

FY23-24 ANNUAL REPORT



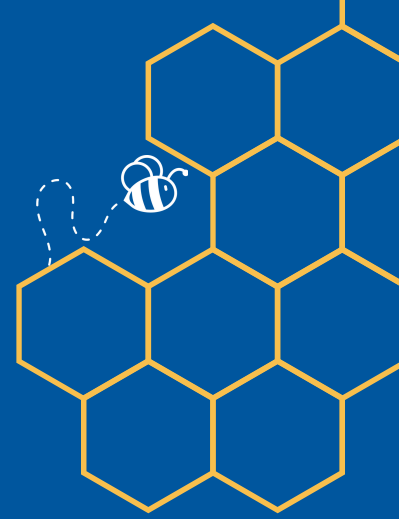
NEW BRITAIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

20 High St, New Britain, CT 06051
(860) 224-3155 • www.nbpl.info

Jefferson Branch
140 Horse Plain Road
860-225-4700

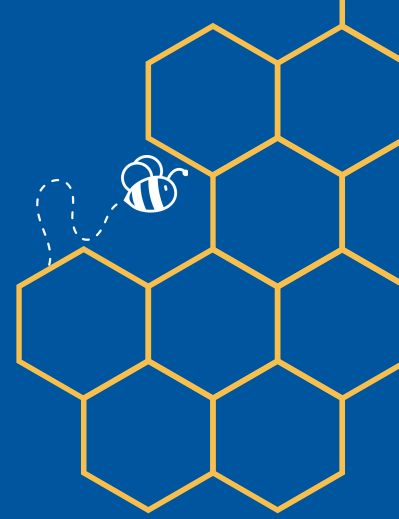


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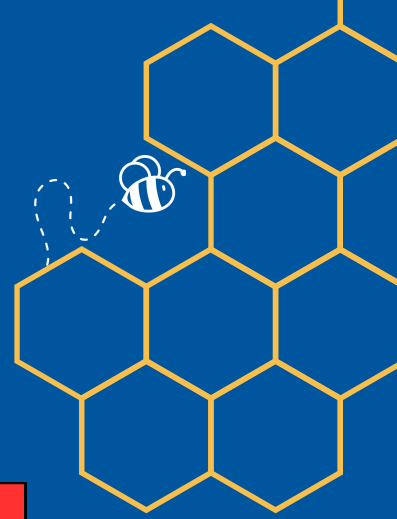
OUR MISSION



*The **New Britain Public Library** aspires to give every resident the opportunity to become successful and well-informed by offering resources, services and experiences that build skills and provide enrichment.*

STRATEGIC PLAN

2023 - 2028



GOAL 1: PROVIDE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

- a. Increase NBPL usage and the number of card holders.
- b. Provide program offerings geared to community needs (social issues, housing, employment, education, health, technology training).
- c. Meet the community where they are (outreach and promotion of services).

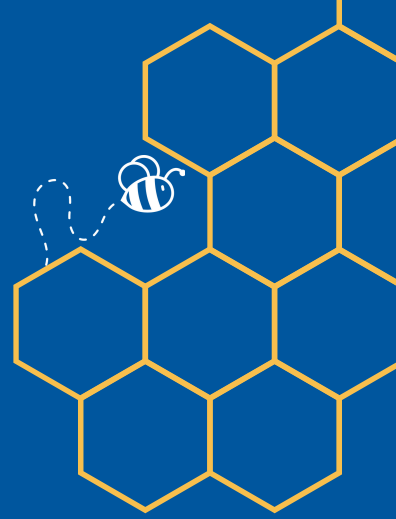
GOAL 2: COMMUNITY

- a. Develop and implement DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) initiatives for the particular needs of our Staff, Board of Trustees and New Britain population.
- b. Work with Central Connecticut State University (CCSU), the Chamber of Commerce, New Britain Public Schools, and Religious, Civic and Community Partners to develop programs connecting all of us.
- c. Improve and expand programming and interaction with New Britain youth in grades 6-12, and young adults ages 18-24.
- d. Recruit and appoint members to the Board of Trustees who reflect the diversity of the community including young people.
- e. Expand the reach of NBPL services including ways to go to the community rather than have them come to us, via bookmobiles, traveling programs, etc.



