. Grant Colfax, director of the Department of Public Health. ■

The Show Must Go On! Storytimes Continue Despite Library Closure

San Francisco Public Library Youth Services team pivoted fast after the shutdown to ensure that the Library’s beloved storytimes could continue to entertain and educate early learners, and let’s be honest, also provide a little break for parents and caregivers juggling work and childcare.

The Library’s Media Services team turned the reading room in the Main’s Children Center into a mini TV studio,

accounting for social distancing and other safety measures that would enable storytellers to be filmed safely. Librarians, working remotely, also set up their own home studios to record storytimes.

Sweet Stories debuted on April 7, 2020 on [Instagram TV \(IGTV\)](#) and quickly grew from a three-day-a-week broadcast airing on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2 p.m. and Saturdays at 11 a.m. to a daily program accessible on Instagram and [YouTube](#).



Mayor London N. Breed. Photo by Michael-Vincent D’Anella-Mercanti.

“We missed families as much as they missed us,” said Youth Services Librarian and Sweet Stories program manager Maricela Leon-Barrera. “Our hope was to bring them something joyful and comforting during a time of great uncertainty. Sweet Stories is that, a short and sweet reminder that we are with them despite any distance.”

[Continued on A3](#)

A Night to Remember	.....A2	Summer Interns Step Up	.....B2
SFPL Goes Fabulously Fine Free	.....A2	The I Love My Librarian Award goes to...	.....B3
Library Spreads the Love of Reading at Mayor’s Annual Toy & Book Festival	.....A2	2019 Library of the Year Winner	.....B3
New Virtual Library Lets Patrons #LibraryfromHome	.....A3	Top 10 Circulated eBooks and eAudiobooks	.....B3
From Drab to Fab — sfpl.org Gets a Makeover	.....A3	Advancing Racial Equity at the Library and Beyond	.....B4
Dear Susan	.....A3	Questionable Questions	.....C1
One City One Book Events Draw Record Crowds	.....B1	Our Sponsors	.....C1
VOWS: Reunited and It Feels So Good	.....B2	Letter from the City Librarian	.....D1
Summer Stride Celebrates the Outdoors	.....B2	Fiscal Year 2020 Budget	.....D2

A Night to Remember



The Atrium was the starting point for a series of roving performances over the course of the evening including circus artists, DJ sets, drag performances and music. Photo by Alexander Kim.

More than 5,200 revelers from all corners of the Bay Area, and even as far as Portland, Oregon, flocked to the Main Library on February 1, 2020 to enjoy the City's [second Night of Ideas](#). Once again, San Francisco Public Library joined forces with the French Consulate in San Francisco, KQED and SFMOMA to produce an unforgettable FREE seven-hour marathon of debates, keynotes, panels, performances, screenings, music and a special live broadcast of KQED's Forum. This year's interactive format

was designed to spur dialogue and participation on the 2020 theme *Living on the Edge*, an adaptation of the international theme *Être vivant*.

The day after the event, Children's Librarian Jim Jeske reported that he encountered three completely different families who all said they attended Night of Ideas, and it was either their first time in the library or their first time seeing our wonderful Main Children's Center. They all came back the next day with kids in tow to explore

and said that if it were not for Night of Ideas, they never would have thought to come down.

Night of Ideas 2020 was made possible by the support of the City and County of San Francisco, the Friends of the San Francisco Public Library, 836M, Cultural and Scientific Services of the French Embassy in the United States, the French American Cultural Society, the Institut Français, French bee, Microsoft and the Open Society Foundations. •



Live broadcast of KQED's Forum with Mina Kim.

One of the biggest draws of the night was the live two-hour broadcast of KQED's Forum with host Mina Kim. The first segment was dedicated to a discussion on how living in constant chaos can affect us and the second part focused on how to channel disorder into creative endeavors.



Climate and social justice activist Isha Clarke.



Idris Ackamoor and The Pyramids.



Nicki Jizz performs with Drag Alive.

SFPL Goes Fabulously Fine Free



On September 16, 2019, SFPL had exciting news to share: it eliminated overdue fines for all Library patrons, a monumental step in reducing barriers and living up to its commitment to free and equal access to its communities! In addition, the Library erased all outstanding overdue fines from patrons' records, thereby restoring access to many patrons who have need of the Library's resources.

Nationwide, elimination of overdue fines in libraries had several positive outcomes:

- Increased patron access to materials and services
- Reduction of the inequitable impact of overdue fines
- Improved patron relationships with their library
- Optimization of library staff time and increased staff efficiency

This move was made possible through [SFPL's partnership and work with the San Francisco Financial Justice Project of the Treasurer's Office](#). The two resolutions went before the Board

[Continued on A3](#)

"Your efforts at inclusiveness of our whole community, not just some of us, is an ongoing inspiration. (Am very clear that this requires a whole lot of wisdom and on-going hard work for the staff from top to bottom.)"

—Linda Morrow, patron

COMMUNITY

Library Spreads the Love of Reading at Mayor's Annual Toy & Book Festival



SFPL holiday elves get ready to distribute free books.



Happy attendees show off their free books.

"We hope that the sense of joy this event generates inspires children and their families to read together and to create more happy memories with San Francisco Public Library."

—City Librarian Michael Lambert

Mayor London N. Breed and the San Francisco Department of Child Support Services, together with the San Francisco Fire Fighters Union Local 798 and San Francisco Public Library, hosted the 11th Children's Toy & Book Festival at City Hall on Wednesday, December 4, 2019.

During the event, City Librarian Michael Lambert and staff from Community Programs and Partnerships, Collections and Technical Services, Human Resources and our branches, spread book joy

to more than 1200 San Francisco children, including classes from SFUSD elementary schools, family childcares, preschool groups and families from Wu Yee Children's Services. The Circulation Team ordered a gorgeous collection of books for ages birth to 5th grade to get children started on their home library.

