

October 2021 Report from the Executive Director

ADMINISTRATION

By David Slivken

Below are updates on two initiatives the library district has prioritized for 2021—Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and our Staff Culture Initiative.

Customer EDI Survey

On Monday, November 1, the library’s Customer EDI Survey went live online (via Survey Monkey). This survey will be available through November 21. There is a dedicated PAC in each library for customers to take the digital survey onsite. Signage is also helping direct customers to the station and explain more about the survey.

Feedback is essential to our understanding of the library’s strengths and challenges around equity, diversity, and inclusion, particularly as it pertains to our community’s experience with our buildings, collections, programs, and services.

Key information:

- The customer survey is part of our ongoing EDI initiative. It was developed by our EDI consultant, Think Again with input from Executive Leadership Team.
- The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete depending upon how detailed individuals want to get with their answers.
- The survey is anonymous and confidential – the consultants will report back trends and data to library leadership.
- (Optional) Survey takers can enter their name into a drawing to win gift cards to local businesses! Their name is not attached to survey info – the library will not see their answers.
- (Optional) Survey takers can choose to have Think Again follow up with them for more specific conversations.

We are working with Think Again to get a Spanish-translation of the survey. More info TBA.

Staff Culture Initiative-Conducted by Denison Consulting

A strong culture is the common denominator among successful organizations. The key to a successful organization is to have a culture based on a strongly held and widely shared set of beliefs and values that are supported by strategy and structure. Our culture sets the context for everything we do! We all have a role to play in transforming our culture and creating the type of workplace we can be proud of and want to share with others.

In 2019 and 2020, library staff participated in staff culture surveys around 4 key drivers of high performance and satisfaction: mission, adaptability, involvement, and consistency. These are based on the Denison Model of Organizational Culture.

MISSION: Direction, purpose, and blueprint *Do we know where we are going?*

ADAPTABILITY: Patterns, trends, and market. *Are we listening and responding to the community and marketplace?*

INVOLVEMENT: Commitment, ownership, and responsibility. *Are our people aligned and engaged?*

CONSISTENCY: Systems, structures, and processes. *Do we have the values, systems, and processes in place to create leverage?*

The results of these surveys highlighted areas of strength and growth and also areas for improvement. Based on staff feedback in these surveys, library leadership will focus on two areas that can make the most impact in creating a positive and strong culture.

CULTURE TRANSFORMATION: Identify the areas of cultural strength and weakness that are impacting staff satisfaction and engagement. *What are we doing well as an organization? What can we improve upon or let go in order to create a positive culture?*

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: Assess and coach library leadership to inspire and build a strong culture. *Is leadership living and communicating the library's values? Is it clear how the library values define the organization and determine how its run?*

Progress Updates:

CULTURE TRANSFORMATION ACTIVITIES

Dec. 16, 2020 - library leadership team (LLT) reviewed survey results and yearly comparisons

Jan. 27, 2021 - survey results shared with staff at virtual meeting

Mar. 3, 2021 - LLT work session with Denison to review data and highlight areas where deeper analysis is needed. This work informed the staff focus groups design.

Mar. 8, 2021 - Hired a programming and events coordinator, Angela K., is support cooperation, collaboration and coordination across the organization related to programming.

Apr. 7, 2021 - LLT work session with Denison. Work focused on identifying parts of our culture that we should preserve and strengthen, invent and perfect, unlearn and leave behind, and rethink and try again.

Apr. 29, 2021 - Hired the EDI consultant group Think Again Training & Consulting to assist our efforts around equity, diversity, and inclusion.

May 12, 2021 - LLT work session with Denison. Work focused on creating "problem statements" along with actions to be taken, identifying obstacles to success of action, listing stakeholders and roles, and determining how success will be measured. This work informed the content of the staff focus groups as key stakeholders in this process.

May 26, 2021 - Supervisors participated in focus group discussions with Denison around staff culture and moving forward with this initiative.

Jul.13-16, 2021 - staff focus groups scheduled with Denison to further explore the key areas for improvement and gain more clarity about their views. Very few staff members participated.

Jul. 28, 2021 - LLT reset on the staff focus groups. Will work to re-schedule and provide better communication and clarity about why the focus groups are important to this process.

September 2021 - Staff focus groups were scheduled with Denison to further explore the key areas for improvement and gain more clarity about their views.