STRATEGIC PLAN

2023 - 2028



GOAL 3: BUILDING: PROVIDE HEALTHY, SAFE SPACE

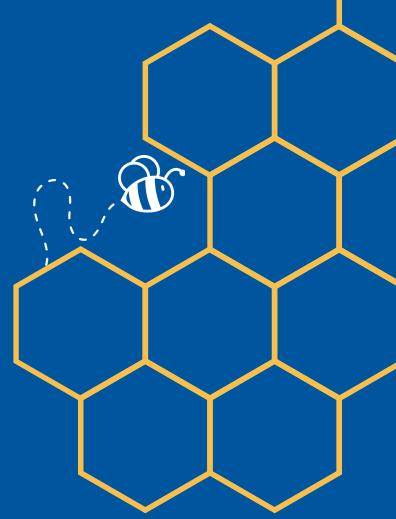
- a. Work with the New Britain Institute Board of Managers to monitor the NBPL endowment and the use of funds to maintain and improve its buildings.
- b. Continue monitoring and funding building improvements.
- c. Complete fundraising for Phase II of outdoor renovations.
- d. Create a fundraising plan for parking lot entrance renovation.
- e. Explore additional small meeting rooms and a small business center.
- f. Expand space or change location of Local History Room and explore the possibility of re-establishing a New Britain Historical Society.

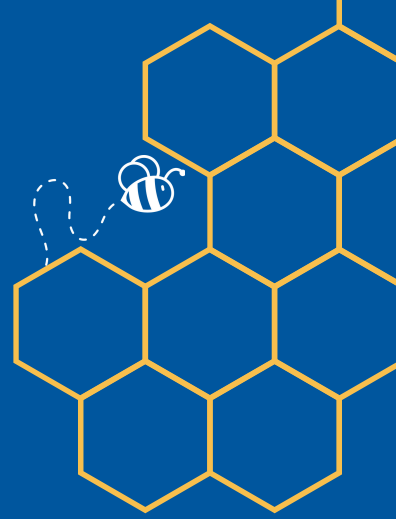
GOAL 4: OPERATIONS & FUNDRAISING

- a. Review personnel policies and procedures.
- b. Conduct a Staff climate survey annually in order to promote a positive, creative and inclusive culture.
- c. Review backup and recovery supports for all technological systems; adjust as needed.
- d. Expand training opportunities for Trustees in the areas of DEI, fundraising, library services and programming.
- e. Invite staff to make quarterly presentations on programs and/or services to the Board so members can be better stewards of the NBPL.



OUR TEAM





BOARD OF TRUSTEES



FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

“Change is constant. (Be like water).”

Brown, Adrienne Maree. *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds*. AK Press, 2017.

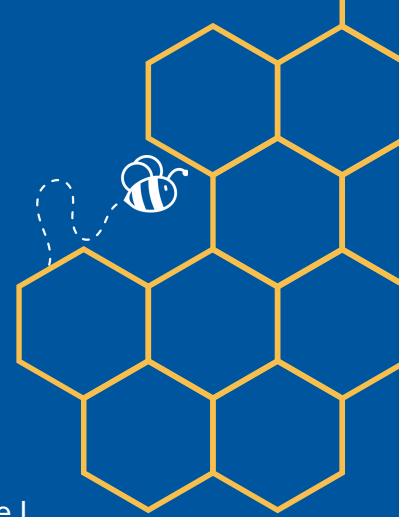
The past year has been a year of change at the New Britain Public Library. A new Business Manager, a new Director, and staff promotions by way of a reconfigured organizational chart has presented new opportunities for growth and innovation. Since I assumed the role of Director at the end of February 2024, we have initiated greater cross-departmental collaboration and developed new avenues for staff throughout the organization to take part in decision making processes.

The format of our monthly board reports has been revised to provide continuous updates on the progress made towards meeting the goals set in our strategic plan (2023-28). The presentation is now highly visual and efficiently communicates our accomplishments and priorities, which means that the reports can serve several purposes, including communicating the impact of our work to partners and community stakeholders. Keeping the updates tied to our strategic plan not only keeps the board abreast of our progress, it also helps hold us accountable on a day-to-day basis by keeping our strategic goals at the forefront of our minds as we make decisions about new programs, services, and other initiatives.