"Each year, we look forward to joining with our City colleagues in ensuring that everyone in our community gets to experience some holiday cheer and to seeing the beaming faces of the children when they get to pick out their books," stated City Librarian Michael Lambert. •

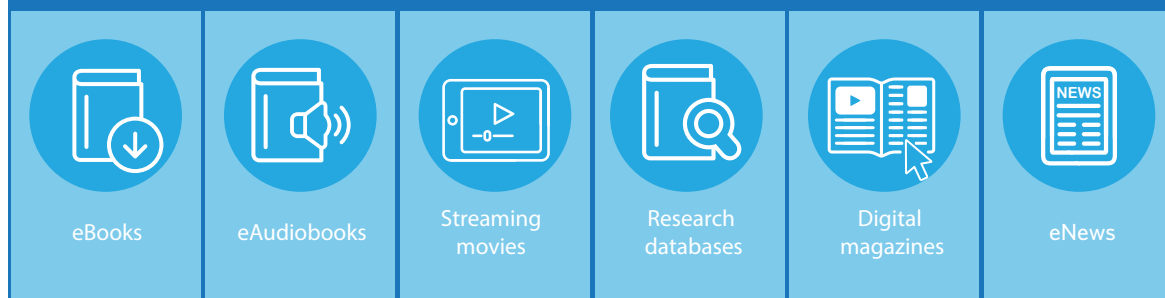
The BRIDGE at Main
LEARNING RESOURCES + CLASSES + PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP

FOG READERS

THE MIX AT SFPL

New Virtual Library Lets Patrons #LibraryfromHome

Enjoy your library at home



When the Library closed its doors in March 2020 in response to the COVID public health emergency, we moved swiftly to support our patrons who immediately needed access to our vast online resources. Enter the SFPL Virtual Library sites. Some of the most essential Library resources were bundled up into one-stop sites for [adults](#), [teens](#) and [youth](#). Each Virtual

Library features hand-curated, easy-to-find eResources, book and film lists, event listings and YouTube videos. Since the closure, the Virtual Libraries have received almost 6,000 site visits. One important benefit of our Virtual Libraries is that they are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, guaranteeing access around the clock.

Additionally, our teams mobilized to set up and provide temporary digital access cards to SF residents, City and County of San Francisco employees and City College students. Over 13,500 people have signed up for a digital access card, allowing us to provide virtual services and resources to new patrons even while our doors are closed. ■

Continued from A2

SFPL Goes Fabulously Fine Free

of Supervisors and the Mayor for adoption through the City's Fiscal Year 2019-2020 budget process. The City budget was signed by Mayor London Breed in August, paving the way for the Library to take final steps in the process of eliminating fines, clearing outstanding fines from patron records and restoring accounts that had been suspended because they had reached the maximum limit on overdue fines—making San Francisco Public Library even more fabulous than before.

Here's what our patrons had to say about going Fine Free.

"FAN-TAS-TIC! Thank you for the wonderful news. Was a fan of SF Public Library before, and love you even more now..."

—Andrea Klose

"I usually don't do this sort of thing but I gotta say, 'Bravo!' That is an awesome and inspiring act so sorely needed in our world today. On behalf of library patrons and indeed people everywhere looking for a little bit of bright in a shady world, thank you."

—Patrick Santanelli

"Thank you, thank you! It is wonderful to belong to such a wonderful institution as the San Francisco Public Library. I have never had many fines and have always loved your service, but your decision shows that once again San Francisco is at the forefront of what matters in the world."

—Peggy Schaller



"This library has real energy. It has real passion. They move quickly on initiatives and they say 'yes'... The SFPL is nimble, creative, and always inclined to find a way to make things happen."

—Author Dave Eggers
(from his letter of support for SFPL's nomination for Gale/Library Journal 2018 Library of the Year)

Continued from page A1

Storytimes Continue Despite Library Closure

Each episode recreated the magic of the Library's in-person storytimes, complete with our much-loved sing-alongs. As Leon-Barrera explains, "While families may find these as a respite in their day, our storytimes are also designed to help parents engage in the early learning development of their children by modeling songs and rhymes that they are encouraged to repeat. We also make a point of embedding early literacy tips in the delivery."

As the program developed, the Saturday broadcast became *Sweet Stories en Español* to help address the lack of programming for Spanish-speaking households, and episodes in Mandarin and Cantonese were also added. A number of high-profile guests participated in Sweet Stories: Mayor London N. Breed, Supervisor Aaron Peskin, City Assessor Carmen Chu, award-winning author Dave Eggers, City Librarian Michael Lambert, Recreation & Park General Manager Phil Ginsburg, Director of the Department of Children, Youth



Librarian and Sweet Stories Host Joseph Ferrar.

& Their Families Maria Su, artist Innosanto Nagara, Pistahan Festival Hermana Mayor Marjan Philhour and drag performer extraordinaire Per Sia.

But the real celebrities were the librarians who were greatly missed by the community: Angela Moffett, Anna Cvitkovic, Cristina Mitra, Elizabeth

Perez, Eve Bekker, Ileana Pulu, Janine Mogannam, Jim Jeske, Joseph Ferrer, Lissette Gonzalez, Lynne Maes, Maricela Leon-Barrera, Mei Hung, Meredith Steiner, Michelle Waddy, Molly McCall, Morgan McGuire, Nicole Termini-Germain and Sherilyn Connelly.

In total, the Library recorded 64 episodes of Sweet Stories, almost 11 hours of content (or free time for caregivers, depending on how one looks at it). Sweet Stories received 60,596 combined views on IGTV and YouTube.

Sweet Stories continues to evolve in this new environment. Instead of pre-recorded content, storytimes are now recorded on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11 a.m. and broadcast on Facebook Live. Patrons do not need to have a Facebook account to view the stories. As more youth librarians return to work, additional live storytimes will be added during the week so that the public can reconnect with their favorite librarians once again. ■

FASHION

From Drab to Fab — SFPL.org Gets a Makeover



According to Chief Information Officer Michael Liang, "The new site boasts greater functionality and accessibility through a modern, graphics-forward interface. Type, buttons and icons are larger and easier to read. Fresh photos and banner images showcase SFPL as a modern, forward-looking institution."

In January 2020, San Francisco Public Library unveiled its redesigned website, [sfpl.org](#). This update represented the first major revision to the Library's site since 2010.

The new [sfpl.org](#) preserves many of the previous site's popular features, such as the catalog search bar at the top of the homepage, toggles to the Spanish and Chinese translations of the site and a carousel of exciting events and programs.

The redesign also enables flexibility to nimbly create webpages that our communities need, including robust landing pages for [Summer Stride](#), our [STEM Challenge Yo'Self Series](#) and [Nature Boost Series](#). ■



Dear Susan

What we gain by preserving the present

Dear Susan: I'm grappling with how we, as a society, will be able to explain this extraordinary time to future generations. Please help.

—STUCK INSIDE IN SF

Dear Stuck: It's true, we often don't fully grasp the significance of the current events that shape us and our city, but when we look back at images and documents, we get a sense of what we lived through and its historic legacy. It's a good thing that San Francisco Public Library thinks about these things for us so that we don't have to.

Located in the Main Library, the San Francisco History Center is the repository of the City's collective memory. Right now, the Center is actively archiving all types of materials, in multiple formats, to build a collection that documents and preserves the collective experiences of San Francisco residents in the coronavirus era.

They want to know what is happening to you, your neighborhood, your schools and your workplaces. I suggest you channel your anxieties by putting on your archivist's hat and help them capture what is different in our world today, what we miss, what we've created to reflect our new reality and how we

are communicating and living now. The kinds of items they're looking for include photographs, blog posts, video or audio recordings, notices, signs or posters, including government notices or signs from private businesses, personal correspondence such as letters, emails or postcards, community newspapers and personal journal entries. You should also go ahead and send documentation about protests for racial equity and the horrible wildfires too. It's all part of our world today, and we need multiple perspectives to tell the story about what we are living through.

