

# Northfield Public Library

## Programming and Outreach Services

### 2019



## Introduction and History

The Northfield Public Library's service population includes the City of Northfield and rural Rice and Dakota counties, equaling approximately 27,000 residents. The library is well-used in the community, with 18,020 active library cards registered as of December 2019. The library is situated in a historic Carnegie building which was expanded in 1984, tripling the original size of the building; in 2015-16, an additional 1,400 sq. ft. was added through a much-needed renovation, which allowed for floor plan and functional changes to increase building efficiency, flexibility and accessibility.

While the 2015-16 renovation greatly improved building function and patron satisfaction, library staff recognized that in order to continue to provide relevant and timely library service to the community, library programming would need to expand beyond the walls of the physical building. This expansion of library services, called Library Outreach, is a major priority of the the 2018-2020 Library Strategic Plan, and supports the Library's mission statement:

*The Northfield Library strengthens community, supports literacy, provides access to information, and fosters lifelong learning and enrichment. An expanded and enhanced outreach service program enables the NPL to connect with the community.*

One of the first Outreach initiatives for the new Strategic Plan involved the creation of the library's Book Bike, designed by library patron Eric Johnson and built by River City Builders. The bike was unveiled in spring of 2017 and is a regular feature at community events, including seasonal weekly storytimes and book checkout at the Riverwalk Market Fair. The Book Bike is shared with Northfield Promise, which is ridden by volunteers into underserved neighborhoods for weekly book giveaways to children.

During this same time period, Library staff were able to use a staff vacancy to create a position that better fit our Outreach priorities; a half-time position of Outreach Coordinator was filled by Angelica Linder in late 2017.

Also in 2017, the library was approached by William Sternberg, representative of the Ames Family Fund of the Minneapolis Foundation. The Ames Fund was interested in providing funds to give momentum to community-wide Northfield initiatives. Ultimately, the Ames Fund helped to finance a our first-ever new library Bookmobile, a Bookmobile collection, and enabled us to hire Angelica in a full-time capacity for two years. Without their help, to purchase the Bookmobile, our Outreach Services initiative would be extremely limited. Their funding inspired the City of Northfield to provide an additional 40% in funds, with community contributions, large and small, funding the last 20%.

## **Vision Statement for Outreach Services**

*Northfield Public Library Outreach Program will bring outstanding library services to all corners of the community.*

## **Mission Statement for Outreach Services**

*Northfield Public Library Outreach Program provides information and resources to enrich the lives and strengthen our community through innovative services beyond our walls.*

## **Northfield Public Library Strategic Plan and strategic priorities**

### **Strategic Priorities**

- 1) Underserved Population Services
  - a.) Expanded Outreach Services
  - b.) Targeted in-house programming
  - c.) Targeted collections
  - d.) City ID Implementation
- 2) Early Literacy focus
  - a.) Targeted Early Literacy programming
  - b.) Parent education programs
  - c.) Improved collection and environments
- 3) Increase Public Awareness
  - a.) Improved community awareness of library services
- 4) Technology
  - a.) Early adopter of new technology
  - b.) User-friendly website and library platforms
- 5) Partnerships
  - a.) Maintain existing, develop new partnerships
- 6) Responsible Stewards
  - a.) Proactive staff training
  - b.) Increase staff capacity with hiring strategies
  - c.) Maintain library properties
  - d.) Improve library collections

While many of the library strategic priorities are touched by Outreach Services, Underserved Population Services and Early Literacy focused programming are the main priorities for Outreach. For the Strategic Plan, Underserved Populations are defined as Seniors, Teens and the Northfield Spanish-speaking population.

## Early Literacy Focused Programming and Outreach

Early literacy focused programming has been identified as a strategic priority and efforts are being made to improve the library's presence in the community by delivering early literacy focused programs such as storytimes in locations outside the library. The Book Bike, Bookmobile, and the Outreach coordinator position enabled library staff to deliver far more early literacy programs in the community in 2018 and 2019.

A new outreach opportunity in 2019 was collaborating with the Northfield United Methodist Church Women's Group and the Northfield Community Action Center during Operation Backpack. Operation Backpack annually provides community children with a new backpack full of supplies appropriate for their grade level. Library staff provided storytimes, games, and crafts for the children and library resource information for the parents. During this event staff interacted with 144 children and adults and issued four new library cards.



Table 1 shows the number of programs delivered in 2017, 2018, and 2019. The goal was to increase the number of early literacy outreach programs by 20% between 2018 and 2019. As shown in Table 1, we surpassed our goal and more than doubled the programs offered. Going forward we are looking for tools to measure the impact of our programming. These tools will include surveys, interviews and more.