This year also saw the start to the process of the Library turning outward and learning about our community in a more intentional way. Asking crucial questions about who the library has previously failed to connect with in a meaningful way will help guide our work of creating greater relevance, significance, and impact in our community. We are dedicated to learning about the people we serve and working with community members and other organizations to co-create the library programs and services that correspond with the aspirations of the residents of New Britain. As these aspirations are ever-evolving, so is the New Britain Public Library. We are already making good progress in assessing and improving access to our collections, and are about to take a closer look at how our library buildings can be reconfigured to better meet current community needs.

I look forward to another year of change, and I am grateful for our wonderful staff, our Board of Trustees, the Friends of the New Britain Public Library, our fantastic community partners, and the many thoughtful and interesting community members that I have had the privilege of meeting and learning from during my first six months in this role.

In gratitude,
Viktor Sjöberg



A YEAR IN REVIEW

A REFLECTIVE APPROACH

As our monthly Board reports now do a good job of sharing how our activities relate to meeting the goals set in our Strategic Plan, this report will take a slightly different, more reflective, approach and speak about our collective accomplishments based on the data available to us.

GOAL 1: PROVIDE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

The usage of the Library has increased considerably compared to the previous fiscal year, evident by a 24% visitor increase at the Main Library. We also saw a 17% increase in the number of cardholders, with 4158 cards issued or renewed across both locations. Our Circulation staff have also done a great job of cleaning up our patron database to eliminate inactive patron accounts, which means that our database is reflecting actual users (and that our increase is technically even larger).

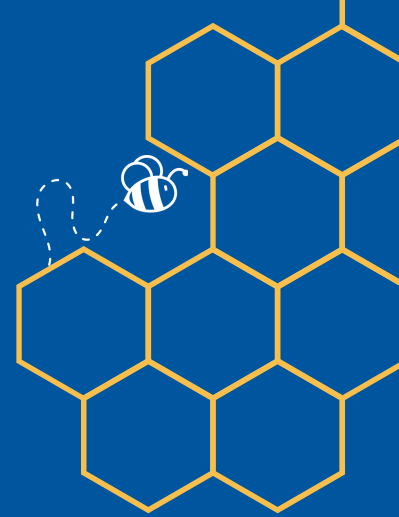
It is also worth noting that while public computer usage at our libraries is up 41%, our visitors are not asking as many reference questions (down 20%), although questions at the Children's and Young Adult departments are increasing. Circulation and reference data further supports the decision to consolidate the two service desks at the Main Library.

During the first half of the fiscal year, our overall circulation numbers remained static compared to the previous year, but we have seen a steady increase since then, totaling a 6% increase of overall annual circulation. As expected, we are seeing an even greater increase in eMaterials, which is up 16%.

Both our programs and our outreach efforts have been covered extensively in our monthly reports, and it has especially been very encouraging to see how our team has embraced the increased outreach efforts. As we collect more data, we will be able to speak to the direct impact on Library use statistics.

We have drastically increased the number of programs we offer by 74% and the program attendance is up 37%. We would ideally like to see that second number be a bit higher, but new initiatives take time to grow and flourish. Special recognition goes to Adult Programming Librarian Rachel Szostek and Head of Young Adult Services Brett Garabedian for spearheading outreach efforts and creating new programming.

The Jefferson Branch door count and overall circulation were both lower this year, but the new staffing model and the plan developed by Branch Coordinator Elizabeth Swagger will most likely turn these trends around as they allow for both outreach and programming.



GOAL 2: COMMUNITY

The Library's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion was demonstrated not only through the creation of a committee dedicated to identifying and addressing issues of inequity (both internally and in terms of how we work with our community), but also through the forging of new partnerships, as well as through other efforts designed to reach community members that the Library had not previously been successful in forming relationships with. This work is most sustainable when it is slow and thoughtful, using metrics that are qualitative rather than quantitative.

