Hamilton County

cincinnati public library

Annual Report 2020

A Letter from the Library Director

As someone who was born and raised in Cincinnati, I know that in the past our city has weathered challenges like floods, tornadoes, and yellow fever. Yet, I never thought that in my lifetime I'd experience a global pandemic. The year 2020 was a time of adapting for the Cincinnati & Hamilton County Public Library, and this annual report may look different from years past because the needs of the community we're privileged to serve changed so much and so quickly.

During the brief period when we had to close our doors in the spring, we continued providing services via the phone, website, and social media. We also used that time to pivot and make sure when we re-opened we were offering services most needed by the community. I am grateful for partnerships that helped us achieve this, such as the free COVID-19 testing we offered at 26 of our locations with the help of UC Health and The Health Collaborative. I am also very appreciative of the Ohio General Assembly for their decision to provide public libraries in the state with CARES funds, so that we could safely re-open our doors to the community.

In 2020 we also shifted our focus to online services and resources, delivering hundreds of virtual programs and re-directing resources to digital content. I'm proud to say that, due in no small part to our dedicated staff, we were able to move forward with several Next Generation Library projects in 2020.

While I may not have thought our community would experience a pandemic in my lifetime, I know that Cincinnati and Hamilton County is a strong, resilient community and that we will come together to build a better future. Thank you to the staff, volunteers, partners, donors, and community members who make all of this possible.

Paula Brehm-Heeger
Eva Jane Romaine Coombe Library Director

Cincinnati & Hamilton County Public Library: *Learning without limits.*

At CHPL, every one of us is devoted to every one of you. To lending an ear. To pointing the way. To serving as a springboard for curiosity, uniting diverse people around a common love. We're here for the playful hearts who want to connect. The hungry minds eager to collaborate. And the wide-eyed ones who wonder what they'll discover next. We're here for all. And we'll never quiet the curious.

2020 Stats

4,889,606
Digital resources checked out

1,924,403
In-person visits

1,650,388
Unique items checked out

229,827
Meals and snacks distributed

7,454,289
Research Databases and Other Digital Resources Accessed

30,647
Free Documents Scanned for Customers

24,966
Free Documents Faxed for Customers

Social Media Engagement

Engagement is the number of times that people viewed our social media content, including live virtual events and on-demand storytimes.

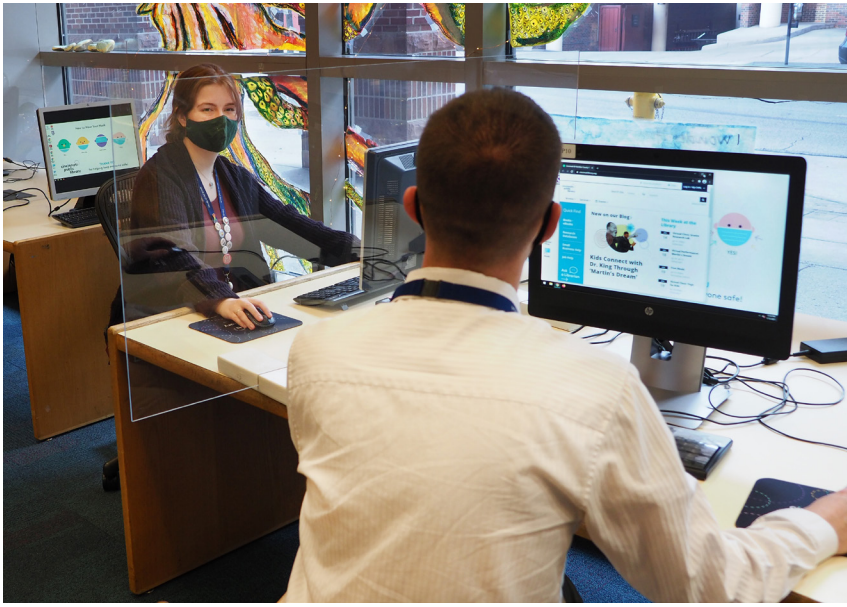
Facebook
300,266 engagements

Twitter
46,723 engagements

Instagram
36,313 engagements

YouTube
13,284 hours of watch time in 2020 with an average view time of 5 minutes

