



DES MOINES  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Annual Report  
2017/18





“When all else fails, turn to the library.”

—Kristi Monroe  
Read her story on page 7

# Contents

4



Letter from the Director

Letter from the President,  
Board of Trustees



5

6



Cardholder Story: Jamie Gulley

Cardholder Story: Kristi Monroe



7

8-9



Spotlight on Early Literacy

Spotlight on BIG Events



10-11

12



Spotlight on Senior Outreach

DMPL Foundation



13

14-15



Financials and Statistics

# Letter from the Director

**S**tories. Where would we be without stories? Allow us to share some of our library stories of a successful year at the Des Moines Public Library with you.

Our focus at the Des Moines Public Library is providing a safe space where all are welcome. A place of civility, information, and shared culture. By providing free access to information and materials, we hope to further your personal story through self-empowerment and learning.

Through our programming and community space, we strive to provide a social infrastructure where all walks of life may gather to share, listen, and grow. We offer thousands of programs for children and teens each year to keep them reading and engaged.

Early literacy is especially important for the youngest of our community's children. By providing a solid foundation of reading and access to books from an early age, these children will arrive at kindergarten ready to read. Ready to learn.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, you'll read about another of the library's great successes of the past year: our outstanding outreach programs at senior and community centers all over Des Moines. In between, we serve patrons needing internet access, language learning skills, and help with finding employment. Or just help in finding good books, great music, and popular movies.

What is your library story? How may we serve you? Let us find that perfect book for you – or eBook or audiobook. Let us help with your homework needs and research projects. Everyone's story is unique and we hope to be a part of your inspiring story.

— Susan A. Woody, *Library Director*



## LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION

Susan A. Woody, *Director*

Linda Roe, *Deputy Director*

Jen Tormey, *Supervising Librarian, Technical Services*

Sarah Scholten, *Supervising Librarian, Central Library*

Brooke Santillan, *Senior Librarian, Central Library*

Carolyn Greufe, *Supervising Librarian, Franklin Avenue Library*

Ashley Molzen, *Senior Librarian, East Side Library*

Nikki Hayter, *Senior Librarian, Forest Avenue Library*

Jon Hobbs, *Senior Librarian, North Side Library*

Brenda Hall, *Senior Librarian, South Side Library*

Tim Paluch, *Community Engagement Supervisor*

Jon Choda, *Building Maintenance Supervisor*



# Letter from the President, Board of Trustees

The Des Moines Public Library wrapped up another year of serving our community, and we have much success to celebrate. During the last fiscal year, there were more than 800,000 in-person visits to the Des Moines Public Library's six buildings. The library's public computers were used more than 130,000 times. There were more than 725,000 visits to the DMPL website. And, 1.3 million items —physical and digital — were checked out.

These numbers reinforce what the Des Moines Public Library Board of Trustees and I believe is an indisputable fact: The public library is as vital a resource to its community as ever.

The library continues to evolve to match the wants and needs of its users, offering new digital resources from eBooks to streaming video to online tools for learning languages and customizing legal documents.

But while the Des Moines Public Library and its offerings look different today than they did a few decades or even years ago, our core mission remains the same, and our community continues to put its trust in us and the services we provide.

Because behind every impressive number and statistic is a personal experience — a moment in time when a citizen needed the library and the library and its dedicated staff were there to help them.

That hard, important work will happen once again this year, next year, and beyond. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, we look forward to continue serving the needs of our cardholders and the people of Des Moines.

— Wes Graham, *President, Board of Trustees*

## DES MOINES PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Library Board of Trustees is comprised of five dedicated central Iowans who volunteer their personal time throughout the year. Members are appointed by the Mayor of Des Moines and approved by the Des Moines City Council. The autonomous board meets monthly to set policies and guide the library's administration, while also working with city leaders to ensure the Des Moines Public Library meets the needs of Des Moines residents.



## TRUSTEES SERVING DURING THE FY 2017-18:

Wes Graham, *President*  
Jennifer Fiihr, *Vice President*  
Isobel Osius, *Secretary*  
Jule A. Thorsen  
Bob Mahaffey

# Cardholder Story

## Jamie Gulley



“I need the library. It wouldn't be possible for me to get my degree without it.”

Jamie Gulley is a 43-year-old Des Moines mother who wants to give back to her community. That's why she's pursuing a degree in Health and Human Services. The only way she can do that is by taking online courses – and the only way she can take online courses is by using the Des Moines Public Library.

“I don't have a computer at home,” Gulley says. “I came to the library to use the computer. Then I realized the library has more resources than I thought it did. It was kind of a blessing in disguise.”

She also has two sons. While she is taking classes and studying, her kids attend library programs, play in the children's area, and find books they love.

“They want to read more. They want to check out books,” says Gulley, adding that she's noticed a big difference in how they view reading. “They've discovered they can find books they like to read – their kind of books.” She adds that the boys love attending children's programs as well, and they come to the library even when she doesn't need to do school-related activities.

After getting her degree, Gulley wants to give back to her community through nonprofit work – “helping someone help themselves. Then hopefully, they help someone else.”

