



Oakland Public Library

ANNUAL REPORT



Greetings friends,

The past year was a time for celebration and milestones for Oakland Public Library.

We kicked off the celebration by marking the 40th Anniversary of Second Start Adult Literacy and Learning. What started in 1984 with a mission to assist adults with basic reading and writing has since evolved into a comprehensive program that supports learners in reaching their literacy goals, while also offering classes in financial management, digital skills, and more. The program's success is a direct result of the commitment of its volunteer tutors, who work closely with learners to help them achieve their goals. In 2024, we celebrated a remarkable duo who have been working together for ten consecutive years.

For the first time since its opening in 1951, Oakland's Main Library underwent critical infrastructure repairs. I am deeply grateful to the Oakland voters for their support in voting for Measures KK and U, to the California State Library for "Building Forward" grant funds and to the OPL team for their dedication in preparing for and handling the closure. We invite you to stop by soon, explore the improvements, check out a book, or attend a program at the revitalized Main Library!

Anthony Propernick, a longtime OPL employee, recently received the prestigious Alameda County "Bike Champion of the Year" award. This recognition is so well deserved—Anthony has been a consistent and welcoming presence at OPL for decades. In his humble manner, Anthony shared that the award wasn't just about him, but about the East Oakland Engagement team and the incredible work they do, which stands as a testament to his dedication to his team and the communities they serve.

In 2022, OPL partnered with the Eat. Learn. Play. Foundation to launch the Little Town Library initiative in Oakland. This program aims to address low literacy rates among children, promote lifelong learning and reading, and encourage book sharing. As of 2024, there are 20 Little Town Libraries in Oakland. I'm incredibly grateful for this partnership and for OPL's Manny Hernandez, who leads this project, turning this vision into reality and helping expand OPL's reach across the city.

The Bookmark Bookstore has a new home in downtown Oakland. The Bookmark has been a staple in The Town for 32 years and the new location on Broadway is larger, brighter and will offer more space for shoppers and special events. Thank you to the dedicated volunteers who run the store and to the Friends of the Oakland Public Library for their unwavering support of OPL. Please visit soon and buy a few books.

Finally, in 2024 we celebrated the 50th Anniversary of Hip Hop and the invaluable contributions of African Americans to the arts and Oakland with the release of nine limited-edition library cards. The launch was met with overwhelming enthusiasm from the community, and even a year later, people continue to celebrate these cards, honoring the rich Black history, culture, and individuals they represent.

We had a good year at OPL. Learn more inside this report.

Sincerely,

Jamie Turbak

Jamie Turbak
Library Director



CELEBRATING BLACK ARTISTS, HISTORY AND CULTURE

Limited Edition Library Cards

In February 2024, Oakland Public Library introduced nine limited-edition library cards celebrating the impacting contributions of African Americans to the arts in Oakland, offering a local twist on the national Black History Month theme, "African American and the Arts."

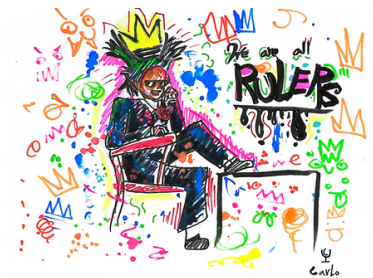
The library card art contest invited artists of all ages to submit original works in five categories-- Music, Visual Arts, Theater and Performing Arts, Literature and Poetry, and a special category to honor the 50th anniversary of Hip Hop.

The contest received over 100 submissions, with nine winning designs selected—three each from children, teens, and adults. Winning designs celebrate African Americans and their significant contributions to the arts in Oakland. Three cards pay tribute to history makers from the Black Panther Party, while others highlight Black authors and literature, graffiti as an art form, and music from jazz to Hip Hop.

"What began as an idea to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Hip Hop evolved into a broader movement honoring Oakland and the arts as a whole," said Tarshel Beards, community relations manager for OPL. "The winning designs embody the spirit of Black artistry, culture, and history, beautifully reflecting Oakland's legacy of activism and innovation."



