

New & Noteworthy



Imagine It! Summer Reading Kickoff We'll be celebrating the start of our all-ages Imagine It! Summer Reading Challenge (May 15–August 31) with a storython on May 15 and 16 via Facebook Live, sharing stories and activities throughout the weekend. This summer, kids will win prize books and a color-changing cup. Teen readers will earn prize books and a backpack. For adults, grand prize winners will get themed gift baskets with prize books and gift cards from local businesses. We'll also be giving out 1,000 tote bags during the first week of signups.

Welcome Video for New Hires Like many organizations, we are innovating new ways to provide connection and information during onboarding for new hires. This month we are premiering a Welcome video, offering a friendly introduction and inspirational message from Library Director Donna Pittman, Children's Services Manager Mike Rogalla, and Career Librarian Jordan Neal, who narrate and appear on camera. The video also includes 75 photos highlighting services and past events we've hosted, as a way to showcase the community members of all ages who enjoy their time here—and to make visible our very human-centered "bottom line."

Home Delivery We plan to resume offering Home Delivery in July. We will be contacting former recipients soon to see if they are interested in receiving deliveries again. We are in the process of connecting with a new group of volunteer drivers to put books into the hands of homebound community members.

Creativebug We've recently launched a new learning resource for community members. With Creativebug, we are now offering 1,000+ crafting classes taught by experts, including topics like painting, knitting, and baking. Parkland College design instructor Beverly Kudeki was excited to find out about Creativebug and looks forward to sharing it with her students: "Creativebug is amazing—thank you so much for sharing this resource!! I've started several classes already. The site is totally addictive, the teachers are great, and I could spend all day there. 😊"

Program Highlights

Sign up to get the Zoom link:
champaign.org/events

WEBINAR

Monday
May 3
7 pm

Eco-Minded
Entrepreneurship

with Mona Fang
CEO, Karma Trade

Part of the Launch at the Library webinar series.

Get that Job! Success

As Career Librarian Jordan Neal was leaving one evening, a customer ran towards her and yelled "Jordan, I got the job!" He previously attended career workshops and she helped him with his resume. He shared many uplifting updates. He also acknowledged he had been hesitant at first to consider and incorporate the discussion points we advised into his resume

and shared his appreciation: "I'm thankful for all of your help!"

Book-a-Librarian Appreciation

From a customer: "I wanted to let you know about the career meeting I had with Jordan Neal this morning. It was the most pleasant, informative meeting I think I have ever participated in. She was beyond helpful and every step of the way I felt completely comfortable. When dealing with resumes, jobs, and interviews, having someone who makes you feel comfortable is vastly important and Jordan is a professional. She walks the line of having an immense knowledge base, asking the right questions, making you feel at ease, and tailoring the conversation to meet your needs all while it seeming effortless."

Douglass Branch

Kids & Teens Take Home Books & Crafts Douglass Branch staff gave out 213 books to kids to build home libraries in March. The DIY Kids Take & Make series are popular, with 101 kids and teens picking up craft kits this month.

Parent & Family Learning Lab As part of a Parent & Family Learning Lab event, Amanda gave 50 books to children and teens and signed up new cardholders at Shadowwood Mobile Home Park. She also recorded storytimes to share with participants via the group's Facebook page. The Parent & Family Learning Lab is a joint venture with the Library, Champaign Unit 4 School District, and Project READ.

New Initiatives & Partnerships In March, Danté Scott met with Leander Spearman, Director of Belleville Public Library, to plan a presentation for this year's Illinois Library Association conference. Douglass Branch staff also attended meetings with community partners including the Housing Authority of Champaign County Broadband Grant Steering Committee (Danté) and the African American Heritage Trail Committee (Essie Harris).

Customer Comments

What's here at the Library? The "whole world!"

A man came in, stopped by the Welcome Desk, and exclaimed, "I just have to thank you for reopening...the whole world to me!" He spread his arms out and did a bit of a twirl!

When an offer to take home an iPad leads to a teary thank-you

A customer who visits regularly to use the computers, asked as she was leaving if she could speak to someone about getting more computer time. She needed about four hours on her next visit as she was trying to work through many doctor's appointments and it was consuming a lot of time. We asked if it would be helpful if she could do this from home instead of coming here to the library. She said it would be great because she had some mobility issues and she was in pain much of the time. We were able to send her home one of our new iPads that include data service for free internet access. She expressed her gratitude and began to tear up because she said, "You have no idea what this means to me, there are no words."

Tech webinar was superb

"The Taking Photos with Smartphones & Tablets webinar was SUPERB. Please convey my thanks and admiration to the two presenters! I am in my late 70s and wear hearing aids—and found the sound quality excellent. I was a bit surprised at how clear the commentary came through. At first I found the two presenters spoke very quickly, then realized they spoke so clearly that I had no trouble understanding them. Their commentary corresponded perfectly to their slide presentation. Their explanations were clear and easy to understand. They didn't have to fumble around if they realized they wanted to add something to the explanation they had just finished. A webinar as it should be! An accomplished pair of presenters. Thank you!"

Helping community members stay healthy

We helped a customer on the phone get information about the COVID vaccine clinic at the Douglass Center. She was hesitant because she doesn't like needles, but decided to come. When she arrived she came into the Douglass Branch to thank us for the help and to tell us she and her sister both got appointments for their vaccines.

Appreciation for Douglass Branch

"It is good to find the library open and to browse your selection. I always find the movies that I like here. Thank you!"

Success after needing help with unemployment claim

A customer who had stopped in previously for help on a problem with her unemployment claim came in to thank us again for all the help. She wanted to let us know that everything was working for her now on the website.

You need to come to the Douglass Branch!

After Douglass Branch staff helped a customer apply for a grant for her home daycare, she called her sister and said, "You need to come down here. The people here are so nice and they will help you with your application. That's why I always come here."

"Most wonderful people on the planet"

Cheryl Forest Morganson: "Our Champaign librarians are the absolute most wonderful people on the planet. This note was tucked into a bag of books hand-picked for Clara awhile back when the library was closed to the public. I only just noticed it."