Pivoting During a Pandemic



747,617
WiFi sessions

185,400
Curbside, drive-thru, and locker visits

149,791
Calls, chats, and emails to our Virtual Information Center

3,259
Socially distanced screen-sharing sessions for customer computer help

300
Virtual programs, including storytimes and lunch and learns

Financials

***ALL FUNDS**

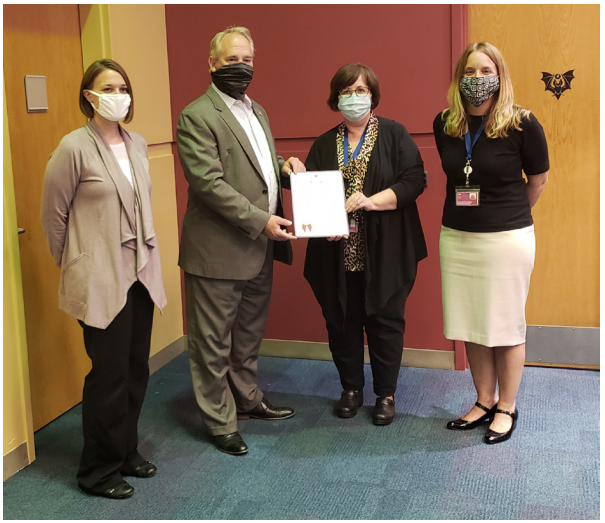
2020 Revenue

Restricted Grants	$1,041,135.62
Public Library Fund, State of Ohio	$41,427,080.51
Tax Levy	$39,194,874.39
Customer Fines & Fees	$273,149.67
Earnings on Investments	$705,820.29
Contributions	$494,512.89
Miscellaneous Revenue	$1,333,224.00
	$84,469,797.37

2020 Disbursements

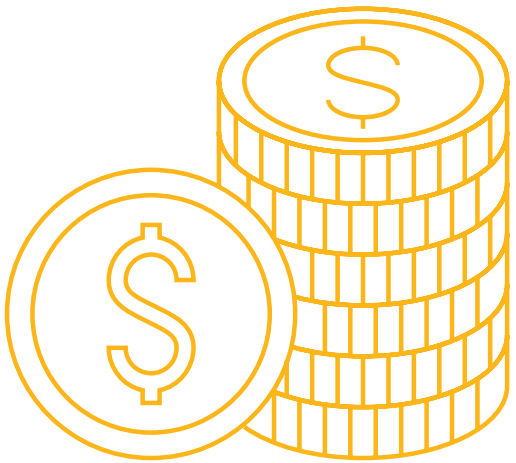
Salaries	$28,232,333.86
Benefits	$8,889,157.19
Supplies	$1,833,787.27
Purchased Services	$11,337,760.03
Library Materials and Information	$8,306,499.07
Capital Improvements	$6,652,553.80
Other Objects	$525,972.66
Transfers Out	$65,778,063.88
	$78,385,144.62

*Data includes capital improvements for the Facility Master Plan (FMP), excluding $13 million in FMP encumbrances.



CHPL Staff receives financial reporting award

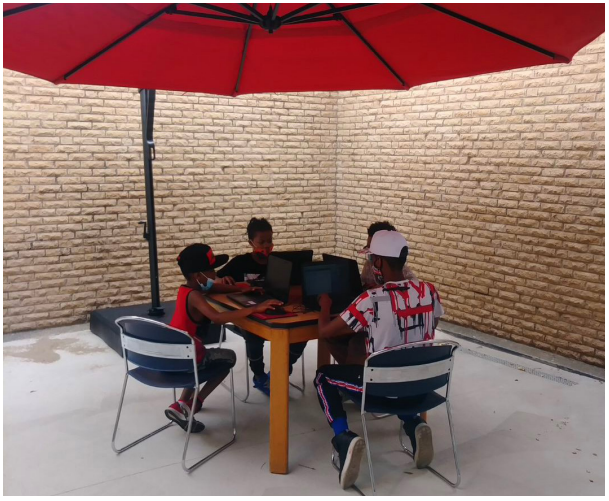
Rep. Catherine Ingram visits Downtown Main Library



ONE OF AMERICA'S TOP LIBRARIES

LIBRARY JOURNAL

FIVE-STAR LIBRARY



Enjoying the West End Branch's courtyard upgrade

Eva Jane Romaine Coombe Library Director Paula Brehm-Heeger with West End Branch Library staff

Awards

Five-Star Library

We were one of only five libraries nationwide to receive the prestigious Five-Star Library award by Library Journal. And, we're only one of two libraries with eight consecutive years at this top level.