Learn more about the designs and artists at oaklandlibrary.org/artcontest/winners



Carlo Barravino

We Are All Rulers of Our Artistic Journey



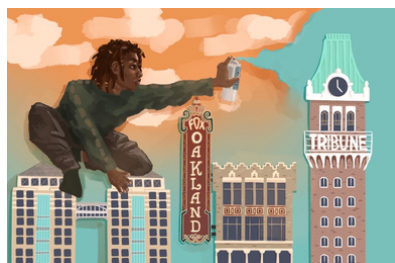
Lucas Oda

African American Musicians



Molly Wolferson

Angela Reads



Kiara Hunter

Spray Painting Oakland



Cora Vera Keith

Women of the Black Panther Party



Carmen Lieu

Blooming Knowledge



Kelly To

Emory Douglas: The Black Panther Minister of Culture



Ajuan Mance

The Transformation Of Silence Into Language



Shomari Smith

Oakland's Hip Hop 50

PARTNERING WITH THE COMMUNITY TO IMPROVE LITERACY AND SPREAD THE LOVE OF READING

Little Town Library

In 2022, Oakland Public Library partnered with the Eat. Learn. Play. Foundation, a non profit founded by Ayesha and Stephen Curry to create Little Town Libraries (LTL) in Oakland.

The initiative was inspired by The Little Free Library, a book-sharing concept that supports communities in creating fun, tiny libraries in front yards of homes and businesses for families to share books and develop their children's passion for reading.

The United States is facing a literacy crisis. According to Oakland Reads, nationally only one in three children reads at grade level by the end of third grade. In Oakland, the numbers are even more concerning, with just 15.4% of Black children and 12.5% of Latino/a children reading at grade level. The COVID pandemic has further worsened these disparities, disproportionately affecting Oakland's most vulnerable communities.

This program seeks to reverse these statistics and boost literacy among Oakland's youth by placing small, accessible libraries in under-resourced neighborhoods in East Oakland, West Oakland, Chinatown and Fruitvale.

As of 2024, Oakland has 20 Little Town libraries, offering free, culturally relevant books to children and families to foster a love for reading and learning. With the support of community partners, OPL staff selects and maintains books for these libraries, ensuring they represent the community's demographics and needs.

"There is power in literacy and youth having access to books in their communities," said Manuel Hernandez, senior library assistant for OPL who manages the Little Town Library program. "We choose books based on input from the communities served by the program and feedback from our LTL ambassadors who have a keen understanding of what genres and categories work best at their sites. We also use readers' advisory techniques to learn which books are most likely to resonate with the youth at each location. Our goal is to provide culturally and linguistically relevant books that reflect the diverse experiences of Oakland youth, with a particular focus on BIPOC communities."

Learn more at oaklandlibrary.org/little-town-libraries



Little Town Library at the Ira Jenkins Recreational Center, East Oakland, California



Bookmark Bookstore

Founded in 1950, the Friends of the Oakland Public Library (FOPL) is an independent, nonprofit membership organization that provides critical financial and volunteer support to OPL. Additionally, the all-volunteer Board of Directors exemplifies true friendship to the library. They advocate for library services at City Hall, promote OPL programs to the public, lead volunteer outreach and improvement initiatives, and respond to library needs with unwavering enthusiasm and support.

The Friends opened the Bookmark Bookstore in 1992 to raise funds for the library. After three years in its initial location, the Friends moved the store to nearby 721 Washington Street in April 1995. There it operated - at times overflowing with donated books - as a special gathering place for library supporters and book lovers.

With the lack of space a constant issue in this small historic storefront, the Friends Board of Directors initiated the search for a new home for the Bookmark in late 2023. Thankfully, the search was short, and they found the perfect new location just blocks away at 933 Broadway. The Friends moved into this new space - also in a beautiful, historic building - in May and held a "soft opening" on June 15, 2024.

