

University City Public Library

6701 Delmar Blvd.

University City, MO 63130

Strategic Plan

2017-2020



Our Mission Statement

Since the establishment by Benjamin Franklin of the first lending library in colonial Philadelphia, public libraries have been at the heart of the cultural life of American communities. As quiet, sheltering spaces dedicated to enriching the present and the future with the legacies of our literary and learned past, they have helped to educate individual citizens and to shape our collective national memory. They have, as well, brought the wider world to patrons in all corners of these United States. As that world seems to grow both wider and closer than ever before, changing at a vertiginous rate, many of our citizens will continue to turn to enlightened public libraries for a vision of learning, literacy, and communication.

The University City Public Library is dedicated to examining and defining that vision for a notably diverse community whose citizens span a wide range of economic, educational and ethnic backgrounds. This very diversity requires the library to play several roles. While maintaining its historic ties to print culture, it must also, within its means, incorporate innovations in the rapidly evolving field of electronic communication. Its collections in several media are selected and administered by a regularly evaluated professional staff that is encouraged to keep abreast of new developments in library science and information technology. In addition to its responsibility for maintenance and improvement of the library's physical plant, the staff and the director seek to create an environment that will attract patrons of all ages and from all neighborhoods of our city.

Balancing its obvious appeal to the educationally and technologically privileged with the more inclusive task of offering educational opportunities to the entire populace of University City, the library intends to serve citizens across the entire spectrum of interests and abilities. It must not, even unwittingly, promote a division between those who know and those who do not. Similarly, it will identify the needs and concerns both of its regular patrons and of those who do not regularly enjoy its services.

Besides serving individual patrons, the library also continues to be a focal point for community activities related to or enriched by its resources. In its location at the west end of the University City Loop, the library is a central part of this active culture center.

The library respects and celebrates the many cultural, religious, and ethnic threads in the urban tapestry of University City, a municipality widely known for its enthusiastic support of education, self-improvement, and community service. We, the trustees and staff of this institution, affirm this proud tradition and seek to perpetuate it into the coming century.

Community Committee Members and Focus Group Members

R. A. Adegboye
 Ann Aurbach
 Ellen Bern
 Mary Costantin
 Maria DeShields
 Kathleen Gallagher
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Library Board of Trustees

Edmund Acosta	Library Board President
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Joan Greco-Cohen	Library Board Treasurer
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Deborah Arbogast	Library Board Member
Luise Hoffman	Library Board Member
LaTrice Johnson	Library Board Member
Joy Lieberman	Library Board Member
Rubina McCadney	Library Board Member

Special thanks to

Susan Glassman, who served on the Community Committee and the Library Board (2007-2013), and was instrumental in beginning the planning process.

Service Response #1: Create Young Readers

Goal: Children from birth to school age, parents, caregivers, and service providers who work with young children will find materials, programs, and services designed to enhance early literacy skills and ensure that young readers will enter school ready to read, write, and listen.

Objectives:

- The number of preschool children age birth to 5 years in the community who have a My First Library Card will increase by 10% each year.
 - Action: Increase marketing of My First Library Card at story times, summer reading programs, and other Library events.
 - Action: Promote My First Library Card at school and community events.
 - Action: Work with area businesses to have My First Library Card information available throughout University City.
- Through surveying patrons, we will calculate the number of parents of preschoolers who find materials, and services to enhance early literacy skills in their child. This number will increase each year.
 - Action: Provide books-to-go kits, each with a collection of thematically related materials covering early literacy skills and activities.
 - Action: Provide computer technology with appropriate programs for preschool-age children.
 - Action: Provide access to ebooks for preschool children through Tumblebooks, Overdrive, and Hoopla for Kids.
 - Action: Incorporate a read-to-me component in our children's summer reading program to include children ages birth to 3 years.
 - Action: Increase our early literacy technology by adding preloaded early literacy tablets to our collection for both checkout and in-house use.
- Increase attendance at our regularly scheduled story time programs divided by age of intended audience, and include interactive components such as singing, music, rhyme, puppets, play, and crafts.
 - Action: Present outreach story time programs off-site at local area daycares and preschools.
 - Action: Incorporate a read-to-me component in our children's summer reading program to include children ages birth to 3 years.

Service Response #2: Be an Informed Citizen

Goal: Residents will have the information they need to support and promote democracy; fulfill their civic responsibilities at the local, state, and national levels; and fully participate in community decision-making.

Objectives:

- Community members will look first to UCPL for information that helps them fulfill their role as citizens.

- Action: Clarify library policy to streamline process of arranging presentations by candidates, officeholders, and partisan groups.
- Action: Improve labeling of paper information materials from government entities, and improve staff training so that all staff can direct patrons to these resources.
- Action: Initiate service to fully process voter registrations at the Library.
- Action: Establish regular voter registration drives via League of Women voters or AARP; these should be ‘library-sponsored’ events heavily publicized.
 - In non-election years, library will hold a minimum of two drives; a minimum of four drives will be held in election years.
- Action: Create an area on UCPL’s webpage to serve as a pointer to events calendars of government organizations in the area

Service Response #3: Celebrate Diversity

Goal: Provide programs and services that expose patrons to the diverse cultures within University City, as well as the broader world.

