



CRANSTON
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

2025 IMPACT REPORT

Farewells and New Beginnings

Full-time library staff members hired or promoted between July 2024-July 2025

Thank You, Karen McGrath!

After 39 years of dedicated service to the Cranston Public Library and the Auburn community, long-time Branch Librarian Karen McGrath retired in September. Karen leaves a legacy of commitment, leadership, and care for generations of library patrons. The library was pleased to welcome Nomi Hague into this role, bringing with her deep experience in public librarianship and a strong connection to the Auburn Branch, where she has served as Youth Services Librarian since 2021. Nomi's appointment ensures a thoughtful transition, and continued growth and service to the community.



Joseph Silveira
IT Manager
May 2025



Talia Botelho
Youth Services Librarian
July 2025



Cranston Mayor Ken Hopkins & Karen McGrath



Nomi Hague
Promoted to
Auburn Branch Librarian
June 2025



Tayla Cardillo
Transferred to
Central Library Youth Services
July 2025

Our Mission:

The Cranston Public Library brings people, information, and ideas together to enrich lives and strengthen the community.

Our Values:

Access - We provide free and equitable access for all. We actively seek to remove barriers so everyone in the community can use the library.

Community - We engage with our community and partner with others to foster cooperation and provide services and collections that meet evolving community needs.

Intellectual Freedom - We champion the exploration of information and ideas. We protect the privacy and confidentiality of all library users.

Learning - We celebrate the power of literacy and lifelong learning. The library is a place where people of all ages can pursue their interests and improve their understanding.

People - We provide exceptional and responsive customer service. We invest in our staff and cultivate an environment of growth, support, and teamwork to best serve our community.

Letters from the Director & Chair



Ed Garcia
Library Director

In my role as Library Director, I have the privilege of advocating not only for the Cranston Public Library, but for the core values of librarianship and the rights of all readers in our community. This year, I joined a broad coalition of librarians, authors, religious leaders, legislators, and readers to help pass the Rhode Island Freedom to Read Act which is now among the strongest anti-censorship laws in the nation. Its passage marks the culmination of a professional journey I began three years ago to defend

the First Amendment and the fundamental right to read.

Signed into law on July 2, 2025, the Act affirms that the freedom to read is protected by both the U.S. and Rhode Island Constitutions and prohibits the removal or restriction of library materials based solely on doctrinal or partisan objections. It recognizes the professional expertise of librarians in building collections free from political pressure and, uniquely, establishes a private right of action allowing readers, writers, and publishers to challenge censorship. This first-of-its-kind safeguard positions Rhode Island as a national leader at a time when challenges to books and ideas are increasing across the country.

For Cranston, the Act strengthens our ability to provide inclusive, balanced, and community-centered collections, protects staff as they carry out their professional responsibilities, and ensures that the library remains a place where all people can explore ideas freely. Together, we will continue to ensure that Cranston's libraries bring people, information, and ideas together to strengthen our community.



Michael Goldberg
Chair, Cranston Public Library Board of Trustees

In *The Library Book*, Susan Orlean describes libraries as one of the few public spaces where no one expects you to spend money. The Cranston Public Library is proud to offer that welcoming space across six branches and through Branch 7 at events throughout the city.

Patrons come to borrow books, movies, music, tools, and instruments; use technology and 3D printers; attend programs; view local art; take English classes; access museum passes; and find quiet, safe, and enriching places for learning and connection.

This work is made possible through the support of the Cranston City Council, the Friends of the Cranston Public Library, donors to the Cranston Public Library Association, and the many volunteers who support programs, book sales, fundraising, and governance. This year, grants allowed us to upgrade lighting to reduce energy costs and replace outdated computers thanks to The Champlin Foundation. We are especially grateful to our trustees for their dedicated service.

We are proud of Director Ed Garcia's leadership in helping secure passage of the Freedom to Read Act and his recognition with the 2025 Page Turner Award from the Rhode Island Center for the Book. We also note the importance of restored federal funding that supports statewide library services, including interlibrary delivery. And if you haven't read *The Library Book* yet, we encourage you to check it out.