All submissions will be preserved in the City's official COVID-19 Community Time Capsule to be shared with the public, as well as remain in the City and County Archives of San Francisco (part of the [San Francisco History Center](#)), for long term preservation. If you are interested in sharing digital content, there is a submission form [on their website](#).

I hope you consider sharing your experience with the Library. Perhaps you can start with this letter?

Sincerely,
Susan Goldstein,
the City Archivist for San Francisco

One City One Book Events Draw Record Crowds



Tommy Orange and Kim Shuck discuss *There There* at the Koret Auditorium.

It was standing room only and then some for award-winning author Tommy Orange's One City One Book conversation with Poet Laureate Kim Shuck on October 16, 2019. Crowds tested the maximum capacity of the Main's Koret Auditorium and the Latino Room to hear Orange (Cheyenne and Arapaho) discuss his debut novel, *There There*, which depicts the urban Native American experience in the Bay Area past and present.

"Public programs like these are part of the solution, a more visible community is part of the solution. Our neighbors need to see us as more than remnants, more than visual shorthand for the past."
—SF Poet Laureate Kim Shuck

"The library experienced an incredible energy hosting Tommy Orange, a proud, contemporary, Native voice. He connected so much with our varied communities, speaking to a more universal experience, drawing an incredibly diverse audience to all of our One City One Book programs," said Community Engagement Manager Alejandro Gallegos.

The book proved to be a timely and extremely popular choice for the City's 15th annual One City One Book literary celebration, which happened to coincide with an unprecedented confluence of significant anniversaries and events: the 50th Anniversary of the Occupation of Alcatraz, the anniversary of the City's first Indigenous Peoples Day, the anniversary of the removal of the racist *Early Days* sculpture from the Civic Center and an ambitious first-ever citywide American Indian Initiative celebrating the contributions of local Indigenous Peoples, organized by the San Francisco Arts Commission (SFAC).

For three months, the Library joined local Indigenous organizations and cultural institutions throughout the City in presenting public programs

honoring Native Peoples and commemorating the Occupation of Alcatraz, many of them drawing record crowds. In addition to the October 16 talk, [Orange made appearances at City College](#), Oakland Museum of California and June Jordan High School, where he spoke with aspiring young writers. The Library hosted 13 book groups and a wide array of public programs for all ages.

Patrons enjoyed **Landless in the Bay Area**, an intimate discussion with leaders of traditional Bay Area territories about historical and

women. The Library partnered with the National Park Service to present **Alcatraz Is Not an Island**, featuring Historian Eloy Martinez (original occupier), Hawk (James) Lowden of the Hoopa Valley Tribe and a National Park Service Ranger who told the story of the Occupation.

For youth, Park Rangers provided a fun-filled storytime of traditional Ohlone tales about animals and plants that still live in the Presidio. Young patrons participated in **Growing Your Roots: Ohlone Ethnobiology**, a program about traditional uses of



Danza Azteca Mixcoatl Anahuac perform in the Main Children's Center.

contemporary events that have left them landless and without federal recognition. Another standing-room only event included **Untold and Intimate Stories of the Alcatraz Occupation**, in which participants were given a rare glimpse of photos taken during the Occupation and an opportunity to listen to a group of original occupiers tell their rich stories of organizing and living on Alcatraz. **Ancestral Ink**, a panel of four female Indigenous knowledge keepers, shared the history, tradition and revitalization of tattoo practices among Indigenous

California plants still growing wild in the Presidio, and **Ohlone Games**, which introduced them to the culture and history of San Francisco's original inhabitants.

"We're so proud that SFPL provided opportunities for Native people to engage with each other and with the Library," according to Community Engagement Coordinator Anissa Malady. "It was a truly community-driven experience, demonstrated by the ownership of this programming by the Native communities we worked hard to reach."



Ancestral Ink panelists: Heidi Lucero (Acjachemen and Mutsun Ohlone), Sage LaPena (Nomtipom Wintu), Carolyn Kual'i (Hawaiian/Apache), Tiffany Adams (Chemehuevi Indian Tribe of Lake Havasu, Konkow and Nisenan of Northern California), L. Frank Manriquez (Tongva-Acjachemen) and Cece Carpio (daughter of the Philippines).



Landless in the Bay Area panelists: Moderated by Julian Brave NoiseCat (Canin Lake Band Tsqescen), Ruth Orta (Ohlone/Bay Miwok/Plains Miwok), Corrina Gould (Confederated Villages of Lisjan) and Jonathan Cordero (Ramaytush Ohlone).

The Main Library hosted six distinct exhibits:

- **The Continuous Thread: Celebrating Our Interwoven Histories, Identities and Contributions**, a small selection of photographic works by Hulleah Tsihnahnjinnie, Jean Melesaine and Britt Bradley of the Bay Area Indigenous community, presented in partnership with the SFAC;
- **Occupy Alcatraz!**, an exhibit by the SF History Center of materials from the Alcatraz Indian Occupation collection, donated to SFPL by Indians of All Tribes in 1972;
- San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection presented **All That Glitters Is Not Gold**, displaying works by artist Kaytea Petro alongside previously unreleased images of the Occupation;
- **Before the Occupation: A Brief History of Native Americans at Alcatraz Federal Penitentiary**, which illustrated events and controversies between the federal government and Native Americans that led up to the Occupation;
- **The Native Reclamation of Alcatraz Island, 1969**, featuring news from daily newspapers and the underground press of the Native American Occupation.
- Curated by the SFAC, **Reclaiming Space: Projected Portraits of the American Indian Community**, projected portraits of contemporary members of the local Indigenous community by Melesaine were projected onto the facade of the Main Library for one week.



Shoshone Bannock member Dr. LaNada War Jack shares her story of the Occupation of Alcatraz alongside, Ruth Orta (Ohlone/Bay Miwok, Plains Miwok) and Eloy Martínez (Southern Ute).

San Francisco Poet Laureate Kim Shuck (Tsalagi) summed up the significance of the Library's 2019 First Person celebration and citywide American Indian Initiative as follows: "Although Indigenous Peoples make appearances in public art in San Francisco, contemporary Native people are rarely visible in this city. The San Francisco Bay Area has one of the largest and most varied Western Hemispheric populations and yet we still hear ignorant and miseducated comments about 'looking Indian' or our low numbers making us inconsequential." ■



VOWS: Reunited and It Feels So Good

It's a tale as old as time. A love story for the ages. Proof that absence truly does make the heart grow fonder.



District 11 Supervisor Ahsha Safai and City Librarian Michael Lambert at the Excelsior Branch.