Notable progress includes Head of Children's Services Amy Litke and Library Director Viktor Sjöberg working with the Consolidated School District of New Britain to ensure that 3rd grade student visits are brought back to the Main Library this fall.

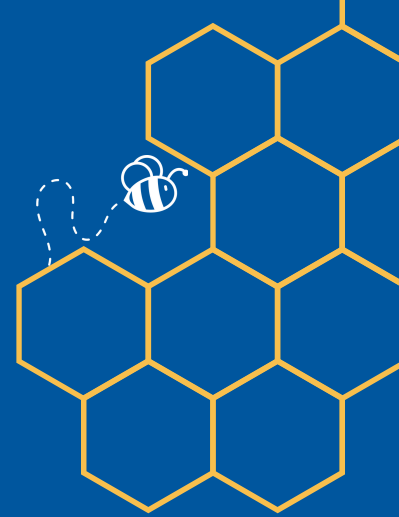
Recently promoted into the role of Head of Young Adult Services, Brett Garabedian has been making excellent progress in improving and expanding programming and interaction with New Britain youth in grades 6-12. This year saw a steady increase in teen room visitation by 27%. The number of teen programs increased by 100% and the program attendance was right in line, seeing a 98% increase. Brett noted that starting to offer more weekly programs has helped the staff to get to know some of the regular teen patrons better and has made the teen room feel more like a place where teens can hang out on a week to week basis, with the awareness that something will most likely be happening.

Internet usage increased by 100% at our teen computers. The average session is about 90 minutes long, and the fact that teens are using library equipment for more sustained periods of time makes it more likely they will become repeat visitors, which has seemed to work well for forming a small community of regular teen library users.

We have also seen a concerted effort to create programming for adults in the 18-24 age range, with the Open Mic nights, game nights, and Banned Book Club being notable examples. It is also encouraging to see that community-led/library-supported initiatives such as the Brown Girl Book Club have started meeting at the Main Library.

The Hive Makerspace continues to thrive under the leadership of Makerspace Coordinator Amaly Zubeidy, seeing 550-600 visitors each month, which is an amazing feat, considering both the size of the space and the staff time involved in many of the activities. The Hive stands apart from other makerspaces in the area in that it is an intergenerational and creative environment that is responsive to community needs.

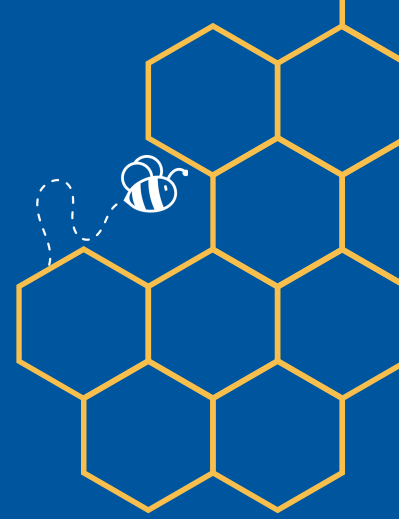
A donation made to the library by New Britain resident Olga Margaret Plocharczyk will further expand the Library's ability to meet our community members where they are through the acquisition of a library vehicle.



GOAL 3: BUILDING: PROVIDE HEALTHY, SAFE SPACE

Business Manager Jazz Coakley has made a great amount of progress towards the health and safety of the Main Library buildings since joining the Library in November 2023. In addition to the projects listed below, the Library was awarded a Community Development Block (HUD) Grant to replace the roof of the Erwin Building.

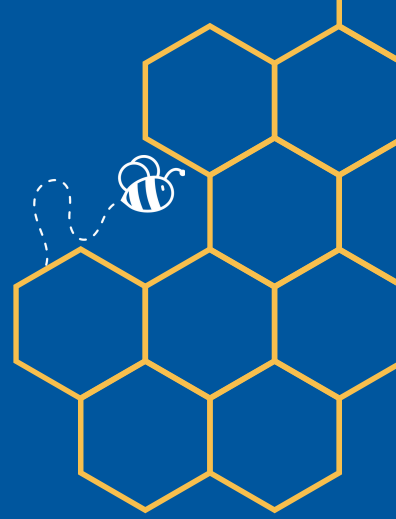
A project to install five study/meeting rooms on the first floor of the Main Library is also underway.



