

Director's Report

February 2025

Arlington Heights Memorial Library



Strengthen the library's service outside its walls

AHML Continues to Build Upon Partnerships



Have Dreams Academy: The library hosted a partnership event with Have Dreams Academy, a workforce training program for adults with high-functioning autism. Senior & Accessible Services Interim Manager Katie organized a library tour and practice interviews for the program participants. Staff from multiple departments supported this outreach visit including Community & Circulation Services Supervisor Megan, who helped lead a library tour, Human Resources Generalist Gaby, who presented information on our hiring process and job search tips and Acquisitions Supervisor Marie, who joined the other AHML staff to complete practice interviews with the students.

District 214: Teachers from District 214's Center for Career Discovery visited the library to learn about services and resources available with their AHML educator library cards. Youth Outreach Specialist Amy and Info Services Librarian Lynnanne hosted the group of 14 teachers, presenting on school services, helpful databases for their students and more.

Kathy Gannon, Partnership Manager & Apprenticeship Supervisor, said: ***"We are especially thrilled to have the support of your team as we strive to improve access and outcomes for our student community. The fact that each member of our team now has an AHML card, along with meaningful connections to your incredible staff, ensures we are better equipped to help students turn the page toward their next chapter."***



GOAL

District 25 & District 214: The library partnered with Districts 25 and 214 to host a panel program exploring AI in school spaces. The panelists included the library's Technology Instruction Coordinator David Olichwier, District 25's Director of Technology Chris Fahnoe and District 214's Instructional Technology Coordinator Katie Page. Kudos to David and Programs & Exhibits staff Neal and Jay for months of collaborative planning with the schools.

Arlington Heights Chamber of

Commerce: Info Services staff Diane and Steven collaborated with Makerspace Branch Assistant Manager Chris to co-host the Chamber's before hours networking group at the Makerplace. In addition to networking, 24 Chamber members learned about how the Makerplace can benefit their businesses.



Staff collaborated to host a second Chamber networking group last month called BLAST. Attendees including Executive Director Mike Driskell prepared meals for 50 people for JOURNEYS | The Road Home, a nonprofit organization that provides shelter, counseling and resources to end homelessness.



St. Viator High School: Staff members from Youth Services and Info Services demonstrated how to use the library's databases to eight classrooms and 190 juniors at St. Viator High School over the course of two days. Since the visit, staff know of at least four students who have visited the library seeking additional research help for their projects.

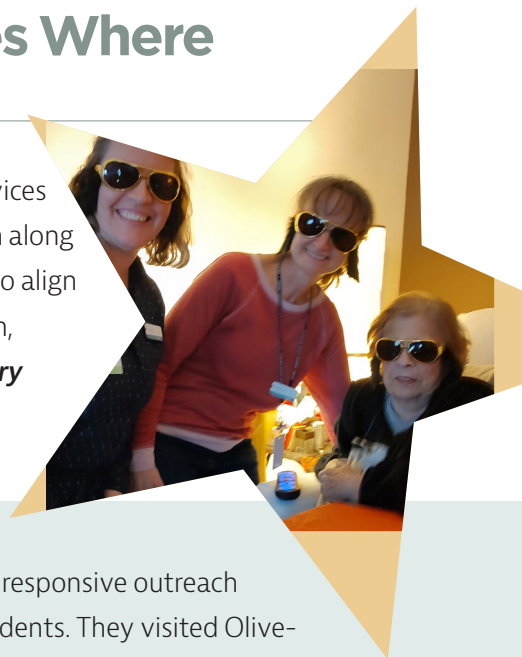
Arlington Heights Garden Club: Emily and Nikki from Programs & Exhibits partnered with the Garden Club for Homegrown National Park—a hybrid event presented by Professor of Agriculture Doug Tallamy. Over 130 attendees watched on Zoom and 47 people attended the watch party at the library. The engaging presentation inspired the environmentalist audience to shrink their lawns in favor of native plant gardens.