This goal is only possible because of the library. “I need the library,” Gulley says. “It wouldn't be possible for me to get my degree without it, no.”

“I grew up in poverty, and I'm still growing up in poverty. But I'm trying to get myself out and teach my boys how to get a degree. You can do it, no matter how old you are. I'm 43. You can do it!”



# Cardholder Story

## Kristi Monroe

Kristi Monroe and her two children – Zanna, 6, and Zophie, 4 – moved to Des Moines' south side nine years ago under “chaotic circumstances,” she says. Kristi didn't have a job or access to the internet, and did not know much about what the city offered in general.

“When all else fails,” she says, “turn to the library.”

Monroe used library resources to find a job. The family also used the library to surf the internet, check out books, and borrow movies. “Getting our feet planted and being safe and being where we needed to be – I found a lot of that at the library.”

The family has grown up at the library, too. Zanna is now 15, and Zophie is 13. After checking out books and movies, the duo discovered the programs the library offered, including crafts, board games, and even computer programming.

“Occasionally, they had Raspberry Pis, which are minicomputers,” says Zanna. “We got to code them or do different games on them. It was just really fun.” Kristi eventually bought Zanna one for Christmas.

Both Zanna and Zophie are now regular volunteers at the library. They've helped with crafts and dressed in costumes during storytimes for younger kids. The experience has helped them grow, their mom says.

“It gives them social skills and interactions,” says Kristi. “There are so many opportunities to sit at home and stare at a screen. This gives them the opportunity to work with other people, younger people, the public – you know, they just do good things.”

The Monroe family credits library staff for being knowledgeable and welcoming.

“The librarians are always happy to help you,” says Zophie.

“It's just so comfortable here,” says Zanna.



Healthy Public Research

“ Getting our feet planted and being safe and being where we needed to be — I found a lot of that at the library. ”

# Spotlight on Early Literacy



**SIMPLE  
STEPS**  
...TO SUCCESS

READ WRITE SING PLAY TALK

With support from Polk County Early Childhood Iowa and several grassroots community organizations, our **Simple Steps to Success** initiative continued to give parents, caretakers, and early childhood advocates resources to emphasize the importance of incorporating five core concepts — read, write, sing, play, talk — into a child's life, no matter their age.

In our second year of Simple Steps, we increased our reach into the community by developing an awareness campaign on social media, in addition to TV, radio, mailers, materials at schools and pediatricians' offices, and more. We also translated our 30-second videos into Burmese so we could reach this growing Des Moines community with this vital message.

**All Summer Long**, the Des Moines Public Library's summer reading program, was a success again this year. Nearly 5,000 children signed up for the program, which encourages kids and families to keep reading throughout the summer to help stop the "summer slide" — the loss of academic skills and knowledge over summer break. Studies have shown that simply reading every day over the summer is often enough to help sustain academic gains made during the school year.



Kids in the All Summer Long program stay engaged and keep learning by reading books and taking part in summer learning activities to win prizes. Activities included creating a story using pictures, visiting a museum, and building a reading fort. Library programs encouraged both reading and STEM activities. Kids got the chance to get hands-on with insects, learned about sound in nature with help from the Science Center of Iowa, and saw pirates take to the open sea during a Jester Puppets show.









# Spotlight on BIG Events

The library is open to everyone, but it's fun to be in the spotlight every now and then. In addition to our regular programming, two major events brought hundreds of people and families through our doors this past year.

About 1,500 people – many in costume – showed up at Central Library on a Sunday in May for the first MyDMPL Con, a “family-friendly festival for all fandoms.” Disney princesses and costumed superheroes roamed the library, food trucks parked outside, and interactive crafts and activities filled the meeting rooms. Kids made magic wands, learned to draw manga, stepped into a green screen scene, and more.

The DMPL Youth Services team created the event as a family-focused and family-friendly alternative to area comic conferences. After its inaugural year success, MyDMPL Con promises to now be an annual signature event for the library.





# 18TH ANNUAL AVID AUTHORS VISITING IN DES MOINES

The Des Moines Public Library hosted six nationally known authors for the 18th season of its Authors Visiting in Des Moines (AVID) series. More than 1,500 people attended author lectures this season, including nearly 800 people that packed into Roosevelt High School's auditorium to hear from *A Gentleman in Moscow* author Amor Towles. Our other hosted authors spoke on issues such as class, stoicism, the process of writing, and civility. One patron told us:

*"Thanks to everyone involved in AVID (and DMPL). I've greatly enjoyed all the talks – even if the type of book wasn't at least initially what I'd have chosen for myself to read. I'm now reading fiction for the first time in probably 10-12 years thanks to AVID and Amor Towles!"*



Stephanie Powell Watts, seated, at the book signing table at her AVID speech in 2018.



Suku Radia, left, moderates a question-and-answer session with AVID author Amor Towles.



# Spotlight on Senior Outreach



In 2017, the DMPL received a grant from American Enterprise to provide specific programming for area senior citizens. The project was a success, featuring book discussions and outreach programs, but in applying for the grant again for 2018, South Side Library branch manager Brenda Hall aimed to expand the program to be more engaging, hoping for more meaningful interactions with this vital demographic of library patrons.

