

THE STORYLINE

A quarterly publication of the Oak Park Public Library

FALL 2018

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OAK PARK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
oppl.org



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Vol. 3, No. 4
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Find board meeting dates and locations at oppl.org/board, and get in touch at board@oppl.org.

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Get to know us and our core values at oppl.org/about.



ON THE COVER

Walk into the Main Library, look to your right, and find *Hope and Discovery*. This large-scale painting by Dan Gustin, part of our art collection, was moved earlier this year from the Veterans Room to the lobby, where it now welcomes all. More: oppl.org/art



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➔ This issue showcases select events and classes at the library this fall. View all at oppl.org/calendar.

The Storyline is published quarterly as a service to the Oak Park Public Library community. Contact us at communications@oppl.org: Kristen Romanowski, Writer/Editor; Rebecca Lang, Graphic Designer; Jodi Kolo, Director of Communications. Many thanks to library staff and community photographers whose work is featured in this issue, including Rob Catania, Joselyn Daker, Ann Farrell, Genevieve Grove, Tina Harle, Kelly Knowles, Power of Partnerships, and Deidre Winterhalter.



Left: Power of Partnerships—a new, free learning opportunity designed to engage students entering grades 2-8 and help teachers develop a restorative justice approach to teaching that includes families as partners—included about 80 students, teachers, and teen counselors at the Main Library during the four-week summer school program.

Below: Oak Park's two-day Community Building Blocks Workshop drew more than 50 people who shared valuable input with consultants from the Environmental Protection Agency, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. More: oppl.org/news



DIVERSITY. INCLUSION. EQUITY.

Earlier this summer, when a *Forbes* columnist suggested that Amazon should replace local libraries in a since-deleted perspective piece, the outcry was swift. Loudly and clearly, with their personal anecdotes of progress and empowerment, people from across the nation defended the public library as a “common good”—doing work that remains vital to all and that continues to be more than worth the investment.

At the Oak Park Public Library, our work is guided by professional principles and ethics, embodied in statements such as the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights and the Urban Libraries Council’s Statement on Race and Social Equity. Our work is also guided by you, our community, and by the community’s collective aspirations.

What kind of community do you want to live in? Through your email responses, online feedback, and in-person conversations (oppl.org/listen), you told us: you want to live in a community that prioritizes and values diversity, inclusion, and equity.

So as your public library, how do we work on that? How do we continue to

remove barriers to access and service and to empower citizens, particularly those who are the most marginalized and vulnerable?

One significant way is with a social work service model of engagement. This approach has helped change conversations in our community. People all over are looking at the library, talking about its work, and learning with us (pages 4–7).

It is also by connecting with like-minded organizations.

Collaborations with community groups such as the Equity Team of Oak Park and Triton College bring in new ideas and opportunities—whether from a federally funded community

sustainability workshop (see above and oppl.org/building-blocks) or a fresh, new version of summer school at the library (see above and oppl.org/pop).

We also are working on ourselves. Library staff continue to explore individual and group learning around privilege and systemic racism.

As one staffer said: “There’s still so much more to be done. What happened back then is not in the past. Work on unconscious biases in ourselves—that’s what our equity work is all about.”

David J. Seleb
Executive Director

LISTENING *and responding*

In March 2016, Robert Simmons joined the library as its first social worker, a direct result of the library's intentional strategy of listening and responding to community aspirations. Since then, the Social Services and Safety team he's built has served more than 350 vulnerable patrons, the majority of whom are Oak Park residents experiencing mental illness, homelessness, and extreme poverty.

"When I started, I was shocked at how many socially isolated people were here, particularly at the Main Library, who needed some type of social services advocacy," Simmons said.

The team, which includes Social Services Specialist Stephen Jackson and three Safety and Security Monitors, doesn't offer direct service to patrons—they don't provide therapy, for example. Instead, they talk with people to identify their needs and refer them to appropriate resources, including those related to housing, employment, health, immigration, and domestic violence. "Someone may request assistance with one thing, but then we find out that they can use help in other areas too," Simmons said.

