

# Director's Report

June 2025

Arlington Heights Memorial Library

GOAL

Strengthen the library's service outside its walls

## AHML Continues to Expand Awareness of Senior Center Reading Room



In partnership with Arlington Heights Senior Center agencies, the library's Senior & Accessible Services team hosted a health and wellness event for older adults and their families with over 130 participants. A highlight was the assistive devices demo, where library staff showcased items from the Library of Things collection and connected attendees with accessibility resources. A special shout-out to the library's Graphics team who provided all of the directional signage for the event.



Fifteen residents at Luther Village participated in a discussion of *The Little Liar* by Mitch Albom, led by Senior & Accessible Services Advisor Kathryn. Residents appreciated both the book and Kathryn's in-depth research, with several sharing personal and family stories from World War II Europe.

## Mental Health & Volunteer Fairs Offer Resources & Opportunities for the Community

### Mental Health Fair



Over 115 attendees had the opportunity to interact with 24 organizations serving various areas of mental health needs, as well as five elected officials supporting the event. New this year, OMNI joined in planning the panel portion of the event, which featured five women working in the mental health field. Programs & Exhibits Manager Jennifer and Community Engagement Liaison Catalina partnered with State Representative Mary Beth Canty's office, Kenneth Young Center and Village of Arlington Heights Social Service Coordinator Darren Brown for the fair.

Nearly 170 people attended the annual Volunteer Fair at its new location, the Pioneer Park Gymnasium! Programs & Exhibits Coordinator Nikki welcomed a mix of returning and new community organizations offering volunteer opportunities for teens and adults. Each year, the participating organizations appreciate this opportunity to connect with the community as much as community members enjoy "one-stop shopping" for volunteer opportunities.



## AHML Continues to Build Upon Partnerships

### Saint Viator High School

In collaboration with Saint Viator High School's International Program, Youth Outreach Specialist Amy and Kids Librarian Ellie worked with five visiting high school students to share their culture and experiences from their home countries with Globetrotter program participants.



GOAL

## Village of Arlington Heights

Programs & Exhibits Assistant Jay welcomed Village Manager Randy Recklaus for his third annual Village Update where he shared foundational information about the Village, updates on the Chicago Bears and more.

## Farmers Market

Makerspace Advisor Alle collaborated with the Farmers Market Manager to create acrylic stencils of their logo using the Epilog laser cutter. At the first Farmers Market of the year, all ages had the opportunity to use paint and laser-cut stencils to decorate tote bags.



## Multiple Partners

Info Services Advisor Diane used the Reference Solutions online resource—available to all library cardholders—to help the Metropolis Performing Arts Centre, Village of Arlington Heights and Arlington Heights Chamber of Commerce generate targeted marketing and outreach reports to support their small business needs.



## District 25

Dryden and Windsor Elementary School students participated in the World of Work program at the library. Community & Circulation Services staff introduced them to various roles including checking out materials, assisting customers at the drive-up window and more.

## AHML Engages Community in Places Where Customers Are

### Swing Into Spring

Around 500 people attended this year's Swing Into Spring event at North School Park where Community & Circulation Services and bookmobile staff engaged with attendees. Attendees visited the bookmobile, played games and more.





GOAL

## Farmers Market

Community & Circulation Services and bookmobile staff helped kick off the Farmers Market season by welcoming hundreds in attendance on the bookmobile and more.



## Local Schools

From preschool classrooms to high school cafeterias, Youth Services staff interacted with over 3,000 students in local schools to promote this year's Summer Reading Program.

## Staff Highlights from Outside the Library Walls

- English as a Second Language Advisor Brian was featured on the front page of the *Daily Herald* for his discovery of nine Arlington Heights soldiers who died in the Civil War, but who were not memorialized in the Arlington Heights war memorial.
- Kids Librarian Ellie launched a new Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) professional development group, Emergent Readers in Lower Elementary, focused on library services for grades K-3.
- Programs & Exhibits Manager Jennifer co-planned and hosted the third Library Administrators Council of Northern Illinois (LACONI) Trustee Banquet since the pandemic. The event welcomed 126 trustees and directors from a diverse pool of suburban public libraries, offering a rich opportunity for networking and connection.