NEXT: Denison to review staff focus group feedback

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

April 7, 2021 - LLT work session with Denison

July 28, 2021 - LLT preparation for their individual assessments. Leadership Development 360 measures a leader's performance on a set of 12 leadership behaviors linked to high-performing business cultures.

The District will use the assessment to help LLT individually: Identify specific areas of individual strength and weakness, and establish an action plan for leadership development

- Understand group-level leadership strengths and weaknesses
- Learn how specific skills and practices impact their leadership performance
- Develop leadership skills necessary to adapt to a changing environment
- Understand their role in creating a high-performance culture

October 18 - 29, 2021 - LLT members participated in 360-degree assessments by select staff members. A part of the Denison process is focused on individual development, and another element is the leadership team development. In order to accomplish both, we need to understand perceptions about leadership at the individual level and team level.

COMMUNICATIONS

By Katie Auman

In October, the Communications Department was busy with event planning and promotion for the Fort Collins Book Fest along with continued work on Día de Muertos community events and supporting activities for the Executive Director search.

2021 Fort Collins Book Fest: Up, Up, & Out

Another Fort Collins Book Fest has come and gone, and with the same level of success as pre-pandemic festivals. What made this year's event so exciting was a new vision for the festival, created and led by Meg Schiel and an amazing team of organizers, that expanded the scope of the types of authors and presenters who participated, reached new audiences, and continued to highlight the value of the library in the community.

A large scale community event like this is not possible without the hard work of many individuals including Meg Schiel (artist lead and event coordinator), Audrey Glasebrook (talent coordinator), Angela Kettle, Ludy Rueda, Laura Carter (design lead), Amy Holzworth, Jenny Thurman, Annie Crumpton, Molly Thompson (FRCC liaison), Courtney Hensel, Peggy Lyle (event consultant), Revati Kilparti (Old Firehouse Books), the team at Wolverine Farm, the team at The Lincoln Center, and so many others including volunteers, emcees, and moderators.

Just a few of the many highlights:

- A truly hybrid event with sessions in-person and livestreamed simultaneously from the Lincoln Center
- New focus on kids, families, and teens with authors like Julie Rowan-Zoch, Juleah del Rosario, Laura Resau, and 123 Andrés
- Additions of popular genres like romance, horror, mystery, and more
- Bilingual sessions planned and presented with help from Community Outreach
- Continued focus on the local literary community with local authors reading and leading workshops
- New partnerships with CSU Center for Community Literacy and SpeakOut!, Colorado State University Libraries, and Fort Collins Reads
- Amazing in-library sessions planned by children's and teen services librarians
- Top quality technical production by VIA Company, RockFan, and theNABETv.com created a highly-professional production and experience for online viewers
- Continued funding support from local businesses and organizations, the Library's Friends and Trust groups, and many grantors

If you missed any session from the Book Fest, you can watch recordings of most of them on the library's YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/PoudreLibraries>.

October Highlights:

- Second direct mail piece from the “Next Chapter” campaign dropped this month. It was mailed to approximately 7,700 library cardholders who are considered “occasional” or recently “inactive” users and who do not have an email address in their account.



- Supported communications and logistics for the Executive Director search including media outreach, email marketing, social media, website, dedicated blog page, and internal communication.



- Earned media coverage in October included:
 - “CSU Libraries-sponsored Fort Collins Book Fest to combine in-person and virtual events” – *SOURCE*, October 6, 2021, <https://source.colostate.edu/fort-collins-book-fest-2021/>
 - “Recommended: Big Pumpkins and Cool Books” – *North Forty News*, October 9, 2021, <https://northfortynews.com/category/art-lifestyle/recommended-big-pumpkins-and-cool-books/>
 - “Literary and Historical Fiction, Survival Tales and More at Fort Collins Book Fest” – *North Forty News*, October 19, 2021, <https://northfortynews.com/category/art-lifestyle/literary-and-historical-fiction-survival-tales-and-more-at-fort-collins-book-fest/>
 - “Ten Things to Do for Free in Denver This Week” – *Westword*, October 19, 2021, <https://www.westword.com/arts/denver-things-to-do-free-week-october-18-12585042>
 - “Loveland library director finalist for Poudre River job” – *Reporter Herald*, October 20, 2021, <https://www.reporterherald.com/2021/10/20/loveland-library-director-a-finalist-for-poudre-river-job/>
 - “Fort Collins Book Fest Author Highlight” – *The Silver Lining Magazine*

Ongoing Activities:

- Building a library programming plan, including staff input, best practices, evaluation options, etc.
- Assisting Community Outreach with planning the 2021 Día de Muertos community celebration happening throughout October and culminating in a public event on November 6 at the Gardens on Spring Creek. Visit www.NoCoDiaDeMuertos.org for news and updates.
- Continuing efforts related to social media, email communications, newsletters, video development and other key activities to keep the community updated on Library services and news.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH SERVICES

By Ken Draves

Community Outreach Librarian (Children and Teens)-- Ludy Rueda's report.