Brian Lycko, who said he visits the library frequently "because it's peaceful," was connected with a job after team member Stephen Jackson introduced himself and learned Lycko was looking for work. Jackson contacted a community developer he knows who employs people who may have barriers to employment, and the developer came to the library to meet with Lycko.

"I told him my qualifications and what I could do, and he hired me. I've been working for him for about two months now," Lycko said in July.

Through relationships with approximately 45 Chicagoland organizations, plus extensive experience



From left to right: Safety and Security Monitors Cherie Montgomery and Brian Green, Supervisor of Safety and Security Aaron Alonzo, Social Services Specialist Stephen Jackson, and Director of Social Services and Safety Robert Simmons.

working in Oak Park, the team can connect people with services for "the entire life spectrum, from babies to seniors," Simmons said.

Noting that libraries traditionally have not employed social workers—although the practice is becoming more common nationally—the library exists to provide services, resources, and information in response to community needs and aspirations, said Deputy Director Jim Madigan. "The state of Illinois has abdicated its responsibility to provide mental health services and support for other social services, and therefore local governments are having to step up," Madigan said. "We've expanded what we do to meet our community's needs and aspirations."

ABOUT WHO IS SERVED...

37%

are experiencing homelessness

41%

have children in the household

67%

are Oak Park residents

92%

earn less than \$15,000 a year



ADDRESSING *a national epidemic*

When it comes to opioid use and abuse, Oak Park and River Forest are really no different than anywhere else in the country, said Mike Charley, Director of the Village of Oak Park Health Department. Local data show increases in overdoses, particularly from heroin, and mirror what's going on in the rest of the country, he said.

Charley serves on the OPRF Opioid Task Force, established by the grassroots organization IMPACT in March 2018 with a one-year grant from the Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation. Members of the task force include local hospitals, police and fire departments, and the library, which Charley called “a microcosm of the community.”

As such, the library has not been immune to the issue of opioid abuse. The library's Director of Social Services and Safety Robert Simmons also serves on the task force, and Charley said his input has been valuable to community organizations trying to better understand the issue, what's being done, what can be done, and the resources available.

Noting that preventing illicit opioid use is a long-term priority for the Oak Park Health Department as well, Charley said that as the task force continues to meet into 2019, “we're going to have a better idea of where to refer people, and what resources we have to help the community with this issue.”

If you or someone you know needs help with opioid abuse:

Illinois Opioid Helpline:

- 1-833-2FINDHELP

Community Mental Health Board of Oak Park Township:

- 708-358-8855
- oakpark.il.networkofcare.org

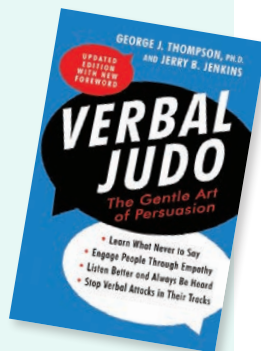
RESOLVING *conflict with empathy*

“Our ultimate goal is to make the library a safer environment for patrons and staff,” said Aaron Alonzo, Supervisor of Safety and Security. Alonzo and his team of Safety and Security Monitors do this by making rounds and observing all areas of the library, helping staff enforce the library's rules of behavior, and listening and empathizing with patrons to de-escalate situations.

“With any of our patrons, we don't know what they're going through, or what happened to them that day,” he said, adding that someone he encounters may have just lost their job or been evicted from their home.

In resolving a situation, even if it means asking someone who's violating the rules to leave the library for a time, Alonzo uses tactics from the book *Verbal Judo: The Gentle Art of Persuasion*. Its LEAPS strategy could be applied in any interpersonal context, he said, including parenting.

- **Listen:** Maintain an open mind and eye contact; pay attention to body language.
- **Empathize:** Show interest; try to understand where the person is coming from.
- **Ask:** Get the facts, including who, what, when, where, how.
- **Paraphrase:** State what you heard the person say, in your own words.
- **Summarize:** Provide closure; state your next steps.