Grow the use of our services and resources

## Baby Prom Takes Over Hendrickson Room

Over 160 babies, toddlers and caregivers attended the library's first Baby Prom. The library's youngest customers danced underneath the disco ball with rattles and rainbow streamers as a curated playlist kept the music flowing. Toys, books and crayons were on hand for any "wallflowers" who needed a dancing break. Finally, a professional photographer snapped prom photos for families.



## New Scan & Fax Stations Make Their Debut

Three scan and fax stations were replaced with new ones. The larger displays include accessibility features such as narration and magnification, and support more than 25 languages for navigation instructions. Other features include translating documents into other languages, high speed scanning, auto-adjusting document orientation, scanning text into audio files and more. Special thanks to the IT and Digital Services teams for collaborating on this project.

## Summon Research Assistant Added to Library Website

Library Search

Summon Research Assistant

BETA

Summon is the library's largest single article search tool and is the resource behind the "Quick search for articles and more" box at the top of the library's databases webpage at [ahml.info/databases](http://ahml.info/databases). It searches a set of over one billion articles and then links to full text in the library's subscribed databases from Gale, EBSCO, Proquest, Nexis Uni, Britannica, etc., as well as selected open access sources.

Customers now have access to the Summon Research Assistant, which allows them to ask natural-language questions and receive AI-generated summaries, along with links to supporting articles. Special thanks to Electronic Resources Librarian Bill for working on adding this feature to the library website.



## Universal Changing Table Now Available at the Library

As part of the library's continued focus on accessibility and inclusion, the library now offers a powered, height-adjustable universal changing table for children and adults located in the new accessible all-gender restroom on the second floor.



## Successful Landmark Series Features Presentation on Library History

Genealogy & Local History Librarian Eddie presented a successful program on the history of the library as part of the ongoing Arlington Heights Landmark Series. Over 40 attendees learned about the establishment of the library from its early days as the Women's Reading Circle to its current institutional legacy. Attendees shared their own appreciation of the history of the institution and their memories of the library through the years.

## AHML Engages the Community Through Programs & Experiences at the Library

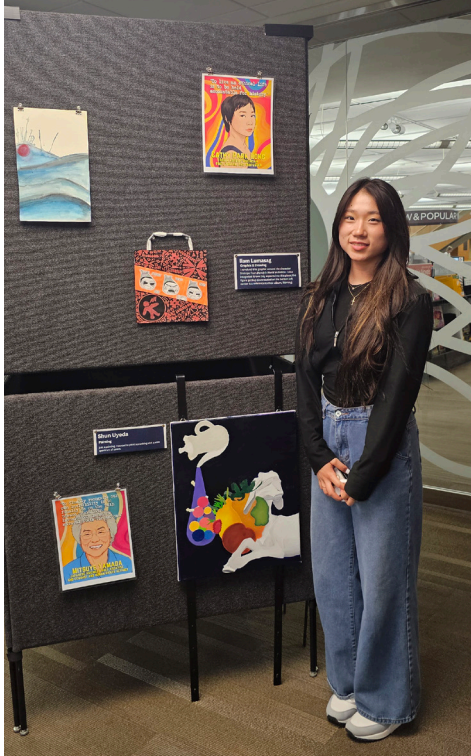
- Senior & Accessible Services hosted Improv for Brain Health with Dr. Kristin Krueger, a clinical neuropsychologist and researcher at Rush University. Through engaging improv activities, participants practiced memory, communication and spontaneity, boosting confidence and creativity. Attendees praised the "well-versed instructor" and valued the interactive experience.
- Programs & Exhibits Specialist Neal welcomed back Chef Dave Essau for a French pastry demo in Hendrickson Room. Given the high demand for culinary experiences and limited capacity in the Makerplace Kitchen, the library is increasing the number of demos to meet community demand.
- Technology Instruction Coordinator David and Digital Services & Makerspace Advisor Beth hosted a new afternoon Tech Help drop-in session at the library's Senior Center Reading Room, which was the most attended so far with nine participants.
- Programs & Exhibits Assistant Jay welcomed horticulturist Sharon Yiesla for a creative container gardening program with 80 people in attendance. Attendees gave this program a perfect five in the post program survey.