Under the leadership of two part-time paid co-managers, the all-volunteer bookstore staff sell gently used books, puzzles, games, DVDs, CDs, LPs, and ephemera at the new store and online. Sale proceeds, along with Friends of the OPL memberships and donations have recently generated more than \$225,000 per year. These funds are used for library programs, services, administrative needs, and facility improvements.

OPL congratulates FOPL on this milestone in their long history and wishes them continued success with the store. We are also enormously grateful to everyone who volunteers their time, donates books and other media, and shops at the Bookmark.

Learn more at fopl.org



CELEBRATING

Anthony Propernick

Oakland Public Library congratulates Anthony Propernick for being recognized as one of Alameda County's 2024 Bike Champions of the Year by the Bay Area Bike To Work Day organization. This award honors individuals in nine San Francisco Bay Area counties who inspire bicycling in their communities and demonstrate a strong commitment to using bicycles as their primary mode of transportation.

Propernick, a senior library assistant and dedicated community activist has worked for OPL more than 20 years. He has led numerous successful biking and outreach initiatives, fostering connections to bike resources, literacy programs, library services, and community support networks.

"Winning the award wasn't about me it was about recognizing the work that the East Oakland Engagement Team does at The Bike Fix," Propernick said. "It felt good because it meant that the work we're doing to support the community is valued. For me, the real reward comes from serving my community, building relationships, and being in the work itself. The Bike Champion Award helps raise awareness of the disparities in bike infrastructure and repair services that East Oakland residents face. Improving that access, and making it more equitable, is what drives me and is why I accepted the award."

Propernick's passion for biking, literacy, and working with youth drives his mission to improve biking accessibility through library programs in East Oakland.

In 2013, Propernick coordinated a bike repair workshop at the 81st Ave branch during Bike to Work month. At the time, there were no bike shops in East Oakland east of 50th Ave. After the workshop, word spread that there were people at the library who could fix bikes, and people started bringing in bikes, mostly for flat tire repairs.

The Bike Fix was born.



Our goal is not just to connect residents to library branches, but to **bring the library to them.**

- Anthony Propernick

The Bike Fix at 81st Ave has become the year-round, go-to place for free bike repairs. It fills a critical transportation need in East Oakland, especially for those who wouldn't be able to afford repairs. Due to its success, the program has expanded to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Branch.

The focus on biking and community outreach includes The Bike Library Lounge, a mobile outreach program that brings Oakland Public Library books and activities directly to the community. Propernick coordinates The East Oakland Engagement Team, which sets up bike-powered library lounges in Oakland at parks, special programs and street events.

A core component of library outreach is the forming of productive relationships with local organizations and professionals to support successful programming. Propernick is dedicated to that charge beyond biking, though biking remains a priority because each repair and giveaway is an opportunity to connect and build relationships to help people in various areas of their lives.

"Some of the youth who attended those early clinics now work with us on bike repairs at the library," Propernick said. "Our work fosters respect, support, and community. People of all ages come to the Bike Fix, whether for fun or as a transportation necessity. Together, we help each other get on bikes and keep riding."

Learn more at oaklandlibrary.org/bikes



East Oakland Engagement Team with Library Director L-R: Anthony Propernick, Manny Hernandez, Hana Kadoyama, RB Burnette, J Jimenez, Onaji Bush, Jamie Turbak



ADULT LITERACY & LEARNING

SECOND START

EST 1984

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF ADULT LEARNING

Second Start Adult Literacy and Learning (Second Start), Oakland Public Library's free adult literacy program, provides personalized tutoring to help adults improve their reading, writing, and math skills. The program, which started in 1984, is one of the original library-based literacy programs in California. Since its founding 40 years ago, Second Start has empowered countless learners by pairing them with trained volunteer tutors for one-on-one sessions.

According to the 2022-2023 California State Library's report to the legislature on literacy, 28 percent of Californians aged 18 and older—approximately 8.5 million people—read at or below a second-grade level. While public libraries and other state partners offer literacy services across California, only a small portion of those in need receive assistance, highlighting the critical need for increased funding to support adult literacy programs.

