

YEAR IN REVIEW

TWENTY **SIXTEEN**



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LOOKING BACK AT 2016

King County is the 13th largest county in the United States—and growing—not only in numbers, but in ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity. Rapid growth creates unique challenges, but also presents myriad opportunities to respond to the social and educational needs of the 1.4 million residents KCLS serves.

In 2016, KCLS programs, services and resources focused on the areas of early literacy, K-12 education, community engagement, emerging technology and outreach. They included new card accounts for K-12 students to encourage access to KCLS' online resources; expanded mobile services for at-risk populations; workshops to bring teens together to discuss social justice issues; and tutoring for adults to help them earn elementary or secondary diplomas in their native language.

KCLS also expanded Summer Reading to include adult-oriented events, such as author appearances, and a year-long adult education series offered a forum for civil discourse around wide-ranging topics from homelessness to transgender bathrooms.

KCLS continues to be among the top library systems in the country for total circulation. In 2016, our patrons checked out a total of 20.8 million books, movies and other materials. This figure includes 3.5 million downloadable items, making KCLS the number one circulating library for OverDrive downloads in the United States.

Over the past year, KCLS began the process to develop a new strategic plan and invited a variety of constituents to join the discussion. Through a series of in-person interviews, focus groups and community surveys—some conducted in other languages—KCLS gathered important insights from school districts, city councils, community partners, Friends groups and Library Boards, KCLS Trustees, staff and patrons to help shape and guide the work of the Library System in the years ahead.

KCLS will celebrate its 75th Birthday in 2017, and we'll look back at all the ways the Library System has—and will continue to—support patrons of all ages in pursuit of their life goals, whatever those goals may be.



EDUCATING STUDENTS

*Education is the great equalizer and a capstone of democracy itself. In 2016, KCLS continued its long-held mission of providing educational opportunities and programs for all ages, from Infant Story Times to college-prep classes for young adults. In addition to a continued investment in early childhood education, KCLS expanded outreach services to students in a number of different ways. Mobile Services staff visited youth in area detention facilities to connect them with inspirational speakers, classes and other learning resources, as well as books and reading. A new partnership with all 18 school districts within KCLS' service area now gives more than 200,000 K-12 students seamless access to KCLS' online resources. Staff also recognized that many students sought help transitioning to the post-secondary world, and responded with the popular *Life After High School* program, which offers support to graduates.*



YOU ARE NEVER TOO YOUNG: EARLY CHILDHOOD LITERACY

Researchers, educators, policy makers, parents and other experts confirm that learning begins at birth. According to the Washington State Department of Early Learning, research shows that about 85 percent of brain growth happens in the first three years of life. Quality early education and early interventions can provide the building blocks for literacy, learning, emotional development, resilience and achievement. Given the critical importance of early learning and literacy, KCLS staff has worked closely with experts in the fields of childhood development and parent education to create and provide programs that stimulate young minds, spark curiosity, cultivate social skills and support families. Many new and continuing programs in 2016 reflect KCLS' commitment to early childhood education, providing a win-win for children, parents, caregivers—and society at large.



Highlights

- Children's librarians engaged more than 162,000 kids with exciting stories, songs and play through its popular **Story Times** program, which was offered in every library in a variety of languages.
- Kaleidoscope Play & Learn**, a program for children and caregivers to help build early learning skills and strengthen family engagement, was presented in English, Chinese and Spanish, drawing 22,789 people at 14 locations.
- Raising a Reader**, a new program launched in late December, provided weekly training in research-based practices to help adults develop the habit of sharing books with their children. Fourteen families with children ages 16 months to three years participated in the program.
- Ready to Read** early learning workshops presented in libraries, preschools and other community locations, reached more than 1,200 parents and caregivers.
- Prime Time**, sponsored by Humanities Washington, brought 570 individuals and families to the library to enjoy reading while eating together. An additional 100 people participated in Spanish Prime Time programs held at two libraries.
- A **Spanish-Language Family Book Group** engaged 128 children and their families during seven sessions.
- Building early learning skills through the use of technology, a total of 550 children and their parents used a special app downloaded onto **Launchpad** tablets available for checkout as part of a pilot project at four libraries.
- Fiestas**, which addresses education equity for Latino families with preschool children, drew 1,000 people to 64 programs.



Infant Lapsit and Story Times Teach Even the Tiniest Patrons

They can't even walk yet, let alone read. But you're never too young to visit the library, and babies are no exception.

On weekday mornings at various locations, **Infant Lapsit** and **Infant Story Time** programs have proven increasingly popular with parents, grandparents and other caregivers.

Sammamish Children's Librarian Sara Jensen, as she does every Wednesday morning, led a very busy class. Standing before a packed room of parents and their tots, she presented one age-appropriate activity after another. She sang throughout, urging the parents to sing along with their youngsters.

The program offers meaningful bonding time between baby and caregiver in an environment that reinforces the importance of learning through play.

Infant Lapsit Story Times focus on the five reading readiness skills identified by the national Ready to Read program: **Talking, Singing, Reading, Writing and Playing.**

The meeting room was filled with 60 adults and wriggling infants, eyes wide at seeing others their same size. One baby crawled within a two-foot radius of her watchful grandmother, returning to curl up in her lap as Jensen sang "This is the way the ladies ride, the ladies ride, the ladies ride..."

Following Jensen's instructions, the babies clapped their hands and stretched their arms, gently guided by their caregivers. As she sang "Roly Poly, Roly Poly," babies were all lifted up, little feet kicking.

"For a lot of parents, this is not only a chance to get out of the house and share time with their children, but also to compare child-rearing notes with others," Jensen said. Noting those who came to observe the class and take pictures of their grandchildren, she added "It offers multi-generational language learning for grandparents, too."

After the class ended, the majority of parents remained, talking among themselves or playing with their children.

One mother of an active 11-month old boy said the class was a lifesaver, especially during dark winter days when playing outside is not an option.

"He likes the music and enjoys the other kids and parents; this is very good for his social skills," she said, as she watched her son put eggs back into a basket to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

"It is really good that libraries have this."



THE ELEMENTARY YEARS

Learning may start early, but when children enter kindergarten, their social and educational prospects abound. KCLS is all about making learning fun, providing programs that encourage and support kids of all levels and abilities. Research has shown that a child's learning potential is strongly linked to support at home, and many popular library programs are geared toward building bonds between children, parents, and caregivers, such as the **Stuffed Animal Sleepover**, which invites kids to leave a favorite stuffed animal overnight at the library. They discover their stuffed friend's adventure when they pick it up the next day.

Highlights



Study Zones, offered at 39 libraries, feature volunteers who provided free after-school homework support to over 11,000 children and teens.

Tutor.com provided 34,516 online tutoring sessions on a variety of subjects for students of all grade levels.



Global Reading Challenge Brings Out the Best in Young Readers

The packed room fell silent. Parents held their collective breath while siblings and classmates gazed expectantly at the competitors seated in circles, heads bowed.

These fourth and fifth-graders were thinking. Together.

“Round One, Question One,” announced a children’s librarian. “In the book, ***Chitty Chitty Bang Bang Flies Again***, you can see the Cathedral of Notre Dame. Who does mum say lives there? Give an exact name.”

Team members consulted each other, wrote down their answer, and handed the slip of paper to their captain who, as hopeful messenger, presented it to the children’s librarians seated at the head table. After each question, a judge read the answer aloud.

“The answer is Quasimodo. Sorry, but we cannot accept ‘Hunchback of Notre Dame.’”

Disappointed sighs filled the room.

For three more rounds, librarians asked multiple choice, true/false and fill-in-the-blank questions during the 17th Annual **KCLS Global Reading Challenge**. The questions, drawn from six different books and designed by KCLS’ children’s librarians, test teamwork plus comprehension and retention. Guessing doesn’t make the grade.

The answer is—

“The Island of Madagascar” (groans)

“Library of Congress” (applause)

“Elephants are People, Too” (big applause)



A total of 1,710 kids from 66 schools participated in the 2016 Global Reading Challenge. Each year, KCLS and local public and private schools encourage fourth and fifth-grade students of all reading levels to work as teams while reading some of the best in children’s literature. The event, sponsored by the King County Library System Foundation, not only aims to introduce a range of fiction and nonfiction to young readers, but to show the value of libraries as community resources.

The winning teams earned gold (well, not real gold) medals and more importantly, bragging rights for being reading champs for their region. The 2016 regional champions were:

Wicked Readers, Cedarhurst Elementary,
Central Region (Highline School District)

Candy Crusaders, Issaquah Valley Elementary,
East Region (Issaquah School District)

Rapid Readers, Margaret Mead Elementary,
North Region (Lake Washington School District)

Soaring Readers, Arthur Jacobsen Elementary,
South Region (Auburn School District)

“It was worth the hard work!” said 10-year old C. Volkens, smiling as he high-fived his Wicked Readers coach. “We learned about a lot of stuff we didn’t know, like Nazis and World War II.”

For many parents, the Global Reading Challenge offers a worthwhile activity for kids who may not participate in sports, music or other school pursuits, yet want to experience the recognition for a job well done. Challenge competitors said they’d recommend that their younger siblings and friends sign up to compete when they become fourth-and fifth graders.

“It’s a great thing! It’s really fun—and the books are really good. Everybody should try it,” said one Wicked Reader, adding, “We’re wicked as in Wicked Cool!”

STORY

Reading with Rover: A Powerful Pairing of Pooches and Children

Pet owner, L. Williams, gently stroked Dana's long, sleek back as the dog laid on a hand-made quilt, her head on Williams' lap. Small children crowded around the specially-trained Great Dane, eager for a chance to read aloud to their new canine friend.

As an eight-year-old boy read a Batman story, Dana listened attentively, not caring whether the child bobbled sentences or stumbled over grammar.

All of which is the main point of **Reading With Rover**, an innovative program that aims to encourage young readers of all ages, particularly those who have trouble reading. Proving so popular when introduced at the Bothell Library in February 2016, it was quickly expanded to other libraries. By the end of the year, 800 children in 36 programs had practiced reading to their furry friends.