‘PEOPLE MAKE *a lot of assumptions...*

about who is experiencing homelessness, based on how someone looks, acts, smells, or dresses,” said Director of Social Services and Safety Robert Simmons. “But really, you don’t know unless they tell you.”

As the Oak Park Homelessness Coalition notes in its 2016 Plan of Action, “The homeless are not just on our streets. They are our classmates at school. Our parents and friends from work or church or baseball teams. They are members of our community.”

According to the coalition—which is funded by the Oak Park Township and has more than 30 member institutions, including the library—more than 5 percent of Oak Park residents live in extreme poverty, one missed rent payment away from eviction and homelessness; and about 200 kids in Oak Park elementary schools and high schools are homeless.

Simmons, who worked previously for the Oak Park Township, said it was overwhelming to learn how many families were experiencing episodic homelessness and “doubling up,” which can mean



living with friends and relatives, staying on someone’s couch, or spending a few weeks in a shelter or hotel.

Whatever someone’s situation, Simmons said he tries to never make assumptions: “We have to be careful about profiling, stereotyping people, with the intention of removing them from a space.” For many people experiencing homelessness, the library can be a haven—a safe, quiet space apart from the turbulence of life in a shelter or on the street, with free resources for learning, job-seeking, and entertainment.

Simmons, who works with Housing Forward and other organizations to connect people with resources, notes there is at least a five-year wait for subsidized housing in Oak Park. He stresses that homelessness is a community issue: “From a public policy standpoint, locally, regionally, nationwide, we can do much better.”

**housing
FORWARD**
ending homelessness

HOUSINGFORWARD.ORG

For two years, Ebony Martin has been working in Oak Park as an Outreach Case Manager with Housing Forward. She visits the library twice a week to work with clients and collaborate with Simmons, with whom she has helped at least 25 people find housing. “The library is a welcoming place,” she said.

On summer Fridays, when Housing Forward’s PADS Shelter in Maywood is closed from mid-May to mid-September, Martin hands out free lunches in Scoville Park and makes sure people have what they need to make it through the weekend, whether that’s a bus pass, a restaurant gift card, or a T-shirt. ►

December 2017

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

Keith and Victoria have been coming to the Oak Park Public Library for more than five years. Two years ago, PADS found them a new apartment, and after both having recently interviewed for new jobs, they're enjoying action and comedy—on the DVD players available for checkout—while they wait for the official job notification e-mail that says congratulations.

oppl.org/visit/technology-access

#OakParkStories #WhatsYourStory #OakPark



REMOVING *barriers to access*

To have the widest access to library resources, you need a library card. And to get a library card, you typically need proof of a permanent home address.

But what if you don't have one? Maybe you're temporarily staying on a friend's couch, or sleeping in a shelter?

"Libraries are for everyone, no matter what their housing situation is," said Lori Pulliam, Director of Public Services and Programs. "If someone tells us they don't have a permanent home address, we will work with that person to get them a library card so they can have access to resources and services."

As of July, about 100 people who identify as homeless had Oak Park library cards. Those cards carry regular privileges, but must be renewed annually. The same is true for cards issued to Oak Park educators and Oak Park business owners. More: oppl.org/welcome

- **What are some misconceptions about people who are homeless?** "The biggest misconception is that all homeless people panhandle," Martin said.
- **What does it take to get someone housing?** "An open mind and acknowledgement of what the client's barriers are and how willing they are to work on them. Every individual is different and there is no magic formula."
- **How can people get involved or make a difference?** Be responsive to requests for help. "People can volunteer essentially anywhere at Housing Forward and donate food, clothes, time, and money," Martin said.

A WAY TO HELP

Socks are consistently among the most requested items at homeless shelters. All October, we're collecting new pairs at all library locations to benefit the clients of Housing Forward and other organizations.

