

Director's Report

November 2025

Arlington Heights Memorial Library

Spotlight



Twelfth Annual One Book, One Village Concludes with At-Capacity Author Event

About 350 people filled Forest View Educational Center's theatre on October 28 to hear bestselling author Fiona Davis discuss her novel *The Stolen Queen*, while another 62 viewers watched the event live on the library's YouTube channel. Davis discussed a range of topics with Chicago-based writer and editor, Alison Cuddy, the moderator for the evening.

Davis and Cuddy delved into key themes of the novel, such as female friendship and the portrayal of womanhood. Davis explained her decision to write about a 60-year-old protagonist, noting how older women are often underrepresented as heroines in literature. She also reflected on the broader issue of women's stories being overlooked in history.

The Stolen Queen was announced as the book for One Book, One Village (OBOV) 2025 at the end of August and since then copies of the book circulated more than 1,600 times. More than 1,300 people attended book discussions and related programming—including the library's after-hours event inspired by the Met Gala—and staff promoted OBOV to more than 1,200 people at outreach events.

"This has been remarkable, and watching it through social media and all the activities and the gala. I am absolutely blown away, and I'm very grateful," said Davis.

Davis and Cuddy's conversation was followed by an audience Q&A and a book signing. A video recording of the entire interview and event is available for viewing on the library's YouTube channel. Special thanks to the Friends of the Library for supporting this author event.



Strengthen the library's service outside its walls

Library Continues to Build Upon Partnerships



Village of Arlington Heights

At both Harmony Fest and Autumn Harvest, staff shared information about the library's One Book, One Village initiative including the highly anticipated author event.



District 25 & District 214

Youth Services Outreach Specialist Amy and Teen Librarian Alejandria hosted middle school and high school librarians at the library. The meeting was hosted in the Hub so the librarians who serve teens could see the space and encourage their students to visit.



District 214

Youth Services staff attended three local high school football games this fall, building upon a strong partnership with the school district. Staff engaged 1,351 people of all ages, some familiar faces from the library's monthly Tinker Day visits and many new faces as well. Kids and teens were excited to spin the wheel for a chance to win one of the exclusive library-branded mini footballs.

Back at the library, a small group of Spanish-speaking ESL students from the District 214 Adult Education Women & Children's Center toured the library. They appreciated the personalized Spanish-language tour and were excited to learn about their access to the library's ESL and technology classes.



Local Library Collaboration

In collaboration with Indian Trails Public Library District, Community Consolidated School District 21 added public library card registration to their enrollment process which resulted in the library connecting 260 students with library cards.



Staff Highlights from Outside the Library Walls

Illinois Library Association (ILA) Conference

Six library staff members presented at the annual ILA Conference in Rosemont, Illinois.

- Info Services Manager Jolie co-presented Navigating Self-Censorship, Soft Censorship, and the Chilling Effect in Illinois Libraries
- Programs & Exhibits Manager Jennifer co-presented the poster session Speaker Programming Made Easy with Illinois Libraries Presents
- Electronic Resources Librarian Bill co-presented the panel presentation E-Resources for All
- English as a Second Language & Literacy Coordinator Tracy presented the poster session Engaging with English Language Learners: Strategies for Effective Communication with Positive Outcomes



- Genealogy & Local History Librarian Eddie presented Heritage or Hierarchy: Removing Barriers to Access in Genealogy and Local History and Programs
- Exhibits Coordinator Nikki co-presented with the iREAD committee on the 2026 Summer Reading theme, Plant a Seed, Read
- Executive Director Mike presented two sessions in the Library Counts preconference focused on Artificial Intelligence

National Career Development Association

Info Services Librarian Lynnanne completed an 8-week course from the National Career Development Association Facilitating Career Development Training and Certification Program and is now a Certified Career Services Provider.

University of Wisconsin (UW)–Madison

As part of a 2025 training initiative to better serve multilingual families, ESL Advisors Amy, Gary and Brian completed UW–Madison's Spanish for Librarians course and are continuing to develop their Japanese, Russian and Ukrainian skills to enhance communication and support for English as a Second Language students.