Regular Programs:

- Noches en Familia (Family Nights), a program where culture, traditions, and community is celebrated through children's stories, music, puppets, crafts, and traditional games.
- Phone-A-Story in Spanish and French
- Storytimes and crafts at:
 - Stove Prairie Elementary
 - Livermore Elementary
 - Irish Elementary
 - Harris Bilingual Elementary
 - North Aztlan Center
 - Boys and Girls Club of Larimer County
- Teen Council Meeting

Special events:

- Rafael López community mural and IMAGINANTES program 10-years anniversary
- 123 Andrés concert. This was the first family friendly event during Book Fest
- Celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month with virtual presentation of author and illustrator Rafael Lopez at Linton and Harris Elementary schools.



Day of the Dead programs:

- Art exhibition at Old Town Library featuring students from Harris, Shepardson and Boltz schools. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWL04S-RD74>
- Mini Chefs virtual cooking workshop for kids during a school out day in partnership with Slow Food Denver.
- Intergenerational Virtual makeup workshop
- Special Day of the Dead storytimes at different PSD elementary schools
- Family friendly Virtual baking workshop (pan de muerto)
- Virtual presentation on Day of the Day in Guatemala followed by a workshop for kids
- Virtual presentation about La Catrina's symbolism in the past and the present from a feminist and decolonial perspective by CSU professor Dr. María Inés Canto Carrillo
- Crafted a Nicho altar that represents the library at Gardens in Spring Creek



Harris Elementary Student learning about Day of the Dead through art.



Nicho altar at Gardens in Spring Creek

Monthly Report – Africa Garcia (October 2021)

Programs & Events:

- Imaginantes Mural Celebration 10/1
- Digital Inclusion Open House 10/2
- Mexican Cartonería Workshop 10/5, 10/12, 10/19
- Literacy Workshop for PSD Parents & Library Resources 10/6
- PSD Computer Classes 10/7, 10/14, 10/28
- Book Club for Mortals 10/20
- Pan de Muerto Workshop 10/27

- Northside Aztlan Altars 10/27

Committees & Teams:

- OTL Classifieds
- FRCC Diversity Committee
- Adult Programming
- LCN Steering Committee
- Larimer County Digital Inclusion Design Team – Digital Roots x2
- City of Fort Collins Navigators

Professional Development:

- Outreach Series – Webinars x4
- Rocky Mountain Outreach Interest Group 10/8
- UndocuHUB: Legal Services 10/26

Working on:

- Know Your Rights Clinic on 11/14 (PRPLD, La Familia, Fuerza Latina & ISAAC)
- Homebound
- City of Fort Collins ARO Program & Library collaboration
- Affordable Housing for Seniors – needs?

Other:

- CIO maintenance
- RingCentral
- Information on Immigration packets
- Open Forums for Executive Director
- Think Again Focus Groups
- Open Enrollment Department Meeting
- Materials for Kite program on 10/28

COUNCIL TREE LIBRARY

By Currie Meyer

CTL welcomes Rebeca Cox (she/her), new Library Assistant: Rebeca brings public library experience in customer service, tech and computer assistance, public programming, person-in-charge roles, and reference / adult services. Rebeca is fluent in Spanish, has presented bilingual storytimes and translated library promotions and announcements. She is from Delaware.

DART reference tracker sample week 3 / 3 completed: DART is a free, online tracking system from the Colorado State Library’s Library Research Service. The application tracks, sorts and stores library staff-customer transactions. See attached report.

Teen Services Librarian Jenny Thurman coordinated six programs and events in October:

ART-ober for teens Kick-off Event October 2 at CTL. First in-person program inside Council Tree Library since March 2020! Teens picked up art supplies for ART-ober challenges, drew and shared sketches based on prompts, and played Pictionary and Exquisite Corpse.

