



# WHAT THE KIDS WANT

WHAT DO ANCHORAGE'S KIDS WANT TO READ AND LEARN AND HOW DOES THE LIBRARY FILL THAT ROLE?

LIBRARY IMPACT REPORT  
WINTER 2019-20

*Photo above: A young reader in the Library's PAWSitive Reading program for reluctant or struggling readers grades K-4.*

An interview with the Library's Youth Services Coordinator, Elizabeth Nicolai

## **What do you see as the role of Youth Services at APL?**

People will come in with a new baby and we give them baby books, then a couple of years later we move onto the picture books, and after that, we move to phonetic books and beginning readers. We meet people where they are in their reading journey, and we introduce people to different sections of the library, which gives them the knowledge and tools to move on to the next step of their learning and discovery.

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**Fun fact:** *Reading Rendezvous grew from 2,300 people to 3,400 in 2019, and Harry Potter Day drew in 2,000 people to Loussac in 2019. These programs are possible because of your donations, so thank you!*

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## **What is the best thing about being a YS Librarian?**

The really great thing is that the clientele is always evolving. Kids are still in learning mode, they are still in asking mode. Many adults have gotten out of the habit of learning because they are afraid to look ignorant or stupid. Kids aren't like that, they always want to learn!

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# Your Investment at Work

## Library Highlights – You made this possible!

- **Increased Library Funding:** Library Champions successfully advocated the Mayor and Assembly to increase the Library's budget and restore a bus route to serve Loussac Library.
- **Friends of the Library contributed \$92,000** to the Library for 2020 Summer Discovery, materials purchases and more!
- **Planned for a New Alaska Room:** the Library conducted outreach to prospective users to get input on the space design and future programs.
- **Supported Muldoon Library:** a team explored a partnership with education and nonprofit partners for a shared facility. While this did not come to fruition (yet!), the Library did secure facility upgrades through its new lease in its current location.
- **Raised funds to create an Assistant Community Resource Coordinator** (to expand service to Mountain View Library) and **launch a peer navigator program:** \$75,000 from Alaska Mental Health Trust, \$19,000 from Recover Alaska, and \$15,000 from Alaska Community Foundation Social Justice Fund. **The Community Resource program served over 400 library patrons in its first year.**



**Photos:** the *Welcoming Week Civics Fair* at Loussac Library in September (left), Chugiak Chinooks baseball players read to children at the Chugiak-Eagle River Library at *Books with the Chinooks* (center), the Library and Anchorage Health Department teamed up to host free public flu shot clinics at all library locations this fall, including Muldoon Library (right).

## News on the upcoming bus stop for Loussac

The Anchorage Assembly recently approved adding a new People Mover route to include Loussac Library. We don't know yet where the stop will be or if a new route will be created. We do know that this service will have a huge impact on library patrons! The process to reinstate the Loussac stop took a lot of time and effort by many different people and organizations. Thank you to all of you who made phone calls, attended meetings, or wrote letters voicing the importance of this bus stop! Here's what's next:

- The bus stop won't be available for at least another ten months. People Mover has to finalize public input on route selection, train new drivers and might even have to buy new buses.
- We hope the stop will go live next summer in July or August 2020.
- The most likely route will start at the Dimond Center, travel down Old Seward to Tudor and over to Denali, onto 36th Ave, over to Spenard and Wisconsin, down Northern Lights and Minnesota, and finish at the Downtown Transit Center.

# What the Kids Want, cont.

## Why is a strong Library critical for our community's educational and economic health?

Anchorage is a winter town and a place where it's hard to live without money (for more on this idea read *Pieces of Me* by Lizbeth Meredith). Many indoor spaces for toddlers cost money, but libraries are free and open to the public, and fill a role for families seeking community connections. People who are new to Anchorage can come here to meet other families, other kids, and learn to love Anchorage. Of course, we also play a critical role in early education.

Our librarians use best practices in early literacy and education to give our patrons a leg up in their learning, and we do this through innovative programs and partnerships with other organizations. In the last few years we expanded 1000 Books Before Kindergarten, began Bilingual Storytimes, launched STEM kits, increased outreach to childcare providers, and partnered with the School District to get library cards to 40,000 students. While we have a lot of fun in our work, we are also very intentional in how we deliver high quality educational resources to our patrons and community.

**Fun fact:** Bilingual story time is getting bigger and better at APL. We now have Spanish, Yupik, American Sign Language story times, and Farsi story time coming in 2020.

## How do you transition between reading as a subject and reading as a hobby?

It's easy for students to think of reading as a subject, and not something to love. We get to help kids find what makes them happy and makes them love to read, from the beginning reader who needs phonics books, to the 4th grade boy who hasn't found the book that makes reading click for him, to the 6th grade girl working on a science project. Whatever the kids need, we can help them find it and foster their love of reading in the process.

## When you get funds from the Friends and Foundation, how are you able to put that to use?

These funds are instrumental in bringing up performers and authors for our Summer Discovery reading program, which enables us to offer programs that most libraries of our size normally couldn't offer, so thank you!

Detach and mail to: Anchorage Library Foundation/Friends of the Library: PO Box 244714, Anchorage, AK 99524

## YES! I want to help the Anchorage Public Library build community.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I'd like this gift to go to a specific library (please list):  
\_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please keep my name anonymous in recognition materials.



I'd like to support the Library's immediate needs for materials and programs with a gift in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

Make check payable to: **Friends of the Library**



I'd like to support the long-term growth of the Library and new library initiatives with a gift in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

Make check payable to: **Anchorage Library Foundation**



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# Contribute to the STEM Kit Fund

Library STEM kits encourage exploration, experimentation and observation. They also help kids connect to books and reading. You can help us expand this popular program by contributing to the STEM Kit Fund this fall to duplicate popular kits, restock missing parts and add subject areas.

*"While returning a STEM kit, a grandmother shared that her grandson's English language skills are poor, but he loves borrowing the STEM kits. He is able to do the projects even though he cannot read English because the pictures in the instructions tell him what to do." - Youth Librarian Linda Klein*

**We've set a goal to raise \$2500 by 12/31 for STEM Kits. Can you help us reach our goal?**

*Donate at [librarychampion.com/donate/stem-kits/](http://librarychampion.com/donate/stem-kits/)*

# Pay it Forward - Join the Next Chapter Society

## Consider a planned gift to the Library Foundation

You can provide a legacy of learning and exploration for future generations by making a planned gift to the Anchorage Library Foundation. Planned gifts through the Next Chapter Society are easy to make by setting up or making a simple adjustment to your will, or naming the Foundation as a beneficiary to an insurance or retirement plan. Consult your financial advisor or attorney to find the gift that best fits your situation.

Please contact Clare at [info@librarychampion.com](mailto:info@librarychampion.com) or 907-343-2944 if you have further questions or are ready to make a planned gift.