Grow the use of our
services and resources



Digital Services collaborated with Community & Circulation Services to launch the library's participation in Digital Inclusion Week to raise awareness of digital access and equity. Technology Instruction Coordinator David organized and participated in six events including offering tech help with Digital Media Specialist Chris at two bookmobile stops, participating with English as a Second Language (ESL) & Literacy Coordinator Tracy in group discussions with Culture & Conversation attendees on the topic of technology in everyday life and engaging with over 370 people at the Farmers Market with Digital Services Manager Diane, Community Engagement Supervisor Catalina and ESL Advisor Amy.

Throughout October, the library celebrated its eighth annual Inclusion Awareness Month, highlighting a commitment to inclusive programs and services and fostering dialogue with the community and its partner organizations.

A man wearing a black and white skeleton bodysuit stands next to a large inflatable pumpkin character. The pumpkin character has a carved jack-o'-lantern face and a black body with white skeleton patterns. In the background, there is a blue inflatable character, an American flag, and several other pumpkins on the floor.



Library Offers Halloween-Themed Programs for Youth

Halloween Fun

Dinosaurs, witches and skeletons invaded Kids' World for the library's annual Halloween Fun, a morning and afternoon carnival of crafts, games and only-slightly-spooky experiences for kids of all ages. Rather than candy or toys, each participant received a Halloween-themed prize book, sure to offer a little more nutritional value for kids. A total of 611 babies, kids and their grownups attended, many sharing positive feedback through words and smiles.



Halloween-Themed Culinary Program

Tween Librarian Kerry and Youth Services Advisor Nicole presented two sessions of a Halloween Candy culinary program. Tweens and teens learned how to make gummy bears and filled chocolate pumpkins. One teen participant who was initially hesitant to attend proudly showed his mom his candy creations. His mom mentioned that trying new foods was outside his comfort zone, so trying white chocolate during the program was a big accomplishment for him.



Library Hosts Successful Virtual & Off-Site Programs During Construction

Virtual

Over 70 people joined Programs & Exhibits Coordinator Nikki in welcoming Egyptologist Colleen Darnell for a very high interest program titled Fashion and Beauty in the Age of Cleopatra. Colleen condensed her normal three-hour course on the topic to a one hour-long program specifically for the One Book, One Village audience. Programs & Exhibits Specialist Neal hosted Dr. Foy Scalf from the University of Chicago for The Mummy as Monster: Unraveling a Pop Culture Icon. Fifty-five attendees enjoyed a fascinating exploration of the mummy myth—from early Western encounters with ancient Egypt to its evolution through literature and film.

Makerplace

For the first time, the Makerplace and Genealogy teams joined forces to offer a fun, new program. Genealogy & Local History Librarian Eddie taught customers about the history of family crests and heraldry and showed them how to make their own crests filled with personal meaning. Makerspace Specialist Kate then taught customers how to etch their crests onto slate coasters on the laser engraver. Customers were excited to attend a program at the Makerplace, especially since some had never been before!



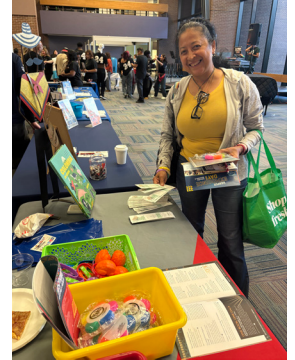


Enhance the library's role in the everyday lives of the Arlington Heights community

Library Celebrates Cultural Diversity

Hispanic Heritage Month

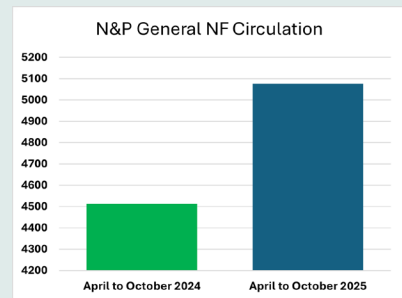
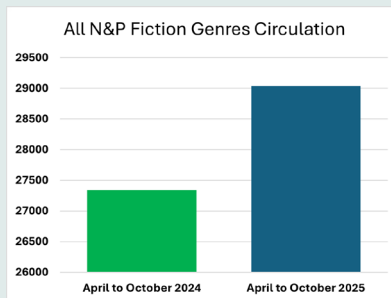
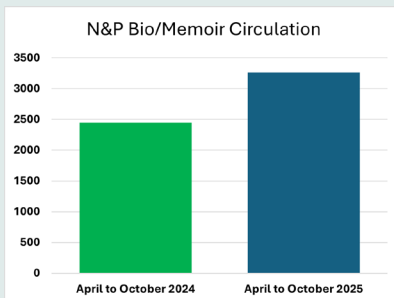
The library celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with the launch of a bilingual English–Spanish webpage featuring booklists, resources, programs and local events. One of the programs was an arepas cooking program in the Makerplace Kitchen, where a local community member shared the dish's cultural significance. Community & Circulation Services Manager Shannon and Community Engagement Supervisor Catalina represented the library at Harper College's Harper Fiesta, connecting with attendees and promoting library services, One Book, One Village and the after-hours gala.



KPop Demon Hunters

The film *KPop Demon Hunters* is currently having a cultural moment, especially among kids and youth of all ages. Staff who are fans of the movie from Youth Services and Digital Services collaborated to present a *KPop Demon Hunters* Party to an overwhelming community response with 404 family members attending this afternoon event.

Increase in Checkouts Following Space Redesign



In April 2025, Collection Services staff completed a refresh of the New & Popular area on the first floor. More space was added to popular collections like Fiction, Mystery and Biography/Memoir. As a result, checkouts increased by 6% for the Fiction genres, 12% for general Nonfiction and 34% for Biography/Memoir!

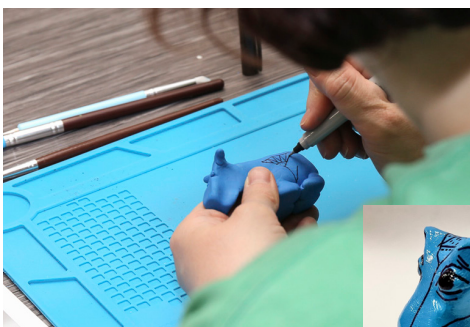


Library Responds to Social & Economic Needs

- Programs & Exhibits Specialist Neal, Community Engagement Supervisor Catalina and Chef Brian launched another PADS season with a community cooking program, preparing dinner and dessert for 50 guests at the First Presbyterian Church shelter. Now in its third year, the library's partnership with JOURNEYS | The Road Home and PADS continues to raise awareness and combat food insecurity in the community.
- Info Services Librarians created a list of local food resources for the library's website during the SNAP interruption that took effect on November 1. This resource list shares ways in which community members can receive help and/or volunteer to help others in need.
- In October, the English as a Second Language (ESL) & Literacy team hosted 56 programs for adult English language learners, and 611 people participated in total for these classes.
- To help adult English language learners apply real-world communication skills, ESL & Literacy Coordinator Tracy led two student groups to a local café, where they practiced reading menus, ordering food and conversing in English. For many, it was their first 'brunch' experience, and the response was overwhelmingly positive.



Makerplace Fosters Community Connection & Inspires Creativity Through Experiences



One Book, One Village

The Makerplace joined the One Book, One Village celebration with themed programs including Laser Etch a Cartouche, Sculpt Your Own Egyptian Hippopotamus and Beyond the Book where attendees made grape stuffed leaves with Chef Brian before discussing the book.



In the Makerplace Kitchen

Chef Brian celebrated fall flavors in the kitchen with new classes on apple cider donuts and heart-healthy soups, and an apple tasting during October's Talk & Taste.

Fiber Arts Meetup

This month's Fiber Arts Meetup drew the largest crowd ever to a Makerplace meetup. Fourteen customers joined Makerspace Specialist Kate to work on their own projects ranging from Halloween cross stitch and a crocheted scarf for a Halloween costume to wintry embroidery and knit sweaters. Customers continue to find great community at these meetups and love sharing their projects and asking for advice from fellow attendees.

Inspired By Art

Inspired by a session at the Illinois Library Association's Reaching Forward Conference, Digital Services & Makerspace Advisor Beth created a weaving project for October's Inspired By Art Afternoon and Night programs. Beth collaborated with Digital Services & Makerspace Advisor Michael to design and produce a wooden loom for each customer using the Makerplace's Epilog laser cutter. Weaving classes have traditionally been challenging at the Makerplace because customers' projects "live" on the loom until completion. By providing individual looms, customers were able to work at their own pace and create textiles using yarn without time constraints.

What Customers Are Saying



"We love the 24-hour hold box at Camelot Park. With the weather being so nice lately, it makes a perfect Saturday or Sunday morning to bring the kids to the park, pick up our books and then read them in the wagon on the way home."

-24/7 Hold Pickup Lockers Customer



"Thank you to the library for hosting the Chicago Lighthouse. The library in Arlington Heights is a leader in providing access to these types of resources. Thank you!"

-Chicago Lighthouse Low Vision Products Road Show Attendee



"I was pretty apprehensive about sewing before, and this class opened up a whole new world of making possibilities!"

-Sew a Tote Bag Attendee at the Makerplace



"The presenter was knowledgeable and provided information on exercise, diet and other resources that I will be able to use every day."

-Healthy Living for Your Brain & Body Attendee



From an outreach event at Olive Mary Stitt School: ***"There was a family from Mexico who told us all about how much they love the Makerplace. The little boy held up his sweatshirt to show us [Makerplace staff member] that he had designed it there. The dad saw the Spanish-language flyer about the library's Studio and is now really excited to come in and check it out."***

Arlington Heights Memorial Library

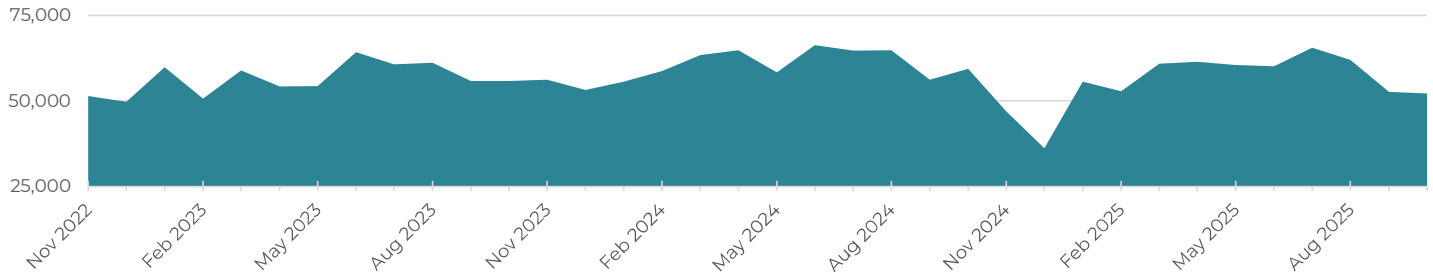
October 2025 Dashboard

Library Visits

72.1% of library customers in October visited the Main Library. Year to date, library visits are down -4.7%.

	October			2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Main Library	37,611	72.1%		454,132	489,121	-7.2%
Drive-Up	4,187	8.0%		47,319	51,620	-8.3%
Outreach	4,128	7.9%		26,776	21,004	27.5%
Bookmobile	2,709	5.2%		23,323	22,804	2.3%
Senior Center	1,824	3.5%		16,932	12,471	35.8%
Makerplace	1,716	3.3%		15,349	15,397	-0.3%
Total	52,175	100%		583,831	612,417	-4.7%

Total Visits



Room Use	October	2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change	Trend
Hendrickson Room	0	82	104	-21.2%	
Conference Rooms	0	10,598	12,468	-15.0%	
Total	0	10,680	12,572	-15.0%	November 2024-October 2025

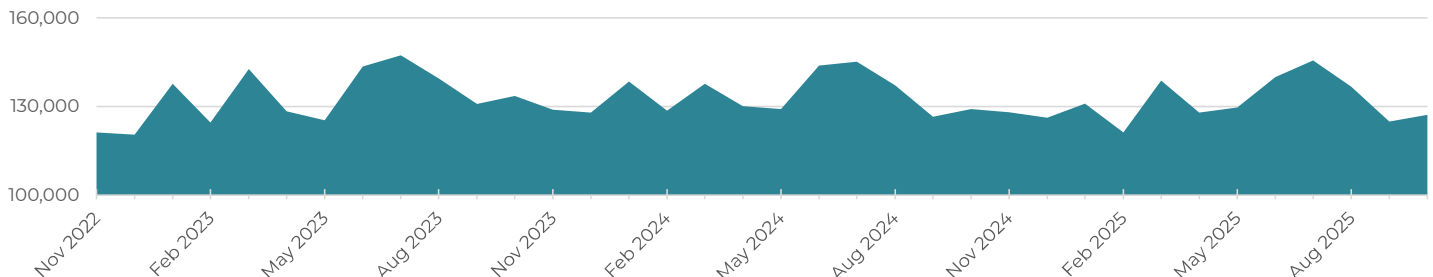
Library Cards ¹	October	2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change	Trend
Resident	382	3,621	3,916	-7.5%	
Reciprocal	102	1,106	1,143	-3.2%	
Purchased	2	14	7	100.0%	
Total	486	4,741	5,066	-6.4%	November 2024-October 2025

Circulation

127,200 items were checked out in October. Year to date, total checkouts are down -1.7% compared to 2024.

	October			2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Print	72,091	56.7%		748,991	779,053	-3.9%
Downloadable	24,453	19.2%		249,404	232,329	7.3%
Audiovisual	21,486	16.9%		226,511	236,889	-4.4%
Other	9,170	7.2%		97,783	97,210	0.6%
Total	127,200	100%		1,322,689	1,345,481	-1.7%

Total Checkouts



¹ New cards only. Does not include renewals.

Arlington Heights Memorial Library

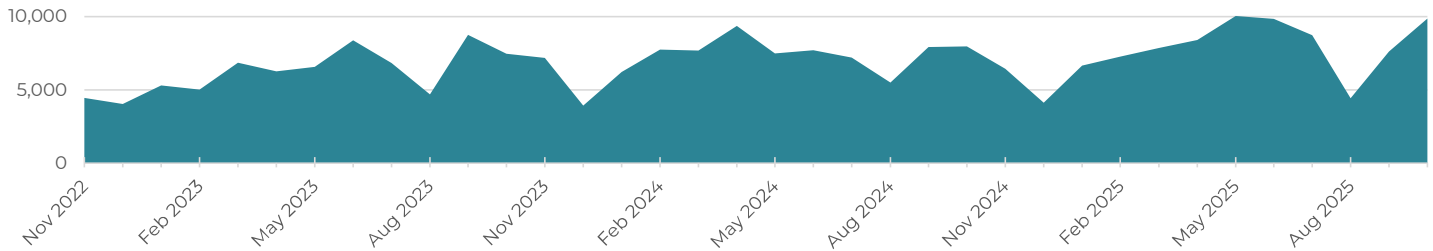
October 2025 Dashboard

Programs

4,746 customers attended Children programs in October, which represents 48.1% of all program attendees. Year to date, program attendance is up 7.9% across all audiences and program sessions are up 4.4%.

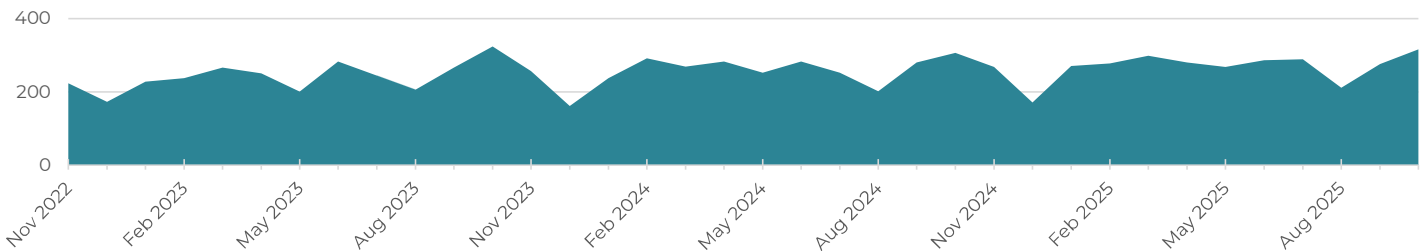
Attendance	October		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Children	4,746	48.1%	41,466	37,783	9.7%
Adult	3,810	38.6%	33,420	33,758	-1.0%
Teen	1,313	13.3%	5,815	3,263	78.2%
	9,869	100%	80,701	74,804	7.9%