**Table 1: Early Literacy Focused Outreach events in the Community**

2017 (8)	2018 (30)	2019 (65)
4 Headstart	4 Headstart	7 Headstart
4 Special Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Healthy Kids Day</li> <li>- Montessori School</li> <li>- Sibley School</li> <li>- Storytime at Imminent</li> </ul>	4 Greenvale Community School	5 Longfellow Preschool
	9 Riverwalk Market Fair (Book Bike)	3 Northfield Nursery School
	12 Special Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Healthy Kids Day (Bookmobile)</li> <li>- Yeti Storytime</li> <li>- Storytime at Imminent (Book Bike)</li> <li>- Northfield Gymnastics Club (Bookmobile)</li> <li>- YMCA (2) (Bookmobile)</li> <li>- Giant Storytime in the Park (Bookmobile)</li> <li>- First Friday Arts Event (Bookmobile)</li> <li>- Thursday's Table (Bookmobile)</li> </ul>	1 Greenvale Community School
		11 Riverwalk Market Fair (Book Bike)
		7 Books and Stars Storytimes
		6 School conferences (Sibley, St. Dominic (2), Greenvale, Bridgewater (2))
		6 Book Talks- Sibley (4), Greenvale, Bridgewater
		13 Tuesday/Wednesdays in the Park Storytimes
		6 Special Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Yeti Storytime</li> <li>-Thursday's Table Storytime</li> <li>-Storytime at the Foodshelf</li> <li>-Prairie Creek</li> <li>-Promise Fair</li> <li>-Operation Backpack</li> </ul>



## Senior Services

Providing library services to Northfield community seniors is a strategic priority for the Northfield Public Library. Service to seniors has been a part of library services for many years. These services include the homebound delivery service, deposit collections at senior facilities, and programming delivered at senior facilities.

In the fall, staff began a new outreach initiative, teaching a series of poetry workshops at the Parkview East building of the Northfield Retirement Community (NRC). Focusing on metaphors and memories, staff led exercises where attendees wrote their own poems, then combined lines to write a group poem. Sharing was encouraged and a microphone was passed around the room. Attendees who felt comfortable shared their work, resulting in great group conversations. The workshops were so popular that the exercises were offered to other NRC living spaces including Cannon Valley Suites and Northfield Manor. Group poems from each of the NRC locations were read at a holiday celebration in the Chapel on December 19, with library staff as one of the guest readers. Workshops will continue in 2020.

Library services for seniors has increased from 2018 to 2019 in the number of programs delivered. The number of patrons enrolled in the homebound delivery service and deposit collections has remained the same. Our goal was to expand services to seniors in 2019 by increasing the number of programs offered by 10% and Table 2 shows that the programs increased by nearly 45%. For 2020, each program will be evaluated by attendance and impact. We will be working with this target population to develop programs that match their wants and needs.

Table 2: Library Services for Seniors		
2017	2018	2019
Number enrolled in Homebound Program		
60	96	96
Number of Deposit Collections		
3	3	3
Number of Outreach Programs		
11	32	46



## Teen Services

Our goal for 2019 teen services was to increase teen programming and outreach offerings by 20%. We exceeded that goal by 150%. 2019 was the first full year of having the Teen Advisory Board (TAB) help guide the direction of teen programming and initiatives and YA collection development since the library renovation. The importance of their collaborative role in the decision making process is reflected in how we exceeded our teen programming and outreach goal. Staff offered five teen programs each month. Four of these programs are groups that meet once a month: Anime and Manga Club, Teen Advisory Board, Dungeons and Dragons, and Teen Book Group. Each of these groups were created as a result of a teen(s) expressing interest in the library providing the space where they can meet others who share their interest. In addition to these monthly groups, there is one regular program offered each month. These programs were created to relate to a monthly theme (e.g. Mental Health Awareness month), what is hot in pop culture (e.g. Stranger Things), timeless fandoms (e.g. Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone Interactive Movie Screening), or anything else the TAB and the teen librarian thought would be a program that Northfield teens would be interested in attending. We hosted a number of teen programs in 2019 that brought teens into the library who either were not regular Northfield Public Library users, or had not previously been to the Library. Some of these programs were Teen Game Night, Self-Defense Workshop, Perks of Being a Wallflower movie screening and discussion, Anime and Manga Artist Lead Workshop at the Northfield Arts Guild, and a Stranger Things Escape Room. This was the second year the library offered a teen fine waiver in honor of Teen Read Month in October.

A new initiative in 2019 was a Teen Comfort Cabinet funded by the Friends of the Library. The purpose of this initiative is to provide access to a variety of basic health products for teens free of charge, no library card required. The cabinet is a repurposed card catalog that fits perfectly within the YA shelves.



