



Create

Empower

Inspire

Discover

Utica Public Library

Annual Report

2014-2015

Strong Library,
Strong Community



303 Genesee Street · Utica, NY · 315-735-2279 · www.uticapubliclibrary.org

New Philosophy Behind Adult Programs

In an effort to better serve the changing needs of our community, the Utica Public Library has made a shift in its adult programming that places a focus on learning and creating. Programs are specifically chosen that allow participants to leave with a skill or knowledge that extends beyond the parameters of the library building and can be useful as a future reference. In keeping with this focus, the Utica Public Library has brought in Yoga, Zumba, Writing Classes, Butter Lamb Classes, Origami, and Fiction Discussion Groups. In each case,

participants leave with something beyond the pleasure of simply viewing a performance. Performance programming is still incorporated into the Library's adult programming roster, but allowing for educational programming to take a stronger lead.

Carl Antonucci,
Adult Program
Coordinator



*"One of the things I love most is having the chance to introduce people to cultural things that they might not seek out on their own. Whether it's classic novels like **The House of Mirth** by Edith Wharton and **Invisible Man** by Ralph Ellison or classic films like **Sunset Boulevard**, **Easy Rider**, and **To Kill a Mockingbird**, or the beauty of Islamic Architecture, it's truly a thrill to watch patrons enjoy the 'discovery' of something that they were not familiar with, but have come to appreciate. You can't put a price on that kind of inspiration and enlightenment."*

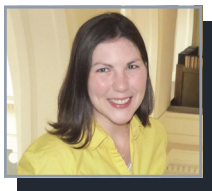
Technology Training

Libraries are not only a place where community members have access to the Internet, they are also a place where people can get training to be a successful digital citizen. Teaching computer skills has become absolutely necessary as critical interactions between citizens and employers or government agencies take place electronically. As the gap grows between early adopters of technologies and those at the other end of the spectrum, library staff will continue to evolve and grow to meet our mission of ensuring everyone in our community can access computers,

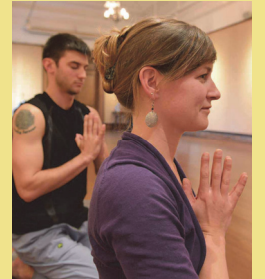
the Internet, and digital literacy training.

The library is a safe place for people to come and learn without fear of embarrassment. Those most in need of help with technology often express frustration over not having the knowledge necessary to navigate through the digital landscape. But there is no need for anxiety. No one is born with the knowledge of using a computer. It just takes time and effort, and our technology instructors are happy to help along the way.

Jocelyn Ireland,
Digital Literacy
Librarian



*"I choose to work in a public library because I believe in giving everyone a chance to better themselves. **Curiosity sparks in all ages**—it's never too late to learn. I love teaching technology skills and watching people **empower** themselves."*



Creating Memorable Experiences with Youth Services

The Library has a strong commitment to Youth Services as a whole – services from birth through adulthood. In terms of services to our younger patrons, our offerings are myriad. We view early literacy development as preventive medicine, whereas many literacy programs are simply bandages: if you have literate children, you have literate adults. As a result, we have instituted programming specifically for babies and toddlers over the past few years, and these have been very successful. It is tremendously rewarding to see young ones grow up with the programs and with the Library as a constant in their lives.

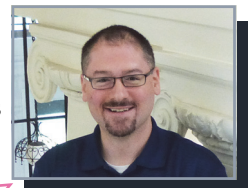
In addition, and with much thanks to the Community Foundation, we are continuing our vast amounts of programming during summer vacation months. The Library is unique in the size and scope of its Summer Reading Program, and moving forward starting with this coming summer, the Program will evolve to become more *experiential* and attempt to get our community's youth actively doing worthwhile and interesting things throughout the summer instead of just trying to record the number of books they read.

For teens and young adults, our gaming programs continue to be the number one area the Library connects with them. What seems like a bunch of people playing is really so much more. Games have an amazing way to increase interpersonal skills and cross the boundaries imposed upon people

by society – age, race, gender, economic and other social differences, which in the case of teenagers might be something so much more important to them than any of those other differences, such as the different cliques they belong to. Also, and in a slightly sneaky way, game play involves a great deal of educational development, including critical thinking skills, SAT level vocabulary and mathematics. Over the course of a period of time playing games with individuals, it is possible to see tremendous growth in all of these areas as they learn to interact with others more fluently and with greater ease, and learn how to critically think and strategically play the games.

Speaking of playing, our services to youth have a great deal of focus on the concept of play as it matters to development. Play in all of its forms is a positive developmental means of interacting with, and learning about, the world. Play can be as simple, yet as profoundly important, as little ones building with blocks – learning about cause and effect, motor skills, shapes, and so much more—and it can be as complex as teens and adults involved in a strategic board game. Play is a means for experiencing the world, and the Library has a fantastically unique opportunity to provide that experience.