Major Digital Learning Grant

The Cincinnati Museum Center and the Library were awarded a $496,707 grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services to address inequities in education and tech access in Avondale, Price Hill, St. Bernard, West End, and Westwood.

National Award for Tech Upgrade

An Innovations Initiative Honorable Mention was awarded by the Urban Libraries Council for improvements to the courtyard at our West End Branch, made possible with funds from the FC Cincinnati Foundation.

Excellence in Financial Reporting

The Auditor of State Award with Distinction was again awarded to the Library for excellence in recordkeeping.

Community Partnerships

Sewing Masks for Healthcare Workers

Contributed to the county's mask-making effort while PPE (personal protective equipment) supplies were low in the early months of pandemic. Our St. Bernard Branch, Reading Branch, and Loveland Branch Mini MakerSpaces were converted to mask-making stations for **TriHealth's** and **Hamilton County Public Health's** first responders.

Empowering Workforce Development

- Created a mobile laptop lab with **Cincinnati Works** to present a virtual hiring fair at **Cincinnati Museum Center** for people who had been furloughed or experienced job loss during the pandemic.
- Worked with the **Cincinnati Arts Association** to set up a mini mobile laptop lab for furloughed and laid-off arts employees in the area.
- Partnered with Cincinnati Works to supply COVID-safe, social distancing space and laptops for members of **Cincinnati Works' JumpStart Job Readiness** workshop.

Offering Food to the Community

In an effort to combat food insecurity during COVID-19, the Library partnered with **La Soupe's Community Kitchen Program** in October to provide frozen meals for all ages. This private-, corporate-, and foundation-funded project has since expanded to nine locations with plans to continue through at least early 2021.

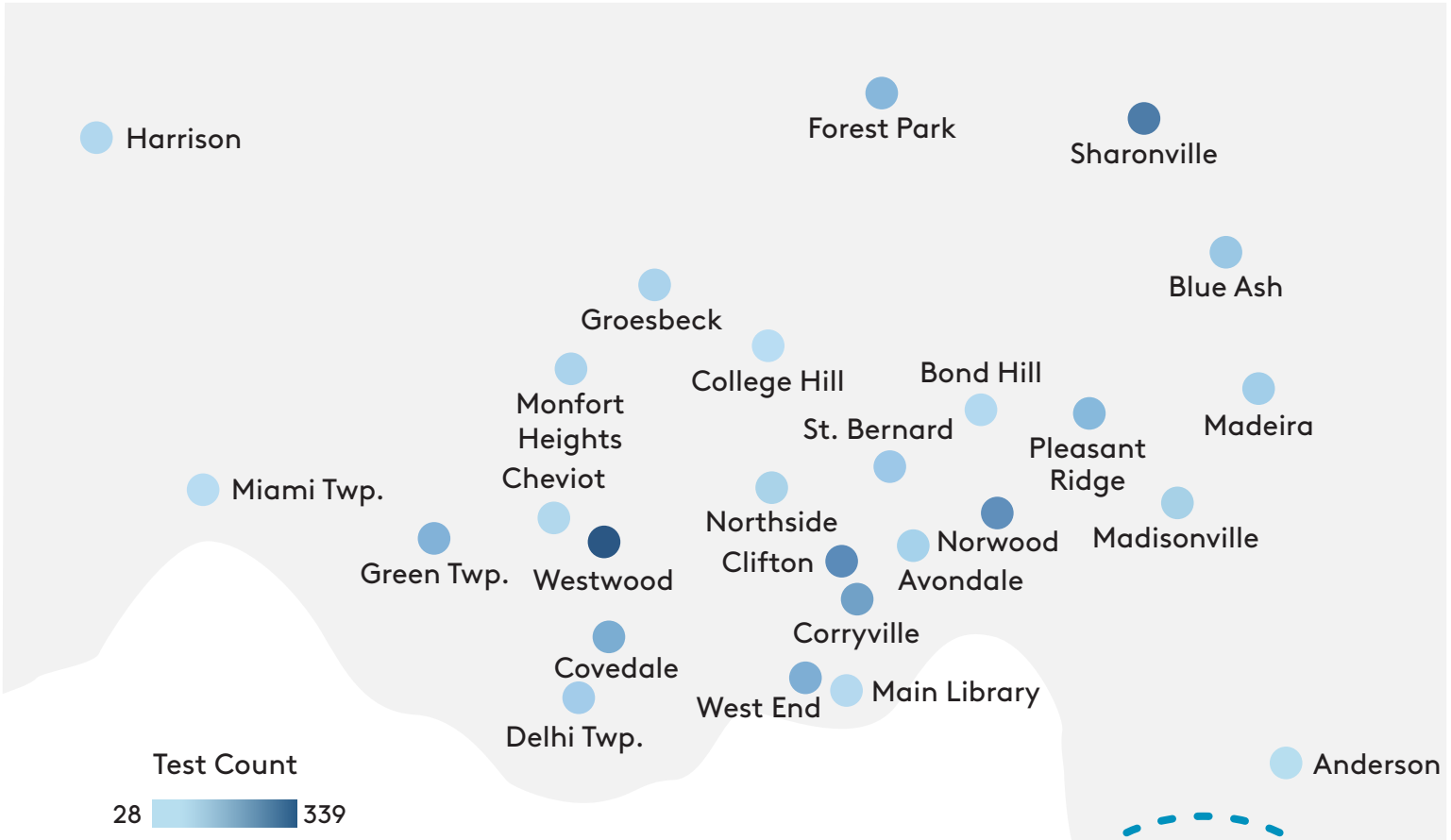
Our pre-pandemic after-school meal service for kids, a partnership with **UMC Food Ministry** fully-funded by the USDA, pivoted to a weekly meal box service containing seven dinners and seven snacks. Meal boxes are offered at 18 library locations.