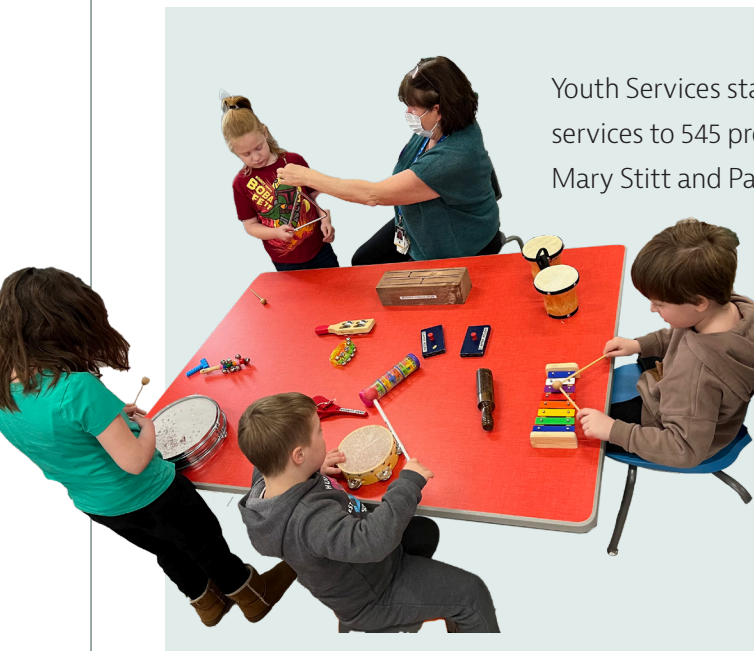
GOAL

AHML Engages Community in Places Where Customers Are

Senior & Accessible Services staff Renee and Katie visited a library delivery services customer on her birthday, wearing novelty sunglasses to celebrate the Elvis fan along with her family and friends. The customer's family had coordinated the event to align with the customer's monthly library delivery visit and shared their appreciation, ***"You've all been so wonderful to my mom. The monthly deliveries and library staff are so important to her and make a difference in her daily life!"***

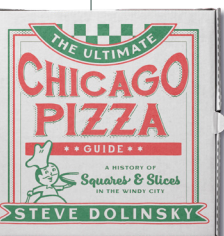


Youth Services staff provided a diverse array of responsive outreach services to 545 preschool–elementary-aged students. They visited Olive-Mary Stitt and Patton Schools to promote Monarch Award-nominated titles.

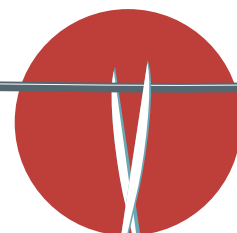


Tween Librarian Kerry and Kids Librarian Ellie worked with Ivy Hill Elementary's PTA to kick-off their parent-led book club for students and hosted a training session on running youth book discussions. Staff welcomed students from Futabakai Japanese School to the library, providing a tour and library user instruction. The month ended with a visit to Riley Elementary where Youth Outreach Specialists Amy and Kate provided sensory storytimes for students in their Educational and Life Skills Program.

AHML Continues to Offer Virtual & Hybrid Opportunities



- January's Illinois Libraries Present event featured NBC 5 Food Guy reporter, Steve Dolinsky. One hundred Arlington Heights community members tuned in live, demonstrating Zoom events still offer a real convenience, especially in the winter months, and that Chicago and its suburbs just truly love pizza. Steve's presentation was fun, upbeat, picture-ful and kept the chat buzzing with questions, challenges, recommendations and anecdotes from viewers across the state (2,159 viewed in all).
- About 25 people attended the Cutting the Cord 101 class virtually, appreciating the convenience given the cold weather. The class hosted by Gregory, Digital Services Manager, featured updated information on the topic.





Grow the use of our services and resources

Winter Reading Registration Increases from Last Year

The library's Winter Reading program brightened 775 participants' dark winter days from December 16–January 31. This was a 42% increase from last year's registration. Forty-seven percent of participants completed the challenge, reading for at least 20 days during the program.



