



2024 Fiscal Year
07.01.2023 - 06.30.2024

Kansas City Public Library

Annual Report

150 

We are a doorway to
knowledge for all people
in our community.



Original Bookmobile c. 1950



Plaza Branch c. 1967



Heartland Book Fest c. 2023

explore
learn
discover
inspire
create
find
empow
connec
access

Letter from Pete Browne

President, Board of Trustees



Dear Supporters,

This past year was truly one of celebration. Because you're holding our year-end report, it's likely you've been a part of the sesquicentennial anniversary excitement, and I thank you for that.

For 150 years now, the Library has been a critical part of Kansas City's infrastructure both as a safe space to learn, grow, and discover, and as a vibrant cultural center. Our Signature Events, in particular, act as the city's premier public forum for engaging with nationally recognized thinkers, artists, and leaders, and have been showcased during this festive time.

Many of you were with us in December when we kicked off our four-part anniversary speaker series. Each event was very much a party, with live music, food, and activities, and began with Finnish scholar Tommi Laitio who talked about what he calls *convivencia*, a space between harmony and open conflict where strangers can come together. A space like a public library.

We also welcomed and learned from National Book Award winner Jacqueline Woodson and NPR host Ari Shapiro. In September, the series wraps up with a visit from Margaret Atwood, the highly decorated author of *The Handmaid's Tale*, during Banned Books Week.

The Library has been, and remains, a leader in cultivating a city-wide appreciation for the humanities through hosting prominent authors like these but also by continually adding new programs and initiatives.

The Maya Angelou Book Award, for instance, is now in its fourth year. The national award, established by the Kansas City Public Library, the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and five other Missouri universities, celebrates contemporary writers of poetry and fiction whose works reflect a commitment to social justice and inclusion.

And more recently, in partnership with Missouri Humanities and the Missouri Center for the Book, the Heartland Book Festival is fast becoming a favorite yearly event. In fall 2023 the inaugural festival drew 2000 book lovers. The 2024 festival, featuring bestselling author and former Georgia House of Representatives minority leader Stacey Abrams, is likely to bring in even more.

Thank you for taking a moment to pause with me to appreciate an institution that I've benefited from so much over the course of my life – a full third of the Library's 150 years.

To all Library supporters, as well as Library staff and volunteers, I thank you for your dedication and hard work all year long. I'm proud to volunteer alongside you and look forward to seeing you at events for years to come.

Pete Browne
President, Kansas City Public Library
Board of Trustees

Board of Trustees

Pete Browne

Reid Day

Laura Dominik

Claudia Oñate Greim

Jonathan Kemper

Susan Kenney

Michelle Smirnova

Elizabeth Warwick

India Williams



Introducing Abby Yellman

Library Director



Dear Friends and Supporters,

I joined the Kansas City Public Library team at an immensely rich and pivotal time in its history. Since assuming the role of director on August 5, I have not been fully able to express what this opportunity has meant to me, both professionally and personally. It is great to be back in Kansas City and an honor to be entrusted with the responsibility to serve the organization and our community.

This fiscal year exemplified a time of exciting changes, record-setting Summer Reading participation, and unforgettable activities like the heartwarming Library birthday parties held throughout the city at each of our neighborhood branches.

As we reflect on our success, we also celebrate the profound support from those who continue to champion who we are and what we do in service to our community. In my first six weeks, I made my way to our 10 locations to engage with staff. The level of passion and investment our staff put into their work is apparent, and I am in awe of their commitment to innovation, inclusivity, and service, and their demonstrations of expertise across service areas.

I've witnessed teams assisting jobseekers from application to interview; helping first-time voters navigate the civic process; supporting refugees striving to acclimate to new surroundings; creating pathways for those struggling with mental health or

housing instability; being a critical connection point between our patrons in need with community partners; or serving 10,431 meals to area children. Kansas City Public Library continues its transformative impact on the lives of individuals and families of all ages.

As a mission-focused organization, impact requires resources and a team committed to embracing the journey – that is, the success and the struggle that always accompanies growth, as professionals, volunteers, and donors, but most importantly as human beings.