"Dana really enjoyed that super hero story," Williams told the boy, who looked ecstatic.

"Can I pet her?"



An estimated 30 children, from kindergarten to fifth-grade, asked the same question after taking turns reading to Dana and two other dogs. The answer is always yes, say the dog-handlers, as long as the children are gentle.

As the low hum of young readers filled the room, J. Wrock of Woodinville watched as her 10-year-old daughter lined up to read to Dana a second time.

"She just loves dogs and was asking for a puppy recently," said Wrock, appreciatively.

"She's really soft," the girl said, after reading Dr. Seuss' **Go Dog Go!** "I've never seen a Great Dane in my whole life."

The combination of books and dogs proved irresistible for children, parents and teachers alike. W. Coombs, a teacher in the Northshore School District, brought some of her kindergarten students to the program.

"For kids to get practice reading, and to read aloud, is the most important thing," Coombs said. "They have to hear themselves for fluency, and need to practice over and over again in different environments and with different people. Dogs are great because they are not critical or judgmental."

Williams, who says reading is her forte, has been a parent volunteer in schools since her own kids were young. Combining her love of reading and dogs came naturally for her.

"I'll do anything I can to help kids read," she said smiling.

“BE-TWEEN” ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL

Tweens—that group of students between the ages of nine and 13—are in transition. In the upper range of grade school, but not yet teenagers, they have unique learning and social needs. Acknowledging the increasing demand for programs that stimulate and educate this special age group, KCLS introduced **Be-Tween** programs, offering 38 thought-provoking and entertaining classes where kids can learn and engage socially with their peers. Thanks to partnerships with the Museum of Flight and community volunteers from the tech industry, many of the classes focused on important Science, Technology, Engineering, Art/Design and Math (S.T.E.A.M.) skills, including Harry Potter birthday celebrations; LegoMania!; skateboard maintenance; Brazilian Beat Music workshop, and a movie screening of *Screenagers: Growing up in the Digital Age*.



STORY

Kids Find Be-Tween Classes Magical

Some kids were all thumbs.
That proved to be an advantage.

“Grab two different colored ribbons and make loops—like this,” said professional Magician Jeff Evans. Kids crowded around, watching closely, holding their fingers exactly like his.

“You can amaze your friends with this one,” he told the eager students, emphasizing the importance of stretching their fingers. “The ribbons switch places!”

Jaws dropped. Kids turned to gauge the expressions of their parents who were seated in the back of the room.

“Whooooaaa,” exclaimed one wide-eyed kid.
“That’s cool!”

The noise level quickly rose as kids showered Evans with questions. They practiced among themselves until they nailed it.

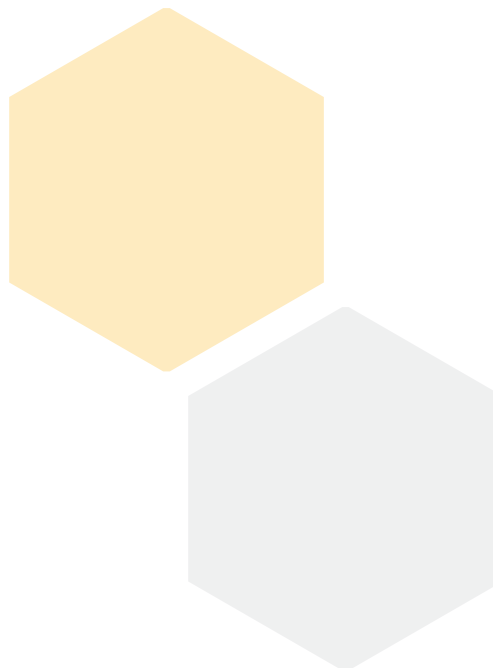
“Watching the kids’ reactions is what makes this so much fun,” Evans said. “You just never know what they’re going to ask, say or do.”

Life of the Party Magic Secrets was one of seven magic classes offered as part of KCLS’ Be-Tween series, engaging youth in a variety of creative pursuits ranging from breakdancing, songwriting and book-binding to digital photography, gaming, robotics and animation.

Evans was indeed the life of the party and kept the kids challenged as well as entertained. He promised the young audience that their friends would never figure out his two-card magic trick. He even stumped parents with a color-crayon trick. After he performed an illusion with a paper bag, one girl stared at her mother in thrilled disbelief. She begged Jeff to repeat the trick until she mastered it.

“I know that Jeff influences tweens in a positive way,” said Issaquah Children’s Librarian Ann Crewdson. “One mother told me her son was really shy until Jeff invited him on stage do a magic trick.”

“Impressing them is not always easy,” Crewdson said. “But with Jeff, they are always starry-eyed.”



A KCLS Space Odyssey Picks up S.T.E.A.M. for Tweens and Teens

When it comes to learning that is meaningful and fun, library programs can be out of this world.

At least that's what an enthusiastic group of kids discovered after attending a **Kerbal Space Program (KSP)** class at the Foster Library in Tukwila. In all, 61 tweens and teens participated in the program in 2016.

KSP is a space-flight simulation game that teaches S.T.E.A.M. skills to tweens and teens, helping them develop critical-thinking, problem-solving, creativity and other important life skills. It is an area that schools are increasingly emphasizing in their curriculum, and KCLS partnered with the Museum of Flight to bring KSP to the library.

KSP players create their own space program and launch Kerbals (tiny green people who speak like Minions) into orbit. Kids who expect computer keystrokes to produce intended results quickly find out that Kerbals throw curveballs. The game demands not only that players understand terms like "retrograde," "periapsis" and "apoapsis," but also learn how to put these concepts into action.

"There's a lot to remember," said instructor Tedrick Mealy, Outreach Educator for the Museum of Flight. After giving an overview of how the game worked, Mealy directed kids to their computer screens, where Kerbals waited on launch pads, framed by earth's horizon and outer space.

"Hit the spacebar to stage your rocket," Mealy said. "Press 'D' to turn the rocket to the right. The green circle is your velocity vector; the velocity vector is where your rocket is going. Press control to lower the throttle..."

With fingers hovered over keyboards, the kids launched their Kerbals into space.

"Uh oh," Mealy said, helping one boy. "What happened to your stabilizer?"



Another had not yet achieved lift-off.

"Let's see, looks like you're out of fuel," said Teen Librarian Rachel McDonald, who was helping with the class.

One boy was feeling quite proud after a successful launch...until his spacecraft stalled.

"Your rocket is starting to tumble. That's not good," Mealy said, helping to rectify the problem.

Soon, all Kerbals were launched. The kids were enthralled.

"The students have been really receptive," Mealy said. "I was worried that it would be more of a struggle, because it is complicated. But they took to it really well."

Parents also lauded KCLS' partnership with the Museum of Flight. As the mother of one girl put it, "the class opened her mind."

TEENS: PREPARING FOR THEIR FUTURE

Whether through innovative programs and services or simply providing welcoming areas for a group that values its space, KCLS has worked hard to make the library a special place for teenagers. As part of the 2004 Capital Improvement Plan, KCLS' new and renovated libraries include designated space for teens to study, work and engage with one another. Teen librarians develop innovative, age-appropriate programs, including tutoring, technology workshops, financial literacy classes, and discussion groups on topics ranging from poetry to social justice. Additionally, Mobile Services deliver books and programs to kids throughout the county—wherever they may be.

Highlights



Teen Talk, a seven-week series of workshops, was created for teens and emerging adults interested in discussing issues around social justice and equality in an environment where they were able to freely express ideas and opinions. A total of 117 youth participated in the series at the Renton Library. Afterwards, many said they felt more connected to peers in their community, and felt more knowledgeable about how to affect positive change in society. Teen Talk was the brainchild of Teen Services Librarian Jennifer Wooten, who teamed with Kiana Davis, a poet and teacher at Youth Source in Renton, to invite guest speakers and leaders from the community to engage with area youth.

Mobile Services outreach provided 800 programs at King County's **Youth Detention Center** in Seattle and **Echo Glen** residential juvenile detention facility in Snoqualmie, serving more than 6,000 youth.

Life After High School programs at various libraries drew a total of 569 people at 38 programs; another 492 attendees participated in six programs outside the libraries.



Teen Challenge: How to Team Up and Build Robots Fit for Battle

Time was running out. Shouts from dismayed teens rang through the classroom.

“Uh oh.” “Oh, no!” “Hurry!”

Teams scrambled to re-attach pinchers, wheels, arms and other parts that had fallen off their robots. They plugged wires back in, tuned sputtering motors and grabbed controllers for one, final test-drive.

“Okay, time’s up!” said class coordinator Marina Hernandez. “Let the **Battle of the Bots** begin.”

Twenty teenagers whooped and cheered as their colorful, plastic creations were launched into battle inside a carpeted “arena” at the Kirkland Library. The robotics class, held in partnership with the Museum of Flight, was part of KCLS’ Teen Summer Reading Program, **Get in the Game**.

Teams that worked hard to build foot-long, motorized contraptions gleefully sent their robots into combat. While it wasn’t exactly Clash of the Titans, damage was inflicted. Using controllers to manipulate the tank-like structures for maximum impact, the mini-machines clashed with their intended targets. One robot pinched off another robot’s arms; others had wheels knocked off, rendering them defenseless.

“That was cool,” said 13-year-old C. Kotschevar, whose team built a purple robot with red and black wheels, and a yellow bowsprit to incapacitate challengers.

Hernandez, a robotics expert with the Museum of Flight, spent the beginning of the class determining how much the kids knew about robots. It turns out, they knew quite a lot. When she asked them about the various ways robots are used, their answers ranged from ATMs and car washes to robotic “fish” that can detect pollutants. Kids familiar with *Transformers*, *Wall-E* and other sci-fi films also knew that robots can vacuum carpets and perform surgery, as well as do “*RoboCop*” work considered too dangerous for humans, such as defusing bombs.



C. Kotschevar’s mother had high praise for Battle of the Bots. When her son saw the class advertised in the newspaper, he immediately reserved a seat.