Objectives:

- The library will be a resource for patrons to learn about diverse cultures.
 - Action: Feature diverse artists throughout the year in THE GALLERY, and hold at least 10 shows per year.
 - Action: Create book giveaway programs that provide books that promote diversity.
- The Library will plan 12 programs a year with a cultural component.
 - Action: Plan and host programs, including performances and classes, which promote the appreciation of the diverse heritages in our community and beyond.
- The Library will expand services and materials for non-English speakers in the community.
 - Action: Work with the school district to promote ongoing ESL classes and services.
 - Action: Work with the school district to plan and host events appealing to the ESL community.
 - Action: Offer materials in languages spoken in our community, including Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Bosnian, and other languages as requested.

Service Response #4: Connect to the Online World

Goal: Patrons in the library will have access to the Internet and technology services through library resources.

Objective:

- The Library will expand Internet access by removing barriers and making access available to all patrons during library hours.
 - Action: Provide Internet access via wired public computers for all patrons 72 hours a week.
 - Action: Provide Internet access via wireless using BOYD or loanable library devices.
 - Action: Implement wireless printing.

- Action: Evaluate usage and recommend bandwidth increases as needed to provide access for desired online activities.
- Action: Update public computers every 4 years by refreshing hardware regularly and maintaining availability to relevant software.
- Action: Develop e-resources access cards.

Service Response #5: Make Informed Decisions

Goal: Teens and adults will have access to resources that will help them make better informed life decisions

Objectives:

- The number of participants in library-sponsored or library-hosted informational programs will increase by 5% each year.
 - Action: Increase marketing of informational programs through displays, shelf talkers, and other in-library signage.
 - Action: Reach out to community partners to increase off-premise marketing opportunities.
- Within one year, more than 50% of adult survey respondents will say that the library's health and financial collections and resources adequately meet their needs.
 - Action: Evaluate health and financial collections from patron point of view through surveys and anecdotal evidence.
 - Action: Provide and promote web links to authoritative health and financial information websites from UCPL website.
- Within one year, 50% of teens and their parents will be better prepared for post-high school financial decisions as a result of library programs, based on survey responses and anecdotal evidence.
 - Action: Host Thinking Money exhibit in May/June 2017.
 - Action: In conjunction with Thinking Money exhibit, host FAFSA/paying for college program for teens and parents.
- Within one year, circulation of financial-related materials will increase by 3%.
 - Action: Feature financial materials in conjunction with Thinking Money exhibit.
 - Action: Promote Thinking Money exhibit and financial materials during AARP tax prep events.

Service Response #6: Satisfy Curiosity

Goal: Adult and senior residents will have access to information to meet their need to explore topics of personal interest and to facilitate lifelong learning.

Objective:

- Within one year, the Library will provide at least six opportunities for seniors to explore their creativity.
 - Action: Work with University City's senior services coordinator and senior advocacy agencies to provide programs for seniors at the Library. Suggested connections and programs include:
 - SeniorsCountSTL
 - Alzheimers Association presentations on memory loss and dementia

- Programs on legal and financial matters for seniors
 - Creative programs, such as iPhone photography tips for seniors
 - Programs on smartphone basics, Instagram, Twitter, and other social media
- Action: Connect with area agencies on aging to promote pre-existing visual and performing arts classes aimed at seniors through brochures on the Creative, Health, and Informed Aging kiosk.
- Action: Market Library services to residential facilities in University City.
- Action: Reach out to churches, synagogues and mosques in the area to inform them of programs and services available at the Library.
- Action: Present programs to the Chamber of Commerce, AARP, HPES, and other local organizations concerning Library programs and services.

Goal: Teens and children will have access to resources which fulfill their need to investigate topics of personal interest.

Objective:

- The Library will increase the circulation of children's and young adult non-fiction by 3%.
 - Action: Work with schools in University City to provide area children and young adults with relevant materials.
 - Action: Market Library services and programs to schools in University City.

Service Response #7: Know Your Community: Community Resources and Services

Goal: Patrons will find current information about local resources in the library building and via the webpage.

Objective:

- Provide a connection between Library patrons and community organizations.
 - Action: Review existing policy for bulletin boards and handouts to ensure that access is maximized and that all staff understand policy.
 - Action: Re-engage with local organizations that offer volunteer opportunities to build a collection of materials to which patrons interested in volunteer work can be referred.
 - Action: Conduct a service fair to help raise awareness of volunteer opportunities in the community, with the assistance of the Chamber of Commerce and the University City senior services coordinator.
 - Action: Continue to explore the online catalog's Community Record feature as a tool for providing patron's access to community information. Add a minimum of three community records per month.

Goal: Patrons will find and share information about our community's past and present.

Objective:

- Create an audiovisual archive of community stories that will be accessible to patrons both online and at the Library.
 - Action: Continue to build an audio archive of community-based stories modeled on the StoryCorps project. The archive will be accessible through online streaming, as well as physical CDs that can be checked out.
 - Action: Make the One Button Studio and Library video cameras available for recording local stories. Stories can be added to the Library archive, which will be made accessible through online streaming video.