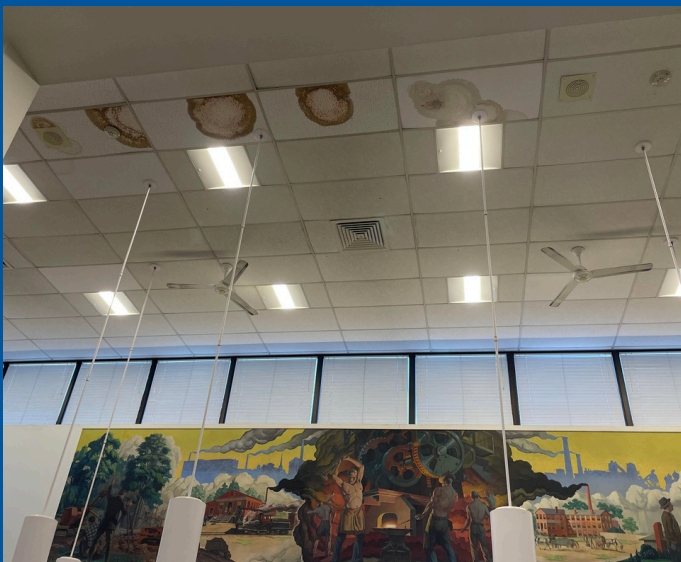
FACILITIES



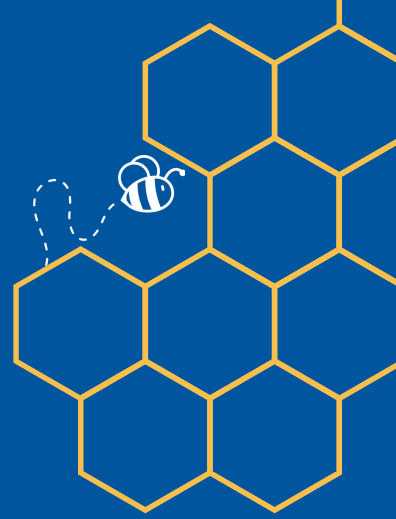
July 2023: Carpeting on the first floor was replaced, along with upgrades to the HVAC system funded in part by the Community Development Block (HUD) Grant.



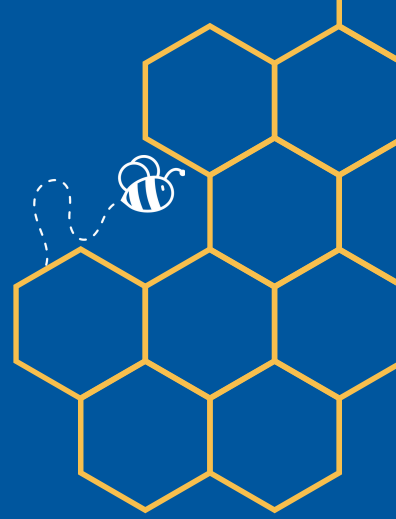
January 2024: Re-caulking of Cooper Building windows.



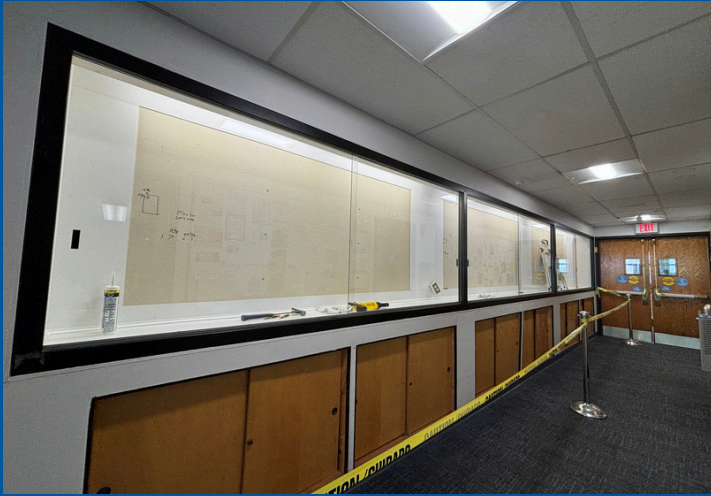
March 2024: Roof drainage pipe repaired above the Circulation Desk.