Teen Services also increased its community outreach offerings. The teen librarian, Outreach Coordinator, and other library staff worked together to coordinate library visits and activities for Summer Blast (*A program designed to help close the opportunity gap by providing instruction and creative programming for Northfield middle schoolers*) students for the second consecutive year. The teen librarian also collaborated with Northfield Public Schools, Arcadia Charter School, and the Northfield Arts Guild for a variety of outreach programs that included library tours, research evaluation

talks, Bookmobile visits, book talks, and post-secondary education options discussions. The teen librarian is excited to continue developing these partnerships in 2020.

We are proud that we exceeded our goal of increasing the number of teen programs and outreach opportunities in 2019. We look ahead to 2020 by reflecting on our current offerings and exploring ways we can improve meeting the needs of Northfield teens.

Table 3: Teen Programming and Outreach		
2017 (4)	2018 (26)	2019 (65)
Hamilton Sing Along Program (1)	Teen Advisory Meetings (9)	Teen Advisory Meetings (10)
Dungeons & Dragons (1)	Dungeons & Dragons (5)	Dungeons & Dragons (10)
Teen Advisory Meeting (2)	Summer Blast Programs (6)	Summer Blast Programs (4)
	Anime & Manga Group (2)	Anime & Manga Group (9)
	Special Programs (4)	Teen Book Group (9)
	- Marvel Party	Outreach Visits (3)
	- TORCH student tour	Special Programs (20)
	- Teen fine waiver	- TORCH student tour
	- Teen Reads Program	-Teen fine waiver
		-Teen Reads Program
		-Writer's Group
		-Game night (2)
		-Teen Mental Health Awareness
		-Movie Night (3)
		-Harry Potter Interactive event (2)
		-Book Crafts
		-Magic: the Gathering
		-Brief Intro to Arduino
		-YA Author visit
		-Stranger Things Escape Room
		-Cyan (3)



Stranger Things  
Escape Room  
Participants



The Calculus of Change  
author, Jessie Hilb and TAB  
members, Sophie and  
Gracie.

## **Spanish-speaking Population services**

Providing library services to the Northfield Spanish-speaking community has been identified in both the Library's Strategic Plan, and in the City of Northfield's Strategic Plan.

In 2019, we organized and implemented our second Hispanic Heritage Celebration, a community wide program which included a series of cultural and cuisine programs and ended with a Day of the Dead Celebration. On September 14, the library hosted a National Hispanic Heritage Month kickoff event. The day featured two bands, four dance groups, Zumba, food and craft vendors, face painters, and children's games and crafts. The Northfield Union of Youth served free cotton candy and several community groups came together to make this a successful event. In 2018, about 400 people attended and 2019 more than 1,100 people enjoyed the day.

The celebration continued with in-depth programming on Latino history and culture throughout October, giving the community opportunities to learn about Latino history, culture and cuisine. The cultures of México, Puerto Rico, Colombia, Perú, El Salvador, Argentina, Guatemala, Venezuela and Brazil cultures were highlighted in the 2019 programs. More than 400 people attended the 6 weekly Culture and Cuisine Programs. Carleton and St. Olaf Colleges, Northfield Arts Guild, and the Northfield Poet Laureate collaborated with the library to make the Hispanic Heritage Celebration a great success.

Library staff applied for and was awarded a SEMAC (Southeast Minnesota Arts Council) grant which provided much of the funding for the Hispanic Heritage Celebration. The library was able to pay for several large tents, decorations, promotional materials, presenters and entertainment. The Friends and Foundation of Northfield Public Library (FFOL), the Northfield Public Library, and the City of Northfield also sponsored the events.

In 2020, the Northfield Public Library, Greenvale Community School, Neighbors United, Healthy Community Initiative and the Mexican Consulate will collaborate to launch a program called Plaza Comunitaria. Plaza Comunitaria is a program sanctioned by the Mexican government to provide education in Spanish so people from Mexico can finish their elementary or secondary education in Spanish and get an official diploma of completion.

Our goal for Spanish language outreach and programming for 2019 was to increase the number of programs offered by 5%. We exceeded this goal by increasing programming by more than 25%. Looking ahead to 2020 programming, the staff will be spending time evaluating and measuring the success and impact of each program offered. We will not set a goal to expand the number of programs offered but continue to offer the programs that are most impactful.



Table 4: Spanish Language Programming and Outreach		
2017 (23)	2018 (76)	2019 (97)
Spanish Computer Class (23)	Spanish Computer Class (22)	Spanish Computer Class (27)
	Spanish Storytime (15)	Spanish Storytime (13)
	Tuesdays in the Park (8)- Bookmobile	Tues/Wed in the Park (11)- Bookmobile
	Night to Unite (2)- Bookmobile	Night to Unite (2)- Bookmobile
	ESL & Technology Class- (13)	Spanish Book Group (11)
	Hispanic Heritage Celebration (1) - HHC programs (15)	Spanish Zumba (11)
		St. Dominic Church Visits (3)
		Cinco De Mayo (1)
		Mexican Consul visit (1)
		Hispanic Heritage Celebration (1) - HHC programs (12)
		Day of the Dead Programs (4)



