

Oakland Public Library



Annual
Report
2018/2019





COVER PHOTOS AND PHOTO ABOVE: DOUG ZIMMERMAN

COVER PHOTO, 1ST ROW, 2ND PHOTO: TINA AITYAN

Letter

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Oakland,

Following the June 2018 passage of Measure D, Your Library set out to make good on our promise to become more accessible to all Oaklanders.

In April 2019, the Oakland Public Library (OPL) expanded our hours for the first time since 2004, ensuring our 18 locations would be open longer and more often than ever before. Now, all locations offer evening service during the week, 17 of our locations are open six days a week, and our Main Library and 81st Avenue Branch are open all seven days. We want to be sure that Your Library can fit into the busiest of schedules.

We also analyzed different barriers to library access and discovered that overdue fines adversely affected our most under-resourced and vulnerable communities. We found that overdue fines often closed people's library accounts, and even discouraged people from signing up for a library card in the first place. We also discovered that processing overdue fines actually cost *more* than the amount we were collecting.

So, in July 2019, we joined a nationwide movement in eliminating overdue fines for library materials. Since then, we've seen old faces return and signed up hundreds of Oaklanders for their first library card. Now, anyone, at any age, can get their very own library card.

As you'll see in the pages of this 2018-19 annual report, Your Library is so much more than books. You'll read about our role in the City of Oakland's bike plan, our Oakland Mosaic program which highlighted some of our immigrant communities, the Friends of the Oakland Tool Lending Library's Junior Carpenters program, and much, much more.

The expanded hours, elimination of overdue fines, and the thousands of services and programs we offer would not be possible without the support of the Friends of the Oakland Public Library, the Library Advisory Commission, volunteers, OPL staff, and the people of Oakland.

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to an exciting year ahead!



Jamie Turbak
Director of Library Services



100 Years of Service

Two branches celebrate a century.

In the early 1900's, industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie funded more than 1,500 libraries throughout the United States, including four still in use in Oakland: the African American Museum and Library at Oakland (formerly the Charles S. Greene Library), Melrose, Temescal, and Golden Gate. In the fall of 2018, the Golden Gate and Temescal branches hosted community celebrations to mark their 100th year serving each neighborhood.

At Golden Gate, the branch organized a series of events leading up to its centennial celebration. A local historian ran a program to discuss the legacy of the Carnegie libraries and the Golden Gate Branch in particular, and a local neighborhood collection, sponsored by Commons Archive, was unveiled to preserve the stories of the Golden Gate neighborhood. The birthday party featured live music by a local musician and printmaking with Kala Art Institute. An original Black Panther Party (BPP) member, Saturu Ned, discussed BPP programs, and a blessing and honoring of ancestors was performed by an indigenous elder.

The Temescal Branch's all-day party included local children's author Angela Dalton, who presented her latest work to neighborhood kids before an old-fashioned birthday party took over in the afternoon. The volunteers of the Fixit Clinic helped people with their bikes, three local bands performed, and an oral history project launched the second century of service to Temescal.

We're honored to have played a part in preserving our communities for over a century, and we value the community's continued support.



PHOTOS: MITZI WONG-NGUYEN
MIDDLE BOTTOM PHOTO: DOUG ZIMMERMAN

Amplifying Voices

Oakland Youth Poet Laureate program finds its rhythm.

Since its inception in 2012, the Oakland Youth Poet Laureate (OYPL) program has empowered Oakland's youth to develop their own voices and tell their own stories. It's an unprecedented citywide effort to celebrate literacy through poetry and to connect young writers with far-reaching opportunities. In addition to receiving an educational scholarship, the OYPL embarks on a year of appearances as an ambassador for literacy, arts, and youth expression.

Leila Mottley earned the title of 2018 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate. In her work, *Love Poem to Oakland*. Leila offers a look at the changes she sees in her hometown of Oakland. Her perspective clearly resonated with the public at large with a video produced by YR Media, having been viewed over 91,000 times on YouTube and Facebook. She performed at community events, in classrooms, and for Oakland's City Council. She also appeared in a half-hour feature on KQED's Forum during a live recording hosted at the 81st Avenue Branch. Leila is currently enrolled at Smith College and working on her third novel.

In February, Leila and the 2019 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate, Samuel Getachew, emceed a discussion with best-selling author Angie Thomas (author of *The Hate You Give*) and writer, filmmaker, hip-hop artist, and professor MK Asante in front of more than 1,000 spectators at Oakland Technical High School.

At this important event, co-sponsored by the Oakland Unified School District, OPL, the Friends of the Oakland Public Library, and Mrs. Dalloway's Bookstore, Samuel and Leila moderated an inspiring discussion which included the message of fighting for your dreams even if the odds are stacked against you.