“What a gift this is,” she said, adding that her son was not really interested in robotics until he took a previous class. “I love that the library offers programs so that kids can try out different things. Some child could wind up an inventor.”

“This class gives kids a chance to hang out but also to learn, which is great,” she added. “As moms, we want to make sure that during the summer their brains don’t turn to mush.”

Teenage Girls Move Full S.T.E.A.M. Ahead



From October to May, a group of 18 girls gathered at Bothell Library every week. While music played in the background, they laughed and chatted, munching on popcorn, tortilla chips and other after school snacks.

But when it was time to get down to work, they did. Sitting straight and facing their laptops, they began tapping their keyboards, some a bit more tentatively than others.

Girls Who Code is a unique program that teaches S.T.E.A.M. skills through a self-paced curriculum developed by the national nonprofit organization of the same name.

Convinced that computing skills are essential for many well-paying jobs in the United States, attorney and politician Reshma Saujani founded Girls Who Code in 2012 to help close the gender gap in the technology industry. Saujani has also written *Women Who Don't Wait in Line* and *Girls Who Code: Learn to Code and Change the World* (the latter to be published in late 2017).

Teens attending the class embraced the idea that learning to code may get them a good job in the future, but they were also having fun while making friends with others who have common interests. Their parents were highly supportive.

While the class is informal, non-intimidating and encourages questions, there is also structure: the girls must fulfill certain academic requirements. Students are instructed to choose one of several categories—fashion, music, storytelling, digital art or game development. Each girl then uses her preferred category as the framework for learning programming fundamentals and ultimately building a music, fashion or other subject-based website.

“The girls are learning to give the computer instructions for what they want it to do; everything has to be written in a language the computer will understand,” said Teen Librarian Catherine Schaeffer.

“Coding requires detailed thinking and precision,” she said.

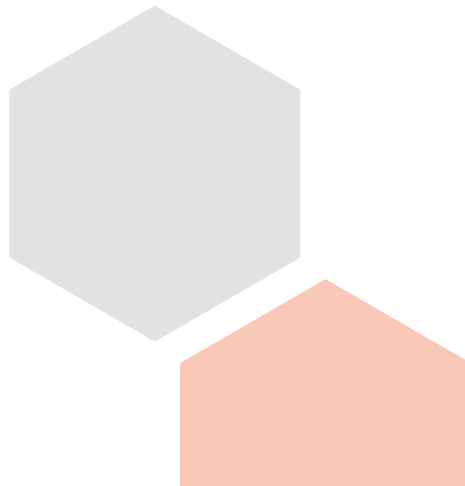
N. Waggoner, age 15, was building a storytelling web page, ignoring for the moment, two hefty school books on her desk.

“I thought coding sounded really cool,” Waggoner said. “I love writing, and I think coding is really useful; I’m going to use it to create blogs.”

Another girl was learning to code by writing music using a special software program, while another was creating a fashion site. Yet another girl was creating a website airing her LGBTQ discrimination concerns.

C. Button, one of the tech volunteers, praised KCLS for offering the program.

“There is a very small percentage of women in my field,” she said. “We need more. Coding is a door-opening skill. Girls may not fit the male stereotype, but it’s silly to think they can’t learn to do this. Anyone can!”



BRIDGING THE SUMMER GAP

*When the school year ends, KCLS makes sure that learning doesn't. Through a broad spectrum of programs and services, students and families receive the educational support, opportunities and even the nourishment they need to bridge the school-year gap and to help counter the "summer slide." KCLS takes summer learning seriously, and to that end expanded not only its **Summer Reading and Summer Meals** efforts, but added a new adult summer reading component. And for the entire family, there was the first-ever **Summer Reading in the Park**, which proved to be a major hit with all ages.*



Highlights



More than 33,400 kids registered for KCLS' Summer Reading Program, **On Your Mark, Get Set, Read**. Students read and logged nearly 18 million minutes.

Get in the Game and Read—KCLS' Teen Reading Program—had 8,632 active participants. In all, nearly 20,000 teenagers attended a Get in the Game and Read library program.

KCLS staff brought the joy of books and reading to many communities through the **Let's Read** program. Mobile outreach staff made 631 visits and distributed 18,500 books for kids to take home and enjoy.

Libraries hosted volunteers who served nearly 9,000 snacks and meals to kids through the **Meals for Youth** program, ensuring access to nutritious food while school was out.

With funding from the KCLS Foundation, **Summer School Busing** transported more than 3,000 kids to 12 libraries for summer learning and fun.

Through a partnership with YMCA, staff brought the library and great books to 3,000 kids attending four summer camps.

KCLS added a new Adult Summer Reading Program—**Exercise Your Mind and Read**. More than 1,500 people registered for the program and joined in the fun.



STORY

Summer Reading Program—Championship Style

On Your Mark, Get Set, Read! And with that, the 2016 Summer Reading Program kicked off on a rainy Saturday in June at the Auburn Library.

In keeping with the activity-based theme, kids were busy in the children's section of the library competing for medals during an indoor Olympic Games program. One 10-year-old boy walked around the room balancing a book on his head during the "floor exercise." When it didn't fall off, he came one step closer to the medalists' podium.

Another girl was busy making a "Mutant Ninja" out of foil. Acknowledging that Ninjas typically aren't present at Olympic events, a children's librarian told the girl she could still earn a medal as long as her "powers" were used for good.

The girl's father could not help chuckling, pointing out that his daughter's favorite book is *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*. He said she had already put 10 other books on hold and that she reads at least twenty minutes a day, or more.

More than 60 kids and parents attended, enjoying an entertaining music program and watching as children checked out books to read over the summer.

Parents agreed.

J. Sarinana and his wife watched from the sidelines while their children sat reading with other kids, or dug into arts and crafts bins to create their own Olympic medals.

Both parents said they want to instill in their children a love of books and strengthen their social skills.

Meanwhile, back at the floor exercises, M. Tooker posed in front of the "Olympic Rings" wearing his champion's medal. According to his great-grandmother, S. Randolph, the boy is a goal-setter when it comes to reading.

"I read all the time," Tooker said matter-of-factly. "I get Sundays off because I read so much. I like to make things, too. Someday, I want to make a new game. I have a lot of things on my mind."



Summer Meals Gives Students a Healthy Boost

At the Burien Library on a summer afternoon, a four-year-old girl rubbed her hands with sanitizer before making her lunch choice. “What would you like to drink?” asked M. Espinoza, a 20-year old AmeriCorps volunteer.

“Chocolate milk. It’s my favorite!” the girl said as her grandmother looked on.

“What color straw would you like?”

“Ummmmm, I choose pink.”

“Baby carrots, raisins, cucumbers or cherry tomatoes?” She took the raisins with her tiny hands, then asked for a “little” apple instead of an orange.

Not everyone chose their lunch with as much enthusiasm as the preschooler, but hundreds of others who attended a **Summer Meals** program showed appreciation with warm smiles and polite thankfulness.

As part of the annual Summer Reading Program, Summer Meals help ensure that children who qualify for free-and-reduced lunches during the school year have continued access to nutritious food when school is not in session. With funding from the KCLS Foundation, the meals are provided by the Des Moines Food Bank, Multi-Service Center of Federal Way and Food Lifeline with support from United Way Vista volunteers and AmeriCorps interns who help serve the meals.

In total, 8,999 free meals and snacks were served during 449 meal times at 15 host libraries, expanded from four locations in 2015 to address increasing needs in the community.

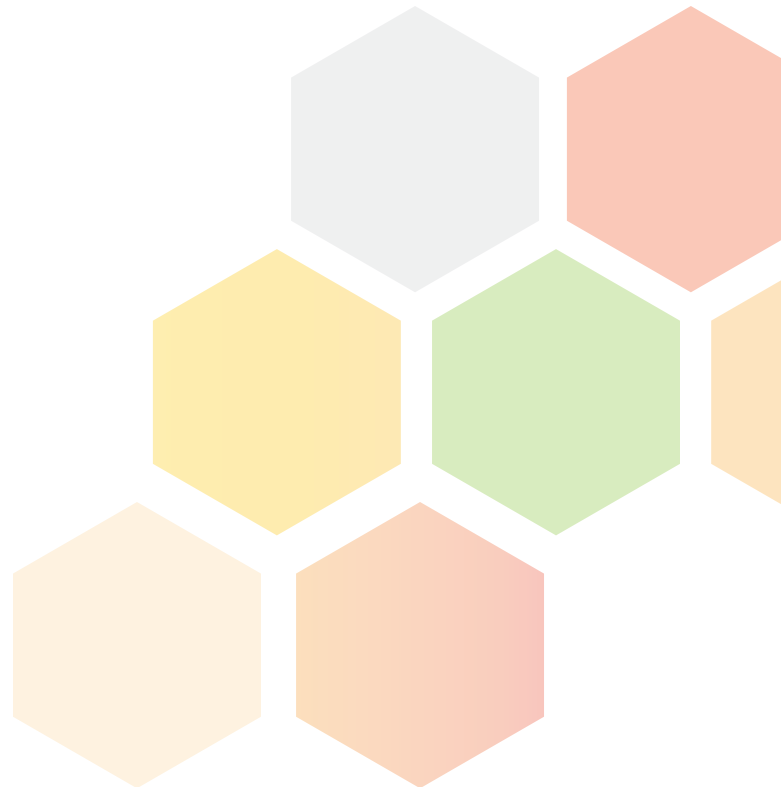
Summer Meals also serves another valuable purpose—drawing kids to libraries where they can check materials and participate in a number of age-appropriate programs. Thanks to generous support from the KCLS Foundation, kids could also receive a free book at each meal site. A total of 1,438 books were given away throughout the summer.

Those who came to the Burien Library had high praise for KCLS and the Summer Meals program.

“Healthy food, together with libraries, is an awesome combination,” said A. Vinther, as her son ate his lunch. “I’m a teacher and I know a lot of students who need this. A lot of parents work during the summer and child care is expensive.”

So is fresh produce.

“Kids get fresh fruits and vegetables here, and when kids are in a social setting with other kids who are making healthy choices, it helps them make healthy choices for themselves,” Vinther said. “And I love the library programs. They make coming here feel like an adventure.”