**MES DE LA HERENCIA HISPANA**  
**HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH**

**Kickoff Saturday**  
**September 14th**  
**11am - 4pm**  
**Northfield Public Library**  
210 Washington St. • mynpl.org

**Dancing**

- Kalpulli Ollin Ayacaxtly de Northfield
- Danzas Colombianas en Minnesota
- Boriken Central Art - Puerto Rico
- Mi Perú MN

**Music**

- Los Chicos B
- Orquesta Kilbre 24

**Food**

- El Jefe's food truck - Mexican Cuisine
- Nori's food truck - Venezuelan Cuisine

**Art**

- Inspiration Station with the Arts Guild
- Craft vendors
- Oscar Mireles "Madison Poet Laureate"

Weather backup location - Northfield Middle School

   



**MES DE LA HERENCIA HISPANA**  
**HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH**

**Culture and Cuisine 6pm**

- Thursday, September 19 - Guatemala Cuisine  
Guatemalan Society of Minnesota
- Thursday, September 26 - Venezuelan Cuisine and  
Brazilian presentation
- Thursday, October 3 - Salvadoran Cuisine  
Speaker Yansi Perez
- Thursday, October 10 - Puerto Rican Cuisine  
Speaker Kristina Medina
- Thursday, October 17 - Mexican Cuisine and Bohemia Night
- Thursday, October 24 - Traditional Hispanic desserts  
Speaker Sebastian Bursel

**Other HHC Events**

- Saturdays, September 21 and 28 - Yoga @ 8am  
Marisela Casper
- Saturday, September 28 - Poetry Festival "Home Away" @ 2pm  
music by Mesifonia
- Thursday, October 17 - Puppet Show @ 10am  
with Gustavo and Julie Boada  
The Clydes and Guillermo Calderon @ 6:30
- Saturdays, October 5, 12, 19, 26 - Zumba @ 8am  
Victoria Nolasco

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## **Outreach collections**

Funds from the original Ames gift (and others) were used to build the current collection with an emphasis on the new service groups. The collection focus includes children and teen materials, Spanish language materials, popular fiction and non-fiction for adults, and popular DVDs for all ages. The core collection was created in 2018. Much of the 2019 budget purchased high demand materials like popular DVDs, juvenile graphic novels and baby board books in both English and Spanish. There are currently 1,019 items in the bookmobile collection.

In 2020, there will be gift monies available for the bookmobile collection.

2018 -Original amount = \$7,500. Spent \$4800

2019 budget = \$2700. Spent \$1,122

2020 budget= \$1,578

The 2020 budget consists of the remainder of gift monies. The 2021 budget will be funded by the library materials budget.

The formal measure has always been circulation statistics but informally the staff listens to Bookmobile users to hear if they are excited by the materials on the shelves, if they check something out or go away empty handed, or are asking/requesting certain materials that are not on the shelves (either checked out or absent from the collection).

The number of items checked out in 2018 was 530. The number of check-outs increased by 74% (922) in 2019. In 2018, children's item checkouts were 70% of the total checkouts and in 2019 the number increased to 77%. This information helps us to add or replace items in the collection.

Items from the Northfield Public Library shelves are rotated to the Bookmobile to better fit the needs and wants of a specific Outreach program. For example, when staff take the Bookmobile to a senior center or assisted living facility, they fill a moveable cart from the bus with large print and other materials from the library shelves that are of interest to that population, thus tailoring the collection to the service population.

## Conclusion

Expanding library services through Outreach is a key initiative in reaching residents beyond the walls of the library. With the purchase of the library's Bookmobile, through the funding of the full-time Outreach Coordinator position, and using enhanced collection funds, library staff was able to increase library services for an Early Literacy focus, and for services to underserved populations in Northfield.

Table 5: 2017-2018 Programming and Outreach Totals					
	2017 Number of Programs	2018 Number of Programs	Percentage of Increase	2019 Projected Percentage Increase	2019 Projected Number of Programs
Early Literacy Focused	8	30	275%	20%	36
Seniors	11	32	190%	10%	36
Teens	4	26	550%	20%	32
Spanish Language	23	76	230%	5%	80

Table 6: 2018-2019 Programming and Outreach Totals			
	2018 Number of Programs	2019 Number of Programs	Percentage of Increase
Early Literacy Focused	30	65	116%
Seniors	32	46	14%
Teens	26	65	150%
Spanish Language	76	97	28%

The City of Northfield continues to support the library in its efforts to provide library services through Outreach in innovative and strategic ways, and it has included the strategic priority of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion into its own Strategic Plan to ensure equitable city services to all Northfield inhabitants. Future plans for Library Outreach Services are expected to expand strategically as we develop community partnerships and resources into 2020 and beyond.