

Executive Director's Report January 2023

What's New @ AHML

Drive Up Window Improvements

The drive-up was closed for three days December 19-21 while a new window was installed. The new window comes equipped with a transfer drawer and intercom system which will allow staff the option of assisting customers while keeping the main window closed, thus increasing protection from extreme temperatures, and increasing safety at this service point. While the installation of the window is complete, finishing of the interior walls will take place within the next few weeks.



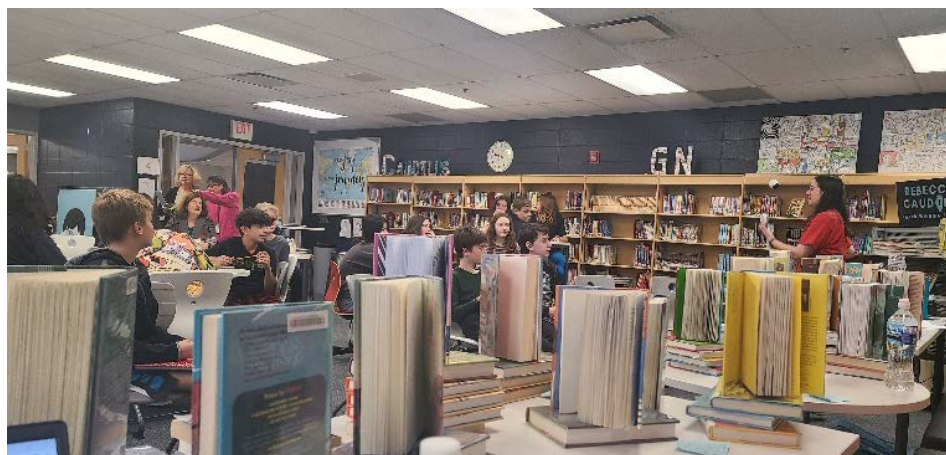
Black Life in America and Hispanic Life in America

The library has added two new research tools, **Black Life in America** and **Hispanic Life in America**, which focus on the experience and impact of African- and Hispanic- Americans, as recorded by the news media. Each database includes millions of articles and primary sources from thousands of publications and covers hundreds of years. They also feature a browsable guide through time periods and significant topics and events to help users quickly locate articles of interest. [Find them in the Research>Databases>All Databases](#) section of the library's website, as well as [the Youth > Teens > Study page](#).

Outreach and Community Engagement

Booktalks at Thomas Middle School

Youth Services staff shared new books with 6, 7 and 8th grade students at Thomas Middle School before winter break. Over the course of three days, staff interacted with 800 middle schoolers booktalking new titles, highlighting library programs, and checking out books for students to enjoy over break. Library staff were able to build a relationship with middle schoolers and staff and restart a beloved partnership after a pandemic hiatus.



Holiday Love Notes

The English as a Second Language (ESL) and Literacy Office hosted 21 participants for two drop-in programs offered in partnership with Meals on Wheels. Participants spent time in the office socializing and making cards sent to the Chicago Meals on Wheels office to be distributed to meal recipients across the Chicagoland area. Participants had fun being crafty and getting to know one another better while learning about this organization and the ways in which they help the community.



Mock Interviews for Have Dreams Students



When Lora Slutsky, Counseling & Employment Supervisor at Have Dreams, a local partner organization that serves individuals and their families living with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), reached out to request interview help for students completing their job training program, the library was quick to respond. Senior and Accessible Services (SAS) Supervisor Katie Myers organized a library tour and scheduled mock interviews with library staff Marie Szymanek, Mary Jo Lepo and Jennifer Begich. The Have Dreams participants also met with Human Resource Manager Lisa Haack who answered questions about the library’s hiring process and offered job search tips.

Serving Our Community

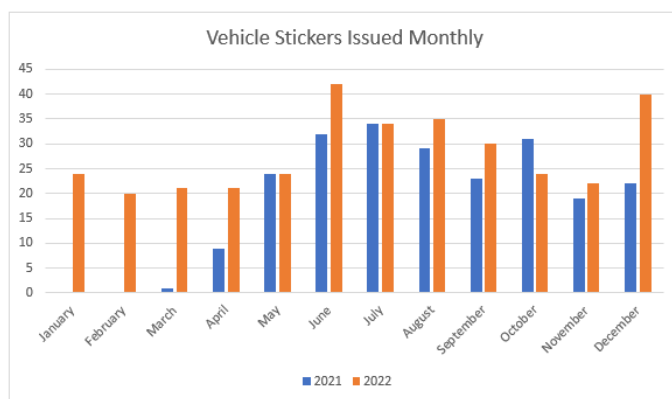
New Information Services offered in 2022

Based on the needs of the community, Info Services staff launched several new services in 2022:

- Take Home Job Kits: 250 kits were distributed
- SMS/Text Messaging
- Museum Adventure Passes
- New Readers Program: Lit Stroll
- Online reservations for the Hendrickson Room
- Implemented Online Payment Processor for Hendrickson Room Payments

Vehicle Stickers

Circulation Assistants issued 40 vehicle stickers this month, nearly double the amount issued in December of last year. While 2022 was the first full year offering this service, overall, 337 stickers were issued in 2022, a 50% increase from 2021. This brought the total number of stickers issued since the service began in April to 561.