Cranston Public Library Board of Trustees

Michael Goldberg Chair
Regina Spirito Vice Chair
R. Drayton Fair
Lisa Kirshenbaum
Dr. Taino Palermo
Diane Schaefer
Jack Trager

Administration & Staff

Edward Garcia Library Director
Julie Holden Assistant Library Director
Nereida Zayas Business Manager
Joe Silveira IT Manager
Dave Bartos Coordinator of Adult Services
Emily Brown Coordinator of Youth Services / Oaklawn Branch Manager
Nomi Hague Auburn Branch Librarian
Nancy Gianlorenzo Knightsville Branch Librarian
Zach Berger William Hall Library Branch Librarian
Dana Santagata Head of Circulation Services
Sarah Bouvier Library Communications Manager



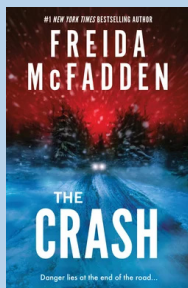
Financials

In fiscal year 2025, The Cranston Public Library received and expended an appropriation of \$3,280,466 from the City of Cranston and \$801,676 in state grant-in-aid. The library also received various grants and donations which funded our public programming.

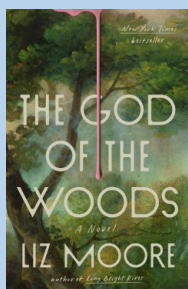
Top 5 Circulating Titles of 2025 at Cranston Public Library



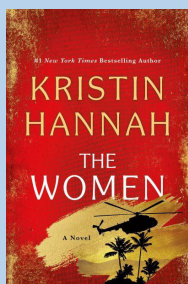
The Wedding People
by Alison Espach



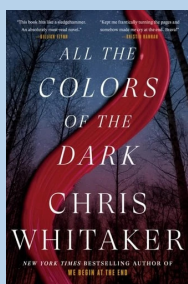
The Crash
by Freida McFadden



The God of the Woods
by Liz Moore



The Women
by Kristin Hannah



All the Colors of the Dark
by Chris Whitaker

CPL By the Numbers

These statistics reflect July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

Library Use

Number of Visits	247,297
Public Computer Sessions	30,542
Community Meeting room bookings	617
Reference Questions	46,176
Library card holders	27,545

Online Use

Free WiFi Sessions	52,242
Free Database & online services	15,153
Website Visits	275,474

Circulation

Physical checkouts	452,844
Digital checkouts	127,936
Total checkouts	580,780

Interlibrary Loan

Items provided to other libraries	49,476
Items received from other libraries	80,249

Library Programs

Number of Programs	1,241
Attendance	27,758

Notaries

1483 services fulfilled by staff notaries FREE at the Central Library

Printing & Scanning

72,764 pages printed by patrons

14,508 pages were scanned for FREE using the ScanStation at the Central Library

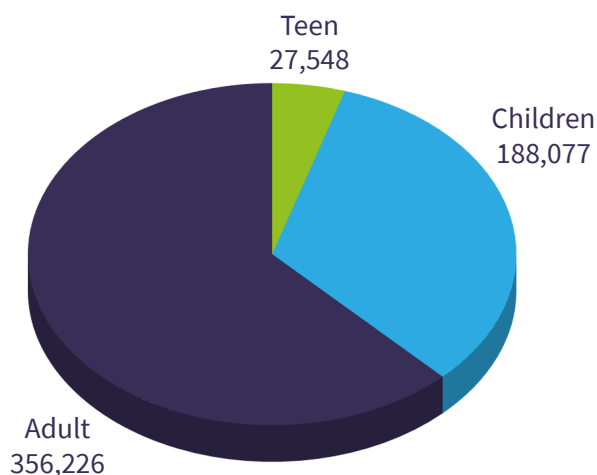
Museum Passes

914 checkouts free or reduced entry to local attractions sponsored by the Friends of the Cranston Public Library

Homebound Services

309 deliveries of library materials made by volunteers to homebound patrons

Circulation by Audience:



CPL is ranked:¹

- #1** among all RI public libraries in circulation
- #1** in adult checkouts
- #1** in children's checkouts
- #2** in teen checkouts



CPL Library users saved: \$9,591,694²
by checking out items at our libraries.

¹ Rankings reflect July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024.

² Value calculated by Ocean State Libraries based on an estimated value of each item.

Rally to Support Libraries

In May 2025, Cranston Public Library hosted a “Rally for Libraries” at the Central Library where Rhode Island’s entire congressional delegation, Senators Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse and Reps. Gabe Amo and Seth Magaziner, joined local librarians, leaders and supporters to emphasize the vital role public libraries play in our communities and to advocate for continued federal support through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) amid proposed federal funding cuts.