May 2024: Phase 1 of the Exterior Renovations to the Erwin Building and interior Erwin stairwell were completed. Funded in part by the CT State Library Grant, State Historic Preservation Society, Community Foundation of Greater New Britain, American Savings Foundation, and Hoffman Foundation.



May 2024: Both first floor display cases were rehabilitated.



GOAL 4: OPERATIONS AND FUNDRAISING

While progress has been made to develop new Library policies, an employee handbook has not yet been finalized.

Backup and recovery supports for Library technology have been identified and are being implemented.

Library staff have joined Library Board meetings with regular frequency.

RECRUITMENT & EMPLOYMENT

This year saw a significant change in the supervisory and management ranks of the Library staff. In addition to the turnover in the Director position and returning to a Business Manager model, several department heads were promoted or hired, as well. Staff members were promoted to lead Circulation and Young Adult Services, the Makerspace now has a dedicated coordinator, and the Jefferson Branch Coordinator stepped down and was replaced by a fully-qualified external candidate. At the end of the fiscal year, a Marketing Specialist position was created and filled.

Also at the staff level, the hours of the Jefferson Branch's Library Assistant position were increased to full-time. This change provides critical support in the areas of staff safety and enhanced community outreach.

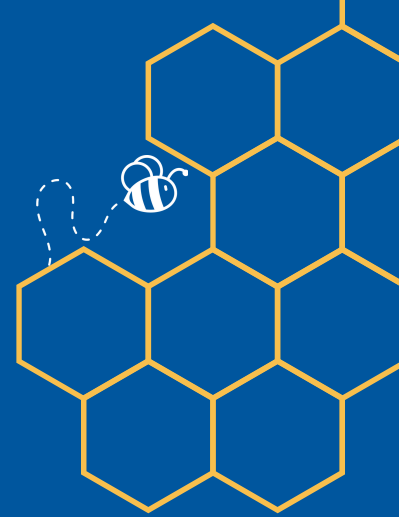
Despite these positive changes, we continue to be thwarted in our efforts to recruit a qualified candidate for the Head of Adult Services position. It has been vacant since the summer of 2023. Efforts have been made to expand advertising, and the position itself has undergone revision to both narrow and simultaneously broaden the scope of responsibilities. Circulation and Young Adult Department Heads now report directly to the Director, thereby reducing the internal responsibilities. Additionally, community engagement is now a featured component of the position's responsibilities. In keeping with that change, the minimum qualifications have expanded to include a person with background in community outreach, with commensurate education and experience.

A PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

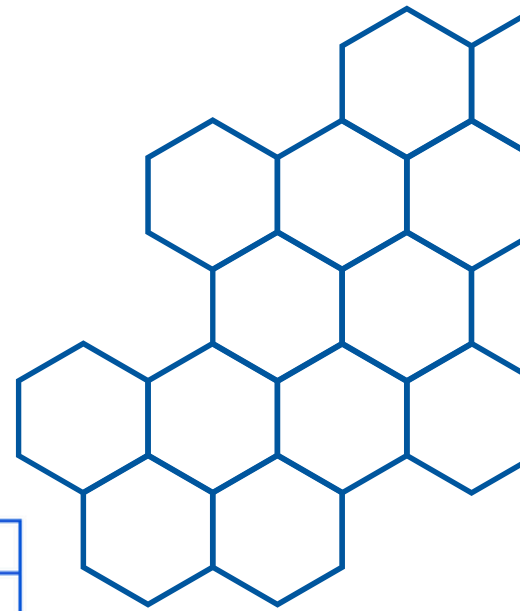
"This year, Literacy Volunteers of Central Connecticut (LVCC) strengthened its collaboration with the New Britain Public Library under Director Viktor Sjöberg. Together, LVCC and library staff introduced workshops from the American Job Center and Capital Workforce Partners, offering career resources to the community.