While our staff, resources, and services have evolved over the past 150 years, our commitment to inform and inspire, to enrich and empower, remains the same. My sincere hope is that you will continue to be a partner in what makes the Kansas City Public Library a pillar of our community, and that you will continue to intentionally engage and lend your strength, time, and curiosity to this organization that I have dreamed of being a part of for the past 20 years.

And thank you. All you have done shines brightly in this report, and it is clear that with your support, remarkable things are ahead. I am so proud to say that I am part of the Kansas City Public Library team and am grateful to have each one of you right here by my side.

With immense gratitude,

Abby Yellman

Chief Executive, Kansas City Public Library

Circulation

This year, the Library experienced a remarkable increase in circulation across our physical and digital collections, showcasing the community's strong engagement with reading and learning. From print books to audiobooks and eBooks, our diverse offerings continue to meet the evolving needs of our patrons.

915,219 Total books borrowed

1,500,682 Total eBooks, audiobooks, music, videos, and podcasts borrowed



131,744 Current Library cardholders

+50,363 New Library cardholders

1,321,069

In-person
Library visits

+118% year-over-year growth



Digital

In 2024, the Library expanded digital services, ensuring seamless access to technology and information through our device lending program, wireless sessions, and Digital Branch. These initiatives have strengthened our ability to serve patrons both in person and online, keeping our community connected and informed.

3,921,517

Online visits to Digital Branch and KCLibrary.org

134,925

Free, on-site
Wi-Fi sessions



689

Hotspots borrowed

1,713

Laptops borrowed



Plaza Branch



Outreach

Through our mobile services and outreach efforts, the Library delivered materials and other resources directly to nursing homes, early childhood centers, and other locations, making reading accessible to all. We also supported immigrant and refugee communities, ensuring they have the resources and support needed to thrive.



Bookmobile

> 72,936

Books or materials delivered through Books to Go



6,969 Books donated through community outreach

8,630 Circulation (lobby stops/bag swaps)

109 People utilizing Library By Mail

7,651 Number of items Mobile Services delivered, circulated, and gave out



Kansas City
Public Library
RISE Refugee & Immigrant
Services & Empowerment

Driver Edu Interviews Practice Financial Literacy English Ba Citizenshi



Naturalization Ceremony



213

Classes offered through RISE

5,085

Total people served through RISE

10

Years of Refugee & Immigrant Services
& Empowerment at the Library

Signature Events

The Library hosted a series of impactful Signature Events, including author visits and community discussions, that fostered informed and engaged citizenship. These events underscored the Library's role as a leader in public discourse and cultural enrichment.



Jacqueline Woodson

79

Signature Events and author visits



Heartland Book Festival

15,029

Online views



13,109

Live attendees



Nina Simone: Four Women



Tommi Laitio event



Jacqueline Woodson event



Glenn North



Ari Shapiro

Summer Reading

Our Summer Reading Program remains a highlight of the Library's offerings. During "Pop in at the Park," our bookmobiles delivered Summer Reading activities directly to city neighborhoods. This approach ensured that students (of all ages) stayed engaged with reading throughout the summer!



26,397

Books logged



47

Parks visited through
Pop in at the Park



Adult Summer Reading Kickoff



15,056

Registered
participants

+16% year-over-year growth



Youth & Family Engagement

The Library provides a wide range of youth and family programs that provided learning and fostered connections within the community. From storytimes to interactive activities, these programs enriched the lives of children and their families, promoting a lifelong love of learning.

56,033

Youth Program Participants

+34% year-over-year growth



Read-to-a-Dog Program

10,431 Meals distributed through Kids Café

25,271 Phone calls to Library's Dial-A-Story program



Financials

Revenues	27,008,031	Property taxes
	959,310	State & Federal grants
	2,068,921	Investment income
	2,295,924	Contributions
	1,160,402	Charges for services
	33,492,588	Total Revenue
Expenditures	17,743,405	Salaries & fringe
	2,795,268	Library materials
	5,625,863	General operating
	3,656,676	Building operations
	1,212,507	Capital outlay
	103,783	Other
	30,929,936	Total Expenditures

Celebrating 150 years of Discovery

One Kansas City Public Library, many locations

Central

Digital

Lucile H. Bluford

Mobile Outreach

North-East

Irene H. Ruiz

Plaza

Southeast

Sugar Creek

Trails West

Waldo

Westport