Tenth Annual Readers' Party Brings Book Lovers Together



Info Services hosted the 10th Annual Readers' Party with 67 people in attendance, up 25 from last year. Info Advisors participated in a panel discussion sharing books they are looking forward to reading this year. In addition, attendees visited stations around the room including Blind Date with a Book, Recommend Your Favorite Book by Genre, Find Your Next Read and button/magnet

making facilitated by Makerplace staff. Both the Makerplace and The Book Stall staff were excellent partners. Attendees said that they liked meeting other readers and building community.



New this Year: Monthly Game Nights

New this year, Programs & Exhibits is offering monthly Game Nights to foster social experiences and connection for adults with shared interests. Programs & Exhibits Specialist Emily launched the series last month with a night of board games. Fifty adults enjoyed playing everything from classic to newer board games. The event offered an opportunity to get to know the wonderful selection of games in the Library of Things collection, while also encouraging attendees to bring anything they wanted to play from their own collections.



Grow the use of our services and resources

AHML Engages the Community Through Programs & Experiences at the Library

- Youth Services staff hosted three Girl Scout troops at the library last month. Troop leaders worked with library staff to determine which badge option would be the best fit for their group. Library staff presented the related activity and led a tour of the library for each visit. Thirty-nine scouts earned a new badge, learned about library services and received a special sticker commemorating their visit.



- Emily and Nikki from Programs & Exhibits welcomed back the Arlington Squares Square Dance Club for a second fun-filled Modern Square Dancing class. Square Dance Caller John Harden led the group of 59 dancers with Emily's assistance, facilitating dance to modern rock and dance music.



- Programs & Exhibits Assistant Jay welcomed back Nancy Betker of Compassion and Choices to present on end-of-life care options with 32 people in attendance. This program continued important conversations which began during last year's One Book, One Village.



- In preparation for Heller Lumber Company's centennial celebration this year, Info Services Librarians Eddie and Steven led a successful program on the company's history. Eddie showcased the Shackley Room's local history resources, while Steven highlighted business resources available at the library that can help contribute to the success and longevity of local businesses like Heller Lumber.

- Programs & Exhibits Specialist Neal debuted Mindful Movements in January with 26 people in attendance. Led by certified mindfulness-based stress reduction teacher Stephanie Kaczynski, the session combined calming breath work, light stretches and mindfulness techniques. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with one attendee from a Parkinson's support group even asking for dates of future session dates to share with his group.
- In January, the ESL & Literacy team hosted 48 programs with 477 people in attendance.

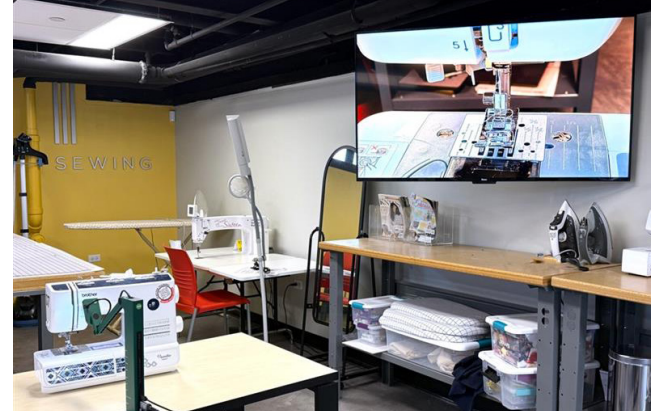




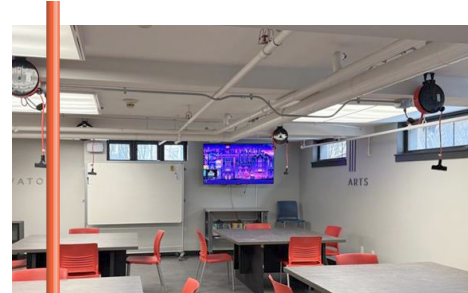
Access & Functionality Improvements at the Makerplace

The Makerplace has had several updates to improve access and functionality in the creative spaces on the lower level:

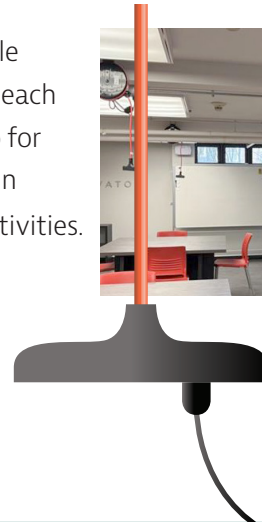
- **Sewing Room:** A new swiveling screen provides close-up views of sewing machine operations during classes and can display demonstration videos. A retractable quilt piecing wall helps quilters visualize their designs without using pins.