LVCC also worked to engage learners in the library's new English Conversation Group to enhance their language skills. Additionally, 10 learners obtained library cards, and 19 used library services with their children for the first time. LVCC remains committed to increasing learner engagement and supporting the library's future digital literacy initiatives for New Britain residents. We look forward to continuing to strengthen our partnership and serving the community."





- **Ron Sheffer**, Executive Director of Literacy Volunteers of Central Connecticut





STATISTICS




		FY 2024	FY 2023
	Total Library Days Open Main	296	292
	Total Library Days Open Jefferson	247	248
	Total Visitors On-Site Main	150983	122680
	Total Visitors On-Site Jefferson	13340	14147

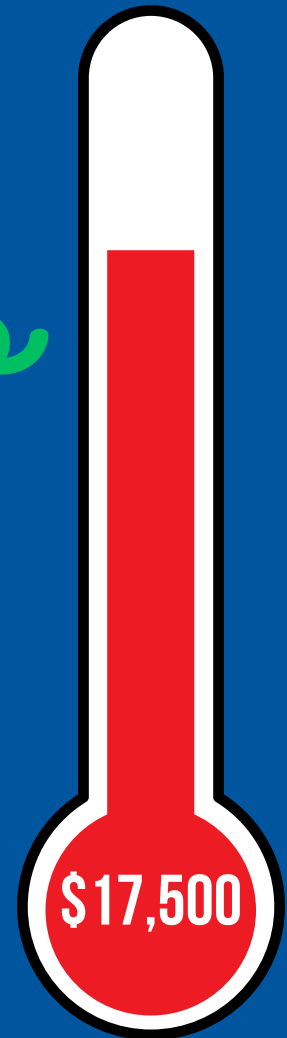
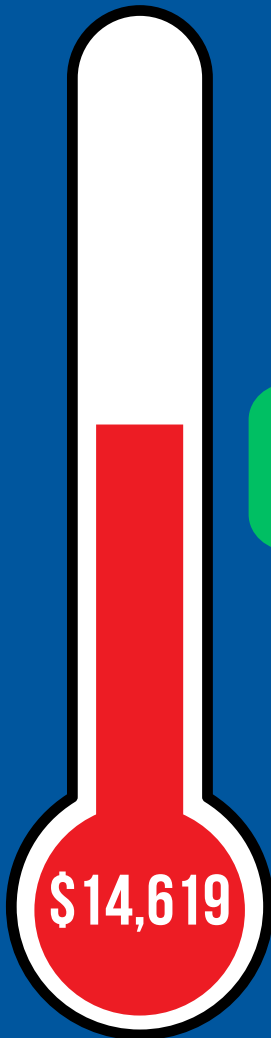
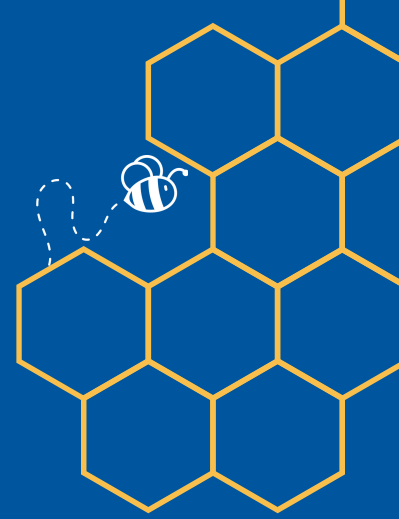
Library Services		FY 2024	FY 2023		
Main Branch		Jefferson Branch			
	Circulation of Library Materials	198245	188681	19028	21073
	eAudiobook/eBook/eMagazine Downloads	20819	17879		
	Audio/Video Streaming	2084	328		
	Circulation Total	221148	206888		
	Library Cards Issued	3997	3403	159	243
	Total Library Card Holders	11462	9774		
	Reference Questions	13906	17399	1159	1365

Technology		FY 2024	FY 2023
	Library Website Sessions	59637	51580
	In-House Computer Use	18987	13425
	WiFi Usage	16176	Unavailable

Outreach & Programming		FY 2024	FY 2023
	Number of Programs Presented <i>(on-site, off-site, includes virtual)</i>	921	598
	Program Attendance	18108	13236