It's our third year participating in Socktober. In 2017, thanks to your generosity, we collected 446 pairs of socks, as well as 50 pairs of underwear, 20 bags and backpacks, 10 pairs of shoes, and a heavy box full of travel-sized toiletries.

"I'm so proud of our community and how much love was shown," said Elementary School Services Librarian Genevieve Grove. "It was really great to hear caregivers talking to kids about how we can help take care of each other, and to hear kids reminding their grown-ups that they needed to put more socks on the shopping list."

Drop off your donations at any library location during open hours, Oct. 1 through 31. Find more ways to help: housingforward.org/give



‘TO BE and build the bridge’

In a Q&A with author Kevin Coval at the Main Library in June, Oak Park resident Jackie Moore stood to ask the final question. That evening Coval had spoken about his work with youth poetry festival Louder Than a Bomb, his love for hip-hop, and how its “culture of digging” inspired him to search out books at his local public library. He read poems from *A People’s History of Chicago*, this year’s One Book, One Oak Park pick, which honors the often repressed stories of poor people and people of color in Chicago.

Moore, who’s president of the Oak Park and River Forest High School Board of Education, pondered how more people, regardless of age or race, could embrace hip-hop and the stories of young people. She questioned why white European history and authors are standard in classrooms. “What is a way to make it so that the respect and the stature that is given to certain authors or

writers or artists can be shared, so that we learn from each other, learn from our kids?” she asked.

The path forward, in parenthood and education, is to be a bridge, Coval said. “And not a bridge into what I know and like, but a bridge for the student to become engaged in the process for the entirety of their lives, of being someone who self-educates.”

In his own education, Coval said, hip-hop and the public library led him to books like *The Black Poets*, which introduced him to Gwendolyn Brooks and poetry in the language of the working class.

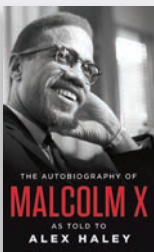
“Ms. Brooks, Studs [Terkel], Ida B. Wells, Upton Sinclair were listeners who built a bridge to people who were not like themselves. And I think that is our only way forward in a country that is deeply divided, in a city that maintains that division,” he said. “It is on us to be and build the bridge.”



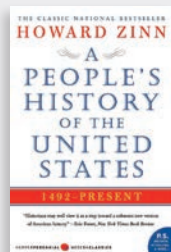
BRINGING COVAL'S POETRY ALIVE

Library staff added their voices by reading personal favorites from *A People’s History of Chicago*, helping bring Coval’s poetry alive in 14 different video readings. Listen now on the library’s YouTube channel: oppl.org/one-book-videos

COVAL RECOMMENDS...



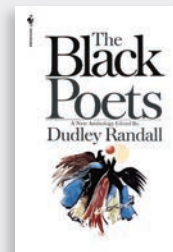
The Autobiography of Malcolm X by Alex Haley and Malcolm X



A People's History of the United States by Howard Zinn



Before the Mayflower: A History of Black America by Lerone Bennett Jr.



The Black Poets by Dudley Randall



NEW! CIVICS 101

MONTHLY ON THURSDAYS, 7-8 PM, MAIN LIBRARY VETERANS ROOM

Join us for a three-part discussion-based series studying the rights and duties of citizenship. Facilitated by local practicing attorney Mark Burkland, who has 30 years of experience with local government law, constitutional issues, and land use and development matters.

- Sept. 20: How Local Government Works
- Oct. 18: The First Amendment in the Kitchen
- Nov. 15: See oppl.org/calendar for details.



VOLUNTEERING *matters*

Did you pick up this issue of *The Storyline* at an Oak Park business, government, or nonprofit location? If so, we can thank library volunteer Susan Burke for making that happen! In addition to organizing library shelves every week, Burke donates her time by distributing 1,340 copies of our quarterly magazine to 47 organizations.

“Once you get involved with libraries, you can’t really let go, and that’s why I came here to volunteer,” she said.