Merced Branch Library staff celebrated the launch of SFPL To Go services on September 1, 2020.

After five months apart, San Francisco Public Library was pleased to reunite with its beloved library patrons. On Monday, August 10, and Tuesday, August 11, the Library renewed its vow to provide libraries for all with [SEPL To Go](#), its front door service.

Patrons reported being “overwhelmed with emotion” in resuming their long-lost love for libraries. Plus, there were many happy returns as library lovers

celebrated the reopening of book drops to return the library items they had held on to since March.

“After months of planning and preparing, *SFPL To Go*'s opening day was an important milestone in the City's reopening,” said Chief of Main Tom Fortin. “Staff worked so hard to create a friendly and welcoming environment for our patrons while adhering to public health guidelines.

“Our branch libraries play such an important role in our neighborhoods,” stated Chief of Branches Cathy Delneo. “While our buildings remain closed to the public, *SFPL To Go* enables us to continue to stay connected with our community and support them during this difficult time.”

It was great to see our patrons at our door and to be able to deliver and receive books once again.”

Led by the Main and Branches division, the libraries were bedecked with rainbow-colored social distancing markers and colorful heart-shaped sunglass signs to celebrate the summer's return to library service.

While it was a long road to reach *SFPL To Go*, the Library followed the latest



SFPL partnered with SFUSD to provide *SFPL To Go*, Pop-Up Pick-Up services at three school locations in San Francisco. Treasure Island also boasts a bookmobile site.

public health guidance and developed safety protocols for contact-free library service aimed at protecting staff while also ensuring the safety of library patrons. Library patrons may now request books, DVDs, CDs and other physical materials. Once the items are available, patrons are notified and can pick up their items at the libraries' doors.

Since that August opening, the Library

has continued to open more branches for front door service every month and is now offering *SFPL To Go*, a Pop-Up Pick-Up service with the bookmobile at three SFUSD school sites: Jose Ortega Elementary School, Willie Brown Jr. Middle School and John O'Connell High School.

Hundreds of patrons are visiting each branch every day. It's fabulous to see everyone again. ■

Summer Stride Celebrates the Outdoors



StoryWalks at the Presidio Promenade.

[Summer looked very different this year](#), but our goals remained the same: [to get everyone reading and learning this summer](#), combined with a little more outdoor time instead of in-the-library time.

“While our brick and mortar locations were closed, we were proud to offer caregivers, youth and adults a wide array of programming that can be accessed from the safety of their own home. At the same time, we wanted to encourage families to take advantage of the restorative benefits of being in nature,” said Christy Estrovitz, Youth Services Manager.

We increased our eBook collection to provide even more fantastic books, designed a new virtual library to keep everyone up to date and developed online programs for kids and adults. More than 15,000 viewers took part in our [summer class and program offerings online](#).

To help students keep reading, the Library sent every SFUSD student a printed Summer Stride tracker and book list of great reads by grade level.

SFPL partnered for the seventh year with Chronicle Books to commission original art from Alison Farrell, inspired by her 2019 book, *The Hike*, informed by her previous years living in the Outer Sunset and love of the natural world. This was the perfect pairing for our collaboration with SF Recreation & Parks, Parks Alliance, National Park Service, Presidio Trust and Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy. To celebrate Golden



A little patron proudly shows off her completed Summer Stride Tracker.

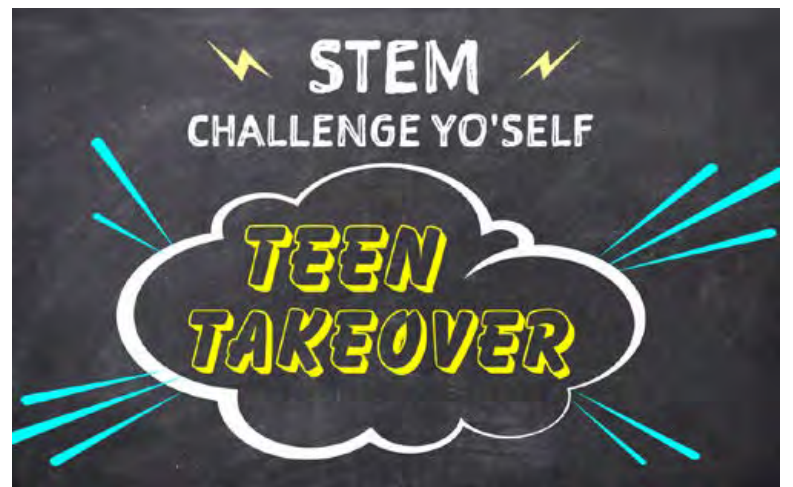
Gate Park's 150th Anniversary, the activity tracker was fashioned as a walk, run or cycle adventure through the Park's treasures, beginning in the Panhandle and finishing at an Ocean Beach sunset. It is a San Francisco nature lover's delight.

“We are grateful for our fifth year of partnership with the National Park Service and Golden Gate Parks Conservancy to offer a weekly *Nature Boost* program,” added Estrovitz. “We stood together to keep students exercising their minds and bodies to combat the COVID slide. Free access to books, nature and the majestic outdoors is crucial for a healthy San Francisco.”

Additionally, beloved StoryWalks were back for another year as an extra-special treat for urban hikers enjoying their local oases. Pages from children's books were put on signs and sprinkled along a trail. Thanks to our partners, there were two books and three different hikes to explore, *The Hike* by Alison Farrell along the Presidio Promenade and Lands End Coastal Trail, and *I Wrote You a Note* by Lizi Boyd at Mountain Lake.

New this year, participants could track their reading and learning time on Beanstack, an online platform accessed from a computer or mobile device. More than 6,500 avid readers entered more than 4.4 million minutes spent reading on the Beanstack tracker this year. ■

Summer Interns Step Up to Help Their Community During Shutdown



Our 2020 Youth Engaging in Library Leadership (YELL) summer internship program went completely virtual! In June and July, 29 intrepid teens worked closely under the guidance of SFPL staff to execute two successful Community Impact Projects to help youth and their families and seniors in San Francisco and beyond—all from their virtual desks—changing both the lives of others, as well as their own.

Two-thirds of the YELL members were on [Team STEM Challenge](#). They brainstormed and developed engaging and educational STEM video tutorials for elementary and middle school students, to launch in October. The remaining third of the teens assisted seniors living in Sequoia Living affordable housing. Over the phone, youth assessed prior knowledge, current barriers and goals for technology use, and offered friendly, patient tutoring tailored to the interests of the senior.

“SFPL has given me so many resources and tools that have helped me become the person I am today. They have been the foundation of my learning and education. From the time I got my first library card to borrowing all kinds of books and movies, the library has been an integral part of who I am,” said Bryce, 2020 YELL intern.