Service Response #8: Learn to Read and Write: Adult, Teen, and Family Literacy

Goal: The library will provide an effective materials collection to serve teens and adults with emerging literacy. The collection will be shelved in a physical space appropriate for their needs.

Objectives:

- Increase circulation of world languages collection by 10%.
 - Action: Improve lighting for the world languages collection.
 - Action: Interfile literacy and tutoring collection to reduce duplication and provide better opportunities for display.
- Renew partnership with University City School District's Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) office to benefit teen and young adult emerging readers.
 - Action: Provide early childhood materials from the youth services department to be distributed to students registering for HiSet and ESL classes with AEL.
 - Action: Explore AEL's future needs for meeting/classrooms.
 - Action: Ensure that all AEL students are aware of literacy and world languages collection through outreach and marketing.
- The Library will effectively refer families and teens to literacy resources in the wider community.
 - Action: Train adult and youth services staff to respond to queries regarding tutoring services.
 - Action: Create links and/or webpage on Library website to direct patrons to resources for improving literacy outside the library, such as AEL and other free or low-cost tutoring options.
- Increase access of teens and young adults to reading materials in all forms, going beyond the checkout-and-return service model.
 - Action: Capture targeted demographic via outreach into the broader community.
 - Action: Promote literacy and love for learning by providing reading materials for non-library users.
 - Action: Provide UCPL patrons, via book donations, an opportunity to partner with on-going community outreach effort.
 - Action: Brand UCPL as innovative and creative in its approach to enhancing family literacy.

- Action: Work with local schools to insure that all students have access to Library materials through e-resources access cards.
- Action: Place UCPL-sponsored little library stations, stocked with community-donated materials, at strategic locations by creating partnerships with local businesses, such as laundromats, grocery stores, and community centers.
 - Identify five organizations to serve as initial outlets.
 - Begin project at one location; track progress and evaluate.
 - Measure number of books in and out as evidence of service; track personnel hours spent.
 - Make modifications as needed and move forward with four additional outlets.

Note: Unlike the Free Little Library concept, all books will be made free to users of UCPL's external libraries instead of a book exchange.

Service Response #9: Stimulate Imagination

Goal: Adults will find materials and resources to enhance their leisure time activities and encourage their intellectual pursuits and imagination.

Objectives:

- Within one year, more than 50% of adult survey respondents will say that they were able to access leisure materials in a timely manner.
 - Action: Implement Hot Titles/DVDs displays.
 - Action: Increase marketing of Overdrive and Hoopla.
- Within one year, more than 50% of adult survey respondents will say they experienced a new culture or perspective through library materials or resources.
 - Action: Cross-promote library collections in displays.
 - Action: Select diverse titles for book discussions.
- Within one year, usage of e-materials will increase by 5%.
 - Action: Increase marketing of e-materials.
 - Action: Offer staff training on Overdrive and Hoopla.
 - Action: Create video tutorials for online resources and post on website.
- Within one year, the number of participants in library-sponsored book discussions, both online and at the library, will increase by 10%.
 - Action: Start online book group.
 - Action: Re-evaluate current book groups in comparison to circulation trends.
 - Action: Look into hosting book groups at locations outside of library.
- Within one year, offer 4 programs that focus on creative filmmaking for adults.
 - Action: Offer series of programs potentially centered on the 48-hour Film Festival and Cinema St. Louis. Suggested classes include a Lynda.com class, a screenplay writing workshop, and how-to program on technical elements of shooting a film, culminating a screening of films created by participants in the programs.

Goal: Children and teenagers will find materials and resources to enhance their leisure time activities and encourage their intellectual pursuits and imagination.

Objectives:

- Within one year, participation in teen-focused creative programs will increase by 5%.
 - Action: Increase outreach to teens online and through community partnerships.
- Within one year, youth usage of library technology makerspace will increase by 10%.
 - Action: Offer additional classes and tutorials on tech gear.
- Within one year, more than 50% of teens, and parents of younger children, surveyed will say that they were able to access leisure materials in a timely manner.
 - Action: Expedite purchasing of new and high-demand titles.

Service Response #10: Visit a Comfortable Place

Goal: Residents will view the Library as a safe and welcoming place to meet and interact with others, or to sit quietly and read.

Objectives:

- Patron use of our meeting rooms will increase by 5% in the coming year.
 - Action: Upgrade Meeting Rooms 1 and 2 to include computer connections to a viewing screen.
 - Action: Upgrade the Dorothy Ulrici Auditorium with new screen and a new projector.
- Patron satisfaction with building appearance and cleanliness will increase as shown in user surveys.
 - Action: Formalize cleaning schedule for the building as a whole, with building staff and senior staff aware of status of cleaning schedule.
- Patron satisfaction with our catalog, website and virtual space will increase, as shown in user surveys.
 - Action: Effectively market databases such as Lynda.com to increase overall use by our patrons.
 - Action: Provide links on Library website to Library Board and administration information.
 - Action: Update Library policies online.