

DATE: February 27, 2023

TO: Board of Library Trustees

FROM: Tarri Ryan, Library Manager, Youth and Bookmobile

SUBJECT: **Youth Programming Report**

SUMMARY

The Mountain View Public Library Youth Division provides resources for learning, recreation, and cultural activities to youth from birth through high school and to their parents, educators, and caregivers. The Youth Division creates high-quality programs and initiatives which are free to all community members with a focus on diversity of experiences. Youth Librarians maintain awareness of theories of infant and children learning and development as well as educational trends and research into youth needs and are especially aware of the needs of youth within the County. Youth Librarians pay particular attention to literacy development, educational needs, youth interests and preferences, and their subsequent impact on Library services. Librarians actively seek ways to create an enjoyable and pleasant Library environment that stimulates curiosity and removes barriers to access of programs and services.

Youth Division staff design, present, promote, and evaluate a continual calendar of events for youth. With steady support from the Friends of the Mountain View Library, Youth Librarians offer a variety of high-quality programs to a wide range of age groups and varying developmental stages. Additionally, the Library will engage outside presenters to supplement Librarian-led programs to increase the scope of cultural and educational opportunities to the community. Because Library programs are always free to the public, the Library is positioned in a unique way to support equitable access to a full cohort of excellent experiences for youth.

TYPES OF PROGRAMS

The Youth Division maintains a year-round calendar of events that presents multiple opportunities for the community. Programs are generally categorized into three types of programs: formal Librarian-led programs, drop-in exploratory programs with Librarians on-hand to support; and self-directed activities and do-it-yourself take-home projects to extend learning or creative endeavors. This multi-faceted approach supports the Library as a third place for families, fosters learning, and affirms the child-caregiver bond in developmentally appropriate ways. Programs are anchored in enhancing literacy, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM), recreational, and cultural experiences.

Librarians also engage in outreach programs within the community by bringing storytimes, book talks, craft-/art-based programs, and performers into underserved areas of Mountain View. Youth Librarians collaborate with other City departments and divisions, such as Recreation, and participate in key City events, including the Monster Bash and the Community Tree Lighting Celebration. Regional events, such as Silicon Valley Reads and United Against Hate, also provide opportunities for unique programming.

Youth Librarians work collaboratively with Adult Division Librarians on applicable programs that would be of benefit to multi-generational audiences. Examples of these programs include summer reading programs, parenting programs, author talks, and musical and cultural events. Parenting programs are a natural extension of Youth Library services. Throughout the year, Librarians bring in local and national experts for practical hands-on skill-building or presentations of recent research findings of interest to parents and educators.

Programs are held in-person, virtually, and at various times during the day. Bilingual storytimes occur in the evening to meet the needs of working families. Parenting programs and special author talks are typically provided virtually for attendee flexibility.

Programs in Pioneer Park, such as Outdoor Storytimes and Family Storytimes, have grown in popularity. Hosting larger gatherings outside has increased caregiver participation in storytimes, allows for social distancing with larger crowds, and has deepened the Library-community experience for all.

Librarians strive to support gaps in learning and adjust to the social adjustment needs of middle and high school students. For example, Librarians have created more drop-in style programs, which remove registration barriers, allow for spontaneous participation with peers and family members, and reduce scheduling commitments. This shift has allowed for a more open engagement in the Teen Zone, increased tween/teen and adult bonding opportunities, and added open-ended programs around self-expression.

Because stronger academic outcomes and healthy physical and emotional development happen when families have opportunities to foster warm and nurturing relationships, the Librarians are intentional in providing services that support family well-being and creating a valued learning and gathering space. Take-away projects and independent programs extend the Library experience. Library programs support core human needs by supporting families in children's love of learning, discovery, making connections, asking questions, and bonding.

2022-23 FISCAL YEAR YOUTH PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

The list below is illustrative of the types of youth-specific and extensive Librarian-led programs planned and/or presented for the first part of the 2022-23 fiscal year. The programs are

segmented by served population. (NOTE: Items marked with an asterisk (*) indicates events that are part of a series—youth may attend one or all).

Baby to Pre-K

- Baby Storytimes*: For infants and caregivers designed to be the first storytime experience; includes simple finger plays, rhymes, and songs to increase verbal and physical interactions.
- Outdoor Storytimes*: Held in Pioneer Park weekday mornings, with an average weekly attendance of 200, presented by two Librarians, and includes a mix of stories, songs, dance, and American Sign Language.
- Family Storytimes*: Held in Pioneer Park on weekends. Family storytimes tend to include early elementary children and their families. Audience numbers average about 120. A time to gather for stories and music that reinforce early literacy skills.
- Math Storytimes*: The Mountain View Library is one of the few libraries in California to host a math-based storytime series. Includes take-home manipulatives and basic math concepts presented through stories.
- Sensory Storytimes*: The Mountain View Library is one of the few Pacific Library Partnership member libraries to host a storytime for children on the autism spectrum who may benefit from reduced stimulation. Sensory Storytime incorporates language enrichment and sensory play.
- Spanish Bilingual Storytime*: Includes Spanish-language vocabulary and incorporates puppetry and song. Spanish Bilingual Storytime focuses on preschoolers yet tends to include early elementary students as well.
- Chinese Bilingual Storytime*: Songs and stories are primarily in Chinese and presented with visual cues to aid character recognition.
- Holiday Music from Around the World Dance Party: Families alongside Librarians gathered in Pioneer Park to dance with musical forms from the world over.
- Stuffed Animal Sleepover: Stuffed animals have a chance to spend the night with pictures of their romps for our youngest customers.