In its fourth year, YELL interns have shown the resilience, determination and integrity of our teen community. They have contributed over 800 hours of time creating community, doing a deep dive into professional skills, learning about library resources and offering event and program suggestions to carry us through 2020 and onward. ■

THANK YOU TO OUR SUMMER STRIDE SPONSORS & PARTNERS



The I Love My Librarian Award goes to... JANET TOM



Award recipient, Librarian Janet Tom.

"We could not be more proud of Janet Tom. She is an exceptional librarian, focused on meeting patrons' needs for valuable information and resources, and is most deserving of this award," said City Librarian Michael Lambert.

Reference librarian at San Francisco Public Library, Janet Tom received a 2019 I Love My Librarian Award, administered by the American Library Association. Recognized for her leadership in her community and commitment to transforming lives, she is one of only 10 librarians in the country to receive this national honor.

Tom was nominated for her ability to bring taboo subjects out of the dark and discuss them with care and respect. Her innovative "Death and Dying" program series was instrumental in helping community members deal with grief and dispelling the stigma around discussing mortality. Her nominators also noted Tom's work with San Francisco Chinese Alzheimer's Association to create a Cantonese/English bilingual forum for elders and their caregivers. According to one of her nominators, through community engagement, Tom "brings the best of the Bay Area together." ■



SFPL's Work It series, which launched this fall from the Main Library's Business, Science and Technology Center, offers integral finance and job search workshops and programs to our patrons.

2019 Library of the Year Winner Talking Books and Braille Center Continues Service while Sheltering in Place

Each year the Library of Congress recognizes the work of state and local libraries that provide braille and talking-book services to people who cannot use print materials. [The Talking Books and Braille Center \(TBBC\)](#) was awarded [Subregional Library of the Year for 2019](#) for great programming and attention to individuals and the community.

TBBC Program Manager Jane Glasby described the unique work her department does: "Like the rest of SFPL, we offer great programming and exhibitions—including music jams, book clubs, audio-described movies, craft, games, braille storytimes, tech workshops and school visits. But another way we stand out is in offering intensive 1-on-1 attention and we know many of our patrons very well. We look for other sources for audiobooks and work out how to play them on various devices. We regularly spend upwards of half an hour on the phone with a patron, particularly supporting all kinds of technologies within and beyond the immediate scope of the library."

Since the shutdown, TBBC's work has continued to serve patrons. As Glasby reports: "Since mid-April, about a month after the shutdown, we picked up our work and continued from a distance. We have made an effort to contact every one of our patrons." TBBC's dedicated staff help people over email and the phone to download talking books and they send out digital talking books on cartridges through USPS, all from the



- 815 active individual patrons
- 65 institutional partners, e.g. the Jail and Reentry services, the Veterans' Administration, schools, elder residences and day centers and SFPL branches
- Circulation FY19-20 - 29,706
- Circulation during COVID: more than 5200 books including ILL and BARD
- Library by Mail circ = 1,374
- Patron contacts: approx. 3000

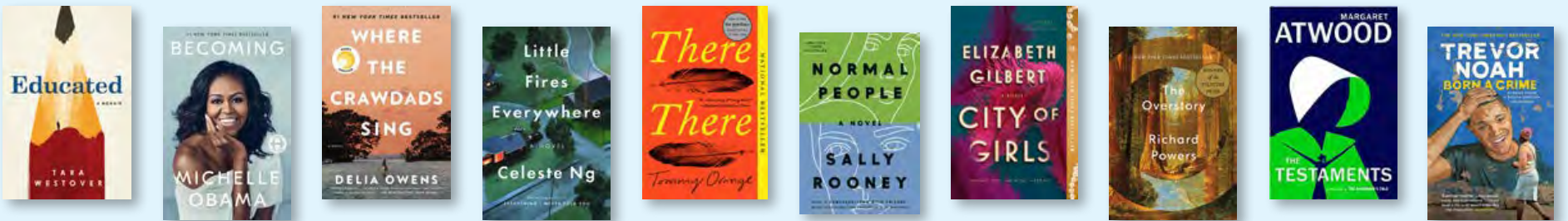
shelter of their homes. They also offer virtual programs. **Sheltering In Place While Blind** is a weekly discussion group facilitated by TBBC's braille transcriber; the long running **Talking Book Club** enjoys more participation than ever; a monthly **Writer's Salon** allows people to share their own or a favorite piece for discussion.

Disability is a strong marker for poverty. Unemployment statistics show a 30 percent rate across disabilities and 70 percent for those who are blind and print disabled. With the closure of the Library buildings, many patrons were cut off from free access to the internet. Transitioning to virtual programs is

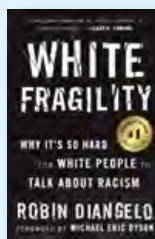
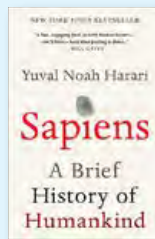
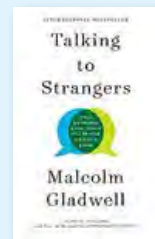
also further complicated due to the fact that many websites do not meet accessibility standards. As a result, TBBC has had to overcome barriers to participation and devise innovative ways to make existing programs more accessible. ■

"Our library represents community and a joy in reading," stated Jane Glasby. *"Our staff is not afraid to explore new technologies to support patrons where they need it most."*

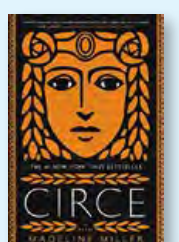
Top 10 Circulated eBooks and eAudiobooks



TOP 10 EBOOKS		
Rank	Title	Author
1	<i>Educated</i>	Tara Westover
2	<i>Becoming</i>	Michelle Obama
3	<i>Where the Crawdads Sing</i>	Delia Owens
4	<i>Little Fires Everywhere</i>	Celeste Ng
5	<i>There There</i>	Tommy Orange
6	<i>Normal People</i>	Sally Rooney
7	<i>City of Girls</i>	Elizabeth Gilbert
8	<i>The Overstory</i>	Richard Powers
9	<i>The Testaments</i>	Margaret Atwood
10	<i>Born a Crime</i>	Trevor Noah



TOP 10 EAUDIOBOOKS		
Rank	Title	Author
1	<i>Becoming</i>	Michelle Obama
2	<i>Educated</i>	Tara Westover
3	<i>Talking to Strangers</i>	Malcolm Gladwell
4	<i>Where the Crawdads Sing</i>	Delia Owens
5	<i>Dear Girls</i>	Ali Wong
6	<i>Sapiens</i>	Yuval Noah Harari
7	<i>The Dutch House</i>	Ann Patchett
8	<i>White Fragility</i>	Robin DiAngelo
9	<i>Normal People</i>	Sally Rooney
10	<i>Circe</i>	Madeline Miller



Enjoy your library at home

TALKING BOOKS AND BRAILLE CENTER
SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY

LIBRARY YEAR | NLS NATIONAL LIBRARY SERVICE FOR THE BLIND AND PRINT DISABLED LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Advancing Racial Equity at the Library and Beyond

“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.” —James Baldwin

Public libraries have a unique and vital role to play in advancing equity and addressing racial divides. This means taking a closer look at our services and being honest about how our institution has failed to help advance racial equity. In recent years, San Francisco Public Library has made a concerted effort to face the racial inequities both within and outside the organization. Since 2018, the Library has had an active internal Racial Equity Committee comprised of diverse staff representing various levels of the organization.