- **Art Room:** Retractable power outlets above each table simplifies setup for soldering, hot glue gun projects and other activities.



- **Creative Arts Space:** New "daylight" temperature lights enhance visibility and color reproduction for artists.



Staff Continue to Identify & Reduce Barriers to Access Library Offerings

- In response to customer requests, Chris, Digital Services Specialist, added QR codes to the drums and piano in the Studio's production room to help customers quickly access equipment tutorials.
- Chris, Makerspace Branch Assistant Manager, and Mini from IT Services collaborated on a system upgrade which now allows 18 computers to print to the sublimation printer, eliminating workflow issues and enabling networked printing for easier troubleshooting for staff to better assist customers. Additionally, Chris worked with the IT team to enable scanning to USB flash drives on the public copier, meeting customer needs for digitizing analog art without extra hardware costs.



Enhance the library's role in the everyday lives of the Arlington Heights community

Library Provides New Way for Emerging Adults to Engage

The library's new 20s and 30s program series kicked off in early January with 90s and 2000s TV Trivia at the Empty Corner. Thirty-eight attendees in their 20s and 30s joined Programs & Exhibits Librarians Emily and Nikki for a fun night of nostalgia and competition. The monthly 20s and 30s programming is intended to give this age group a space to meet each other and connect through fun, social activities. Staff are already seeing a community being built organically and are thrilled to be connecting with this audience.



Staff Respond to Social & Economic Needs of the Community

- Barb, Info Services Librarian, hosted a Resource Hour table in partnership with ICash, an initiative of the Illinois State Treasurer's Office. During the event, 30 community members were assisted in recovering a total of \$3,500 in unclaimed property or funds.



- Lynnanne, Info Services Librarian, collaborated with IDES on a job fair which welcomed over 100 attendees. Attendees distributed 187 resumes, leading to 43 on-site interviews, 39 scheduled interviews and 27 job offers.



Library of Things Collection Sparks Interest & Demand



- Puzzles are one of the more popular items in the Library of Things collection. Collection Services recently purchased an additional 62 puzzles. About 20 puzzles were put out on display on a Thursday and by the weekend, all were checked out!

- Digital Services and Communications & Marketing collaborated on a video for social media to promote the Seestar S50, a smart telescope that is available for check out. The video currently has over 9,500 views on Facebook and over 4,100 views on Instagram. Within a few days there were 30 holds on the two telescopes, nudging staff to order a third one to keep up with the demand.



Makerplace Fosters Community Connection & Inspires Creativity Through Experiences

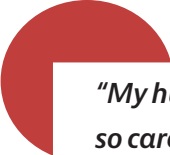
- January's Talk & Taste program focused on sports food ahead of the Superbowl. Attendees enjoyed wings and experienced a fun mad scientist twist with homemade nacho cheese using sodium citrate and popcorn with bacon powder made from tapioca maltodextrin.



- Neal and Nikki from Programs & Exhibits hosted another session of the library's culinary competition, Arlington Heights Chopped! Four teams each created a signature dish using rice, sweet potatoes, black beans, tortillas and a lime. Two more rounds of this popular event will be offered in March and May, with the winning teams invited back for an ultimate championship this summer.




What Customers Are Saying




"My husband just passed away, and I felt so cared for by Alayne and the Senior & Accessible Services staff, who went above and beyond the scope of the class to recognize my loss and check in with me during this time."

-Art with Alayne Attendee




"I was so grateful to find it and use it to talk to my mom. This experience changed my day and brought me peace."