Be on the lookout for Samuel at an event near you in 2019-20! Samuel is a three-time Youth Speaks Teen Poetry Slam Champion whose poetry has been featured by NPR, KQED, KTVU, New York Times and the SF Guardian. Applications for the Oakland Youth Poet Laureate Program will be open in January. For more information, visit oaklandlibrary.org/youthpoets.



Leila Mottley, along with other members of the OYPL program, perform at bookstores and community events throughout the Bay Area.

PHOTO: DOUG ZIMMERMAN

Introduction to Science

To tinker is to learn.

We live in a high-tech world. To make tech more accessible to children throughout Oakland, the Oakland Public Library is designing programs to inspire an interest in science, engineering, machining, and digital art.

Thanks to a Friends of the OPL Mini-Grant, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Branch launched a Junior Hackerspace in early 2019. This is a workspace where youth with common interests meet, socialize, collaborate, and learn from one another. The Junior Hackerspace idea was simple: each program included technology, could be done after school in under two hours, and was easy enough for a novice tinkerer to understand and take part.

It's amazing how far a 3D printer, a virtual reality headset, a set of soldering irons, and a dozen 3D pens can go. Junior Hackers decorated bikes with electroluminescent wire, built motorized paper airplane launchers, constructed LED Minecraft-style torch lights, and reassembled old electronics. These projects introduced them to the basic principles of robotics, electrical circuits, and engineering.

Also, thanks to a Friends of the OPL Mini-Grant, the Main Library hosted a series of family Science Technology Engineering Arts and Math (STEAM) activities to encourage healthy relationship-building while cultivating kids' interest in science. For three evenings during Spring and Summer 2019, families created motorized LEGO vehicles, learned how to chemically create slime, and used 3D pens to create art and explore the value of 3D technology.

Following the success with these science-focused programs, OPL made STEAM project kits available for librarians at additional sites to create similar opportunities across Oakland.



OPL inspires Oakland youth in the areas of science and technology through STEAM-based programming.

PHOTOS: DOUG ZIMMERMAN

Junior Carpenters Club

Discovering the joy of do-it-yourself.

Following a successful “Tool Petting Zoo” program, the Eastmont Branch and the Friends of the Oakland Tool Lending Library (FOTLL) teamed up for a series of children’s workshops (but open to all) during the summer of 2019.

The collaboration consisted of four workshops in which participants used basic hand tools to build increasingly complex projects. The workshops used salvaged, recycled, or upcycled materials wherever possible, in addition to tools that are available for free from the Oakland Tool Lending Library. The events were coordinated and organized by FOTLL volunteers.

Following an introduction to the tools and a lesson on basic safety measures, the Junior Carpenters learned how to use dowels, small pieces of wood, and wheels to make a variety of wooden toys, including cars and even an airplane.

During the third session, participants used their increasing skills to create bird houses or bird feeders from pre-cut pieces of salvaged or upcycled wood. More than one Junior Carpenter embellished their birdhouse with features any homeowner would want – a front porch and even a balcony! During the final session, the Junior Carpenters built toolboxes of their own to take home.

The Junior Carpenters Club series exceeded expectations for participation, repeat attendance by individuals and families, volunteer support, increasing skill and attention to safe working practices, and, most importantly, the gratification of participants. With the experience gained and the stock of tools assembled for the workshop series, FOTLL is planning to continue the series at Eastmont and additional OPL locations.



We can do it ourselves!

PHOTOS: FRIENDS OF THE OAKLAND TOOL LENDING LIBRARY

Open Longer, Without the Fines

The Oakland Public Library made two game-changing announcements this year aimed at making the library more accessible.

In April 2019, OPL expanded its hours by a combined 228.5 additional hours per week. Now all locations are open on Mondays and have available evening hours. The Main Library and 81st Avenue Branch are now open seven days a week. 14 branches are open six days per week and until 8 p.m. two nights per week.

Look for additional programming and exciting events utilizing these new hours in 2019-20.

For so long, overdue fines were a burden to our patrons. Many patrons avoided visiting the library altogether, and the fear of fines even prevented some people from signing up for a library card in the first place.

By analyzing the impacts using the zip code framework in the Oakland Equity Indicators report, it became clear that overdue fines disproportionately impacted communities of color, people experiencing housing insecurity, and communities in poverty. Combined with the fact that overdue fines were not an incentive for returning books, and it cost more money in processing than we collected, we did the only logical thing - we made them history!

Your Library is now more accessible than ever!

No more overdue fines
on library materials!

We're open more oft



en and longer than ever.



PHOTO: DOUG ZIMMERMAN

Oakland Mosaic

Highlighting the experiences and talents of Oakland's immigrants.