The definition of literacy has evolved to meet the changing needs of learners in California and beyond. Literacy now extends beyond basic reading, writing, and math skills to include digital and technology proficiency, as well as English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction and other essential skills.

Today, Second Start has expanded to include new offerings, such as computer and digital literacy tutoring. Learners can also participate in workshops and classes to build job readiness skills or financial literacy. Partnerships help Second Start offer GED preparation for a HS diploma and support for ESL learners. Learners also have access to books, computers and a range of educational resources to support their literacy journeys. Finally, Second Start staff spreads awareness about adult literacy by providing workshops to community groups, organizations and partners.

To reflect our ongoing growth and future direction, we are now **Second Start Adult Literacy and Learning.**

"A key aspect of our programming is the strong bond between learners and tutors," said Stephanie Singleton, a librarian who manages the program. "Second Start fosters a safe, confidential, and supportive environment where learners not only reach their literacy goals but also experience personal growth and greater confidence. In 2024, we celebrated the tenth anniversaries of two dedicated tutors, one of whom has been paired with the same learner for the entire decade."

Second Start Adult Literacy and Learning looks forward to many more years serving Oakland's adult learners and empowering them with the skills and confidence they need to achieve and exceed their goals.

Learn more at oaklandlibrary.org/secondstart



The reason I have all my stories is because of the people who work at Second Start. They are the people who helped me sit down in front of a computer for the very first time. I had never even seen what a computer looked like before.

- Meuy Saeteurn

Second Start Learner
"Many Generations" author

oaklandlibrary.pressbooks.pub/meuysaeteurn



Second Start Tutor Julia and Learner Meuy

Main Library

Keeping Oakland Public Library's (OPL) 18 facilities in good working order and protecting their valuable collections is an ongoing challenge. Even in the best of years, the budget for routine maintenance falls short of what is needed.

This is why OPL's leadership was thrilled to learn about the Building Forward Library Facilities Improvement Program and applied for the grants in 2022 and 2023. This equity-focused competitive grant program was available to public library buildings to address critical maintenance needs and improve infrastructure.

Between two rounds of applications, OPL secured a total \$12 million in grants to make important enhancements at four locations: African American Museum and Library at Oakland (AAMLO), Brookfield Branch, the Main Library, and Melrose Branch.

Thanks to Oakland voters who supported Bond Measures KK and U, the City of Oakland was able to provide the necessary matching funds required for grant funding.

The Main Library project was the first to begin.

"This is the Main Library's first renovation since opening in 1951," said Jamie Turbak, library director. "I am thankful to the voters and our staff who diligently prepared for the closure throughout 2023 and the first quarter of 2024. Also, thank you to our patrons for their patience during closure."

The Main Library closed on May 26, 2024 for these construction upgrades and reopened to the public December 2, 2024. Critical improvements throughout the building include:

- + **New roof installation**
- + **Electrical system modernization**
- + **New boiler control system**
- + **Heating and cooling improvements**
- + **Enhanced lighting & ceiling upgrades**

Other improvements enhance the library environment with refinished floors, fresh paint, window film, window coverings, new ceiling fans, and energy-efficient light fixtures.

Finally, the Community Room received major improvements such as new flooring, secure doors, frosted windows, enhanced lighting, a cooling system, and a kitchenette. With the adjacent courtyard enclosed by a beautiful iron fence, this expands OPL's ability to host more outdoor programs and events.

"Closing the Main Library for six months was no easy decision, as it serves as the central hub for our library system and is truly the heart of Oakland," said Turbak. "However, this renovation was essential and it represents more than just physical upgrades, it reflects our ongoing commitment to creating a safe, welcoming space for everyone."

During closure, the mural "Gateway to Knowledge" by artist Ed Cassel (1947 - 2024) was retouched by Public Works staff painters.

The City of Oakland's leadership and community partners gathered on December 12, 2024 to celebrate the reopening with a ceremonial ribbon cutting.