-Wind Phone User




"I've been dreaming of a group like this, where ladies can come to stitch and chat."

-Fiber Crafts Makerplace Meetup Attendee




"Down to earth instruction, fun examples and willingness to go off script to keep it relevant and useful to students."

-Design Graphics with Canva Attendee




"Everything the AHML staff chooses and presents at these performances is always fantastic."

-Sunday Musicale Attendee




"Your programs are helping me get through the winter."

-Mindful Movements Attendee



"Our library is so fluid and willing to try new things for it's patrons—no matter their age!"

-Readers' Party Attendee



"I have been a resident for 46+ years, and I always tell people that one of the best benefits/reasons of/for living here [in Arlington Heights] is AHML and its people."

-Heller Lumber Company Landmark Series Attendee

Arlington Heights Memorial Library

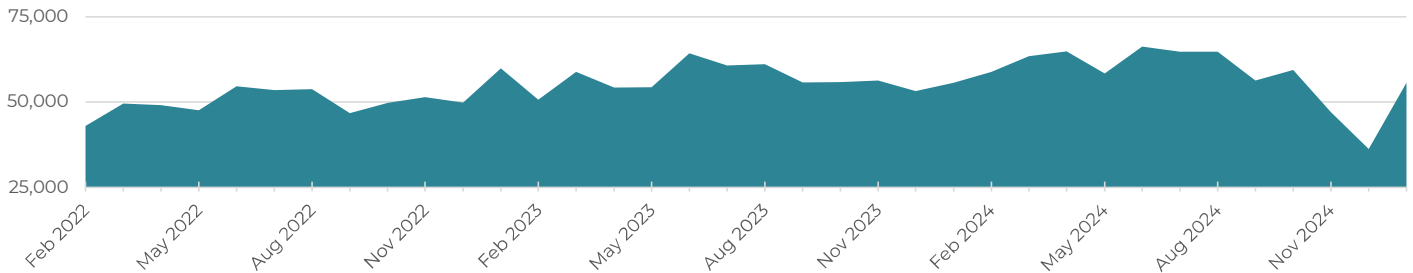
January 2025 Dashboard

Library Visits

82.4% of library customers in January visited the Main Library. Year to date, library visits are down -0.1%.

	January			2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Main Library	45,801	82.4%		45,801	46,009	-0.5%
Drive-Up	5,059	9.1%		5,059	5,442	-7.0%
Senior Center	1,602	2.9%		1,602	1,137	40.9%
Makerplace	1,206	2.2%		1,206	1,300	-7.2%
Bookmobile	1,097	2.0%		1,097	921	19.1%
Outreach	837	1.5%		837	830	0.8%
Total	55,602	100%		55,602	55,639	-0.1%

Total Visits



Room Use	January	2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change	Trend
Hendrickson Room	13	13	8	62.5%	
Conference Rooms	1,279	1,279	1,212	5.5%	
Total	1,292	1,292	1,220	5.9%	February 2024-January 2025

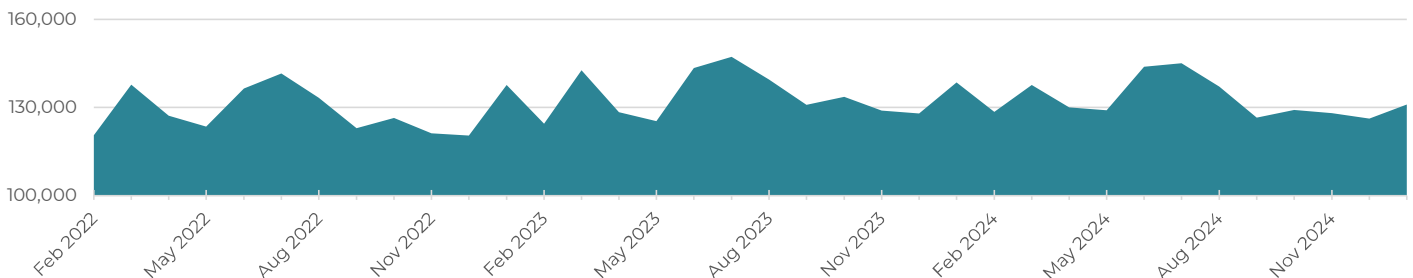
Library Cards ¹	January	2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change	Trend
Resident	363	363	377	-3.7%	
Reciprocal	115	115	104	10.6%	
Purchased	3	3	1	200.0%	
Total	481	481	482	-0.2%	February 2024-January 2025

Circulation

130,988 items were checked out in January. Year to date, total checkouts are down -5.4% compared to 2024.