Offering Tech Access to the Community

Through printed materials distributed by the **Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati**, expanded awareness about library computers, faxing services, and library staff tech support to help with eviction prevention.

Hosting Blood Drives

Hosted summer and fall blood drives with **Hoxworth Blood Center** to help meet the urgent needs of patient care during the pandemic. The drives resulted in 245 units collected and 735 lives saved.



2,424 Covid Tests

Hosting COVID Testing

Partnered with **The Health Collaborative's Test and Protect** to serve as free COVID-19 testing sites. More than 2,400 tests were issued at 26 library locations in 2020. The weekly testing locations, which are scheduled to continue in 2021, are carefully selected to allow equitable access across the county. Testing is walk-up only and no appointments are needed.

BUILDING THE NEXT GENERATION LIBRARY

January saw the release of our Facility Master Plan—outlining specifics of the long-term vision for improvements to our neighborhood library locations with input and recommendations from more than 3,000 community members.

Every library location will receive improvements over the next 10 years.

In 2020, we:

- Broke ground on the Price Hill Branch expansion and renovation project
- Selected a more than 25,000-square-foot location to expand the Deer Park Branch while remaining in the same shopping center
- Upgraded the heating and cooling systems at the Downtown Main Library and North Central Branch
- Upgraded the electrical and sprinkler systems at the Downtown Main Library
- Gave the College Hill, Elmwood Place, Madeira, and Groesbeck branches a refresh with new carpet, paint, and furniture
- Added a drive-thru window to our Anderson Branch Library

In 2021, look for improvements at the Downtown Main Library, more branches getting refreshed, the opening of newly renovated and expanded Price Hill and Deer Park branches, design work on the Madisonville Branch Accessibility Project, two new drive-thrus, and more.

Foundation, Friends and ATLA

Supporting the Library

The Library relies on both public and private support to serve our community. Private support comes to CHPL through the following dedicated organizations.

The Library Foundation

- Provided Zoom technology to power many of the Library's 300 virtual programs
- Supported 12 virtual programs, including office hours and a publishing industry roundtable, and 12 podcast episodes with the Writer-in-Residence
- More than 1,200 donors gave $524,000 in support of CHPL

The Friends of the Public Library

- Provided 4,123 books to community members in need
- Collected items from 864 cars and trucks through multiple Donate Days

Anderson Township Library Association

- Donated 500+ books to community members in need
- Collected items from almost 100 cars and trucks through a Donate Day

"I really liked how straight, to the point, and honest it was. I appreciated the feedback, and even learned a lot from others' questions."

— Writer-in-Residence virtual office hours attendee

Discover Summer Delivered for Hamilton County Youth

We revised our goals for this unusual year. In 2020, we focused on engaging take-home opportunities for youth to help bridge learning gaps from COVID-19 school closures.