We are a town of over 100 languages; a town where 1-in-4 were born outside of the United States. We want our Library to reflect our diverse population: not only to showcase what we can do, but also to provide a platform for sharing our stories with each other.

Thanks to a grant from California Humanities, a non-profit partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities, OPL staff put together an innovative program to celebrate Oakland's diverse communities. This program series, Oakland Mosaic, highlighted the talents and experiences of Oakland's immigrant population. After research and community assessment, the program developed around three groups: the Mam of Guatemala, Koreans, and Afghans.

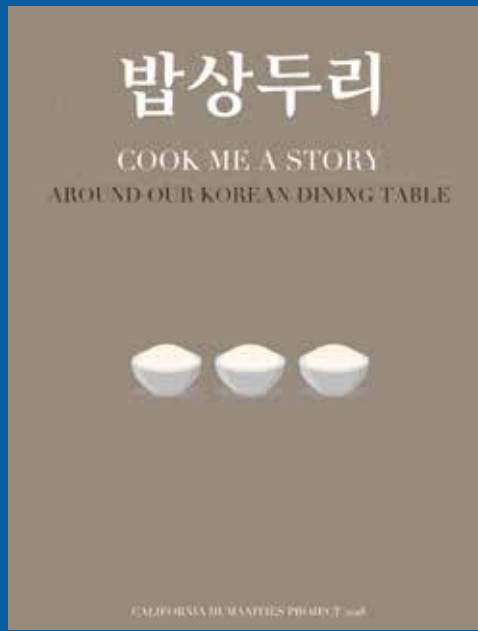
More than 250 people came to the César E. Chávez Branch for the Mam Cultural Festival to learn about Oakland's indigenous Mam (Mayan) community that have settled in the East Bay. Attendees enjoyed live music played on the marimba, learned basic phrases in the Mam language, and devoured chuchitos with corn and beans. Library aide Henry Sales, who helped to organize the event, was proud to showcase his culture to the wider Oakland community, saying: "We're not extinct, like many people believe the Mayans are. We are part of this century, this country, and this world."

At the Asian Branch, staff member Yoonjae Jeon brought Korean-language story times and a back-to-school lunch-making program to a local community center. Parents shared their appreciation for the Korean-based story time, which inspired a community cookbook. Patrons submitted recipes along with personal stories that were compiled into a bilingual, illustrated cookbook. The cookbook not only includes traditional dishes, but also conveys ideas of homesickness and putting down roots in a new community.

The third Oakland Mosaic program featured Afghanistan's first rock band, Kabul Dreams, at the Golden Gate Branch. Now based in Oakland, the rockers performed a set and shared stories of being refugees dispersed around Central Asia before finding community in the sparse Kabul music scene. Following the program, patrons noted that "freedom of expression is vital to a healthy society," and "immigrants make our country great" – indicating the thought-provoking nature of personal storytelling.*

Oakland Mosaic succeeded in affirming a core belief about Oaklanders: we're naturally curious about our neighbors and the world, and we will work to build bridges and understand one another.

**Quotes taken from community feedback forms collected after the program.*



PHOTOS BY KABUL DREAMS (TOP RIGHT), KHAI PHAM (BOTTOM)

Kids' Summer Reading

Books + prizes + activities = one very fun summer!

The Kids' Summer Reading program encourages children ages 0-12 to read at least 20 days over an 8-week period each summer. Every child who meets this goal gets to choose a beautiful new book for their home library and becomes eligible for extra prizes awarded via raffle. Additional incentives, including a free set of Oakland A's tickets and other coupons from local institutions, make this a popular program with kids and families.

OPL's Summer Reading program not only encourages children to keep reading while school is out, it also offers free workshops and events on a drop-in basis. These high-quality activities keep children engaged and prepare them to return to the classroom in August. For many families, the library provides social and intellectual engagement that children would otherwise miss when school is out of session.

Sadly, nutrition is another need that goes unmet for many Oakland children over the summer school break. Thanks to a long-standing partnership with the City of Oakland's Department of Human Services, OPL served free meals and snacks to youth at seven locations in 2019. In just under two months, volunteers and staff served an estimated 6,000 lunches. The library is grateful to have free lunches to offer hungry kids, and for the volunteer help that makes this program possible.

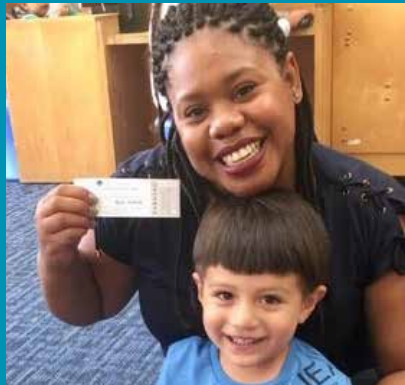
In an effort to make sure our families Explore, Connect, and Grow together, OPL and Children's Fairyland partnered on a limited-edition library card designed by local artist Michael Wertz. Holders of the special OPL Children's Fairyland library card were offered free admission for a day to the storybook theme park – an Oakland treasure since 1950. Many families visited this charming park near Lake Merritt for the first time, thanks to this promotion!