Josh Carlson,
Youth Services
Director



*"I see the Library as a **destination for experiences**. We can provide experiences that are educational, that are entertainment, but at the Library, they should always be positive experiences, leading to **positive change and betterment in those who take part in them**. If a child, a teenager, a family, anyone comes away from their experience at the Library—whether it be one of our programs, checking out a book or movie or other material that enhances their life (even if that simply means providing a bit of joy or escape from the rest of their daily life), an interaction with staff or other patrons, or even something as simple as computer usage—and it is a positive experience, then we have done our jobs."*

Outreach Programs:

Meeting the community where needed

The Library is committed to doing what best serves residents, offering enrichment opportunities that are pertinent and add value to their lives. Our service and dedication does not stop at the doors of our building.

One of our greatest focuses is promoting early literacy here in the Library and in the community. Our Children's Librarians create programs for kids to do what comes naturally: playing while cultivating their minds and social skills. They visit at least a dozen Head Start programs, preschools, and daycares in the area. Each month our staff is able to reach over 400 children and help introduce them to the joys of literacy as well as spread awareness of their local library. During outreach, the children are treated to storytimes that include books, songs, and games. Teachers are also provided with library information for their students' families such as the programs offered at the Library and how to get a library card. Amanda Stewart, Early Literacy Coordinator, has recently started to work with

other agencies, including the Cornell Cooperative Extension Childcare Council, to offer programs for parents and caregivers that provide ideas on incorporating literacy at home.

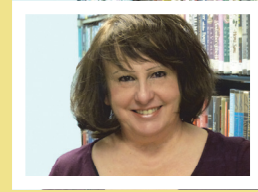
Another strong focus of the Library is making technology instruction more accessible to the community. In 2013, Jocelyn Ireland joined the staff as the Library's first Digital Literacy Librarian. In addition to the new and updated technology courses offered at the library, she also has given computer instruction at locations throughout the community: New Hartford Senior Center, Human Technologies Corporation, MVILR, Parkway Center, Schuyler Commons, Acacia Village, and the Utica Rescue Mission's Morris Learning Center. Jocelyn works with a variety of people with a variety of technology-related needs. Some need help creating a resume and applying to jobs online. Others need assistance getting used to their smartphone or tablet. Digital literacy is just another form of literacy the Library is dedicated to promoting in the community.



Amanda Stewart,
Early Literacy
Coordinator

"Young children absorb so much information in their early years. It is important to be able to expose them to the joy of reading early so they can grow to be lifelong readers."

Meet some of our staff



Savaria

"I enjoy working with the public and the UPL staff. The Utica Public Library is the Heart of the City."



Margie

"People so often think a library is just a collection of books, but we're not! Come meet an author; learn computer skills; attend storytime; view displays in the Art Gallery; listen to a concert; or even learn Yoga. And the best part is: all these activities are free!"



Danelle

"I enjoy working in the Children's Room of the Utica Public Library because it gives me an outlet to express my creativity."

Community Garden

The New York State Department of Health, Oneida County, and the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees have joined together to create a community garden on Library property. Approximately 40 boxes are being used by neighborhood members to grow fruits, vegetables, and flowers to enhance the area and bring fresh foods to the dinner table. In addition, the Library partnered with Thea Bowman to create a garden that serves as an outdoor classroom for its children as well as providing fresh food for lunches.





Austin

One of our dedicated volunteers in the circulation department shares why he works at the Library: "I love having the chance to look at the books and discovering new authors."



Heidi

"I love when people come in and say how they remember coming here when they were younger and begin talking about their good memories of UPL. What a testament to the power of the Library, that after all these years they still carry those wonderful moments spent here discovering themselves and the world around them."



Alistair

"My love of books was passed on to me by my father who was an avid reader and firm believer in the role of books for education and pleasure. The Utica Public Library is an excellent source not only for books and associated media but also for the many varied educational and fun programs available for all the family. It is an honor and pleasure for me to work with a dedicated team of colleagues serving the community."

Volunteers

Volunteers contribute their time to the Library and help to extend services for patrons. The Library's Café and Genealogy and Local History Room are staffed solely with volunteers. Other volunteers also assist in the Circulation, Reference, and Youth Services Departments. Nearly 3,000 volunteer hours were donated last year. One of our most dedicated volunteers is Keith Gerlach.

Keith has volunteered at the Library for over ten years in Genealogy and Local History.



Keith Gerlach,
Genealogy Volunteer

During that time he has helped visitors from Italy, Germany, Poland, Switzerland, Russia, Wales and England. Our genealogy resources draw people to Downtown Utica bringing money into the local economy. Keith also assists researchers through the mail, email and telephone. His favorite part is assisting Armed Services Veterans and Active Duty Service men and women find the military records of their parents and grandparents.

"Until you trace your family through genealogy, you can't know the feeling of discovering something you lost or never knew you had. The joy it brings people is unbelievable."

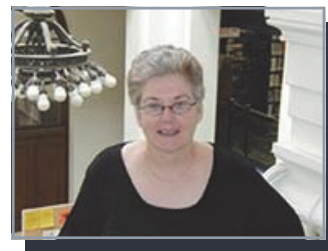
A Letter from the Director

The Utica Public Library was established in 1893. For the past 122 years, the Board of Trustees and staff have remained committed to innovative educational programs and services as well as making available digital and print collections for Library patrons and community members' use. This year we have focused on adult and children's programs as well as technology access and instruction. This report provides information about these initiatives.