Facility Usage		FY 2024	FY 2023
	Number of Community Room Reservations	168	129
	Community Room Attendance	2016	1548

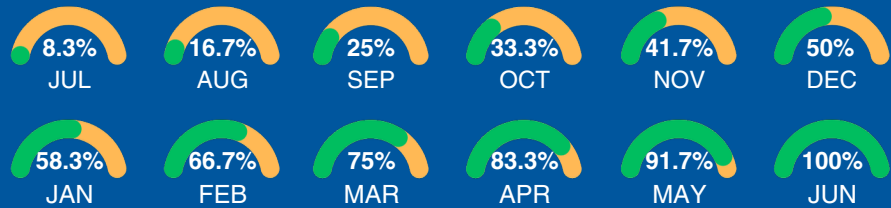
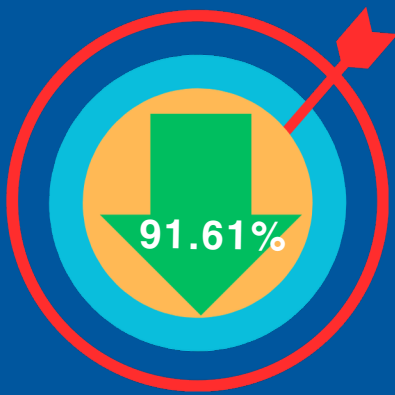
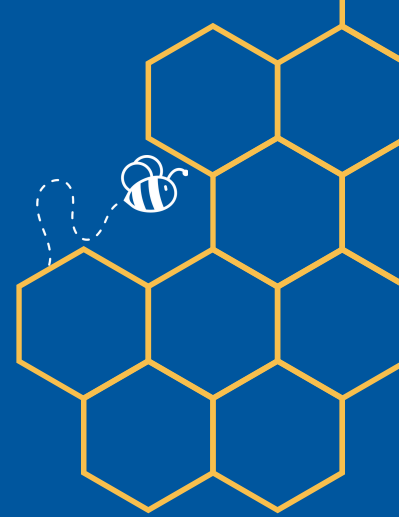
FUNDRAISING



Literary Libations 
VIII



ANNUAL FINANCIALS



Monthly target expenditure percentages over 12 month fiscal period

REVENUE BREAKDOWN

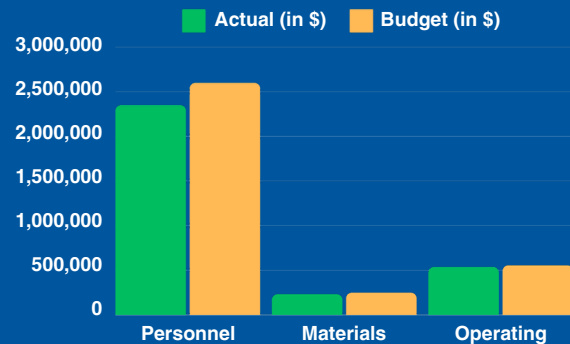
Year End Total Revenues: \$3,381,995

	0	1,000,000	3,000,000	
City Appropriation				3,278,896
*Endowments	40,000			
Gifts, Grants, Etc.	34,513			
Sheehan Computers	17,400			
*NEH Grant Income	4,600			
Borrowlt	4,275			
Desk Receipts & Int.	2,311			Actual (in \$)

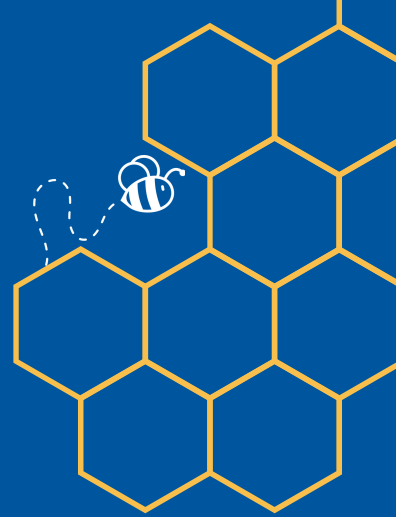
* Revenue applied to special project classes instead of operational budget

EXPENSE BREAKDOWN

Year End Total Expenses: \$3,120,654



CONTACT US



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