Early to Late Elementary

- **Art Explorers***: Program combines the life and work of an artist with an opportunity to utilize materials and style similar to the artist presented. Initial program focused on BIPOC artists.
- **Science Explorers***: Combines science concepts with an opportunity to create and experiment with materials to enhance learning.
- **3D Printing**: Utilizing 3D printing software, customers designed and created 3D prints.
- **A-Z Animals***: Explores the habitat, anatomy, habits, and ecosystems of a specific animal. Connects customers with materials in the Library for further exploration.
- **Drop-In: Let's Create***: Opportunity for unplugged process art experience for youth and their caregivers. Projects have ranged from bottle-cap art to Lunar New Year lanterns.
- **Storytime at Deer Hollow Farm**: In the spring and fall, an intimate storytime in the barn among goats and rabbits.
- **Astronaut Boot Camp**: Outdoor experiential science afternoon around space exploration.
- **Moonday Monday**: Phases of the moon and observation of night sky on an evening in Pioneer Park.
- **Dino Dig**: Pioneer Park was transformed into a dinosaur pit with excavation and learning about types of dinosaurs and archeological epochs.
- **LEGO Engineering Challenge**: Library customers learned about Bay Area sea level rise and created solutions using LEGOs.
- **Holiday Homes**: In creating of a holiday village, children learned architecture vocabulary and 3D math concepts.

Tweens and Teens

- **Switch-It-Up Saturdays***: Saturday afternoons spent gaming and included making new friends and family bonding.
- **Drop-In: Resumé Clinic***: For teens, an informal environment to receive feedback and support on their first resumé's.

- Drop-In: Arts*: Programs include all materials and detailed instruction to encourage further skill-building. Programs have included Hispanic heritage chalk art, quilling, embroidery, calligraphy, painting, button-making, collage, and creative writing.
- United Against Hate Film Screening: *I Am Not Your Negro*: Movie screening and discussion, in collaboration with Adult Services.
- Silicon Valley Reads Artist Workshops: In collaboration with Sunnyvale Library, author/artist Nomar Perez to provide drawing instruction. Later tweens and teens are invited to create chalk art at the Library park entrance.

Outside Performers

- Architecture 101 for Families
- Diwali Dance Performance
- Harmony Monsters Musical Performance
- Village Rhythms: Onye Onyemaechi
- Learn Magic: Brian Scott Magician
- ZunZun Ecological Musical Performance
- Origami with origami artist Bernie Peyton
- Antara Asthaayi Dance Company
- Traveling Lantern Theater
- Fratello Marionettes
- Nature is an Artist: Author talk and family craft night

SUMMER READING

During the summer academic break, customers are encouraged to enroll themselves and their children into the Library's Summer Reading Program. Youth summer reading programs are a staple of public libraries throughout the United States and exist to encourage the habit of reading and gain or retain literacy skills outside of school learning. The Library's Summer Reading Program for youth focuses on creating a daily habit of reading. Reading or listening to an audiobook on a consistent basis earns them free books as a reward.

Customers track summer reading goals online. To encourage progress, last year, the Children's Room provided a Summer Badge Book for customers ages 0 to 12 who enrolled in the summer reading program. The Badge Books were immensely popular, and the Library will be providing Badge Books again this year. Alongside the reading component, Librarians present and plan an array of programs in the summer, deepening opportunities for learning and providing recreational activities for families.

SCHOOL VISITS/OUTREACH PROGRAMS

The Library provides tours, programs, and research support for students. Teachers and schools may reach out to the Library directly to plan field trips, educational programs, and extra research support for their students. School tours typically occur prior to opening to allow time for students to explore the Library as a group and for Librarians and teachers to collaborate on provision of programs. The Library also offers a Mountain View History Center program for students in third through fifth grade that meets History-Social Studies Content Standards for California.

Librarians work directly with AVID and AVID's PEAK high school programs to increase library usage and visibility among underserved students and provide extra assistance in utilizing the Student Connect Card.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Youth Librarians work to be responsive to customer interests and community needs. In addition to the types of programs offered, Librarians work to connect programs to Library materials and collections through book lists, displays, and resources. The Youth Division works to enhance the Library as a learning environment through a bevy of programs and to invigorate the Library environment as a unique platform for creativity and exploration for youth in Mountain View.

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