We are grateful for the continued support of our donors, including individuals, businesses and organizations as well as our elected officials who view public libraries as integral to the quality of life,

education and economic development in our community.

Finally we thank the taxpayers of the City of Utica and Oneida County for investing in the Utica Public Library and enabling creativity, education and excitement to continue in this beautiful building.



Darby O'Brien,
Library Director

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We are deeply grateful to donors at every level, all of whom make it possible for the Utica Public Library to continue services that our residents and researchers around the world count on every day.

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Children Program Sponsors

Diamond Level \$5,000+

M&T Bank/Partners Trust Bank Charitable Fund of The Community Foundation of Herkimer & Oneida Counties (2014)

Gold Level \$1,000-\$4,999

First Source Federal Credit Union (2014)

Strategic Financial Services (2014)

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Basloe, Levin & Cuccaro / Adjusters International (2014)

Copper Level Up to \$250

Turnbull Insurance (2014)

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Ed & Ed Business Technology (2014)

Adult Program Sponsors

Murad and Murad, PC - Art Contest, Feb. 2015

Hannaford Supermarket - Art Contest, Feb. 2015

Prints Charles Photography - Photography Contest, June 2014

Utica College Office of Educator Preparation - Classic Fiction Forum, April 2014

Desserts Beyond the Ordinary - Summer Reading Program, July 2014

Dunkin Donuts—Summer Reading Program, July 2014

Irwin's Fine Food - Summer Reading Program, July 2014

Massoud's Café - Summer Reading Program, July 2014

The Tramontane Café - Summer Reading Program, July 2014

Peter's Cornucopia - Summer Reading Program, July 2014

Barnes & Noble - Summer Reading Program, July 2014

Callanen, Foley, & Hobika, LLP—Art Contest, Feb. 2014

Joann Jacobson - Film Series, 2014

Barbara Kassel - Film Series, 2014

Andrea LeFevre - Film Series, 2014

Frank & Penny Moreno—Film Series, 2014

Board of Trustees

The past year has been an active one for the Utica Public Library. We hope that you will take the time to review the information that we have offered in this annual report.

In addition to the many services provided to our citizens, our board was busy in 2014 with efforts to strengthen the Library that included:

- ♦ Development of plans for a new children's & youth center
- ♦ Development of plans for a new adult computer area.
- ♦ Building improvements with the completion of a two year project to install new gutters and a portion of the roof

As you can see, these are exciting times for the Utica Public Library.

At UPL, we provide services to tens of thousands of the area's citizens. We could not do that without the support of scores of individuals from throughout our community. We could not operate without financial support; support that is critical to paying our bills. After a winter like this past one, where we recorded the coldest month in the history of record-keeping, our heating bill alone for the month of February was \$2,324. Area donors contributed more than \$83,492 to support the Library in our last fiscal year.

To those of you who are not involved, we ask that you consider volunteering, and/or financially contributing to the Utica Public Library...the source of information for our community.

Kelly M. Walters — President

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Dominic R. Passalacqua

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Anthony C. Paolozzi — Treasurer

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C. Sonia Martinez

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New and Coming Soon!

Library card holders can access **free online technology courses** from the privacy of their own home through Webucator.com. Visit or call a reference librarian to get your voucher code and start learning today!



K-12 students with a Utica Public Library card have access to live, expert tutors 2:00 –11:00 P.M. Monday-Friday and 12:00-11:00 P.M. Saturday-Sunday through tutor.com/utica. Math, science, essay writing, standardized testing prep—whatever the student needs help with, these tutors are there for them.

Designs for a new Children's Room are in the works. The Children's Room and Teen Lounge will move out of the basement to the first floor of the Library.





Utica Public Library
303 Genesee Street
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 735-2279
www.uticapubliclibrary.org

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The Library by the Numbers (2014-15 Fiscal Year)

Visitors

In the 2014-15 fiscal year, 205,034 patrons came to the library and another 41,374 visited via the website, www.uticapubliclibrary.org

Collection and Card Holders

144,926 items were borrowed. There were 48,600 active cardholders. 2,494 new library cards were issued.

Shared Resources

17,177 books, DVDs, CDs, and audiobooks were shared with other libraries—both within the Mid York Library System and abroad. 17,553 items were sent to us from other libraries. Resource sharing results in savings to the taxpayer.

Programs

From early literacy programs to digital literacy classes, musical performances and cultural events, the Library offered over 1300 programs and 15,663 people attended.

Public Computers

The Library has forty computers for public use. Patrons used the computers over 71,000 times.

Community Services

The Library's two notaries completed over eight hundred notarizations for community members. Staff participated in over three hundred events bringing Library information, services, and classes into the community.

Reference

37,414 reference questions were answered over the phone, in-person, and online. Reference Librarians help patrons in using public computers for online education, job searching and connecting with web resources. People from across the globe email and call to get information on Utica history, newspaper microfilm, and genealogy research.