The Arcade Age Continues

After a late November opening, the library was bustling with love for arcade games and nostalgia all December long. We estimate we welcomed more than 2,700 visitors to The Arcade Age exhibit in November and another 6,994 visitors to the Arcade Age Exhibit in December. Customers of all ages continue to explore and play the games and share memories, particularly grateful for access to this activity during cold-weather months and while kids have been out of school.

Arcade-centric and inspired programming offered throughout the month met the interests of many different audiences. A total of twenty gamers ranging from teens to adults competed in tournaments for Mortal Kombat, Pac-Man, and Tetris with more tournament play continuing into January.



On Tuesday, December 20, Programs and Exhibits Specialist Emily Muszynski instructed a video game character cross stitch workshop. Eighteen crafters embraced the 8-bit style while learning the ins-and-outs of cross stitch.

On Thursday, December 28, Programs and Exhibits staff hosted an "Arcade Cinema Double Feature" event. Thirteen movie-goers enjoyed popcorn and laid-back screenings of genre classics The Last Starfighter and Tron.

Finals Study Lounge

December marked the end of the semester for District 214, which meant students made their way to the library to study for final exams. 741 high school students used the library's conference rooms, large study tables and made the Hub their home base throughout the week before winter break. The Hub provided snacks and school supplies as well as a special visit from Gracie, the therapy dog, on December 18 and 20 where 52 teens gave Gracie good pets while inadvertently helping themselves de-stress.



Sunday Musicale: Mark Valenti

A strong turnout, engaged audience, and high level of musical talent best describes the December 11 offering of Sunday Musicale. The artist played an hour of complicated classical material strictly from memory – very impressive and well received.



Community Blood Drive

The December blood drive with community partner Versiti resulted in a total of 25 scheduled donors, 24 registered donors, 16 whole blood, four double red cells donors for eight units and a total of four first time Versiti donors. The potential number of patients helped through the library and the Arlington Heights community's efforts: 72.



Meditation for the Holidays

On December 15, Programs and Exhibits Specialist Neal Parker kicked off a several month series of meditation programs. Twenty-one adults joined instructor Mark Zelkowitz for a relaxing afternoon of meditation, from regular program attendees to some new to library

programs. There was a palpable chill vibe in Hendrickson Room following the session and one attendee jokingly asked if she could stay till January.

Your Second Act! Career Series

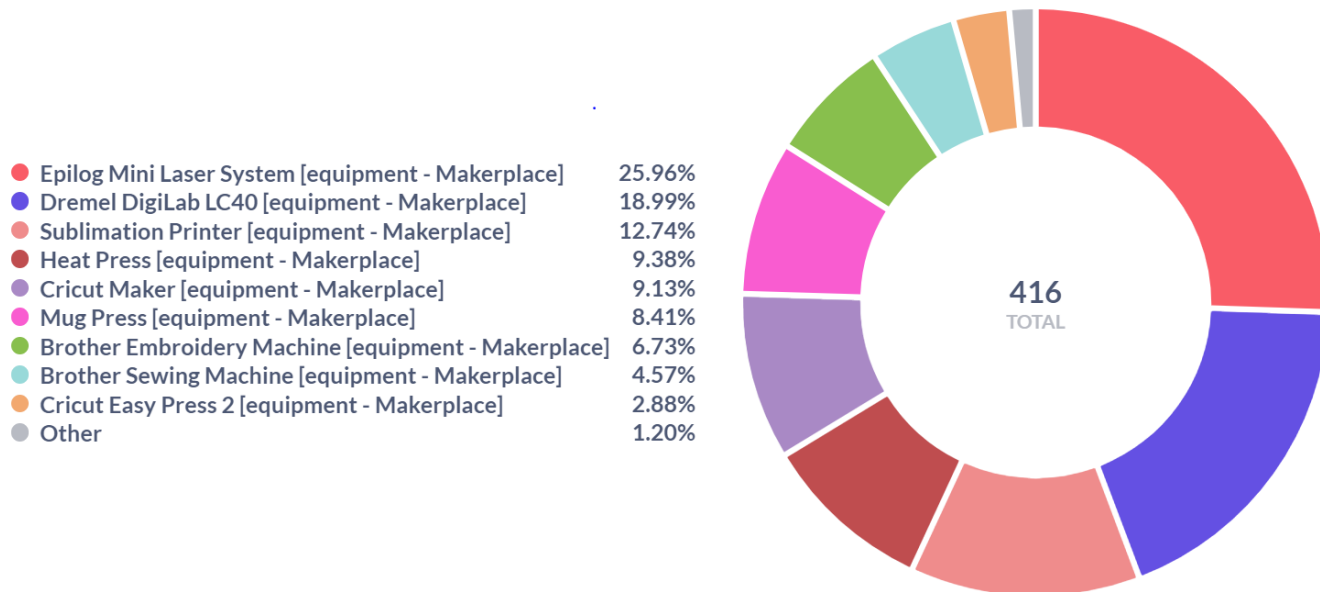
Info Services Librarian Brittany Coleman coordinated this job program with presenter Kelly Will who grew up in Arlington Heights and was excited to present the three-part series aimed towards those seeking to change careers, launching a job search, or aiming to advance their career.