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

## High School Students Display Art in Honor of Asian American & Pacific Islander Month



For the second year, Hersey High School student Erin Suk curated an art display for Asian American and Pacific Islander Month in the Hub. Many teens and families stopped in to view the art, including some of the students who had featured art. It was lovely to see the artists' skills, passion and culture celebrated.

## AHML Continues to Strengthen Service to Multilingual Families & English Language Learners

- Last month the English as a Second Language (ESL) & Literacy team offered a total of 47 programs for adult learners. Forty-five programs were taught by library staff or volunteers with 371 people in attendance, and two programs were facilitated by District 214 staff and volunteers with 69 people in attendance for their Read to Learn program.
- Community Engagement Liaison Catalina and ESL Advisor Brian met with the board members of the Kyrgyz Cultural Center to discuss the English language learning needs of the community and to see their center space. They also delivered recently translated Russian-language materials highlighting library services. The library looks forward to building a strong partnership with the center and working together to support their community's needs.



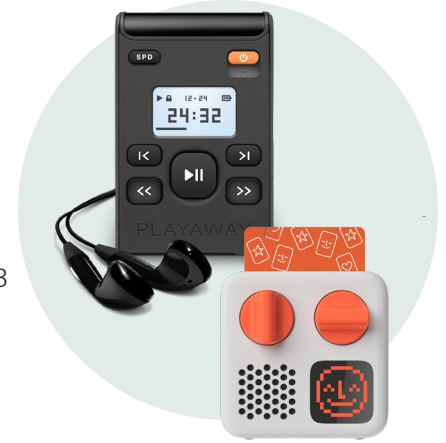


## It's All About Having the Right Collection

In 2019, the library offered over 1,000 audiobooks on CD for kids, which had an average of 282 checkouts per month. In 2022, the average checkouts per month had dropped to 111, and with the Kids' World refresh audiobooks for kids were withdrawn from the collection.

Playaways for kids were added in 2021 and by 2022, the average checkouts per month was 225. By 2024, the average checkouts per month was 511, with just 453 items in the collection.

Yoto players were added in February 2025 and the average checkouts for Playaways and Yotos is now 680 per month, with a collection size of 679 items! Less items than the audiobooks on CD with more checkouts, because we have the right items.



## Makerplace Fosters Community Connection & Inspires Creativity Through Experiences

- Last month the Makerplace team piloted several new classes including an origami class taught by Makerplace user Ray "RK" Liu who was featured in the library's Creator Spotlight, a paper quilling class taught by Makerspace Advisor Kathie that will be offered again in the fall due to high demand and a Sculpey clay class taught by Makerspace Advisors Michael and Alle. All three classes were well received by attendees.




- Chef Brian taught home cooks practical skills on various egg techniques, enhancing weeknight taco dinners, one pan Italian favorites and more.

- Makerplace Specialist Lisa taught a screen printing class to celebrate Star Wars Day where customers printed their chosen design onto a zippered pouch. Lisa also organized a pop-up event where customers created lightsabers using Perler beads.




# What Customers Are Saying




***"Thankful to Neal in organizing these sessions, he is a great asset to the library!"***

-Mindful Movements Attendee




***"Great instructor, excellent pace and repeated instructions to make sure people could really learn it."***

-Let's Photoshop: Fixing Photos with AI Attendee




Senior & Accessible staff shared from customer: ***"As a parent of an adult disabled man who loves the library, I really appreciated you taking the time to provide me with so much information and pointing me in the right direction."***




***"This was very valuable, and I can't wait to get started using all the great services that AHML provides."***

-eBooks, eAudiobooks, Movies and More Attendee



***"Thank you so much for hosting Baby Prom. As a new mom it's been hard for me to have a special occasion to dress up and go out with my husband and baby. This was a really sweet event."***