Racial Equity Committee co-chairs Shawna Sherman and Alejandro Gallegos.



Talking with Kids About Race panel featuring Alison Collins, Gabriela López and Mariposa.

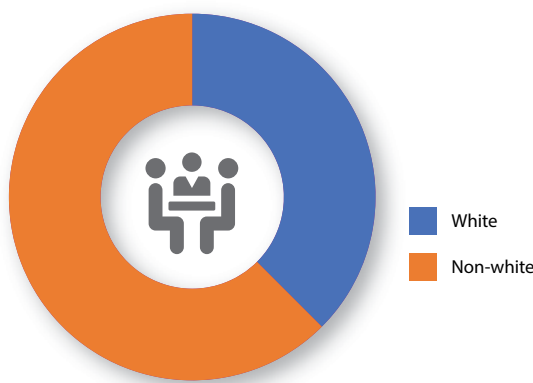
The Committee’s mission states:

SFPL will use a racial equity lens to identify and respond to past and current disparities in order to better serve the needs of our communities. We believe the library space belongs to everyone and will work on policies and programs to promote race equity so that all people feel welcomed in the library to fully participate and benefit from our services.

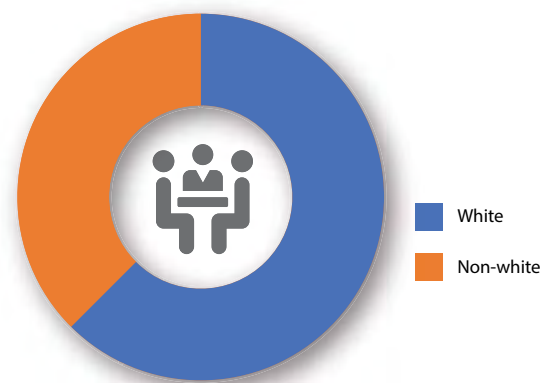
Racial Equity Committee

- Alejandro Gallegos, co-chair
- Shawna Sherman, co-chair
- Charles Coleman
- Chela Lucas
- Denise Schmidt
- Eun Lee
- Gregory Hom
- Janine Mogannam
- Jennifer Woo
- Jimmy Tran
- Kate Patterson
- Maureen Singleton, Management Team Liaison
- Melissa Mendiola
- Meredith Steiner
- Michelle Waddy
- Michele Williams
- Queena Chen
- Tramaine Johnson

Racial Diversity of SF Library Commission



Demographics of Library's Senior Management Team



“Race Equity is not simply a black and white issue. It involves all of us,” said Shawna Sherman. “We hope to really dig into the data to see where inequities exist in our library culture so that we can address them. We are in this together. We all have to work together if we want to make change.”

The group’s co-chairs, Community Engagement Manager Alejandro Gallegos and African American Center Librarian Shawna Sherman, participated in the Government Alliance on Race and Equity, a year-long training for government employees that provides the knowledge, skills and framework to help them dismantle systems of oppression within and outside their agencies. Under their leadership, the Committee has made strides on normalizing discussions about race at the Library. In addition, the Committee works to support current employees and encourage them to begin thinking of library services through a racial equity lens. The Committee launched a new REAL (Racial Equity at the Library) Talk educational series to build greater competency and to foster robust and honest discussions around racial equity in a safe environment.

“It’s important that we recognize that there is a history of creating racial inequity by institutions, and that libraries have contributed to this,” said Gallegos. “We now want our library to contribute to ending racialized outcomes. Supporting this work means that SFPL is committing to continued and ongoing action and

re-examination in creating more equal outcomes for all of our residents.”

The Racial Equity Committee’s efforts were bolstered when Mayor London N. Breed signed the Racial Equity Ordinance on August 9, 2019, establishing the City’s new Office of Racial Equity (ORE), under the jurisdiction of the Human Rights Commission. In the press release announcing the new office, Mayor Breed stated, “This office will help us address racial inequities across the City and advance toward equitable outcomes for all our communities. We know that in the past our City has enacted policies that disproportionately harm communities of color. With this new Office of Racial Equity, we will work to right those past wrongs and ensure that our City’s policies going forward are equitable and just.”

The Office of Racial Equity analyzes policies across the City for their potential impact on various racial groups and consults with City departments to establish tailored plans to address racial disparities both within individual departments and within the communities they serve. The legislation also mandates that every City department create a Racial Equity Action Plan. In June 2020, the

Office issued a citywide Racial Equity Framework, a document outlining the City’s vision, goals and overarching strategies to address racism and racial disparities and advance racial equity in the City, with a focus on the work of City government. The framework includes metrics by which departments, through Racial Equity Action Plans, can measure performance to address racial disparities.

The Library is in the process of responding to Phase 1 of the Racial Equity Framework, which entails providing data in response to the following criteria:

1. Hiring and Recruitment,
2. Retention, Promotion and Protection,
3. Discipline and Separation,
4. Diverse and Equitable Leadership and Management,
5. Mobility and Professional Development,
6. Organizational Culture of Inclusion and Belonging and
7. Boards and Commissions.

The Library expects to complete Phase 1 by December 31, 2020.

Beyond the work of the Racial Equity Committee, the Library used its platform to help educate the public by presenting such innovative programs as **Talking with Kids about Race and Racism: When Sorry Isn’t Enough**, a workshop designed to give parents, caregivers and educators the tools to have constructive and meaningful conversations about race and racism with the children in their care.

After attending the workshop, one participant said that she would “step up” her conversation about this topic with her child and “get more involved at school for implementing change.” Another attendee said, “I will search for a structured guideline that can be used to explain [to] small children [that] race is a social construct, a brief overview of how race is used to oppress minorities and why that is wrong.”

The Main Library hosted the exhibit, **Same Game Different Smokers: A Look at the Tobacco Industry’s Footprint on Black Lives and Black Lungs**, which illustrated the role that increased demand for tobacco played in the creation of the transatlantic slave trade and how tobacco advertising evolved once the African American community became a lucrative market. With images from Tobacco Control Archives, the exhibition demonstrated how the tobacco industry targeted the African American community by repurposing historically racist iconography into slick campaigns and with strategic ad placement, product distribution, event sponsorship and divisive messaging. In connection with the de Young Museum’s critically acclaimed *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power* exhibition, the Library created **The Black Aesthetic**, an exhibit that highlighted library materials that tackled questions related to the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s about whether art by African American-identified artists should be for its own sake or for the benefit of the Black community.