	January			2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Print	70,896	54.1%		70,896	76,872	-7.8%
Downloadable	25,830	19.7%		25,830	24,240	6.6%
Audiovisual	24,096	18.4%		24,096	27,120	-11.2%
Other	10,166	7.8%		10,166	10,220	-0.5%
Total	130,988	100%		130,988	138,452	-5.4%

Total Checkouts



¹ New cards only. Does not include renewals.

Arlington Heights Memorial Library

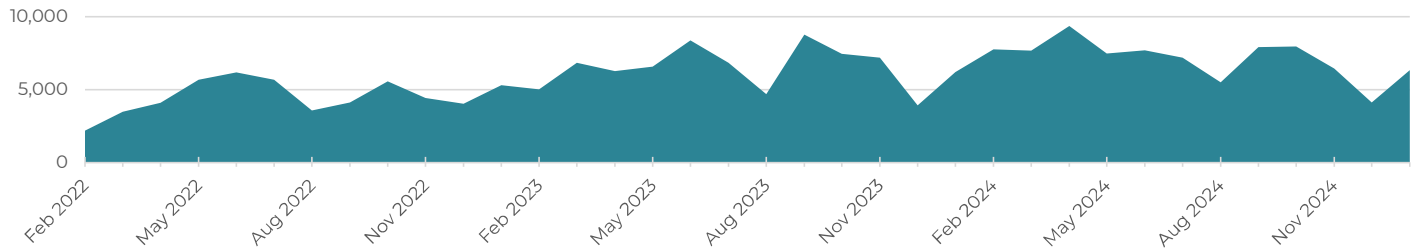
January 2025 Dashboard

Programs

3,790 customers attended Children programs in January, which represents 59.8% of all program attendees. Year to date, program attendance is up 1.9% across all audiences and program sessions are up 13.9%.

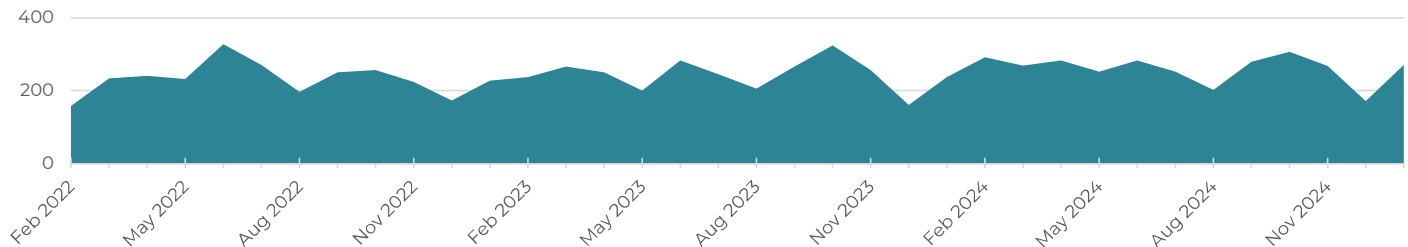
Attendance	January		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Children	3,790	59.8%	3,790	3,683	2.9%
Adult	2,260	35.7%	2,260	2,306	-2.0%
Teen	283	4.5%	283	228	24.1%
	6,333	100%	6,333	6,217	1.9%

Attendance



Sessions	January		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Adult	172	63.5%	172	156	10.3%
Children	82	30.3%	82	73	12.3%
Teen	17	6.3%	17	9	88.9%
	271	100%	271	238	13.9%