Teen Self Care Fair October 10 at the Fort Collins Museum of Discovery. PRPLD staff talked to over 200 teens and their families. PRPLD gave away treats, de-stress art kits (and other activity kits), and flyers about programs and services at the library.

Teen Council Presents: A Costume Workshop October 15 at CTL. We provided teens access to a variety of supplies and equipment, including cardboard, xacto knives, sewing machines, fabric, ipads (for looking up ideas), duct tape, glue guns, paint, heat presses, and more.

Teen Writers, featuring Todd Mitchell October 19 at Harmony Library. Local author Todd Mitchell talked to the teens about their writing, and led them through some exercises to learn how to write more vibrant characters and more interesting plots.

Teen Author Talk with Juleah del Rosario October 23 at 2:30 pm at CTL. Each teen that attended received a bag with snacks and a copy of Juleah del Rosario's latest book: *Turtle Under Ice*.

Teen Writing Workshop with Laura Resau October 23 at 3:45 pm at The Council Tree Library. Laura Resau led teens through exercises to help them create more vivid characters and settings.

Children's Services Librarian Amy Holzworth reports:

Story Stroll at Front Range Village, October 1-31 – The story stroll project invites families to read and walk their way through a picture book. In October, we presented *Walk with Me* by Margaret Wise Brown in collaboration with twelve Front Range Village businesses.

ART-ober for children kick-off October 2 Families picked up over 200 art-themed Take and Make activity kits with upcycled picture book covers, colored pencils, and bookmarks inside. Our volunteers Kathy and Shannon along with LA Drew Gaede guided 112 children and families in a group coloring project and Zentangle activity.

ART-ober interactive art installation offered children an opportunity to create an abstract falling leaves paper sculpture.

Children's FOCO Book Fest event October 23, outside CTL entry featured local picture book artist Julie Rowan-Zoch. Nearly 150 children and families dropped by to meet Julie and participate in the hands-on art activity "Sketch, Etch, Illustrate".



OLD TOWN LIBRARY

By Eileen McCluskey

Ongoing projects and programs in support of the strategic plan

From Karla:

- Outdoor storytimes were consistently well attended though October with only 1 weather-related cancellation. Shout out to all storytellers who braved the chilly temps to deliver great storytimes to kids and families!
- Literary Month/ Dia De Los Muertos Community Celebration included the first ever StoryStroll in Library Park Oct. 27- Nov. 3. featuring the book **Gustavo the Shy Ghost** by Flavio Z. Drago. The mobile StoryStroll was bilingual Spanish/English and will also be featured at the Gardens on Spring Creek November 6. OTL was honored to display Dia De Los Muertos- themed art throughout the children's area by students working with Ludy.
- In anticipation for school's out days, volunteers and staff have been assembling Catapult Construction Take & Make kits for all library locations and Community Outreach. These will be distributed in November to support Erin Lucero's virtual makerspace video. Erin did a fantastic job creating this video--educational and FUN!
- Passive programming in the children and teen areas included creating papel picado, collaborative coloring and seek and find activities.
- Staff has been attending various trainings and conferences including Sign Language for Storytime, Othering and Belonging and Ryan Dowd trainings.
- Teen services highlights include collaboration with Poudre High School's Spectrum Book Club and Jace Long facilitating sessions with the teen writer's group. Great job, Jace!

From Meg:

- Fort Collins Book Fest- over 20 events with 40+ authors- included writing workshops, poetry readings, and author sessions offered in-person and virtually. Over the course of the weekend, we saw over 600 people in-person and the streamed and recorded events were viewed by 1000+ people. Book Fest was successful because of a strong internal organizing committee and anchor community partners with CSU Libraries, FRCC, Old Firehouse Books, and Wolverine Farm Publick House.
- Old Town Virtual Book Club continues to be well attended virtually with a core 22-25 people showing up for each book discussion.
- Hosted the 8th installment (of 9) of Know Your City: Conflict Resolution and Restorative Justice; this was virtual and the recording posted to Library's YouTube.
- Deidre facilitated the last installment of the Staying Active for Seniors program and the last interactive Storytimes in Library Park. The Park trees were a magical setting for our programs this year.

From Eileen:

- Ongoing planning for OTL renovation. Demo Day is Nov. 15 with an expected 4-week construction timeline.
- New computer lab furniture was delivered and installed.

Staffing

- Facilitated hiring of three new hourly Library Assistants.
- Some OTL staff attended the Othering and Belonging conference and OTL supervisors all attended Legal Issues for Supervisors.