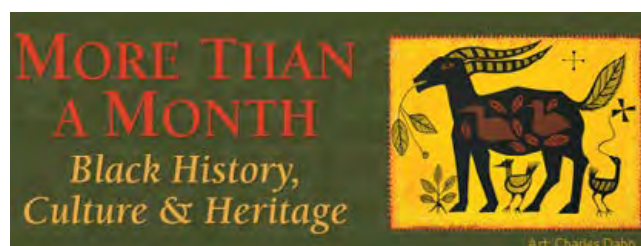
When George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery were murdered, the Racial Equity Committee, along

with Commission President Dr. Mary Wardell-Ghiraduzzi, took the lead on drafting a statement championing racial equity and supporting the #BlackLivesMatter movement.

In the statement, Dr. Wardell-Ghiraduzzi stated that, “Our black colleagues, neighbors and friends have spent lifetimes living with anxiety and uncertainty while too many leaders are silent and complicit. Now is the time for leaders everywhere to take a stand against racism and commit to doing the work to uncover their own biases, prejudices and anti-black behaviors that perpetuate structural and institutional racism.”

The City’s Racial Equity Framework is the roadmap that guides the work of the Library as it strives towards being a 21st-century institution built on inclusion, social justice and mutual respect. To that end, it is committed to reviewing and conducting all internal policies and practices with a racial equity lens, specifically: hiring, recruitment, promotions, discipline, compensation and leadership appointments. The Library will also take steps to strengthen racial and ethnic diversity of employees at all levels from staff positions to managerial and director level positions. Throughout this process, the Library is committed to being transparent as it works towards fulfilling its racial equity goals by making data public and providing regular updates on the execution of the Racial Equity Action Plan.

For more information about the City’s Racial Equity Framework, visit racialequitysf.org.



The Library Leader COMICS

QUESTIONABLE QUESTIONS

The TIP Line (415) 557-4400 is a telephone ready-reference service where librarians at the Main Library are available Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m., and Sunday, 12 – 6 p.m. Once in awhile, we receive some interesting and curious questions.

Illustrations by Michelle McNeil



"I've been mistakenly reported dead. Is my library card still good?"



"Can you look up my address on Google Earth and see if it looks like I am growing weed?"



*"Do you have any cookbooks on the subject, Balled Side Dishes?"
No. She calls back a minute later.
"Can you try this search: Filled Balls Recipes?"*



"Is it shorter to raft from SF to Alcatraz or SF to Treasure Island, and what's the phone number for the Coast Guard because I think they should come with me."



"Can you give me the phone number for the people who invented vinegar?"



"What year did doctors stop slapping babies on the butt when they are born?"

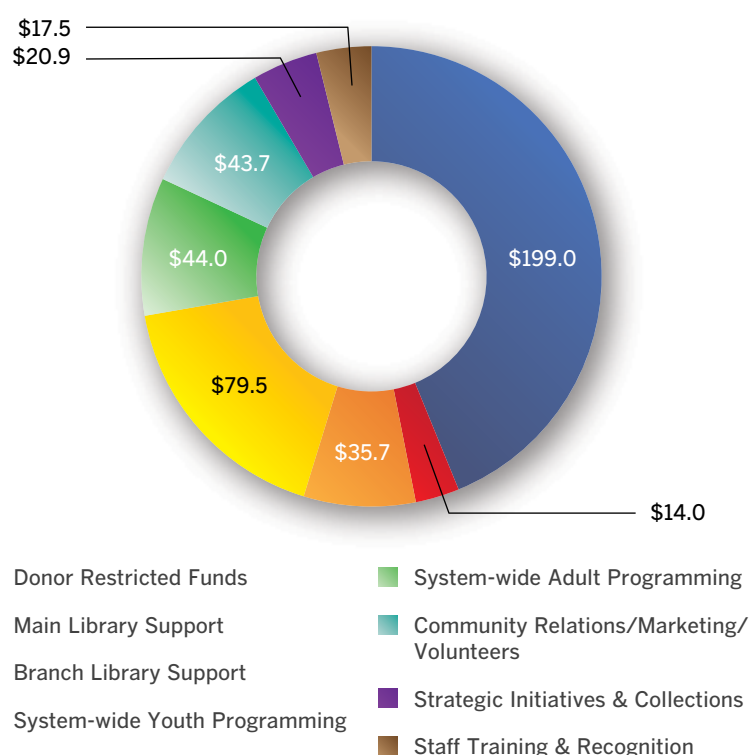


Friends of the San Francisco Public Library provided \$454,450 in direct support for programs, services, equipment and fiscal sponsorship in the following areas:

- Children and youth programs, including Summer Stride
- The Mix at Main teen media center
- Connected Community, system-wide adult programs
- Grants to branches for crafts, wellness and cultural programs
- Professional development training for library staff
- One City One Book and the Effie Lee Morris Lecture
- Collections and programs at affinity centers at the Main (The Bridge, Hormel LGBTQIA, Latino Hispanic, Chinese American, Filipino and Stegner Centers)
- History, art and literary exhibitions
- Enhanced marketing of Library programs and services, including *At the Library*
- Emergency expenditures for PPE for SFPL staff

Friends-supported programs at SFPL were impacted in the fourth quarter due to the City health orders and branch closures, beginning in March.

Friends of SFPL Grant Expenditures Fiscal Year 2019 – 2020 (in thousands)



ON the
SAME
PAGE



Artist Spotlight Week
Alison's Studio

Get Our Newest Library Card Design
Featuring the SF GIANTS!
Now available at all
library branches





San Francisco Public Library Commission

London N. Breed
 Mayor 2018 – present

Dr. Mary Wardell-Ghirarduzzi
 President 2014 – 2022

Susan Mall
 Vice-President 2013 – 2021

Zoe Dunning 2014-2020
 Pete Huang 2018 – 2021
 John Lee 2013 – 2022
 Dr. Eurania López 2020 – 2022
 Teresa Ono 2009 – 2021
 Connie Wolf 2018 – 2022
 Commissioners