STORY

Enthusiastic Patrons Flock to a Summer Reading Party in the Park!

The 19th-century literary master Henry James once said, “Summer afternoon—summer afternoon; to me those have always been the two most beautiful words in the English language.”

KCLS patrons took that phrase to heart on a sunny August afternoon, immersing themselves in a summertime activity that would have won James’ full approval: *Reading*.

In 2016, KCLS expanded its Summer Reading Program to include adults as well as kids, and invited readers of all ages to enjoy books and music in a picturesque setting at a new event called **Reading in the Park!**

Reading events were held during July and August at locations near four libraries: Lake Wilderness Park (Maple Valley); Ashwood Park (Bellevue); Richmond Beach Community Park, and a green space between the Redmond Library and Redmond City Hall.

About 50 patrons attended the Redmond celebration and most agreed that reading and parks was a winning combination. Children and adults checked out books from the Redmond Library or Library2Go! Families brought picnic lunches or queued up at a food truck provided for the occasion. Disc jockeys filled the air with music while KCLS staff handed out popsicles to delighted kids.

J. McPherson and his children, ages four and six, sat in lawn chairs in the shade of a tree. His daughter read ***The Bicycle Mystery***, while her brother read ***Dark Day in the Deep Sea***.

“The kids really love reading. They’d be reading at home if we weren’t here,” McPherson said. “Reading can be a private activity, so being around other readers is great. And it’s really fun to be outside.”

Three women who met in a mom’s group had spread out a large picnic blanket in the sun, surrounded by toys, coolers and books for all ages, including Dr. Seuss and several about horses. As the mothers read, their daughters read quietly, played with their dolls or occasionally jumped up to play with other kids on the broad expanse of grass.

Although the reading parties were scheduled for two hours, many people came early and stayed later. J. May summed it up best.

“KCLS should definitely do this again!”

ENGAGING CITIZENS TO LISTEN & LEARN



*KCLS is committed to promoting civic engagement within local communities and the county at large. **Everyone's Talking About It**, a year-long adult education program, offered a forum where residents could come together in a respectful environment to discuss a variety of subjects ranging from race-relations to politics in order to cultivate a deeper understanding of complex issues and promote tolerance for differing attitudes and perspectives. **Everyone's Talking About It** included 372 different programs and topics and drew more than 5,000 into the discussions.*

Highlights



In partnership with KCLS, King County Elections placed **ballot boxes** at 16 libraries (Algona-Pacific, Auburn, Bellevue, Covington, Enumclaw, Fairwood, Kingsgate, Shoreline, Skyway, Snoqualmie, Valley View, Vashon, White Center, Woodinville); 14% of total ballots cast in the November election were dropped into one of them.

Plazas Comunitarias supports Spanish-speaking adults who are completing their basic education. In 2016, volunteers provided 225 hours of tutoring to 32 adults who participated in the program, 10 of whom obtained elementary or secondary diplomas in their native language.

One of the best ways to encourage reading is to provide a chance to meet one's **favorite author**; KCLS lined up 22 who presented programs at various libraries.

STORY

Controversial Documentary Provokes Thoughtful Discussion

On a rainy April evening, patrons gathered at the Federal Way 320th Library to view a sneak preview of a controversial documentary before it aired locally on public television.

The film, ***Peace Officer***, questioned the increased militarization of American police and their use of SWAT teams, as seen through the eyes of a former county sheriff who lost his son-in-law during a 12-hour standoff with police. The event was sponsored in partnership with KCTS9 (PBS) and Indie Lens Pop-Up Films.

The documentary graphically depicted confrontations involving police, and elicited mixed reactions after the film. In a passionate, yet civil discussion, patrons shared their perceptions about police work, its importance to public safety, and their expectations of protection, transparency and accountability.

Whether attendees agreed with the film's point of view or not—that the growing militarization of police has led to increased violence, rather than a de-escalation of violence—all agreed it was a timely topic. And all were grateful to KCLS for creating an environment for civic education, engagement and discourse.

"The event was excellent," said J. Ward, a retired police officer. She appreciated the opportunity to discuss the film with community members, even those who had differing opinions than hers.

Christopher Bayley, former King County prosecuting attorney and author of ***Seattle Justice: The Rise and Fall of the Police Payoff System in Seattle***, moderated the discussion.

Bayley described the important role of prosecutors in "disciplining the entire justice system." He told the crowd that former King County Sheriff Sue Rahr is tackling the issues of community policing as head of the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission.

"Sue Rahr would say that we should train officers to be guardians, not warriors, and focus on how they can prevent violence in our communities," Bayley said. "You want the right kind of police officers. I worry a lot about random shootings between rival gangs, for example—it's really dangerous. Officers need to have good judgment."

Patrons said the film and discussion inspired them to help improve relationships between local law enforcement and their own communities.

L. Johnson said she was struck by the film for a number of reasons. "I have a lot of respect for police. You want to be able to call someone!" she said. "At the same time, you want them to be professional."

"This was a wonderful program," she added. "It was interesting for me because as a person of color, you think you're the only group with problems, but it's a larger issue than that."



Speaker “Drones” On and Patrons are All Ears

Look, up in the sky! It’s a bird! It’s a plane! It’s a drone!

There have been many stories about drones in recent months, but mostly for the wrong reasons. Aviation expert George Comollo, while acknowledging concerns those stories have raised, has a different point of view.

“Unfortunately, the word ‘drone’ has taken on a negative connotation because some people have been irresponsible,” he said. “It’s too bad.”

As Chair of the Aviation Technology Program at Green River Community College (GRCC), Comollo was invited to give a lecture on drones as part of KCLS' **Everybody’s Talking About It** adult program series.

GRCC is one of the few schools in the country to offer a program on Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), which is what the U.S. government is now calling drones. Comollo is in a unique position to provide the latest news and information on this emerging technology, some of which has come under fire for malfunctions, operator errors, bad judgment and as Comollo put it, “lack of education on rules and regulations.” Local news reports involving drones include one that crashed into the Seattle Great Wheel and another that struck a woman during a Seattle parade. But despite the negative publicity, drones have many benefits.

According to Comollo, a UAS equipped with cameras provide very crisp images and can be used for a wide variety of amateur and commercial purposes. Many enthusiasts—ranging from film makers, firefighters and news media to wedding and real-estate photographers—are clamoring for licenses. Other uses include agricultural monitoring, emergency medical operations, wildlife surveys, oil exploration, logging and even chimney repair.

More than 100 people attended programs at 10 different KCLS libraries. Aviation aficionados and curious patrons alike valued the contextual information and stimulating discussions.

“These library programs are great,” said S. Yaroff, who attended a class at the Duvall Library. “I always find out what’s being offered, because whenever I attend a program, I pick up new information.”

“I came because I was curious,” said J. Yaroff. “I didn’t even realize there was a school (GRCC) that existed for UAS studies. I think it’s wonderful. The drone industry is going to be huge.”



“Citizen Activist” Nick Licata Inspires KCLS Patrons

One might think that an 18-year veteran of Seattle City politics would be burned out, tired of the turmoil surrounding controversies such as homeless camps, racism and minimum wages, and instead would be ready for a relaxing vacation in a warm climate.

Not Nick Licata. Although the popular Seattle City Councilman retired in 2015 at age 67 rather than run for another term, he neither relaxed nor fled public service. Instead, he wrote a book, ***Becoming a Citizen Activist: Stories, Strategies & Advice for Changing Our World***, to celebrate the democratic process and inspire meaningful, productive citizen engagement.

Licata, who enjoys meeting and talking with others, spent much of the 2016 election year discussing his book at local libraries. KCLS patrons flocked to the Renton Library one rainy, post-election November night, and were rewarded with more than two hours of open discussion, civics stories, hard-earned political advice, and an upbeat view of what the average “little guy” can accomplish.

For Licata, democracy is a two-way street. He told the gathering that for our political system to survive, those in government must listen to and serve the public—and conversely, citizens must be willing to listen and engage in open dialogue with their elected officials. Furthermore, citizens need to listen to each other, especially those with whom they disagree.



Those who attended the presentation said it was particularly timely and appropriate in a presidential election year.

“After listening to Mr. Licata, it became clear there are two pathways for us as citizens,” said J. Taylor, who was studying at the library and decided to attend the talk after hearing an overhead announcement. “We can be cynics and disengage from the process, which doesn’t do anybody any good, or we can build bridges wherever we can.”

Truly listening is key to the democratic process, Licata emphasized. It is also the hardest part. But he walked his talk by inviting give-and-take dialogue with patrons.

He discussed highlights from various chapters of his book and urged people to delve more deeply into issues, reading vetted newspaper and magazine sources to more fully understand other points of view and to augment one’s ability to listen.

“I was active in the 1960s (as a political activist),” Licata said. “I have no problem with people being loud, or even disruptive, but I always ask, ‘Why are they so upset? Is it justified? How do you work with them?’ If it gets outrageous, it can be destructive. You have to find a way to address the situation in ways that are productive.”

Patrons Praise Duwamish River Presentation

The photos were stark in their contrast: waters poisoned with trash; wildlife miraculously thriving.

The Duwamish River, a \$342 million Superfund clean-up site slowly being transformed after decades of environmental abuses, was on vivid display at the Des Moines Library on October 24. Tom Reese, a long-time *Seattle Times* photographer who has spent 20 years observing and chronicling the Duwamish River, teamed with biologist and writer Eric Wagner to present ***Once and Future River: Reclaiming the Duwamish***, based on their new book with the same name.

The presentation drew concerned citizens—including past and present residents of Duwamish-area neighborhoods, as well as Duwamish Tribal members—who were all eager for an update on the industrialized river emptying into Puget Sound near Seattle's Harbor Island. The lower part of the river, known as the Duwamish Way, was designated a Superfund site in 2014 by the Environmental Protection Agency.

"Unfortunately, we don't have pictures of the river when it was really beautiful," Reese told the gathering. Consulting old maps, he said one can only imagine how the river must have looked to the Duwamish Tribe when they lived along its banks in the early nineteenth century: a pristine river teeming with salmon, snaking through old-growth forest with Mount Rainier looming in the east.