-Baby Prom Attendee



Youth Services staff shared from customer: ***"I recently checked out a book about a girl with two dads because I had seen it there [on display] for a couple weeks. When I read it to my son, I almost teared up because it was such a beautiful message and such a pure way of explaining a topic that maybe I would've thought would be complicated. Sometimes it's as easy as reading a nice story to give our littles a glimpse of the world in a way that prepares them to interact kindly with those around them."***

# Arlington Heights Memorial Library

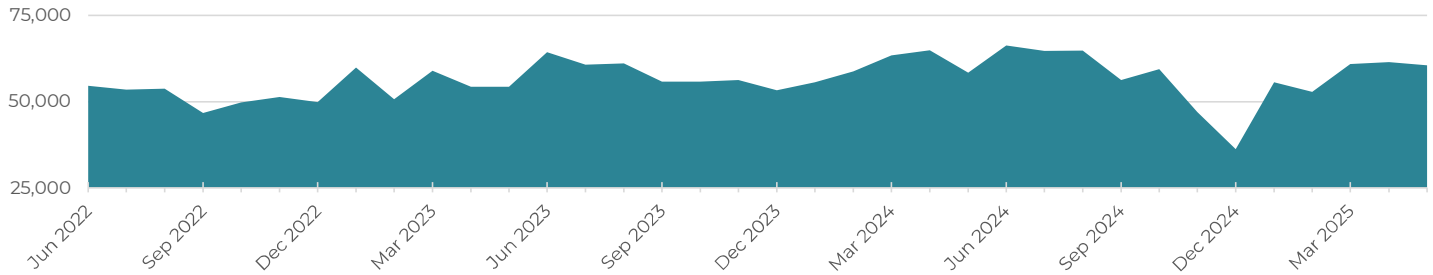
May 2025 Dashboard

## Library Visits

73.9% of library customers in May visited the Main Library. Year to date, library visits are down -3.2%.

	May			2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Main Library	44,737	73.9%		231,511	243,586	-5.0%
Outreach	4,830	8.0%		11,396	9,439	20.7%
Drive-Up	4,516	7.5%		24,482	25,600	-4.4%
Bookmobile	3,389	5.6%		8,902	8,232	8.1%
Senior Center	1,725	2.8%		8,260	6,400	29.1%
Makerplace	1,349	2.2%		6,756	7,731	-12.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>60,546</b>	<b>100%</b>		<b>291,307</b>	<b>300,988</b>	<b>-3.2%</b>

Total Visits



Room Use	May	2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change	Trend
Hendrickson Room	15	56	53	5.7%	
Conference Rooms	1,409	6,734	6,572	2.5%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,424</b>	<b>6,790</b>	<b>6,625</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	

June 2024-May 2025

Library Cards <sup>1</sup>	May	2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change	Trend
Resident	317	1,599	1,685	-5.1%	
Reciprocal	120	562	554	1.4%	
Purchased	1	5	3	66.7%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>2,166</b>	<b>2,242</b>	<b>-3.4%</b>	

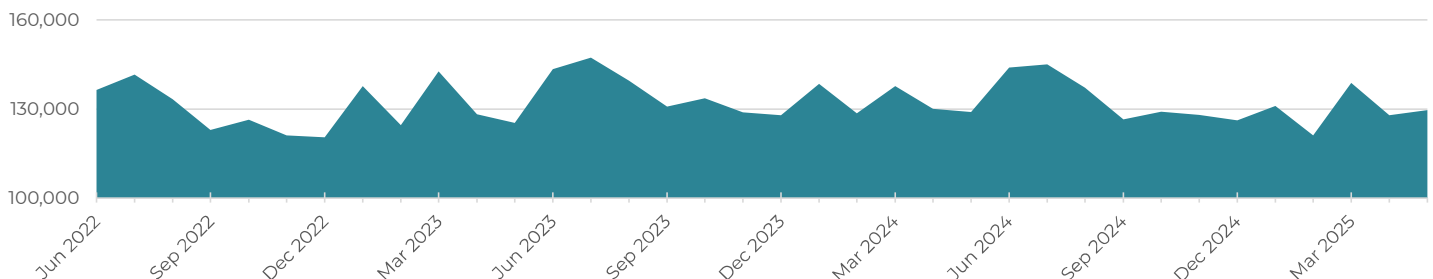
June 2024-May 2025

## Circulation

129,645 items were checked out in May. Year to date, total checkouts are down -2.3% compared to 2024.

	May			2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Print	73,861	57.0%		359,637	376,966	-4.6%
Downloadable	24,430	18.8%		124,499	114,985	8.3%
Audiovisual	21,738	16.8%		115,364	125,239	-7.9%
Other	9,616	7.4%		48,922	46,596	5.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>129,645</b>	<b>100%</b>		<b>648,422</b>	<b>663,786</b>	<b>-2.3%</b>

Total Checkouts



<sup>1</sup> New cards only. Does not include renewals.



# Arlington Heights Memorial Library

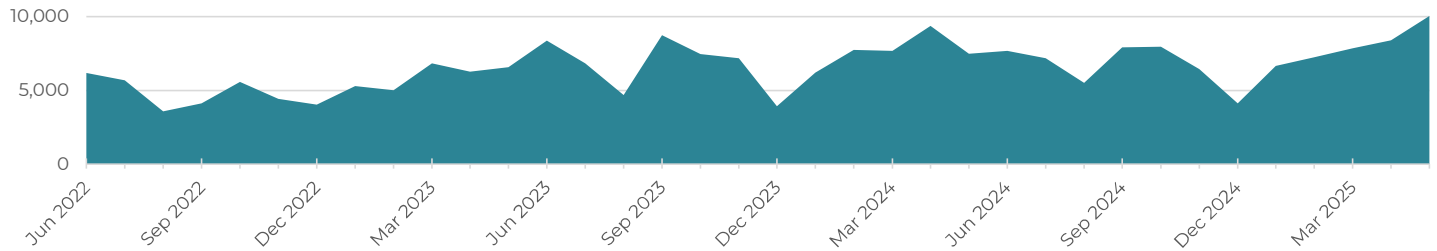
May 2025 Dashboard

## Programs

4,673 customers attended Adult programs in May, which represents 46.5% of all program attendees. Year to date, program attendance is up 4.4% across all audiences and program sessions are up 4.6%.

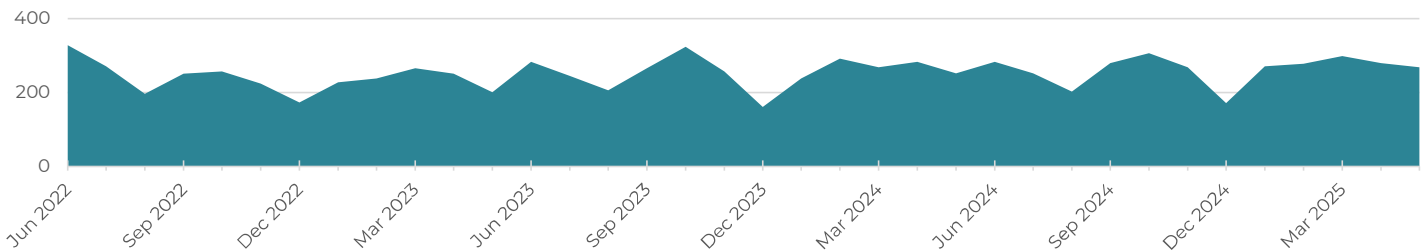
Attendance	May		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Adult	4,673	46.5%	15,556	17,347	-10.3%
Children	3,854	38.4%	21,586	19,010	13.6%
Teen	1,518	15.1%	3,085	2,159	42.9%
	<b>10,045</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>40,227</b>	<b>38,516</b>	<b>4.4%</b>

### Attendance



Sessions	May		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Adult	180	67.2%	898	902	-0.4%
Children	66	24.6%	422	360	17.2%
Teen	22	8.2%	76	72	5.6%
	<b>268</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,396</b>	<b>1,334</b>	<b>4.6%</b>

### Sessions



## Supplementary Programs and Activities<sup>2</sup>

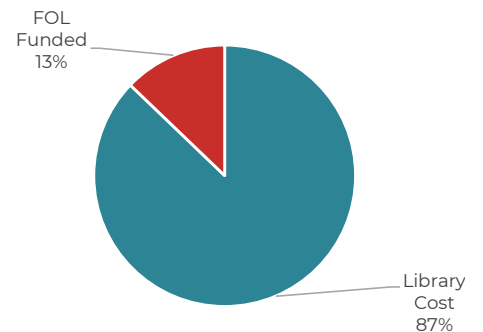
	May	Trend	2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Attendance	1,871		9,344	15,429	-39.4%
Sessions	17		101	95	6.3%

June 2024-May 2025

<sup>2</sup> 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

	May	2025 YTD	Budget	% Spent
Presenters	\$12,054	\$59,665	\$186,018	32.1%
Supplies <sup>3</sup>	\$13,315	\$37,238	\$104,183	35.7%
	<b>\$25,369</b>	<b>\$96,903</b>	<b>\$290,201</b>	<b>33.4%</b>
Library Cost	\$19,150	\$84,488	\$242,701	34.8%
FOL Funded	\$6,219	\$12,414	\$47,500	26.1%
	<b>\$25,369</b>	<b>\$96,903</b>	<b>\$290,201</b>	<b>33.4%</b>



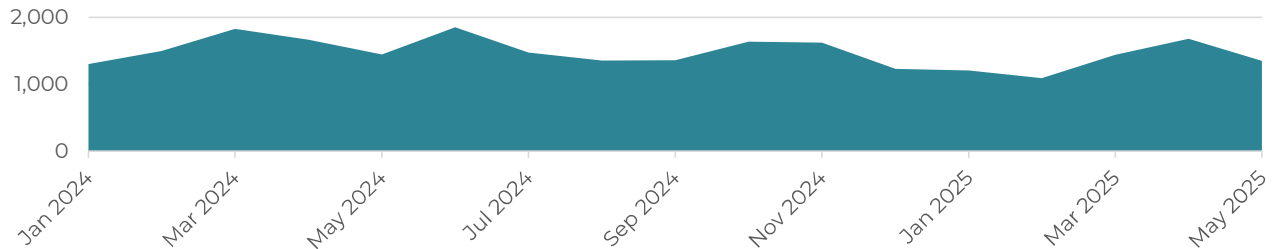
<sup>3</sup> Includes supplies for supplementary programs and activities

# Arlington Heights Memorial Library Makerplace

## May 2025 Dashboard

	May	% New Users	2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
<b>Makerplace Visits</b>	1,349	3.9%	6,756	7,731	-12.6%
<b>New Users<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>May</b>		<b>2025 YTD</b>	<b>2024 YTD</b>	<b>Change</b>
Makerplace	47	90.4%	226	290	-22.1%
Kitchen	0	0.0%	28	100	-72.0%
Makerplace & Kitchen	5	9.6%	11	66	-83.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>-41.9%</b>

### Total Visits



	May		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
<b>Equipment Usage<sup>5</sup></b>					
Fabrication	203	53.7%	783	922	-15.1%
Small Tools	81	21.4%	321	295	8.8%
Sewing	70	18.5%	303	310	-2.3%
Technology	16	4.2%	81	171	-52.6%
Art	8	2.1%	49	15	226.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,537</b>	<b>1,713</b>	<b>-10.3%</b>

	May		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
<b>Program Attendance<sup>6</sup></b>					
Culinary	51	26.7%	439	689	-36.3%
Maker	126	66.0%	589	722	-18.4%
Tour	3	1.6%	32	65	-50.8%
Other	11	5.8%	206	306	-32.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,266</b>	<b>1,782</b>	<b>-29.0%</b>

	May		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
<b>3D Print Jobs</b>	199		782	827	-5%

	May		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
<b>eLearning<sup>7</sup></b>	522		1,966	982	100%

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

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

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

<sup>7</sup> Niche Academy views of Makerplace resources