The DMPL partnered with five senior centers and two community centers, and a dedicated librarian worked with the centers to set up four DMPL events at each location. The events are tailored to each center's needs, with topics ranging from Tai Chi to wills and estates to protecting oneself against identity theft. Book discussions returned, as well. Librarians signed up new cardholders, taught seniors how to use library resources, and provided books. The partnership opened the DMPL and its resources to important members of the community, while also allowing us to take those resources outside our walls to those people who use them.



# DMPL Foundation



Opening Doors. Books. Minds.

**Tim Hickman**, *President*

**Dawn Taylor**, *Vice President*

**Dave Watson**, *Treasurer*

**Jan Kaiser**, *Co-Secretary*

**Stephanie DeVolder**, *Co-Secretary*

**Ellen Yee**, *Past President*

Alex Duong

Deidre Fudge

Michele Guinn

Denise Holck

Steve Jayne

Sasha Kamper

Tracy Lewis

Cory McAnelly

Elvin McDonald

Trevor Meers

Paul Melde

Brandon Paulsen

Alison Ruan

Mark Siebert

Craig Sieverding

Rachel Stauffer

Martha Stephenson

Kathie Swift

**Wes Graham**, *President, DMPL Board of Trustees*

**Susan A. Woody**, *Library Director*

**Dory Briles**, *Foundation Executive Director*



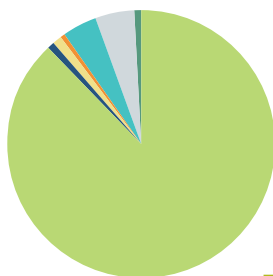
The Des Moines Public Library Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that supports the services, capabilities, and programs at all six Des Moines Public Library branches. Thanks to the generosity of donors, the Foundation plays a key role in funding many major library programs each year, including the Authors Visiting in Des Moines (AViD) series, the Summer Reading and School Readiness Program, and the Technology Fund used to purchase public computers and printers in the library buildings. The Foundation helps fund children, teen, and adult programming and enhances the library's collection.

# Financials

## FUNDING SOURCES | FISCAL YEAR 17/18

City of Des Moines	\$7,454,533	88%
Polk County	\$62,820	0.74%
State of Iowa	\$103,653	1.22%
Grants	\$29,269	0.35%
DMPL Foundation	\$352,682	4.16%
Fines and fees	\$418,597	4.94%
Other income	\$49,710	0.59%

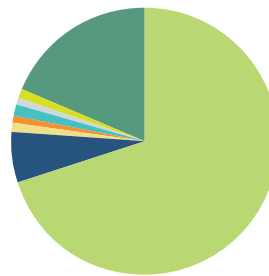
**TOTAL \$8,471,264**



## EXPENDITURES | FISCAL YEAR 17/18

Personnel	\$5,941,853	70.14%
Physical print materials	\$525,883	6.21%
Physical audio materials	\$77,692	0.92%
Physical video materials	\$80,728	0.95%
eBook expenditures	\$105,379	1.24%
Other downloadable audio materials	\$88,159	1.04%
Online resources and other electronic materials	\$85,338	1.01%
Other operating expenditures	\$1,566,232	18.49%

**TOTAL \$8,471,264**



## By The Numbers

### STAFFING

40 Professional

Total Staffing 92

Volunteer Hours 2,946

13,363 Hours Open

### LIBRARY USAGE

813,042 In-Person Visits

Website Visits 728,208

1,327,106 Circulation of Materials

95,553 Active Cardholders

### MATERIALS

\$963,179 Materials Expenditures

Materials Expenditure per Capita \$4.42

Materials Added 50,895

478,237 Total Materials (Physical + Digital)



# By The Numbers

612 Adult Programs



130,248

Uses of Public Computers

208,874 Reference Transactions



120

Public  
Computers  
Available



23,376

Attendance at  
Adult Programs

363,645 Children's Books Checked Out

1,897 Children's Programs

41,182 Attendees at Children's Programs

4,813 Registrations for All Summer Long



Estimated  
MyDMPLCon  
Attendance

Attendance for Amor Towles AViD Lecture 780

Seasons  
of AViD

18

46,949

Total AViD  
Attendance  
Since 2001



138

AViD  
Speakers  
Since 2001



515.283.4152

[www.dmpl.org](http://www.dmpl.org)

### Central Library

1000 Grand Avenue

### East Side Library

2559 Hubbell Avenue

### Forest Avenue Library

1326 Forest Avenue

### Franklin Avenue Library

5000 Franklin Avenue

### North Side Library

3516 Fifth Avenue

### South Side Library

1111 Porter Avenue

### Connect with us!



**T. M. Franklin Cownie, Mayor**

**Bill Gray, Ward 1**

**Linda Westergaard, Ward 2**

**Josh Mandelbaum, Ward 3**

**Joe Gatto, Ward 4**

**Christopher Coleman, At Large**

**Connie Boesen, At Large**

**Scott Sanders, City Manager**