Sessions



Supplementary Programs and Activities²

	January	Trend	2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Attendance	1,447		1,447	1,535	-5.7%
Sessions	23		23	23	0.0%

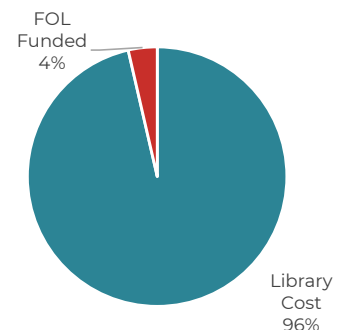
February 2024-January 2025

² Supplementary programs and activities are planned events where customers participate on their own, instead of at a designated time with a group. Registration is not required.

Program Spending

	January	2025 YTD	Budget	% Spent
Presenters	\$19,965	\$19,965	\$186,018	10.7%
Supplies ³	\$5,107	\$5,107	\$104,183	4.9%
	\$25,072	\$25,072	\$290,201	8.6%
Library Cost	\$24,172	\$24,172	\$242,701	10.0%
FOL Funded	\$900	\$900	\$47,500	1.9%
	\$25,072	\$25,072	\$290,201	8.6%

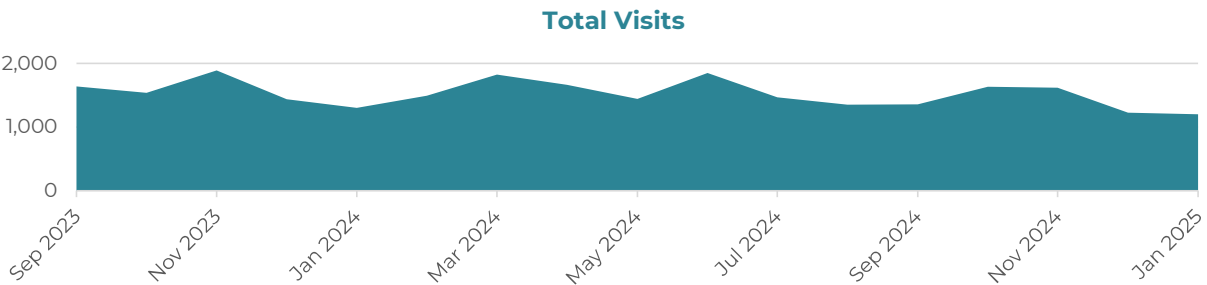
³ Includes supplies for supplementary programs and activities



Arlington Heights Memorial Library Makerplace

January 2025 Dashboard

	January	% New Users	2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Makerplace Visits	1,206	6.3%	1,206	1,300	-7.2%
	January		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
New Users⁴					
Makerplace	55	72.4%	55	70	-21.4%
Kitchen	17	22.4%	17	16	6.3%
Makerplace & Kitchen	4	5.3%	4	10	-60.0%
Total	76	100%	76	96	-20.8%



Equipment Usage⁵	January		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Fabrication	126	41.2%	126	150	-16.0%
Small Tools	75	24.5%	75	46	63.0%
Sewing	70	22.9%	70	64	9.4%
Technology	24	7.8%	24	33	-27.3%
Art	11	3.6%	11	9	22.2%
Total	306	100%	306	302	1.3%

Program Attendance⁶	January		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Culinary	123	50.4%	123	83	48.2%
Maker	81	33.2%	81	111	-27.0%
Tour	0	0.0%	0	11	-100.0%
Other	40	16.4%	40	134	-70.1%
Total	244	100%	244	339	-28.0%

	January		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
3D Print Jobs	166		166	217	-24%

	January		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
eLearning⁷	251		251	151	66%

⁴ Measured by number of waivers signed for maker/fabrication, kitchen, or both

⁵ **Fabrication**: all fabrication room equipment except 3D printers; **Small Tools**: soldering irons, hand tools; **Technology**: design computers

⁶ **Culinary**: kitchen programming; **Maker**: hands on making programs (3D printing, laser cutting, sewing); **Tour**: attendance of facility tours prescheduled or drop-in

⁷ Niche Academy views of Makerplace resources