WE PROVIDED

28,216
Brand new books*

24,608
STEM activity booklets

16,073
Take & Make activity kits

6,914
Summer meals and snacks at library locations**

328
Grand prize kits

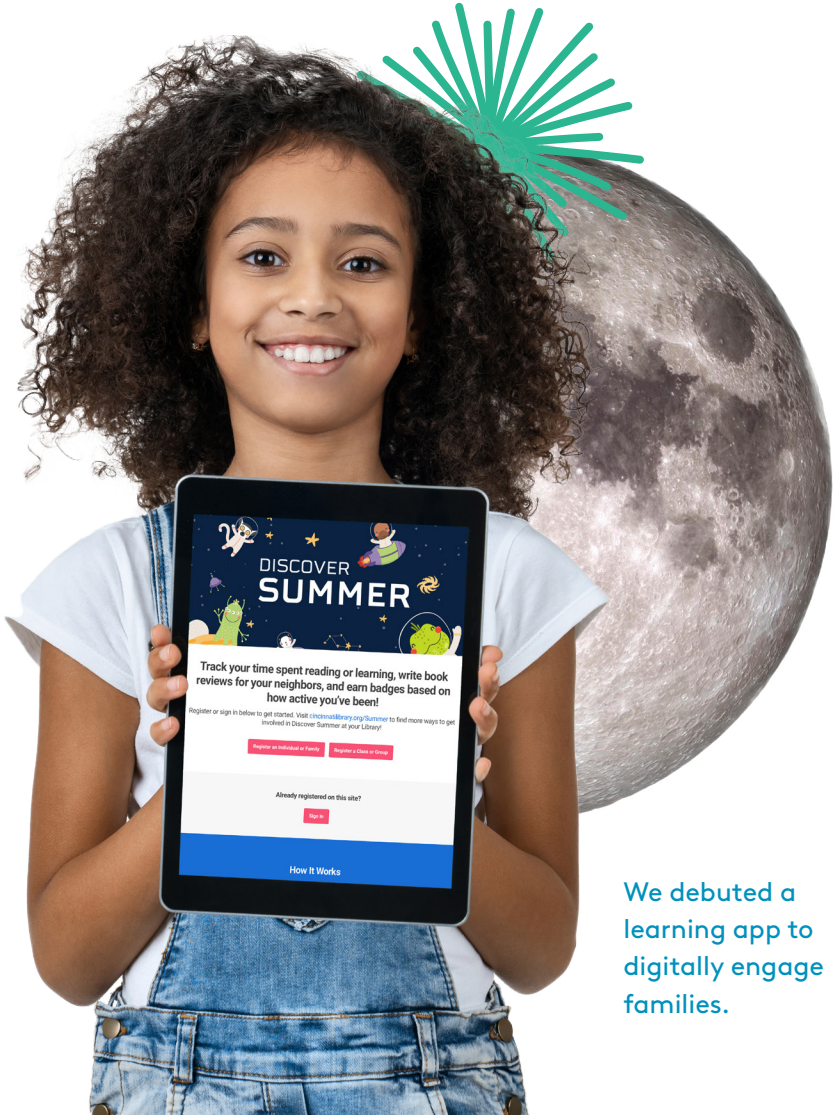
* Available at Library locations and 136 partner organizations. Partners included the Cincinnati Museum Center, Cincinnati Recreation Commission, YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs, daycares, schools, local recreation centers, food distribution sites, places of worship, community centers, other nonprofits and community groups.

** Through a federally funded program

SUMMER PROGRAMS GALORE

147 Live in-person and virtual programs

111 Recorded YouTube videos

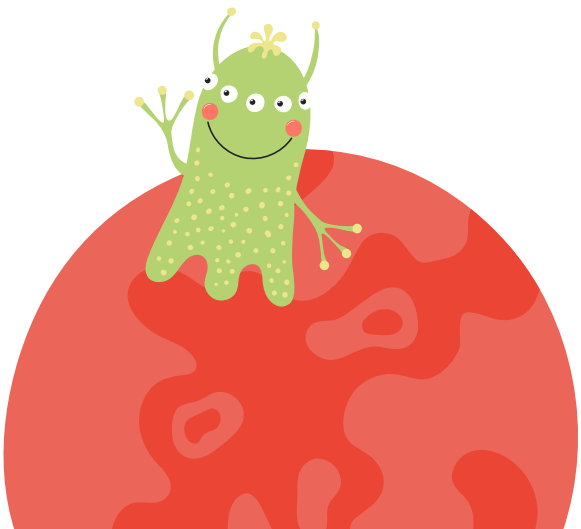


We debuted a learning app to digitally engage families.

