



A Message from Friends of the Piedmont Avenue Library



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At the moment we persuade a child, any child, to cross that threshold-- that magic threshold-- into a library, we change a life forever for the better ~ Barack Obama

Oakland's 2019-2021 Budget

Many library supporters are following information about what funds are now, and may be in the future, available from the City of Oakland for the libraries, and for Piedmont Avenue Branch in particular. A May 22 press release from the offices of Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf and City Administrator Ed Reiskin explains this year's mid-cycle adjustments to the 2019-2021 budget and the proposed cuts that would close the \$122 million deficit. Even with the proposed cuts, there is a \$10.5 million shortfall. For the full explanation, click here:



<https://www.oaklandca.gov/news/2020/city-administration-releases-proposed-midcycle-budget-amendments-for-fiscal-year-2020-21>

The \$10.5 million gap is proposed to be closed through labor concessions currently being negotiated with the union that represents most city employees including most library personnel – Service Employees International Union -- SEIU.

On June 1, SEIU 1021 advised its membership, “The Mayor and her administration are predicting tough times ahead and major budget problems and have called on City workers to accept deep cuts. Specifically, the Mayor has asked 1021 members to postpone all wage increases, including cost of living increases and step increases, until June/July of 2021, and to accept 12 days of furloughs between now and June 2021, including five full furlough days the last week of July of this year.” As of June 1, the union had not agreed to these concessions.

Oakland's 2019-2021 budget will be discussed at the city council's June 16 meeting. Do you have an opinion/comment? To observe and/or participate in the June 16 meeting, go to <https://oakland.legistar.com/calendar.aspx> and click on “agenda” for instructions. Council member emails are available at <https://www.oaklandca.gov/> -- scroll down to “city officials.”

#OPLRESPONDS

During the unprecedented days of COVID-19.

people are reaching out to the Oakland Public Library like never before.
Even with our buildings closed, OPL staff are ready to serve them.

People are enduring the isolation and stress of sheltering in place.

#OPLResponds with increased access to resources

1,828 library accounts created or restored during closure

Extended due dates for 156,860 physical books, movies, and other items currently checked out

Increased limits for popular digital ebook, audiobook & movie platforms Hoopla, Kanopy, and Overdrive

One-on-one help using ebooks by appointment

Weekly "read right now" booklists on our Advice for Readers blog

56 personalized reading lists provided through Book Me service as of May 18



Hoopla checkouts

+70.1%

Feb - Apr 2020

Kanopy checkouts

+141.3%

Feb - Apr 2020

Overdrive checkouts

+25.8%

Feb - Apr 2020

156,860

OPL physical items checked out as of May 20

Moving community connections online

3 existing neighborhood book clubs and 1 ESL conversation club now held over Zoom

OPL's Youth Leadership Council and impactful Youth Poet Laureate program moved online

People need to get online.

#OPLResponds with free internet access.



500 hotspots donated by OPL to OUSD

Extended activation of OPL's 300 WiFi hotspots currently checked out

3376 uses of OPL WiFi outside our buildings as of May 20

People are hungry and need food for their families.



#OPLResponds with food distribution at branch libraries & home delivery to seniors.

400-600 prepared meals distributed every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 81st Ave Branch

As of May 15, 100+ meals delivered every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday to seniors through Great Plates Delivered

Produce pickup at West Oakland Branch and meal distribution at César Chávez Branch began week of May 18

OPL staff serving as Disaster Service Workers distribute food and coordinate service

Total meals served

2,549

May 6 - 18

Walk up, curbside pickup & home delivery

52%

of families served are Spanish speaking

96%

of those served live in East Oakland

On an average day during COVID-19:

People check out

1,786

digital books, movies, magazines from OPL

29

people gain access to OPL with a new or restored card

54

people use WiFi outside our buildings

800

people use a WiFi hotspot provided by OPL

244

people read an OPL blog post

600

meals are picked up at 81st Ave food distribution site

36.4

questions get answered by a reference librarian

People have lost income and need help.

#OPLResponds with access to community support and funding

Created community resource guides on OPL's blogs, including information for "What If You Can't Work From Home?"

Provided access to resume review and job interview preparation through Tutor.com

Introduced remote access to Foundation Directory Online, a portal for nonprofits to find grant funding

Engineered a remote version of Lawyers in the Library, a popular service offering free legal consultations



People want accurate information.

#OPLResponds with City and County information by phone, email & social media

2,367 questions answered by email as of May 20

Help by phone in English, Spanish, and Cantonese

1,000 census reminders from OPL staff by phone and postcard as of May 20

Instructions on making a no-sew face covering, viewed over 22,000 times

OPL Instagram, Facebook & Twitter sharing City of Oakland information on COVID-19 testing, help for residents, & County Shelter-in-Place order

Kids are suddenly learning from home.