The gathering brought attention to the threat posed by the March 14 executive order targeting the IMLS with elimination and the potential impacts on essential programs like workforce development, interlibrary loan, and community education services that rely on federal support.

Delegation members highlighted how IMLS grants help libraries innovate and serve diverse community needs, reinforcing the importance of federal investment in library infrastructure and resources.

The rally demonstrated Cranston Public Library’s leadership in advocacy and its role as a hub for civic engagement, contributing to broader efforts to protect library funding and ensure continued access to critical services for residents.



L to R; U.S. Rep. Gabe Amo, U.S. Rep. Seth Magaziner, State Senator Hanna Gallo, Library Director Ed Garcia, U.S. Sen. Jack Reed, RI Chief of Library Services Karen Mellor, U.S. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse.

"When we rally for libraries, we rally for the heart of our communities — our libraries, our museums, our educators and our future."

- Library Director Ed Garcia at the Rally

Summer Reading Program Sponsors

The statewide Rhode Island Summer Reading Program is supported by the RI Office of Library and Information Services with funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

The Cranston Public Library's summer reading program is also made possible through the generous support of:

- Cranston Public Library Association
- BankNewport
- Bob's Discount Furniture Charitable Foundation
- Centreville Bank Charitable Foundation
- Coastal1 Credit Union
- Cranston Rotary
- Dave's Fresh Marketplace
- Durfee Hardware
- Sweenor's Chocolates
- Time Capsule Comics
- Tony's Pizza Palace
- Wein-O-Rama Restaurant

Summer Reading Kick-off partner organizations:

- Cranston Family Center
- Cranston Fire Department
- Cranston Historical Society
- OneCranston Health Equity Zone



Summer Reading Program

The Cranston Public Library's Summer Reading Program engaged readers of all ages through a dynamic mix of inclusive events, creative programming, and accessible participation options. The season launched with a Summer Reading Kick-off and free book fair at Sprague Mansion, where nearly 500 community members attended and more than 320 books were given away to children and adults. Now in its third year, this flagship event was intentionally hosted in a neighborhood with historically low youth library card ownership to remove barriers and connect families with books, library services, and joyful, screen-free activities. Throughout the summer, Youth Services also introduced a new series of large-capacity, life-size game programs inspired by popular characters and games, welcoming more than 280 participants to hands-on, all-ages experiences that required no registration.

To further expand access, the library complemented its online reading tracker with offline options, including a custom-designed activity and coloring book filled with unplugged games, reading logs, and locally illustrated artwork; 800 copies were distributed across branches and outreach events. Adults were invited to participate through a weekly prize raffle tied to borrowing, library card sign-ups, and reader reviews, resulting in over 5,500 raffle entries and nearly 250 community-submitted reviews displayed in library spaces. In total, the Summer Reading Program delivered 207 programs across all age groups, reaching 6,444 attendees and reinforcing the library's role as a welcoming hub for learning, creativity, and community connection all summer long.



Supporting Our Immigrant Community

The library has offered English-as-a-second language (ESL) and citizenship classes for over 25 years in partnership with the Rhode Island Family Literacy Initiative (RIFLI). Those classes were offered this year at the William Hall Library and for the first time at the Central Library. The library received \$8,000 in legislative grants from the RI General Assembly to support this program.

A \$5,000 grant awarded by Reps. David Bennett, Richard Fascia, Arthur Handy, Charlene Lima, Joseph McNamara, Chris Paplauskas, and Brandon Potter will support ESL classes systemwide; while a \$2,000 grant awarded by Senator Lammis Vargas will benefit ESL and citizenship classes at the William Hall Library. Together, these grants will help expand essential services that support immigrant families and strengthen our community.



L to R; Rep. David Bennett, Speaker of the House Joseph Shekarchi, Library Director Ed Garcia, Rep. Richard Fascia, Rep. Chris Paplauskas.



L to R; Library Director Ed Garcia, Ward 1 City Councilmember Bridget Graziano, RI Senator Lammis Vargas.

Supporting Our Teens

Our teen volunteer program grew even stronger, with 380 teen volunteers who earned 3,248 community service hours with us. This program is a valued and integral part of our library community, providing assistance at programs, completing community service projects, sharing ideas, and working behind the scenes to help the library thrive. Our 5th annual Cards for the Community partnership with the Cranston Senior Center's Holiday Meal delivery service provided over 600 handmade holidays cards in each meal, created by teen volunteers and students at Cranston High School East, Cranston High School West, Bain & Parkview Middle schools, as well as Boy Scout Troop 66.