“I wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed Your Second Act. It has inspired my job hunt and given me the confidence to go after what I want. I now have the tools I need in my toolbox to succeed, and I can’t thank you enough for putting the program together.”

Makerplace

From drumsticks to mugs, sheet music to ornaments, the laser cutters at the Makerplace got quite a workout with over 187 circulations in December. Sublimation printing was also a huge draw with 188 sheets of sublimation paper sold and printed. 110 3D prints were submitted and printed by Makerplace staff in December as well. Below is a breakdown of equipment reservations in December:

December 2022 Makerplace Reservable Equipment Checkouts



A Year in the Kitchen

December marked the first full year of culinary classes offered to the public. In total, we offered 74 classes and welcomed 1,057 attendees. Though the variety of classes were designed for adult audiences 18+, this year’s schedule included classes designed for tweens, teens, parents and even one instructed by an ESL volunteer as a complement to One Book, One Village 2022.

Homemade Cinnamon Rolls

Programs and Exhibits staff welcomed instructor Andrea Pracht back to the Makerplace Kitchen on December 3. Andrea offered two back-to-back sessions of her very popular Cinnamon Rolls class, first offered in September. Thirty-two participants enjoyed her detailed hands-on instruction and tips. Andrea is a whiz at demystifying the science of baking and building up the self-esteem of her participants, energizing them to get into their kitchens and continue to experiment, noting it's okay to fail as long as you keep trying. Glowing attendee feedback showed the class was successful with multiple level learners:



“I learned something, I met new friends, got to take things home. I loved the opportunity!”

“Andrea was wonderful and answered all questions so well. Library staff is amazing, and I love cinnamon rolls. While I have been making them for years, I learned a new and better technique. Thank You!”

“The instructor was great. I went to her website and picked up a couple more recipes to try.”



Holiday Cookie Exchange

Sunday, December 11 marked our second annual Holiday Cookie Exchange at the Makerplace. Programs and Exhibits staff welcomed 25 community bakers, who brought in batches of cookies to share and took new cookies home to their families. New this year, bakers were invited to stay and enjoy coffee with their cookies in the cozy Makerplace kitchen. Participants took advantage of the time to meet and chat about their recipes and their plans for the season. We are excited to continue to offer more casual events such as this in the kitchen.

Makers of the Month

A mom and daughter maker-duo spent a Saturday working their way through all of the Makerplace's greatest hits. They started on the Epilog laser cutter and engraved mugs for teacher gifts. Then made a vinyl sticker for a wooden tote on the Circut vinyl cutter and embroidered a golf bag for dad on the embroidery machine. Quite a day!



Jennifer Nitch, Interlibrary Loan Assistant and a new user of the Makerplace, surprised her family (and herself) with the incredible number of items she made with the logo of her family farm. She made laser engraved water bottles and glasses, sublimated coffee mugs, sublimated t-shirts and puzzles and some great wooden laser engraved ornaments.



One of the library's regular volunteers and a friend spent the day in the art space carving wood together.



Staff Highlights

Congratulations MLIS Graduates

Ellie Richardson in Youth Services Programs and Outreach completed her master's degree in Library and Information Sciences from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Ellie moved from Youth Services Specialist to Librarian.

Information Technology Manager Rich Dworianyn completed his master's degree in Library and Information Sciences from Valdosta State University.

Dementia Practitioner Certification

SAS Supervisor Katie Myers completed 29 hours of training credit to achieve a certificate in both End-of-Life Care and Healthy Aging. Completion of this training provides the necessary credits for Katie's Certified Dementia Practitioner (CDP) renewal.

Trans-Inclusive Librarianship

Community and Circulation Services Manager Shannon Meyer and Youth Services Manager Trixie Dantis completed University of Wisconsin iSchool's training on [Trans-Inclusive Librarianship](#). This training provided expanded knowledge to support the role libraries can take to affirm and support the safety and rights of transgender people through the creation and maintenance of safe and welcoming spaces, collections, and programs.