Reese and Wagner said they felt compelled to tell the story of the embattled Duwamish River. During World War II, when it was straightened and dredged by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Duwamish River was reduced from a 14-mile meandering river to a five-mile navigable waterway intended to support industrial growth spurred by the war. For years thereafter, dredging, filling, building, pipe-laying and dumping of contaminants by more than 40 companies not only destroyed water quality, but an estimated 95 percent of the river's original natural habitat.

Pictures of the battered river drew murmurs from the audience, some of whom were first-time attendees to a KCLS program. Many were struck by the contrasting images in the photos: an old tire at the river bottom, a salmon swimming past it; an otter poking his head above water, undisturbed by a nearby drain pipe; a family enjoying a restored beach, oblivious to a barge in the background filled with scrap metal; kayakers paddling the waterway to collect trash. Other photos showed encouraging signs the river is still alive: a great blue heron snatching a fish from the water; bald eagles perched on pilings; an osprey feeding her nesting chicks.

"I find hope in the fact that (environmental) changes are visible; you can see them," Reese told the class. "All the volunteer work has made a difference."



HELPING PEOPLE CREATE THEIR BEST LIVES

Libraries connect patrons with programs and services that invite them to explore new ideas and discover unique ways to lead fuller lives. In 2016, KCLS fueled creativity by offering classes and workshops taught by master gardeners, artists and athletes on everything from painting to cultivating roses to urban bicycling and snowshoeing. Service Core of Retired Executives (SCORE) volunteers provided free counseling to small business owners, while authors spoke to crowds on topics like downsizing, de-stressing techniques and “digital mindfulness.” Book clubs also added clever twists, such as the Knit-Lit Group, which brought knitters and crafters together through their shared love of reading.

Highlights



KCLS received a **2016 Top Innovator Award** in the category of Civic and Community Engagement from the Urban Libraries Council. The honor recognized KCLS' work with older adults, engaging more than 20,000 seniors in programs and events such as TeleTown Halls, Wisdom Cafés, and retirement and tax-assistance programs.

During the holiday season, KCLS partnered with KIRO 7 Television to host **Toys for Tots** donation bins, collecting more than 2,500 toys for children in need.

A social worker at the Auburn Library is a pilot position, funded in part by the KCLS Foundation, to focus on assisting patrons in need of health and human services.

KCLS staff made more than 8,200 **Mobile Outreach** visits to 294,376 people in low-income housing, parks, senior centers and other locations, delivering books, programs and services.

KCLS provided 11,875 donated books and magazines to residents in 45 locations as part of its **Quick Reads Shelves** program.

Patrons Express Gratitude, Take Stock of Their Blessings

For those who gathered at the Redmond Library to attend a **Wisdom Café**, the discussion had nothing to do with politics, religion, racial tensions, or other current issues at the forefront of people's minds. Instead, the subject was gratitude. And the ensuing conversation was a welcome balm that proved not only timely, but timeless.

The **Gratitude: More than Counting Blessings** discussion brought patrons together as a way to focus attention on the positive aspects of life, but Adult Services Librarian Daniel Shaffer was also curious about what others thought about gratitude.

"This is not really a class," he told the group. "It's just an informal discussion where everyone gets to participate."

Attendees shifted tables and chairs so everyone could see one another. Shaffer instructed each person to write down one thing that made them feel grateful, told them to crumple their papers and toss them into a nearby basket.

Shaffer then smoothed them out and read each one aloud:

"Recognizing that life is a gift"

"Being happy and satisfied with whatever I have"

"Helping people"

"Savoring the moment"

Prompted by more questions from Shaffer, participants kept adding to the list. Although most said they had experienced pain and loss, they expressed gratitude for sunsets, hummingbirds, rain, God, family members, "polite people at the grocery store," healthy food, and "having a roof over my head."

One woman shared that she had recently suffered a stroke. "I find it hard to remember to be grateful each day. But it makes my days better when I try." She paused then added, "I am grateful for my family... and for hugs."

One man who recently moved from India said, "Expressing gratitude means adding balance and settling our minds, but we must express it, like writing thank-you letters when someone does something kind for us."

People smiled, nodding their heads in agreement.

"I don't think you need to decide everything (you're grateful for) every day; you make gratitude a habit-like flossing. You just get up and do it," said P. Martin, a retired teacher.

S. VanHorne, who recently moved from Tacoma, saw the event advertised in her local newspaper.

"I thought it sounded interesting and I wanted to meet people, so I'm really glad I came," she said. "It was useful and inspiring, and valuable to hear what others had to say."



Mobile Outreach Includes Visits to Tent Cities

If you talk to KCLS staff, they will tell you that some of the most grateful library patrons are those who are the most vulnerable: the homeless.

The number of people experiencing homelessness in King County rose yet again in 2016. True to its mission to serve people of all ages regardless of circumstance, KCLS has responded with a number of initiatives, including partnerships with social-service agencies to provide community information and resource fairs; educational programs aimed at increasing public awareness of homeless issues; and participating in *One Night Count*, an effort undertaken by the Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness to determine the actual number of people living without shelter in King County.

Recognizing that transportation is one of the biggest hurdles facing the homeless, KCLS' Mobile Services staff reached out to residents of four tent cities in Richmond Beach and Woodinville—up from just one, three years ago. The service has proven invaluable to those who have little or no access to computers, books or other library materials.

In 2016, Techlab made 10 visits to various Tent Cities, serving 216 total patrons.

"It is gratifying to hear people say, 'The library is here!' when we pull up," said Susie Gonzalez-Pueschner, KCLS Outreach Services Specialist. "They are excited to see us because we welcome everyone and have established their trust."

On an 80-degree day in mid-September, KCLS Mobile Services staff pulled into the parking lot of the Carol Edwards Community Center in Woodinville in a bright red Techlab vehicle. Adjacent to the parking lot was a fenced area where a three-month, temporary Tent City had been erected.

Residents eagerly climbed on board. Some immediately took seats at computers while others browsed books in the vehicle and on a table outside. Staff answered questions and showed people how to access information they needed.

"This is awesome!" exclaimed J. Haas, age 29, who shouted out to a friend passing by. "They have computers, the Internet and air conditioning!"

"Homelessness is affecting a lot of people; it's getting harder for everybody," Haas said. "You still try to have a life and this service really helps. I can check my email, look for information, and use Facebook to check in with friends and relatives like my grandmother. It helps me stay connected to the outside world, to feel like a *person*."

"Once, just once, I would like to go someplace where nobody looks at me and says, 'you people,' as if being homeless and using food stamps is a crime," said D. Goldsmith, a 54-year old artist. She and her husband became homeless after he lost his job and their apartment became uninhabitable after a neighbor's caught fire.

"When the library comes to us, it helps us to be self-sufficient. When we are treated like human beings—it makes a huge difference," she said, proudly displaying the colorful artwork she hopes to sell.

While not all Tent City residents wanted to discuss their situations, Haas summed up many people's sentiments.

"We're not proud to be homeless. We have feelings. We get embarrassed. But we're not garbage—we're just trying to get by the best we can.

When you're in a homeless camp, you don't have many things, let alone technology. Having the library come to us is really appreciated."



TeleTown Hall Connects Patrons with Medicare, Social Security Experts

If anyone doubted that there is a significant demand for information about Medicare and Social Security, they only needed to listen in on KCLS' first-ever **Telephone Town Hall**.

Presented as a public service to educate patrons on the intricacies of applying for benefits, the event provided a community exchange aimed at demystifying how these essential government programs work.

The call was moderated by KCLS staff and included Kirk Larson, Social Security Administration's Public Outreach Specialist for Western Washington, and Liz Mercer, Regional Training Consultant for Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA). Larson and Mercer discussed regulations, requirements and resources, and fielded questions ranging from drug costs, dental plans, eligibility and retirement issues to caregiving, disability, supplemental plans, open-enrollment and other deadlines. Many callers also sought information for their loved ones, including parents, spouses and partners.

According to Larson, Social Security is a vital program for more than 62 million people receiving benefits nationally, including 1.3 million people in the state of Washington alone. It was designed to replace about 40 percent of a person's average working income, but today, one out of three will depend on Social Security for 90 percent of their retirement income.

"Understanding how Social Security will fit into your retirement strategy is very important for how you will live in your 60s, 70s and beyond," he said.

"I have been frustrated by the lack of basic information about how Social Security functions," wrote T. Torgerson. "This was a great community service and I found it a very worthwhile use of my time."

KCLS administered five polls during the call. Among the questions, participants were asked if they learned something new about a resource or service provided by KCLS during the TeleTown Hall—86 percent of 422 respondents answered 'Yes.' Of 352 callers who were asked if they felt more connected to the library, 86 percent also said yes.



STORY

Assistive Technology Fair Offers Hope, Help and Community Support

KCLS' first-ever **Assistive Technology Fair** gave patrons a glimpse of resources that many didn't even know existed.

More than 150 people attended the one-day event, which aimed to educate the public about new technology and resources for those needing specialized forms of assistance. The fair was not only for people living with physical limitations or disabilities, but also for caregivers, family members, educators and others. Vendors and nonprofit organizations demonstrated the latest assistive technologies, and provided financial and technical information on everything from current software to power wheelchairs. Librarians were on hand to show attendees how to use KCLS' catalog and website to access information and resources through KCLS' extensive collection of audiobooks and databases.

KCLS has assistive technology at some of its libraries, and event organizers hoped to show how these devices can help anyone living with disabilities overcome the daily challenges they face.



"This is all news to me," said A. Sera, whose husband's health issues have impacted his mobility. "We're entering a new chapter and I came after a friend told me about it. I had no idea there was so much information available on the KCLS website—I'm going to start there. This event is a wonderful gift for the community."

L. Rodriguez, Assistive Technology Specialist for Seattle-based Sight Connection, has had vision loss since birth. As one of the participating vendors, she enthusiastically demonstrated some of the latest gadgets to curious onlookers, including a keyboard with oversized letters and high-magnification screen readers for printed materials. She also showed onlookers how to take screen shots with an iPhone equipped with a special app that provides audio capabilities.