Our Teen Librarian, Alyssa Taft, visited all six of Cranston's secondary public schools. With support from other youth services librarians, she offered welcome presentations to 6th grade classes, chatted about books at Cranston High School East's "Bring Your Own Book Club," made holiday cards for the Senior Center with the Junior National Honors Society, and read to students in Park View Middle School's Lifeskills class. In total, our librarians provided programs and services directly to 900 teens without requiring them to travel to one of our public library locations.



Page Turner Award

Library Director Ed Garcia was honored by The Rhode Island Center for the Book as the recipient of this year's Page Turner Award. Established in 2023, the award honors a Rhode Island librarian or educator who makes extraordinary contributions to literacy, community connection, and the joy of reading.



Photo Credit: Dhana Whiteing

Garcia was selected for his leadership and commitment to the Freedom to Read. Under his direction, the Cranston Public Library has emerged as a model of a modern public library, open, inclusive, and deeply rooted in its community. From championing intellectual freedom to encouraging curiosity and creativity, his work reflects the values at the heart of the Rhode Island Center for the Book.

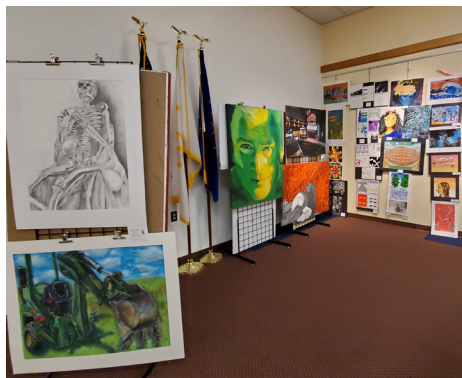
"Ed's vision for what libraries can be, his deep connection to the Cranston community, and his ability to mobilize people and resources have made the Cranston Public Library a model for the nation."

- Senator Jack Reed

Supporting the Arts

This year the library strengthened its support for the arts by hosting a range of exhibitions and creative showcases at the Central Library including the annual Cranston Schools K-12 ArtsFest in March; Clothing: "Costume Expression Inspiration" exhibition by the Cranston Arts Commission; and a community Little Masterpiece art exhibition featuring local artists, that brought diverse artistic voices into our public spaces.

Through these programs, the library served as a vibrant cultural hub connecting residents with visual art and creative expression.



Garden Club Collaboration

For the past three years, the Western Cranston Garden Club has collaborated with youth service librarians to offer a special gardening opportunity for children. This year after reading a story, 15 children and teen volunteers helped beautify the front of the library by planting flowers under the guidance of garden club members. The garden club provided the annuals and necessary tools, while sharing their skills with the next generation of community gardeners.



C-Lab

The Central Library's C-Lab saw a significant increase in engagement this year with both attendance in Open Tech Time and the use of the Media Preservation equipment. Over 550 attendees came to Open Tech Time this year to receive assistance with applying for jobs, troubleshooting their mobile devices or computers, and increasing their technology skills. The Media Preservation service, which offers digitization of VHS tapes, cassette tapes, Super 8mm film reels, photographs & negatives, was used over 540 times. In addition, the 3D printer has also seen increased use, creating over 110 models for artists, inventors, and hobbyists in the community.



Summer Concert Series

Throughout July and August, the William Hall Library hosted seven concerts on its front lawn, showcasing local bands and performers. These Summer Concert Series events, co-sponsored by Mayor Ken Hopkins, the Cranston Parks and Recreation Department and the Cranston Public Library Association, welcomed hundreds of music lovers of all ages. The Summer Concert Series is always a fun way to bring the community together on warm summer nights.



Book & Movie Groups

We offered nine unique discussion groups each month at the Central Library and William Hall Library, bringing readers and viewers together for meaningful conversation and connection. In 2026, we look forward to expanding this popular service with the launch of a new Auburn Afternoon Book Club.

To support this vibrant community, we publish a dedicated book and movie discussion group newsletter with more than 2,050 subscribers, keeping participants informed and engaged. All discussion groups are free, open to the public, and span a wide range of interests, including fiction, nonfiction, mysteries, and film.



Community Events at William Hall Library

Our programming at the William Hall Library featured several standout events this year. In May, we hosted Bridging the Divide through Music and Poetry, which drew 120 attendees and included Branch Librarian Zach Berger reading his award-winning poem.