#OPLResponds with online learning, fun, and support for parents

Access to Tutor.com, offering live, remote classroom help for K-12 students in English and Spanish

OPL librarians create and share 3 storytime videos a week in English, Spanish & Chinese, including Storytime with Mayor Libby Schaaf

Published "How to Learn From Home," a guide for parents to OPL's children's resources

Created 8 guides for screen-free activities for kids

Created instructional videos for using Kanopy Kids, World Book Online, Tumblebooks & other digital resources for children



3 videos in Maya Mam on wearing face coverings, getting tested for COVID & library information

Blog posts on community resources

The City is in a State of Emergency.

#OPLResponds with direct support for those on the front lines

More than 30% of OPL staff are serving as Disaster Service Workers as of May 20

One-on-one COVID-19 testing registration help by appointment

Collected face masks in Main Library book drop for distribution to front-line workers



Your Library is still here for you.

Prepared for the Library Advisory Commission by the OPL Community Relations Department

May 2020



Margaret Rodriguez, Our Children's Librarian

It's not the path she expected, growing up, but Margaret is following in her mother's footsteps by being a librarian. Will her children, 10 and 14, continue the pattern? No one knows, but no one knew about Margaret, either. It sort of just happened to her.

Margaret grew up in the Bay Area and went east to Barnard for her B.A. After graduation, an opportunity to work abroad appeared. She took it and went to India to teach English to expatriate Buddhist nuns from Tibet.

A Buddhist community had formed in Dharmasala when the Dalai Lama came there in exile from Tibet, and this became Margaret's home until an opportunity to be an Assistant Children's Librarian at Brooklyn Public Library was offered. So she came back to New York.

However, despite New York's many charms and the social contacts she had made there, Margaret began to long for the Bay Area and came home after a year. Since her return, she has completed the training and gotten her degree in Library Science, with a specialization in Children's Literature. After working at Oakland's Main Library, she came to Piedmont Avenue Library four years ago.

During the pandemic, she's doing some behind-the-scenes support work at the Asian branch.

She is looking forward to returning to Piedmont Avenue when it reopens. She enjoys the patrons and staff and the neighborhood feeling there. She also likes the proximity to the school and the way the library is a part of their learning environment, and not a separate, exotic space used only by grownups. Margaret has done a lot to make it that kind of place, bringing farm animals, chocolate tasting, clowns, a menagerie with snakes, hamsters and other critters all to the library to entertain, educate and broaden the world of all who patronize it.

It's safe to say that everyone reading this will be happy to have our neighborhood library open again. And having Margaret back in her familiar place will be a welcome return for us and for her.

By Ruby Long, a neighbor whose work has appeared in local and national publications.



The Bookworm Recommends

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind A True Story

by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer

In this amazing true tale, a young African boy named William Kamkwamba learns how to make windmills

that supply electricity to poor villagers. His efforts take him from an impoverished childhood in rural Mali to being a speaker at Global TEDx and a student at Dartmouth College.

When he was a young teen, famine forced him to drop out of school, because his family couldn't afford the fees. But he figured out how to fix radios, the Malawi villagers' main connection to the outside world. And he continued to learn by visiting his local library, where he found an American textbook about energy. And that book changed his life.

From it, Kamkwamba learned how to build a windmill that provided electricity for his house and how to power a pump for irrigating his family's fields. He used PVC pipes from an abandoned bathhouse to make the blades. He scavenged bicycle parts and other essential items. He fashioned a drill from a nail stuck into a corn cob.

His work was discovered by government officials, and they alerted journalists who came to cover his "electric wind." That publicity led to an article in the American blog Hactivate, which, in turn, led to an invitation to speak at TEDGlobal 2007. Kamkwamba wasn't sure what a conference was but decided to go anyway. And there, for the first time, he discovered the Internet.

Thanks to the efforts of people he met through the TEDx organization, Kamkwamba received a scholarship to the African Leadership Academy, a private high school in South Africa, and then a full ride at Dartmouth. It was an amazing journey for the young African inventor.

By Judy Jacobs, Judy began her career in journalism covering energy and went on to be a writer and editor specializing in the business of travel. She loves nonfiction, especially books that inspire or encourage her to explore new places.

What's Happening at the Library



It's Time for Summer Reading Programs at OPL!

Just because our branches aren't open doesn't mean we can't explore, connect and grow this summer together. Starting now, people of all ages can register to participate in our annual Summer Reading program. You'll be able to qualify to win prizes at the end of the program by completing your reading log, participating in

our online programs, and getting involved in your community. Register for Summer Reading by visiting www.oaklandlibrary.org/summer.

Effective March 16, the Oakland Public Library closed all Library locations to help limit the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). These closures will remain in effect until further notice. All programs are canceled while our library is closed. The Friends of PAL will send out a notice when we know the date the library will reopen.