J. Torell said he attended the fair out of curiosity and to get information for a musician friend dealing with hearing loss.

"I try to help any way I can," he said. "I've gathered a bunch of information for her, and I think it will make a difference."

G. Barney, a supervisor with Bridge Disability Ministries in Bellevue, said his organization accepts donations of power wheelchairs and he fielded a number of questions. He was encouraged by the level of interest expressed by potential donors, since the demand for wheelchairs far exceeds their supply.

"We tend to get people coming in (for help) when they're in crisis and stressed," said J. Shoemaker of Sight Connection. "They don't usually know about us until they *have* to know about us. This fair helps educate people on *what's possible* if something transpires down the road."

HONORING DIVERSITY

KCLS acknowledges cultural, social, gender and ethnic diversity and strives to instill greater understanding and respect among all King County citizens. KCLS' diversity initiatives include community events such as candidate forums, panels on career opportunities, concerts and "cultural conversations" and civic discussions on topics dealing with race, gender or disability issues. KCLS sponsored Citizenship Classes and developed special programming during various months of the year to honor and celebrate Native American, African-American, Filipino, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander and other cultures. Libraries have always been welcoming places for all, and KCLS staff works hard to ensure they remain so.

Highlights

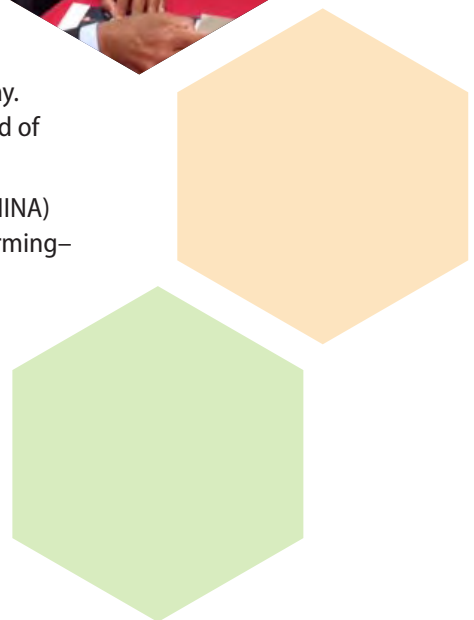


KCLS was honored to host civil rights leader **John Lewis** at the Bellevue Library in August. Lewis spoke about ***March***, a graphic novel trilogy that tells his story of the civil rights movement and the many people who fought for freedom. His appearance with co-author **Andrew Aydin** and illustrator **Nick Powell** drew a large and passionate crowd.

Dr. Terrence Roberts, a member of the Little Rock Nine, the first group of African-American students to desegregate Little Rock, Arkansas Central High School in 1957, spoke at the Bellevue Library in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. His talk, ***Reflecting on History to Inform the Future***, drew a crowd of 144.

A partnership with the Network for Integrating New Americans (NINA) produced 142 visual stories—both heart-wrenching and heart-warming—from immigrants and refugees representing 16 countries. Throughout February, **KCLS partnered with NINA and Dubsea Coffee** in White Center to exhibit of 16 select stories at a community reception that drew more than 50 residents.

In collaboration with ArtWorks, KCLS helped collect audio-recorded stories of local immigrants and refugees as part of the **Immigrant Stories Project**, with two programs held in two south county libraries.



Opening the Door to Acknowledgment and Understanding

All year long, KCLS invited discussion on an array of issues, including homelessness, guns, mental health, race and food insecurity. After Washington State passed a law guaranteeing transgender individuals access to both public and private restrooms and locker rooms, Redmond Library hosted a community discussion on the topic.

"I know this issue inspires intense conversation, but it's an important discussion to have and ultimately helps us get closer," said speaker Aidan Key, an educator with GenderDiversity.org who transitioned from female to male 20 years ago.

Bathroom Politics: Restroom Access for Transgender People drew straight, gay and transgender audience members, including parents of transgender children. All acknowledged the subject was controversial, yet respectfully listened, shared insights and asked questions to gain a deeper understanding of the transgender experience.

Key recalled his decision to transition as the most despairing moment of his life. "My own sister said she needed to protect my niece from me because of who I am."

"Transgender people are just people, but our sheer existence upsets people," Key said. "I've lived in the world as a woman, and I now live in the world as a man. What it boils down to is this: Who do you say you are? Your body is not the sole determinant."

Attendees said they appreciated Key's honest discussion of his personal journey, as well as a chance to share their own experiences. M. Kee said it was a great talk and reassuring to learn what schools are doing.

F. Wamsley added, "It was open and authentic and acknowledges a situation that disturbs some people. It's a discussion that is necessary for society."

B. Czerwinski said he and his wife were very glad they attended.

"I really appreciate that the library held this forum," he said. "Hearing from someone with first-hand knowledge makes a big difference in creating greater understanding."



Photographer Matika Wilbur Graces Patrons with Stories of Wisdom

In 2012 photographer Matika Wilbur had an idea. It started out with humility and gumption and then, like most visions fueled by passion, took on a life of its own.

Believing that Native Americans are a “vanishing race” with much of their indigenous intelligence being erased from collective memory, she felt it was time to speak out in order to help restore the dignity and wisdom of her people.

“Somebody has to do this,” she thought. So she drove across the country in an RV meeting hundreds of other Native Americans who shared their fears, hopes and dreams with her.

Wilbur, a member of the Swinomish and Tulalip Tribes, dubbed her idea *Project 562*. The high-energy, self-described artist and storyteller was determined to collect portraits and oral narratives from among the 562 federally-recognized Tribal Nations in the United States.

By 2016, Wilbur had collected more than 300 photographs and stories, and began sharing those stories with the public. Her presentations at the Burien, Snoqualmie and Auburn Libraries drew 179 attendees, including 86 who packed the meeting room in Auburn.



With a backdrop of images projected on a large screen behind her, Wilbur expressed deep concerns for her people, including high numbers of suicides, a persistent achievement gap in education, and tribal lands and sacred sites threatened by proposed projects.

“I’ve learned from my travels that we’re all inter-connected,” she said. “I’ve been invited into people’s homes over and over again, and have learned that people offer humanity and friendship if you reach out. We all want the same things. Embracing indigenous intelligence is a dream worth having.”

Audience members described Wilbur’s enthusiasm as “infectious” and said her presentation made them much more aware of Native American culture, history, language, beliefs and values, such as environmental stewardship.

“I just had to be here,” said N. Moses. “It was an opportunity to hear her speak from a depth of experience and transparency—it was refreshing to see the emotion as she spoke about exposing injustice.”

L. Laffrey appreciated Wilbur’s “wonderfully comprehensive” presentation, while J. Seymour said it affirmed that something really profound is happening in the Native American community.

“It is great that the library invited her here,” Seymour said. “I’m a white woman, but I’ve always felt deeply connected to nature. I’ve been struck by how indigenous cultures care for the land. We really have to figure out how to live with the planet, not against it.”



STORY

Spanish-Speaking Entrepreneurs Get Off to a Strong Start

They were men and women with creative ideas about starting their own small businesses.

All they needed was a leg up. So KCLS answered the call with a six-week business class taught in Spanish for Spanish-speaking entrepreneurs.

Held at White Center Library, the free evening classes provided 18 hours of instruction on basic business principles, including marketing, advertising and sales. The real test came during the last class, when students presented their business plans to their classmates.

Each student was required to follow a specific format, creating business cards, an organizational chart and, if applicable, “visual aids” of their products.

Business plans ranged from carpet and flooring installation to landscaping, construction and house-cleaning services.

One man who had worked as a chef for such popular Seattle restaurants as Ivar’s and Canlis, had his heart set on starting his own restaurant or catering business serving authentic Mexican cuisine.



J. Villafuerte presented his business plan, which outlined the mission, vision and values and provided the required SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). Having learned about marketing research, he outlined his ideal client demographics in terms of age, gender, socioeconomic factors and geographic location.

Villafuerte acknowledged that starting a restaurant can be daunting and that many fail, but believed his concept of offering traditional meals made with the finest ingredients and paired with select wines would successfully fill an unaddressed niche in the marketplace.

The students agreed that the class gave them the knowledge they will need to be successful, in addition to providing peer support and encouragement.

“I now have more tools to compete and keep up-to-date with industry policies,” he said. “I truly thank KCLS for making these classes possible.”

INNOVATIVE SERVICES

With technology constantly changing, KCLS is proud of its ongoing efforts to offer a wide range of innovative tools to help people of all ages and abilities connect to whatever information they need. Using new portable Tech Toolkits with iPads, laptops and projectors, staff took library services county-wide. Wireless printing from mobile devices through the Cloud proved a popular pilot program at the Black Diamond and Mercer Island Libraries. The Redmond Library hosted the first-ever KCLS Arts & Technology Summit, offering hands-on opportunities for older adults to learn how to use cool new tech tools and toys.

Highlights



KCLS launched a pilot **Wi-Fi Hotspot Lending** program in May. By the end of the year, 200 hotspots had been borrowed nearly 1,800 times.

ideaX, a new series of programs and activities focused on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) was developed by KCLS staff and funded by the KCLS Foundation. ideaX was deployed at more than 50 library and outreach locations county-wide, serving 1,348 participants.

In late 2016, two **eBook kiosks** were installed at Sea-Tac Airport, allowing travelers to borrow up to two eBooks for their journey. In the last six weeks of 2016, more than 1,000 travelers took advantage of this new KCLS service, including 803 non-KCLS cardholders who were issued temporary passes to check out digital content.

Microsoft Office Software Certification (MOS) classes helped 81 patrons obtain certification to validate their skills and improve their job readiness. In all, 254 certification exams were administered.

If people hadn't heard of **Freegal** and **Hoopla**—free services that allow patrons to download and stream content—they have now. More than 200,000 songs, comic books, movies and more were downloaded in 2016.

Maker Day, an experiential learning program at the Newport Way Library, offered hands-on activities and drew 3,326 patrons to the day-long event.