Other popular events included:

- *Archaeology of Cranston*
- *House of Diggs: A Conversation on Power, Race, and Redemption in Black Political Life*
- *We Got This: An Evening with Elissa Kalver*

In addition, we held two Project Linus Blanket Days, which brought in volunteers from around the community to knit, crochet, or quilt blankets for the benefit of children experiencing trauma. Volunteers created a record-breaking 461 blankets, all donated to children who need comfort and care.

We partnered with Brown University Health to offer two multi-part cooking series: "Food Is Medicine" and "Taste of African Heritage." These sessions helped our community explore healthy, culturally rich recipes in a shared, welcoming environment.



Branch7

Building on successful summer outreach experiences, the Library expanded its use of Branch7 to offer events during the school year, in partnership with principals, PTOs, and afterschool providers. Highlights included a free family engagement event at a school with a brand new PTO, and a curriculum night for students who were being bused across town while their school building was renovated. Then in the 4-week period between August 20 and September 17, Youth Services librarians attended 6 back-to-school events at public schools in Cranston, providing information about library programs, signing people up for library cards, and interacting with over 300 people. The library also received a \$1,000 legislative grant from Senator Hanna Gallo to purchase children's books for Branch7.



Sen. Jack Reed



Supporting the Library

Cranston Public Library Association

The Cranston Public Library Association (CPLA) was formed in 2010 and is a separate 501(c)(3) non-profit foundation not directly affiliated with the Cranston Public Library or the City of Cranston. The CPLA secures contributions to help fulfill the mission of the Library. Funds will be made available to the Library for the support of public services, programming, and capital needs.

The Cranston Public Library Association is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) making all contributions fully tax deductible. EIN# 27-3228437



Scan the QR Code
to make a donation

Or visit
[cranstonlibrary.org/
support-library](http://cranstonlibrary.org/support-library)

CPLA Board of Directors

Jessica David, *President*
Michael Goldberg, *Treasurer*
Angela Bucci
Gene Emery
Kate Felder
Edward Garcia, *Executive Director*

Friends of the Library

Are you interested in supporting the library and becoming a library advocate? Join the Friends! Your membership in the Friends of the Cranston Public Library helps support children's programs, museum passes and other programming at the library. Being a Friend also adds your voice as a library advocate in support of library related issues on the state and local level.



Scan the QR Code
to join The Friends

Or visit
[cranstonlibrary.org/
friends-groups](http://cranstonlibrary.org/friends-groups)



Other Ways to Give

There are other options to support the library through planned giving, Required Minimum Distributions from a retirement account, donations of stock or cryptocurrency. For more information, please contact Edward Garcia at director@cranstonlibrary.org or 401-943-9080 ext. 100



Phonics Book Boxes

Now that schools have reintroduced phonics and "decodable" texts to teach reading, the library is offering a new resource for parents. Decodable texts are rarely available in bookstores or circulated by libraries, because they are sold as part of curricula. However, for the past year, the Central Library has circulated 21 "Phonics Book Box" kits with 8 to 25 decodable paperback books each. We are the only library in the state to offer them, and they have circulated 131 times in one year.



School Library Card Drive

Since 2017, when the library first waived fines on young people's library cards, the library has partnered with Cranston school librarians to do an annual library card drive. Library card applications are sent home to parents, and the public and school librarians work together to get cards into the hands of kids whose parents cannot easily transport them to the library. These drives always contribute significantly to overall library card sign-ups, but this year saw the highest participation in 5 years, with 503 students receiving new or updated library cards.





1. CENTRAL LIBRARY

140 SOCKANOSSET CROSS RD,
CRANSTON RI 02920
401.943.9080

2. EDWARD COSTA MEMORIAL ARLINGTON BRANCH

@ MICHAEL TRAFICANTE SENIOR
ENRICHMENT CENTER
1064 CRANSTON ST,
CRANSTON RI 02920
401.944.1662

3. AUBURN BRANCH

396 PONTIAC AVE,
CRANSTON RI 02910
401.781.6116

4. KNIGHTSVILLE BRANCH

1847 CRANSTON ST,
CRANSTON RI 02920
401.942.2504

5. OAK LAWN BRANCH

230 WILBUR AVE,
CRANSTON RI 02921
401.942.1787

6. WILLIAM HALL LIBRARY

1825 BROAD ST,
CRANSTON RI 02905
401.781.2450

7. BRANCH7

SEE YOU SOON!



SCAN CODE TO SIGN-UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER