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

WE STRIVE TO PROVIDE:
• Library services that are known and valued by the community, resulting in broad use by the public
• An engaging cultural and lifelong learning center for the community
• Services and collections that are readily accessible and easy to use and that are relevant to community needs
• An enthusiastic, well-trained and highly capable staff that works well together to provide quality service to all library users
• Facilities that are inviting and well maintained
• Technology that expands and enhances service
• Timely and accurate information that informs and empowers the public
• Defense of intellectual freedom and the confidentiality of each individual’s use of the library
• A close working relationship with other libraries, community agencies and organizations that fosters cooperation, making the most efficient and effective use of taxpayer resources
• A variety of early childhood programs that bring families together and foster a love of reading
• A relevant collection of print and non-print materials that meet the developmental needs of Cranston’s youth
• Collaboration and support for parents and teachers as schools adopt the Common Core state standards
• Programs for preteens and teens
• The annual Summer Reading program which focuses on making reading and literacy-related programs fun and accessible for children of all ages to help avoid summer reading loss
LIBRARY FUNDING

The Cranston Public Library operating budget for fiscal year 2018 (July 2017-June 2018) was $3,427,461. In fiscal year 2018, the library received a 4% budget increase from the City of Cranston, with an appropriation of $2,749,715.

The library received $582,746 in state grant-in-aid. The remainder of our operating budget came from fines and fees. The library also received $530,000 in funds for capital projects.

The Cranston Public Library operating budget for fiscal year 2019 (July 2018-June 2019) is $3,542,614. In fiscal year 2019, the library received a 4.3% budget increase from the City of Cranston, with an appropriation of $2,867,987.

The Cranston Public Library Association (CPLA) is the nonprofit fundraising arm of the Cranston Public Library. CPLA assists the library by providing programs and services that exceed the level of tax-based funding, including free and discounted museum passes, summer reading programs and high quality community programming. CPLA also assumes fiduciary responsibility for gifts and bequests to the library. CPLA is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3), making all contributions fully tax deductible. To make a donation to the CPLA, please call 401-943-9080 x100 or visit cranstonlibrary.org/support-library

To view the CPLA annual report please visit: cranstonlibrary.org/CPLA/annualreport

DIRECTOR’S LETTER

This year as we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the formation of the Cranston Public Library system, we continued our work to create welcoming spaces and to remove barriers for young people to use the library.

Several major building projects were completed during 2018 with more budgeted for the beginning of 2019. At the Central Library a new roof was installed and a much-needed renovation of our public restrooms was completed. At the Oak Lawn branch the basement level program room was renovated and returned to operation following a flood from 2010.

This past June the library launched Fine Free on children’s and teen materials. We believe that fines should not be a barrier for a young person to use the library. Our efforts have already shown results with a 47% increase in the number of participants in our Summer Reading Program and almost a 50% increase in the number of children who completed the program this year! Thank you to the Library Board of Trustees, Mayor Fung and the City Council for believing in our vision.

I also want to thank all those who supported the library and provided us with additional funding this year. The Cranston Public Library Association supported programming at the library throughout the year. The Champlin Foundation’s $54,000 grant funded several new programs including our historic newspaper digital archive and will be funding a renovation of the Knightsville branch program room slated to begin in January 2019. We want to thank Senator Josh Miller, Senator Hanna Gallo, and Speaker Nicholas Mattiello for their legislative grants, which helped support ESL classes, children’s programs, and research databases.

We had another great year of growth at the Cranston Public Library with our amazing staff working hard to provide exemplary service and respond to community needs. On behalf of the Library Board of Trustees thank you for your support and we look forward to 2019!

Edward Garcia
Library Director
Cranston Public Library

PHOTO: The three directors of Cranston Public Library, left to right, 1968-1994 James Giles, 1995-2012 David Macksam, and 2012-present Ed Garcia
In 1968, the public libraries of Cranston united to form one citywide system. We celebrated the 50th anniversary of the formation of the Cranston Public Library with several open houses at each of our library branches. Festivities included raffles, scavenger hunts, refreshments, crafts, a balloon artist at Knightsville; ghost hunters, a history talk and jiu-jitsu demonstration at Oak Lawn; an architectural presentation at William Hall; and use of a 100 year-old embossing stamp at Auburn. The Arlington branch was re-named to honor former trustee and long-time library advocate Edward Costa.
CRANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
ABBREVIATED HISTORY

1888  Auburn Public Library opens on Wellington Avenue with 500-1000 volumes
1895  Arlington Library opens in district hall with 500 volumes
1896  Oak Lawn Library opens in former school house
1897  Edgewood Library moves to Norwood Avenue
1907  Arlington Library moves to Cranston Street
1927  William Hall Free Library opens, replaces Edgwood Public Library
1927  Knightsville Library opens in a store front
1932  Thornton Library opens on Plainfield Pike
1962  Knightsville Library moves to Cranston Street
1965  City Council commissions Shaffer study on library development
1966  Cranston Public Library officially founded; Oak Lawn first to join
1968  CPL officially formed from 6 libraries; James Giles appointed first library director
1977  Thornton Library closes
1983  Central Library opens as administrative center of CPL
1987  Arlington Library closes; reopens as Arlington Reading Room in new senior center
1989  Hall Library renovated
1990  Oak Lawn expands with addition
1991  New Auburn building constructed
1993  Central gets new addition
1995  David Macksam appointed new library director after Giles retirement
2012  Ed Garcia appointed new library director after Macksam's retirement
2013  Reading Room renovated into new Arlington Branch Library with new technology
2014  A $1.2M bond passed to complete major projects throughout libraries
2015  The “C-Lab” opens at Central
2017  Renovated children’s room opens at Central
Prior to the formation of the Cranston Public Library in 1968, there were six independent neighborhood libraries, beginning with the Auburn Library in 1888. The Cranston City Council commissioned a study in 1965 to craft recommendations for library development in the city. Based on this report, and in accordance with RI law, the City Council established the Cranston Public Library and appointed James Giles to be its first library director. He led the organization for 26 years, and we honored him with a ceremony to dedicate the James T. Giles Community Room at the Central Library. Senator Jack Reed, Mayor Allan Fung, other dignitaries, current and former library staff, trustees and family came together to honor him.
Building Community

CANDIDATES FORUMS
The Cranston Public Library and the Cranston Herald partnered to bring two public forums to the Central Library before the 2018 election. The first forum featured citywide candidates for the City Council. The second featured candidates for ward seats on the City Council and candidates for School Committee.

LEGOS AND LUNCH
For the second straight year, the Knightsville branch hosted the Legos and Lunch program. The children made LEGO creations while eating free lunches provided by Aramark. This program was expanded from one to two days a week and ran for 13 weeks during the summer. The library provided 487 free lunches.

EXPLORE CAMBODIA
A TalkStory grant from the Asian Pacific American Library Association allowed the library to host a series of programs about Cambodian heritage, in partnership with the Center for South-east Asians. This four-week family program focused on the geography, language, and arts of Cambodia, using the library’s laptops, 3D printers, and collection of Khmer books. The program culminated in a performance by the Cambodian Society Dance Troupe.
Buildings Upgrades

The Cranston Public Library utilized funding appropriated for capital projects to further update our library locations. We upgraded all the lighting at the Auburn branch to energy efficient LED lights. At the Central Library we installed a new roof and also renovated the public restrooms for the first time since the building’s construction in 1983. The program room at the Oak Lawn branch was renovated following a basement flood from several years ago.
SUMMER READING
This year, 995 young people signed up for the rock-music-themed summer reading challenge, a 47% increase over last year. The popular “VIP Pass” program gave kids access to a secret “backstage party” at the Central Library on a Thursday evening after the library closed to the public.

BOOKLIT
The library’s mobile reading hot spot went on the road for the first time this year. Booklit is composed of a rolling bookcase of high-interest books and a set of benches that can be taken anywhere, indoors or out, to encourage on-the-spot, in-the-moment public reading. This year, Booklit traveled to the Rhode Island Kids Reading Across Rhode Island Kick-off at the Statehouse, the YMCA’s Ok-Wa-nesset summer camp, and an evening event for families at the Roger Williams Park Zoo. This program was funded by The Rhode Island Foundation and Mary Ann & Walter Slocomb Fund.
THE ROOSTER GAMES
At the first annual Cranston Rooster Games, more than 80 third through fifth grade Cranston Public School students converged on the library to compete in a trivia-style competition based on the 2018 Rhode Island Children’s Book Award nominees. A team from Barrows School won the coveted giant rooster trophy at this collaboration between the library and Cranston Public School librarians.

NATURE EXPLORERS
Young patrons of the William Hall Library have benefited from a sustained partnership between the library and the Nature Swap program at Roger Williams Park Zoo. Taking advantage of the gorgeous outdoor space at William Hall, the youth services librarian there has hosted 10 Urban Nature Explorer family programs, connecting children with the natural world through readalouds, outdoor play, and the opportunity to trade natural objects they find for skeletons, geodes, and turtle shells at the Nature Swap.
MATTIELLO GRANT
A generous legislative grant from Speaker Mattiello allowed the library to purchase soft seating and toys for two branch children’s areas. This is part of a continuing initiative to make all locations more welcoming to young children and their families.

FAMILY CODE NIGHT
On December 11, 2018, more than 30 families attended the first-ever Family Code Night at a public library in Rhode Island. Infosys Foundation awarded a grant to URI’s Graduate School of Library and Information Studies to offer Family Code Night events at public libraries across the state, so CPL teamed up with the Cranston Family Center to recruit participants for the inaugural event. The library also hosted a training and media event to highlight the importance of introducing children to coding and computer programming.
During a 2017 drive to sign up Cranston Public School students for library cards, staff discovered that many young people already had library cards but couldn’t use them because of fines and fees. In fact, almost a third of library cards belonging to young people in Cranston were unusable. Library staff studied the problem, learning from library systems that had reduced or removed fines. Then, with the goal of encouraging families to use the library without fear, the Library Director sought support from the Board of Trustees and Mayor Fung to stop charging overdue fines on children’s and teen materials.

In June 2018, Cranston became the first public library in Rhode Island to make all children’s and teen materials fine free. The Providence and Warwick libraries soon followed. Young people must still return overdue materials before they can check out something new, but when they bring Cranston children’s and teen materials back late, they do not need to worry about paying a fine.
This year, 1043 people received technology help through one of our library computer classes or other technology programs such as Open Tech Time, Rhode Coders or a one-on-one appointment with one of our technology librarians.

Through our longstanding partnership with the Rhode Island Family Literacy Initiative (RIFLI) 108 students took part in one of our adult learners programs. CPL offered ESL and citizenship classes at the Auburn branch and William Hall Library and conversation classes at the Central Library. Registered students represented 38 different countries including China, Dominican Republic and Syria. 29 students completed the citizenship classes, passed the citizenship exam and became naturalized citizens.
DIGITAL ARCHIVE
The Cranston Public Library launched a digital archive of historic Cranston newspapers funded by a grant from the Champlin Foundation. The archive launched with digitized copies of 13 newspapers dating back to 1885. The archive is available free via the library’s website. Users can do keyword searches and download articles as pdf files.

CHARGING STATIONS
With public WiFi use at the library on the rise, charging stations were added at all locations. These stations include power adapters for most cell phones and mobile devices. The stations were funded by a grant from the Champlin Foundation.

Library Improvements

KANOPY
In May, the popular on-demand streaming service Kanopy was made available free to all Cranston Public Library cardholders. Kanopy offers a broad selection of more than 30,000 films including quality documentaries, feature films, foreign language films and training videos. Kanopy at the Cranston Public Library is made possible with support from the Mary Ann and Walter Slocomb Fund at the Cranston Public Library Association.

FOUNDATION DIRECTORY
With funding from a legislative grant from Speaker Mattiello, the Library has added the popular grant research database Foundation Directory Online. The grant was a partnership between the library and the Cranston City Council and will allow the city, area non-profits and library patrons interested in grant research access to comprehensive and accurate information on U.S. grantmakers and their funding activities.
CRANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

401,869 Visits to the Library

69,680 Reference Questions Answered

350 Free Notary Services Provided for the Public

69,919 Public Computer Sessions

11,256 Hours Open

CIRCULATION

561,182 Physical & digital items borrowed

68,585 items loaned to other libraries

PROGRAMS HELD

345 Pre-School Programs

164 School Age Programs

59 Teen Programs

641 Adult Programs

146 Family Programs

1,355 Total Programs

CIRCULATION BY AUDIENCE

66.8% Adult

4.0% Teen

29.1% Youth
BY THE NUMBERS

65,892
Public WiFi Sessions

5701
Items delivered to homebound residents

35,384
Library Card Holders

172
Teen volunteers

955
teen community service hours

EZONE CIRCULATION
eBooks, Audio Books, Streaming Video
2013: 11,933
2014: 33,977
2015: 41,036
2016: 49,252
2017: 49,716
2018: 57,334

618
Community Programs & Meetings Hosted

12,574
Children attended youth programs

26,993
People Attended a Library Program

COLLECTION
205,478
Books
33,350
Periodicals
16,784
CDs
21,955
DVDs
277,567
Total Items
1. CENTRAL LIBRARY
140 SOCKANOSSET CROSS RD, CRANSTON RI 02920  401.943.9080

2. 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