Attendance



Sessions	October		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Adult	190	60.1%	1,789	1,762	1.5%
Children	113	35.8%	823	735	12.0%
Teen	13	4.1%	163	161	1.2%
	316	100%	2,775	2,658	4.4%

Sessions



Supplementary Programs and Activities²

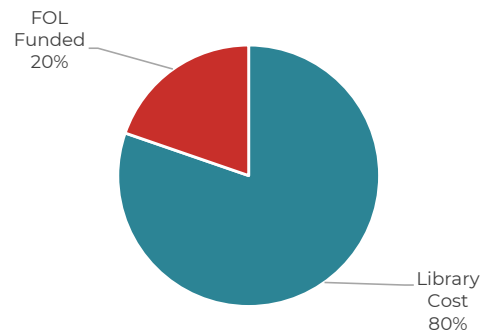
	October	Trend	2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Attendance	2,111		44,122	34,711	27.1%
Sessions	22		210	212	-0.9%

November 2024-October 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

	October	2025 YTD	Budget	% Spent
Presenters	\$13,130	\$129,498	\$199,918	64.8%
Supplies ³	\$5,354	\$80,389	\$104,183	77.2%
	\$18,484	\$209,887	\$304,101	69.0%
Library Cost	\$14,111	\$168,556	\$256,601	65.7%
FOL Funded	\$4,373	\$41,331	\$47,500	87.0%
	\$18,484	\$209,887	\$304,101	69.0%



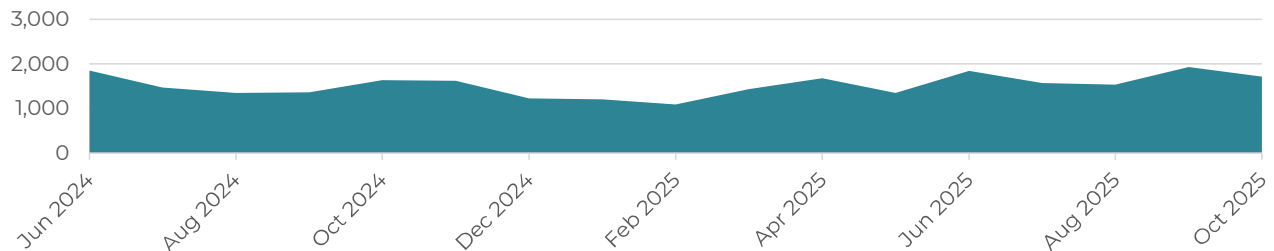
³ Includes supplies for supplementary programs and activities

Arlington Heights Memorial Library Makerplace

October 2025 Dashboard

	October	% New Users	2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Makerplace Visits	1,716	2.9%	15,349	15,397	-0.3%
New Users⁴	October		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Makerplace	45	91.8%	457	605	-24.5%
Kitchen	0	0.0%	71	183	-61.2%
Makerplace & Kitchen	4	8.2%	48	132	-63.6%
Total	49	100%	576	920	-37.4%

Total Visits



	October		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Equipment Usage⁵					
Fabrication	200	47.4%	1,730	2,015	-14.1%
Small Tools	87	20.6%	730	696	4.9%
Sewing	94	22.3%	719	681	5.6%
Technology	32	7.6%	222	382	-41.9%
Art	9	2.1%	80	37	116.2%
Total	422	100%	3,481	3,811	-8.7%

	October		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
Program Attendance⁶					
Culinary	96	33.2%	796	1,190	-33.1%
Maker	183	63.3%	1,315	1,307	0.6%
Tour	10	3.5%	82	93	-11.8%
Other	0	0.0%	779	491	58.7%
Total	289	100%	2,972	3,081	-3.5%

	October		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
3D Print Jobs	368		1,883	1,460	29%

	October		2025 YTD	2024 YTD	Change
eLearning⁷	543		5,827	2,218	163%

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