BUILDING LIBRARIES

In 2016, KCLS constructed new replacement libraries in Skyway and White Center, with funds from the \$172 million Capital Bond passed by voters in 2004, and also managed construction of a new Renton Highlands Library, which was funded separately by the City of Renton. The three new buildings added 15,030 square feet, bringing KCLS' total building space to 756,916 square feet. KCLS also renovated the Kingsgate, Mercer Island and Valley View Libraries. KCLS sought input from local citizens to guide design for all the projects. The result is buildings that draw rave reviews from library patrons who are proud to have libraries that will serve as community hubs for decades to come.

Highlights



KCLS Art in Libraries | A Visual Journey of Possibilities, Knowledge and Imagination, published in June 2016, is the first-ever catalog showcasing KCLS' extensive public-art collection. The beautiful coffee-table book, which is available in print and as an eBook, celebrates the inventiveness and creativity of painters, sculptors, ceramicists, muralists, wood carvers, basket-weavers and other artists, most of whom live and work in the Northwest.

2016 Design Awards: The renovated Renton Library, which reopened in 2015, was one of seven selected by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and the American Library Association (ALA) to receive a 2016 Library Building Award. KCLS and the Renton Library also received a special award from Governor Jay Inslee in recognition of the "outstanding achievement in creating thriving communities, a prosperous economy and sustainable infrastructure in Washington State."



STORY

Skyway Residents Celebrate their New Community-Focused Library

If there's one thing Skyway needs, residents said, it's a place that brings the community together and offers hope.

On Saturday, January 23, they got just that with the opening of the new 8,000 square-foot Skyway Library. More than 1,000 people of different ages, ethnicities and backgrounds huddled under umbrellas in a steady downpour, waiting for the ceremonial ribbon to be cut and the celebration to begin. The crowd eagerly filed into the cobalt-blue building, where skylights and high glass walls made the dark day seem much brighter.

"We're very fortunate to have this beautiful new library; it's a shining light in an area needing revitalization," said S. Dungan, a community service officer who works for the King County Sheriff's office across the street. Noting that the striking, modern building is located at the top of a hill off of Renton Avenue South, Officer Dungan added, "It's like a beacon of welcome. It's very inspirational."

"This library's fantastic," said C. Vitiritti, a volunteer with Veterans of Foreign Wars in Skyway. "We've needed this."



A. Brown hugged and greeted fellow residents while standing in the children's book section. She and her husband Louis live in Skyway and have strived to build a safe and respectful community in honor of their son, Alajawan, who was killed in 2010.

"Look at all these faces," Brown said enthusiastically, sweeping her arm to indicate a library full of people cheerfully browsing shelves, sitting at new computers, or simply gazing at their new community hub. "They're all smiling, they're all happy. It makes me happy."

King County Executive Dow Constantine, King County Councilmember Dave Upthegrove, and State Senator Pramila Jayapal were among the dignitaries on hand who commended local voters for supporting the 2004 Capital Bond measure that made the new facility possible.

Constantine recalled that as a kid he regularly rode his bike to the Carnegie-era Admiral Library in West Seattle. He said the new Skyway Library offers materials and technology resources that allow patrons to expand on the accumulated knowledge of humanity. "Libraries have been around for 5,000 years, yet in that time their main role—building communities and encouraging people to think and exchange ideas—hasn't changed, he said."



White Center Community Enthusiastically Celebrates its New Library

It may have seemed like a long time coming, but it was well worth the wait.

Those were the resounding sentiments of more than 600 residents at the opening celebration of the new 10,000 square-foot White Center Library on May 21.

As rain fell throughout the morning, collecting into a beautifully landscaped rain garden, community members mingled inside, browsing freshly stocked shelves of books, magazines, movies, audiotapes and other materials. Patrons headed straight to chairs to curl up and read, or gaze out the windows to the garden. People of all ages queued up in checkout lines, discussing their “finds” and chatting about the new library. Many commented how light and airy the building seemed—even on a cloudy day.

G. Kim Thomas, Family Development Manager for the White Center Community Development Association (WCCDA), said the new library will be an enormous boon to families in the area.

“It says a lot that this many people are here in spite of the pouring rain,” Thomas said, noting that the facility was packed with people—all smiling. “We’re really excited about this library. It will be heavily used and critical for learning. Kids in the area need free or low-cost ways to keep reading during the school year and continuing through the summer. Most can’t afford a Kindle.”

Set among a stand of trees, the new facility is 4,000 square feet larger than the former White Center Library and within walking distance of schools and other neighborhood businesses.

Several local dignitaries addressed the crowd, including Susan Enfield, Highline Schools Superintendent and State Representative Joe Fitzgibbon.

A heartfelt tribute was given to Rachael Levine, a long-time community activist and White Center Library Guild member who helped galvanize community involvement in library planning and development. A rock sculpture in her honor is placed near the entrance to the library.

“This is a community that gets things done; volunteerism is huge,” said a surprised and deeply moved Levine. “We want a safe, thriving, healthy place where people can get the help they need to live the fullest lives possible. The White Center Library Guild has led community advocacy for this library, and the best way to support it is to use it. Bring your children!”

Representative Fitzgibbon said that White Center’s goals included a community meeting space located near the town’s commercial core, with good bus access and thoughtful design features, such as an overhang at the entrance to protect against the rain.

“We’ve spent many years waiting for this day,” Fitzgibbon said. “KCLS heard the community loud and clear, and I think we hit the nail on the head with this new library. Everything we wanted has come to fruition.”



Renovated Kingsgate Library Draws an Enthusiastic Crowd



A 10-year-old boy was the first to arrive at the opening celebration on April 30 of the newly remodeled Kingsgate Library and quickly volunteered to help pass out programs.

"I already have books on hold," grinned J. Cunningham, who could hardly wait to enter the building. "I like reading. It's my favorite pastime."

With the smell of fresh landscaping in the air, an eager crowd—estimated at 1,000—mingled under tall trees while enjoying the music of the Kamiakin Middle School Jazz Ensemble. Mothers carried babies on their hips; other youngsters perched on their fathers' shoulders or held a grandparent's hand. Teenagers chatted with friends as a long line of strollers started queuing up at the front door. Local dignitaries made brief remarks and then were joined by a band of excited kids who helped them cut the red ribbon draped across the library doors. The crowd cheered as a steady stream of patrons surged forward to check out their newly renovated library.



"It's so *beautiful!*" "It seems so much bigger!" "It's so *light* in here." "I've never noticed that art before." "It *smells* like a new library!"

"WOW! It's *wonderful!*," said L. Rujoni. "My kids are really excited. They couldn't wait for the new library to open."

I. Nixon, who frequented the Kingsgate Library while raising her five kids, said she was impressed with the remodel. Now a nanny for an 18-month old girl, she continues to visit.

"I really value having a variety of books to read," Nixon said. "There's nothing like holding a book in your hands; it's so much better than a screen, it's just not comparable."

Kingsgate residents have long cherished their library and community members had significant input in the design. While the library's footprint has not changed, the redesigned interior has created the illusion of more space by replacing dark wood, adding skylights, and enlarging windows to bring in more natural light. A lighter, more energy efficient ceiling design also provides a stunning backdrop for one of the library's premier art works: *I Was of Three Minds*, a three-dimensional, mixed media installation of wood and fabric by John Thomas De Nunzio.

Several dignitaries, including Congresswoman Suzan DelBene; King County Council Member Claudia Balducci; and Kirkland Mayor Amy Walen, shared their personal library stories and praised the architects, builders and community who made the renovation possible.

"This is an incredible place and the turnout is indicative of what a library means to the community," Del Bene said. "Libraries are important, not just for books. I've been to libraries throughout King County and have seen people attending tax clinics, immigration and citizenship classes and accessing technology...all of which helps people get engaged with learning."

SUPPORTERS










Library advocates—the enthusiastic individuals who share in KCLS’ mission by contributing their time, energy, creativity and/or financial support—are valuable partners. The KCLS Foundation as well as Friends of the Library, Library Guilds and Library Associations—enable the Library System to provide more innovative programs and services that benefit King County citizens every day, including a myriad of educational, cultural and entertainment events that are tailored for the different communities KCLS serves.



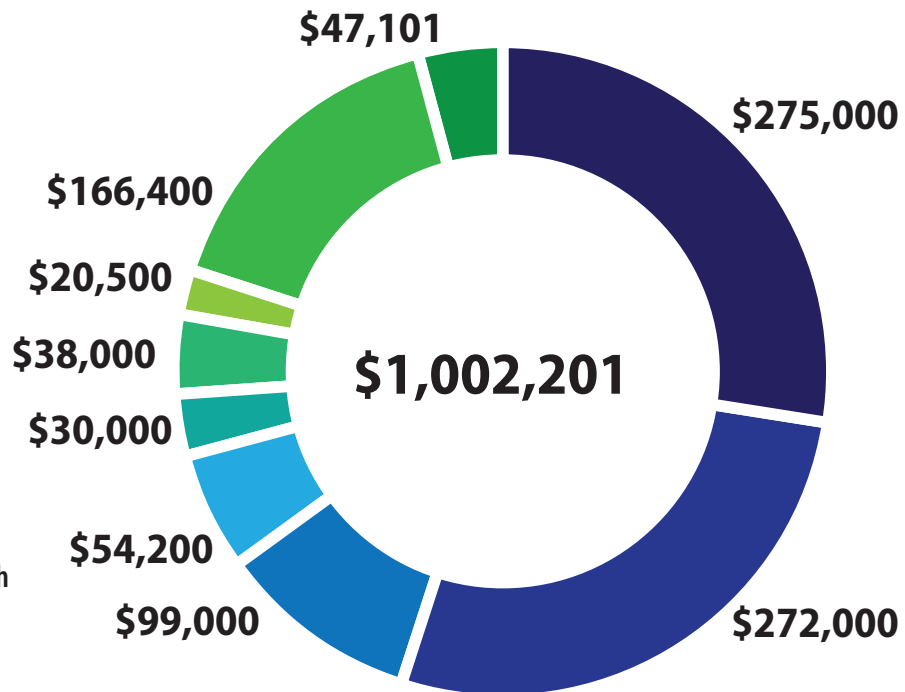
King County Library System Foundation

The **King County Library System Foundation** raised more than \$1 million in 2016—a Foundation record—thanks to the generosity of over 2,000 individuals, foundations and corporations. Major events, including the popular Author Salons and the Annual Literary Lions Gala, engaged community members and raised funds to support programs such as Summer Reading, Wi-Fi Hot Spot Lending, and Literacy for Citizenship. In addition, the Foundation Board of Directors focused its grants on bringing new ideas and experiences to library patrons, such as the Immigrant Stories workshop, which captured narratives from immigrants and refugees who have resettled in King County; and the Art, Tech and Aging Summit that helped older adults gain greater confidence working with smart phones, tablets and other technology.



