2019 COMMUNITY REPORT

Visits to the library
853,606

Physical items borrowed
591,063

Digital items borrowed
64,439

People attended programs
68,058

Computer & WiFi sessions
207,908

Website visits
453,808

Meeting & study rooms used
9,704

Hours open
15,812

HIGHLIGHTS

FINE FREE | Decreased barriers and increased access to materials for all patrons by eliminating late fines on books, DVDs, CDs, and audiobooks.

WIFI IN THE PARKS | Bridged the digital divide by bringing free WiFi to Washington Park playhouse and skate park, Lincoln Park pool, and Bleecker-Swinburne Park stadium in partnership with the city of Albany.

PROGRAMMING | Increased participation in library programs by making more strategic decisions and partnerships about what kinds of educational and entertaining activities our users want.

FISCAL YEAR | Ensured more transparent and efficient financial accounting by changing fiscal year to align with budget cycle.

INTERNAL OPERATIONS | Improved administration of library policies, resources, and staff by installing a manager at each of our six largest branches.

3-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN | Completed 80% of the goals by the end of year 2 with focus on meeting community needs, enabling a community learning platform, cultivating leadership, and ensuring long-term sustainability.
IMPROVING PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE
We’re working to meet the changing needs of our patrons by ensuring the library buildings function for how they are used today.

- Washington Ave. Branch is opening learning labs and will see a brand-new performance space this year.
- Pine Hills & Howe branches are getting generators enabling them to serve as resiliency centers for you during weather emergencies.
- Delaware and Howe branches are participating in a sustainability initiative to ensure the libraries remain vital, rebound from disruption, and provide ongoing value to the community.

COMMITTING MORE RESOURCES TO BOOKS
We’re doing a deep-dive into our collection and how it’s being used. This is resulting in:

- Finding that you love reading digital books, so we’re allocating more funds to eBooks.
- Encouraging people who are new to eBooks to try them out on the free Libby and Overdrive apps.
- Growing and shifting physical collections to the branches that read them the most.
- Reminding everyone that if they can’t find a book at their favorite APL location, it can be requested from another library in our system or through the wider reserve program.

FRIENDS & FOUNDATION

MERGING TWO VITAL INSTITUTIONS | The Friends of Albany Public Library and the Albany Public Library Foundation embarked on a plan to merge in 2019. The goal was to strengthen the organization, streamline administration, and welcome more library supporters into the fold. In early 2020, the newly named Friends & Foundation of Albany Public Library was approved. The Friends & Foundation is the primary way library champions demonstrate their love for APL. They do this through annual donations, attendance at the Literary Legends Gala and Art at APL exhibitions, and participation in author talks and special events, just to name a few. Look for more new and exciting library programs, generously sponsored by the Friends & Foundation, in the coming months.

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