Discover Summer was made possible thanks to the support of our generous sponsors:

Friends of the Public Library, The Library Foundation, Duke Energy Foundation, The H.B., E.W. and F.R. Luther Charitable Foundation (Fifth Third Bank, Narley L. Haley, Co-Trustees) Marge and Charles J. Schott Foundation, TriHealth, and Chemed Foundation

In-kind support from Frisch's and United Dairy Farmers



Hamilton County

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Our new brand and logo debuted in August to better connect with the community.

Minds of All Kinds

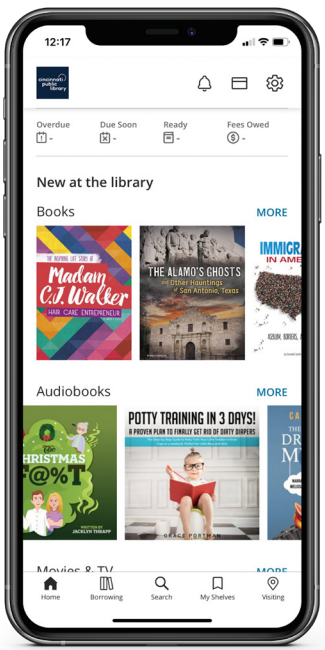
Driven to cultivate an environment encouraging boundless curiosity, through individuals of all kinds learning and growing, together.

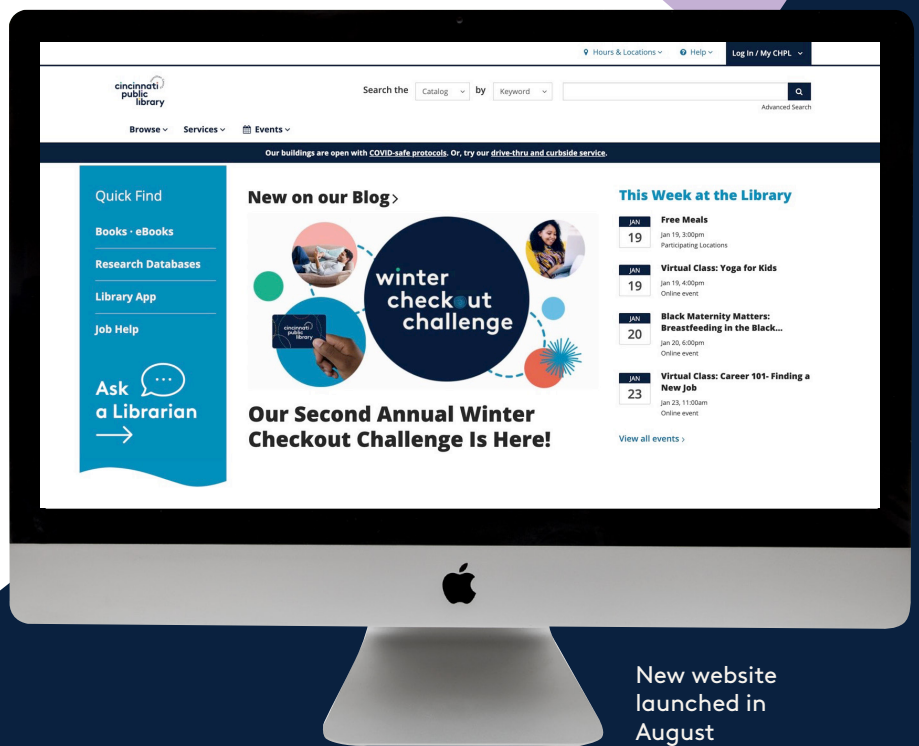
CincinnatiLibrary.org relaunched with important improvements.

In dozens of community listening sessions held in 2019, community members repeatedly asked for a more modern website.

- ADA-compliant catalog
- Robust search engine with natural language search
- New ways to discover titles and track your reading, listening, and viewing
- Accessible on most newer devices, including smartphones

New app launched in December





New website launched in August

THANK YOU...

The Library is deeply grateful for the generosity of our community. The following gifts were received between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2020 by the Library and Library Foundation. These donations are essential to ensuring delivery of excellent library services and the availability of the widest possible range of information resources for all ages.

For inquiries regarding contributions, please contact Staci Dennison, Chief Development Officer of the Library and the Thomas W. Jones Executive Director of the Library Foundation, at **513-369-4985** or **staci.dennison@cincinnatilibrary.org**.

$50,000+

Charles H. Dater Foundation, Inc.

$25,000 - $49,000

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$15,000 - $24,999

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$1,000 - $4,999

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