-  Tukwila & Des Moines Libraries
-  Summer Reading
-  ideaX (STEM Programs)
-  Children & Teens
-  Social Worker
-  Older Adult
-  Diversity
-  Technology Outreach
-  Miscellaneous

KCLS Foundation Program Support



Friends of the Library, Library Guilds and Library Associations

Friends of the Library, Library Guilds and Library Associations—whose members graciously volunteer their time to raise funds for programming and other amenities—provided more than \$308,000 in support to KCLS libraries. In return, KCLS provided its Friends groups with information on sustainable fundraising as well as networking and brainstorming opportunities at a workshop in September. In October, KCLS hosted its annual Friends Day celebration, recognizing the critical role supporters play in keeping libraries vibrant community spaces.

Notable Highlights



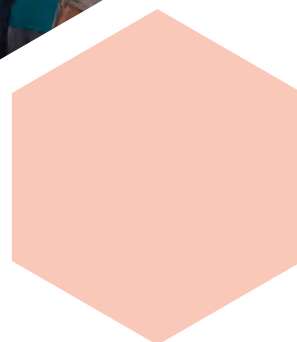
Graceful Elegance, a sculpture by Kentaro Kojima was commissioned and installed by the Newport Way Library Association to honor Jane Kato, longtime association member and former Association president.



Friends of the Mercer Island Library continued its long-standing support of other Friends groups by raising more than \$1,000 to benefit the Friends of the Skyway Library.



Des Moines Library Friends received a \$1,000 volunteer services grant from United Airlines for the creation of a community garden at the Des Moines Library.



KCLS BY THE NUMBERS

In 2016, revenue increased 2.5 percent over the prior year primarily due to growth in housing values and new construction. Prudent financial management held spending to 97 percent of budget and allowed KCLS to maintain a strong financial position while continuing to invest in the services and resources that have the most impact on our communities. KCLS continued to budget expenditures with a long-range financial forecast in mind and an objective to defer the next levy lid lift beyond the original 2018 target date.

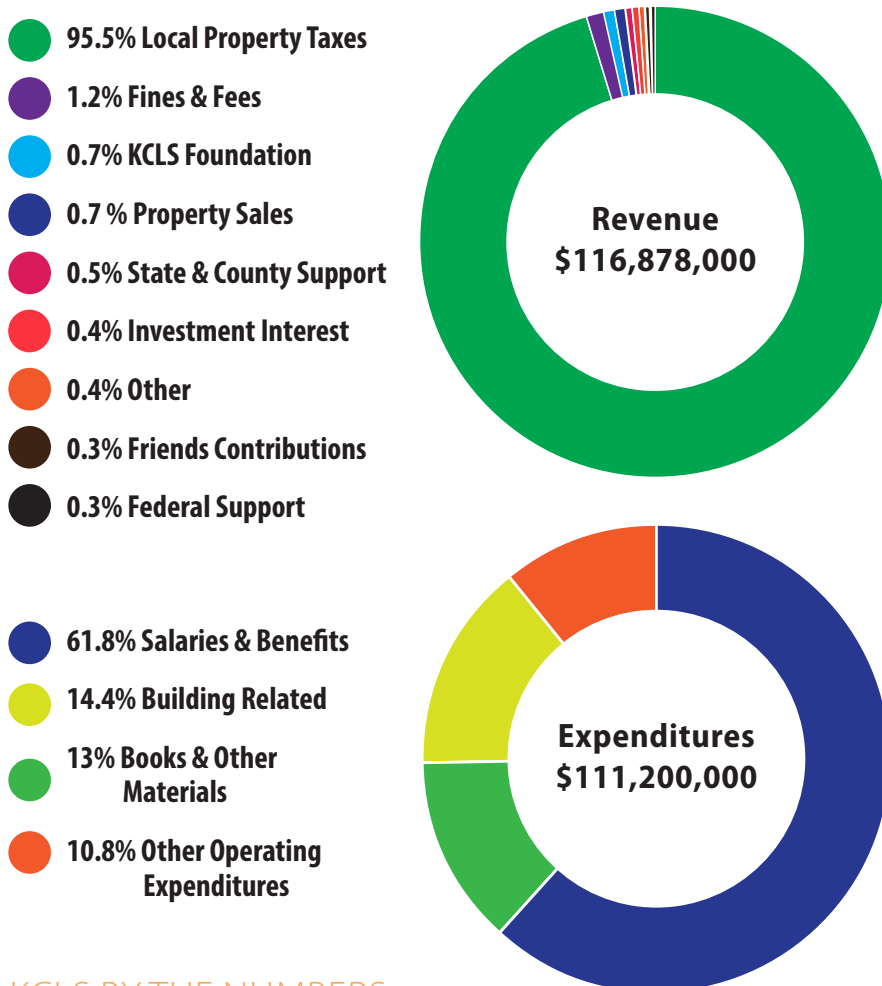
As required by state law, the King County Library System is audited each year by the Washington State Auditor, whose office conducts both an Accountability Audit and a Financial Statements Audit as part of its work to promote accountability, integrity and openness in government.

The Accountability Audit evaluates the Library District’s internal controls to determine if they are adequate to safeguard public funds, and whether they comply with state laws and regulations and KCLS’ own internal policies and procedures.

The Financial Statements Audit uses guidelines established by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) to evaluate whether KCLS’ financial statements are free of material misstatements, and comply with laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements that could have a direct and material effect on the accuracy of KCLS’ financial position.

KCLS has a strong track record of compliance with laws, regulations and accepted procedures as required by the Washington State Auditor, reflecting prudent financial stewardship and governance of public resources.

Unaudited Preliminary 2016 Information



CIRCULATION

LIBRARY	CHECKOUTS
FALL CITY	97,205
ISSAQUAH	655,909
NORTH BEND	211,798
SAMMAMISH	916,232
SNOQUALMIE	171,062
EAST REGION TOTAL	2,052,206
BOULEVARD PARK	66,048
BURIEN	385,677
FOSTER	90,377
GREENBRIDGE	48,578
VALLEY VIEW	84,072
WHITE CENTER	121,161
WEST REGION TOTAL	795,913
FAIRWOOD	581,686
RENTON	261,585
RENTON HIGHLANDS	333,422
SKYWAY	144,633
SOUTHCENTER	94,115
CENTRAL REGION TOTAL	1,404,441
DES MOINES	229,472
KENT	430,626
WOODMONT	178,968
SOUTHCENTRAL REGION TOTAL	839,066
BLACK DIAMOND	79,011
COVINGTON	545,702
ENUMCLAW	173,855
MAPLE VALLEY	381,408
SOUTHEAST REGION TOTAL	1,179,996

LIBRARY	CHECKOUTS
LAKE FOREST PARK	220,043
RICHMOND BEACH	190,853
SHORELINE	759,260
NORTHWEST REGION TOTAL	1,170,156
BOTHELL	1,011,782
KENMORE	303,066
KINGSGATE	305,748
KIRKLAND	700,660
NORTH REGION TOTAL	2,321,256
CARNATION	87,620
DUVALL	186,506
REDMOND	1,266,236
REDMOND RIDGE	89,200
SKYKOMISH	13,207
WOODINVILLE	482,404
NORTHEAST REGION TOTAL	2,125,173
BELLEVUE	1,169,231
CROSSROADS	441,167
LAKE HILLS	336,565
BELLEVUE REGION TOTAL	1,946,963
MERCER ISLAND	346,950
NEWCASTLE	378,030
NEWPORT WAY	515,997
NORTHCENTRAL REGION TOTAL	1,240,977

LIBRARY	CHECKOUTS
FEDERAL WAY	527,706
FEDERAL WAY 320th	235,407
VASHON	276,985
SOUTHWEST REGION TOTAL	1,040,098
ALGONA-PACIFIC	159,405
AUBURN	334,760
MUCKLESHOOT	29,263
SOUTH REGION TOTAL	523,518
ALL LIBRARY REGIONS	16,639,763
MOBILE SERVICES	184,614
YOUTH SERVICE CENTER	24,583
SPECIAL SERVICES	209,197
ASK KCLS	16,466
DOWNLOADS <small>Includes streaming</small>	3,864,023
INTERLIBRARY LOAN	15,428
PROFESSIONAL	37,067
CENTRAL/SPECIAL SERVICES	4,142,181
SYSTEM TOTAL	20,781,944

GOVERNANCE

The King County Library System is governed by the five-member Board of Trustees who are appointed by the King County Executive and approved by the King County Council. Trustees serve as at-large members for no more than two consecutive five-year terms.

2016 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Robert Spitzer, President

Angelica Alvarez

Robin McClelland

Lalita Uppala

Jim Wigfall



AT A GLANCE

TWENTY **SIXTEEN**



49 Libraries

627,727 Square Feet

\$118.4 Million Operating Budget

703,987 Cardholders

10 Million Library Visitors

623,189 Program Attendees

73,373 Served by Mobile Outreach

64 Million Catalog Hits

20 Million Website Hits | kcls.org

4.3 Million Items in the Collection

20.8 Million Items Circulated

3.5 Million Downloads | eBooks | audiobooks | music | video

3 Most Popular Databases | Lynda.com | Bookflix | Consumer Reports