Michael Lambert
 City Librarian 2019 – present

Margot Shaub
 Commission Affairs Analyst 2020 – present

Rebecca Alcalá-Veraflor
 Assistant Chief of Branches

Shellie Cocking
 Chief of Collections and Technical Services

Charles Coleman
 Custodial Services Manager

Catherine Delnoe
 Chief of Branches

Thomas Fortin
 Chief of Main

Heather Green
 Chief Financial Officer

Michelle Jeffers
 Chief of Community Programs and Partnerships

Tramaine Johnson
 Manager of Security Operations and Emergency Planning

Roberto Lombardi
 Director of Facilities

Michael Liang
 Chief Information Officer

Randle McClure
 Chief Analytics Officer

Kate Patterson
 Director of Communications

Lori Regler
 Library Human Resources Director

Todd Robinson
 Engineering Manager

Maureen Singleton
 Chief Operating Officer



San Francisco Public Library

Library Locations

Anza • Bayview / Linda Brooks-Burton
 Bernal Heights • Chinatown / Him Mark Lai
 Eureka Valley / Harvey Milk Memorial
 Excelsior • Glen Park • Golden Gate Valley
 Ingleside • Main Library • Marina • Merced
 Mission • Mission Bay • Noe Valley / Sally
 Brunn • North Beach • Ocean View • Ortega
 Park • Parkside • Portola • Potrero • Presidio
 Richmond / Sen. Milton Marks • Sunset
 Visitacion Valley • West Portal • Western
 Addition • Bookmobiles • Treasure Island

Mailing Address

San Francisco Public Library
 Secretary, Library Commission
 100 Larkin Street
 San Francisco, CA 94102-4989
 Telephone: (415) 557-4236
 Fax: (415) 557-4239

sfpl.org

Letter from the City Librarian

Dear Readers,

As the pages of this Annual Report attest, it has been an extraordinary year for San Francisco Public Library, in many ways.

When I look back at the beginning of this fiscal year, I am reminded of all of the joyful events and programs we presented that brought people from across the City together in the same physical space. In Eric Klinenberg’s book, *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization and the Decline of Civic Life*, he talks reverently about libraries as “Palaces for the People,” spaces that bestow nobility and dignity in those who walk through the doors and that foster “social cohesion” among people who may not normally engage with one another. It is through this lens that I think about the impact and meaning of our incredibly popular One City One Book programs that honored the 50th Anniversary of the Occupation of Alcatraz and our Indigenous community; the [sweet Mardi Gras celebration at our Ocean View Branch](#); our annual Tricycle Music Festival; Night of Ideas, which drew over 5,000 people to the Main Library for a marathon of speakers and arts performances and the many crafting and storytime programs we offer each week. These communal events and the experience of coming into a library to browse books and, perhaps, bumping into neighbors or a favorite librarian, are what help bind us as a community and fortify us so that we can face adversity together.

With the advent of the coronavirus in our City and the subsequent closure of our buildings, we have joined our patrons in mourning the temporary loss of access to these essential civic spaces and to the in-person interactions that bring so much happiness to our lives and that inspire our work. But the story of this year is not a sad one. No, not at all. This annual report tells the story of how the Library adapted to carry on our important work of connecting our patrons to the joys of reading and to each other through virtual events. It is a story about how our staff rose up to meet the challenges of the day to support our City in ways none of us could have imagined a year ago. This year’s story is one of resiliency, creativity and generosity of spirit. It’s the year we expanded what it means to be a Palace for the People in a time when we have to stay six feet apart while wearing a mask. It is the year that showed us that while we are physically apart, we are still very much connected.

I’d like to end by sharing some of the great feedback we received during this challenging year.

“I just don’t even have the words to express my gratitude to you and the library staff. You are a model department and it doesn’t surprise me at all that you are the top-rated department in the City; and this was pre-COVID...But then post-COVID, there was no department that stepped up like you did, going so outside of your area of training to be effective and useful and helpful to the City and what everyone needed.” —District 9 Supervisor Hillary Ronen

“I just wanted to say thank you! The SF Public Library has been amazing throughout this entire pandemic. But you have been amazing long before the pandemic as well. My daughter and I love to read books and you have helped us to be able to afford to keep reading books through the years.”

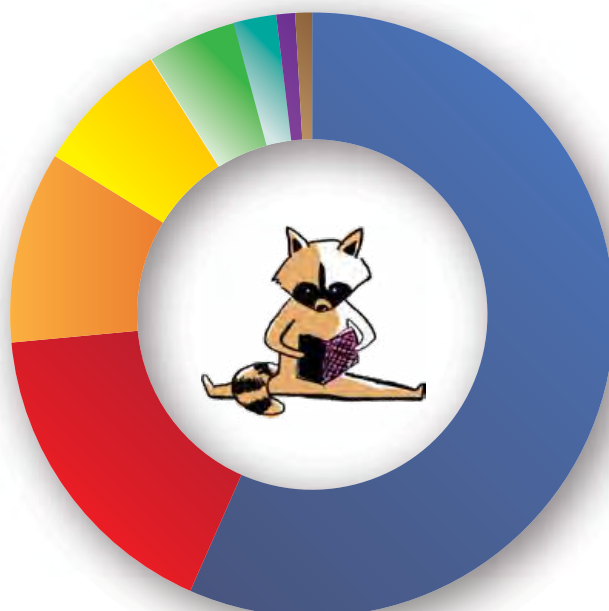
“Thank you so much for bringing this meal and also thank you for ALL that you do for our lives here...We appreciate your efforts and sacrifices and even if [I] don’t know how to express it correctly please know you are admired, respected, recognized and appreciated.” —Shelter In Place Facility Resident

I’m so proud of what we accomplished this year, and I can’t wait until this storm has passed and we can open our doors once again. Until then, it will be **FABULOUS TO SEE YOU** at our *SFPL To Go* locations and at our virtual events.

With Gratitude,


Michael Lambert
 City Librarian

Fiscal Year 2020 Budget (in millions)



\$97.14	Labor
\$29.01	Capital
\$17.62	Collections
\$12.41	Services of Other Depts.
\$8.20	Non-Personnel
\$3.94	Materials & Supplies
\$1.72	BLIP Debt Service
\$1.55	Equipment
\$171.59	Total

Thank You SFPL Staff




RITA MASINA
 Building and Grounds Patrol Officer

ESSENTIAL WORKER WEEK

I am so humbled, knowing that the work I am doing is helping to feed those affected by COVID-19.

It feels great! I am grateful to be a part of the SFPL Family, and the City and County of San Francisco.

#EssentiallyYoureSF

JESSICA JARAMILLO
 District Manager

ESSENTIAL WORKER WEEK

Contact tracing is one of the most powerful tools we have to move towards reopening more safely.

It feels good to take part in the effort to protect San Francisco and the Bay Area, especially reaching out to the Latinx community who has been among the hardest hit economically and health-wise in this crisis.

#EssentiallyYoureSF




YUEN CHAN
 Cantonese Language Translator

ESSENTIAL WORKER WEEK

It's my honor to become a DSW at SF Emergency Operations Center, where I can support the community with my translation expertise and spread the message throughout the City!

Stay home and save lives!

#EssentiallyYoureSF



SFPL To Go
 LIMITED LIBRARY SERVICE

San Francisco Public Library

IT'S FABULOUS TO SEE YOU

SFPL To Go-Go

**POP-UP
 Pick-Up Service**