To close out the fun summer, library staff and patrons gathered at the Oakland Museum of California gardens for a full day of celebration: games, storytimes, craft activities, face-painting, music, and more.

In all, OPL hosted 374 free events for children at locations throughout Oakland, engaging more than 10,000 of Oakland's youth, and concluding well above our target number of program finishers.

Said one patron: "We loved all the incredible children's activities every day of the week. Simply amazing."

Kids' Summer Reading would not be possible without the generous support of our major sponsors: the Bernard Osher Foundation, Fentons Creamery, Friends of the Oakland Public Library, the Hellman Foundation, the Kenneth Rainin Foundation, Oakland Athletics, and the William G. Gilmore Foundation.



PHOTOS: DOUG ZIMMERMAN

Let's Bike Oakland

Providing hubs of bike culture.

In an effort to make Oakland a bicycle-friendly city where bikes provide affordable, safe, and healthy mobility for all Oaklanders, the Oakland Public Library will play a key role in moving forward the Oakland Department of Transportation's (OakDOT) *Let's Bike Oakland* plan.

OPL's 18 locations have been hubs of bike culture for many years. We often host community rides, discussions, and repair clinics, and we bring our services outside our walls with the Bike Library (check out @OPLBikeLibrary on twitter.) In addition, the popular Scraper Bike Team is headquartered out of "The Shed" at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Branch.

We know that transportation is a barrier for people of all ages who want to not only use OPL's services and programs, but also to get to and from school, work, and more. As a part of the *Let's Bike Oakland* plan, OPL will provide concrete locations for the following services, free of charge:

- Fix-it and hydration stations
- Bike tools
- Bike books and DVDs

As OPL Associate Director Nina Lindsay put it at the summer press conference announcing the partnership: "We look forward to continuing our work with OakDOT, the Scraper Bike Team, and additional community partners to make it easier and safer to bike in Oakland."



Learning how to bike safely helps our community thrive.

PHOTO: DOUG ZIMMERMAN

2018-2019 Financial Stats*

Expenditures by Fund Source

General Purpose Fund:	\$12,430,345
Measure Q:	\$13,279,101
Measure D:	\$8,474,360
Local/State/Federal Grants:	\$186,444
Trust Fund & others:	\$143,488
Total:	\$34,513,738

Expenditures by Category

Personnel:	\$23,880,623
Operations & Maintenance:	\$8,526,643
Books & Other Materials:	\$2,106,472
Total:	\$34,513,738

City/County Population Estimates with Annual Percent Change*

Total Population

City	1/1/2018	1/1/2019	% Change
Oakland	428,827	432,897	0.95%
Emeryville	11,994	12,104	0.92%
Piedmont	11,318	11,238	-0.72%

Total OPL Service Area	454,157	458,258	
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*Numbers subject to audit by Oakland City Auditor.

\$75.32

is the average cost
per person based on service
area population of 458,258
(Oakland, Emeryville, and Piedmont)

*California Department of Finance
Demographic Research Unit

2018-2019 Supporters

The Oakland Public Library is pleased to acknowledge the following private and government institutions that provided financial support for specific library programs. We are also deeply grateful to the hundreds of individual donors who support the library through the Friends of the Oakland Public Library and Branch Friends groups.

Alameda County Transportation
Commission/Lifeline
Transportation Program

Herman Auerbach Memorial Fund
Trust II*

BART/Lifeline Transportation
Program

California Humanities

California Library Literacy Services
(California State Library)

Fentons Creamery*

First 5 Alameda County*

Friends of the Oakland Public Library
William G. Gilmore Foundation*

Hanyu (Executive Management
Director & Chairman Ki-
Heung Park)*

Hellman Foundation*

Lincoln*

Matson Foundation

The New York Foundation for the
Arts, Inc.

Oakland Athletics

The Bernard Osher Foundation*

Pacific Library Partnership

Philanthropic Ventures Foundation

Kenneth Rainin Foundation*

Southern California Library
Cooperative

Sunlight Giving*

Porter E. & Helenmae Thompson
Foundation

*Provided support through
the Friends of the Oakland Public Library





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BOTTOM PHOTOS: DOUG ZIMMERMAN

2018-2019

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2018-2019

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BOTTOM PHOTO: OPL STAFF



Your Library



www.oaklandlibrary.org



@oaklibrary

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