OAKLAND
PUBLIC LIBRARY



OAKLAND
PUBLIC LIBRARY
125

MAIN LIBRARY IS NOW OPEN
Welcome back!
CITY OF OAKLAND oaklandlibrary.org

FIRE
DEPARTMENT
CONNECTION

OPEN

Financials

2023-24 Financial Stats*

Expenditures by Fund Source

General Purpose Fund	\$ 10,541,454
Measure Q	\$ 20,548,900
Measure D	\$ 15,393,217
Measure HH	\$ 16,578
Local/State/Federal Grants	\$ 163,454
Trust Fund & Others	\$ 73,714
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Total	\$ 46,737,317

Expenditures by Category

Personnel	\$ 35,323,814
Operations & Maintenance	\$ 8,447,138
Books & Other Materials	\$ 2,966,365
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Total	\$ 46,737,317

Population Estimates

July 1, 2023 - from the United States Census Bureau

Oakland	436,504
Emeryville	12,732
Piedmont	10,635
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Total OPL Service Area	459,871

Average Investment

Per Capita	\$101.63
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*Numbers subject to audit by Oakland City Auditor

Friends of the Oakland Public Library

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ynez Arce
Jennifer Chan
Mifta Chowdhury
Stephen Cole
Erica Dennings
Elizabeth Falkner
Aniya Grimm
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Corey Hatcher
Sara Jewell

Diana Kaw
Pooneh Koohyar
Ronile Lahti
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Glenn Poppe
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Cathy Smith
Cristina Tostado
Angelica Valentine
Alex Weinberg
Karen Zukor

*On September 26, 2023, the Oakland City Council changed the name from the Library Advisory Commission to the Library Commission.

Supporters

The Oakland Public Library benefits from a generous community of volunteers and donors who provide support for library programs and services. The library is pleased to acknowledge the following organizations who contributed to our work between July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024.

Amigos de la Biblioteca César E. Chávez

Herman Auerbach Memorial Fund Trust II*

California State Library*

Eat. Learn. Play. Foundation*

First 5 Alameda County*

Friends of Dimond Library

Friends of Elmhurst Library

Friends of Hoover Durant Public Library

Friends of Lakeview Library

Friends of Melrose Library

Friends of Montclair Library

Friends of Rockridge Library*

Friends of the Asian Library

Friends of the Golden Gate Library

Friends of the Oakland History Center

Friends of the Oakland Public Library

Friends of the Oakland Tool Lending Library

Friends of the Piedmont Avenue Library

Friends of the Temescal Branch Library

Friends-Stewards of the African American Museum & Library at Oakland

William G. Gilmore Foundation*

Harnly/Roeper Fund at the East Bay Community Foundation*

Hellman Foundation Fund*

Matson Foundation*

Oakland Athletics*

The Bernard Osher Foundation*

Pacific Library Partnership*

Phi Beta Kappa

The Picsha Foundation*

The Rodrigo Quintanilla Memorial Fund*

Kenneth Rainin Foundation*

ServiceNow*

The Judith and Robert C. Toll Fund*

The Walters Family Charitable Fund*

West Oakland Library Friends

Young Family Charitable Fund

*Provided support through the Friends of the Oakland Public Library

Administration

23 / 24

Jamie Turbak
Library Director

Nina Lindsay
Associate Director

Bamidele Agbasegbe-Demerson
Chief Curator, AAMLO

Calvin Hao
Project Manager

Derrick DeMay
Supervising Librarian, Branches

Diane Tannenwald
Project Manager

Janelle Montu Veresa
Fiscal Manager

Jenera Burton
Supervising Librarian, Branches

Jiao Han
Library IT and Technical Services Manager

Kere Gonzales
Executive Assistant to the Director

Laura Liang
Supervising Librarian, Children's Services

Mana Tominaga
Supervising Librarian, Main Library

Sharon McKellar
Supervising Librarian, Teen Services

Tabitha Pulliam
Human Resources Manager

Tarshel Beards
Community Relations Manager

Thanita Adams
Safety Manager



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