After retiring from a career working in libraries around Illinois, Burke returned in 2010 to Oak Park, where she’d lived in the early 1970s.

“Oak Park has always been committed to social justice, and that was why I came back,” she said. “It’s a place where people care about community. It’s also the only place I’ve lived where you can walk down the street and say good morning to people, and they will say good morning back.”

THANK YOU!

In 2017, library volunteers generously contributed their time and talents for more than 3,100 hours. With about 90 volunteers, our program offers a way to connect, care, and make a difference. More: oppl.org/volunteer

REFLECTIONS *on service*

Is service always good? That’s one of the questions we considered in July’s meeting of the Civically Engaged Reader series, which examines a different aspect of civic activity every month and continues through October. For July’s focus on service, the group read “What We Don’t Talk About When We Don’t Talk About Service” by Adam Davis, one of the editors of *The Civically Engaged Reader*.

“He asks us to reflect on what service makes of us,” said Library Assistant Donna Ioppolo. “Does it put the volunteer in a superior position to the person in need? Do we ever ask people what it is they actually need, or do we only give what we want to give?”

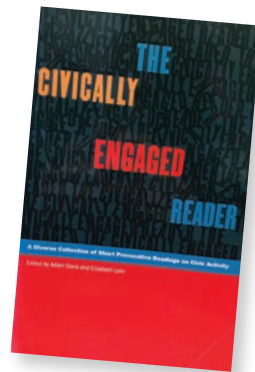
Attendees, who have volunteered for a variety of organizations, reflected that getting to know the people they were

serving made a big difference.

“This helped both groups see each other as equals, rather than the volunteers being somehow superior to those receiving assistance,” Ioppolo said.

Whether you volunteer, participate politically, or simply seek to improve our world, join us at an upcoming session to discuss and find meaning in your efforts.

- Tuesday, Sept. 11, 7-8 pm, Main Library: **Leading**
- Tuesday, Oct. 9, 7-8 pm, Main Library: **What Is Justice?**





KNOWLEDGE *is power*

One Wednesday in late June, on the day Justice Anthony Kennedy announced his retirement from the Supreme Court, a group of teenagers and a 70-year-old former Black Panther Party leader sat discussing civil and human rights in the Main Library Book Discussion Room.

“Find out what’s going on in the world,” said Billy “Che” Brooks to the young people in the room. “You all are it. You’re going to be part of the problem or part of the solution. We’ve got a lot of work to do, people.”

Brooks, deputy minister of education for the Illinois chapter of the Black Panther Party from 1968 to 1972, guides The Living History Project, a grant-funded initiative

that brings youth in grades 6-12 together twice a week to learn about social justice movements and enhance their critical-thinking, research, and social and emotional skills.

At every session, each young person stands and speaks for several minutes on any topic. “The goal is to get better at articulating our thoughts. We all bring our experiences, and we all have value,” Brooks told the group.

Since May, the group had been preparing for an end-of-summer public debate on civil rights and human rights topics at the library. “One of the young ladies felt very strongly that the adoption laws aren’t favorable to poor people. She would like to see that changed,” Brooks said later.

“We have another young person who’s looking at abuse and neglect and the laws that govern and process that.”

On that Wednesday afternoon, one young woman shared her experiences with prejudice: “I’ve had people tell me I’m not black. I didn’t know I had to act a certain way to be black.”

Brooks’ role is to facilitate and motivate. “I go into each session with an open mind and allow them to direct the flow of the conversation, the things that they’re feeling,” he said.

How to process emotions is an important focus. “One of the things that we really talk about is anger,” Brooks said. “And how we process that anger, how we process embarrassment. These are two critical things that are going to be very important as we begin the process of debating.”

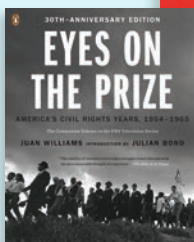
Middle School Services Librarian Jose Cruz said he’s seen Brooks make a huge impact. “The young people who come are dedicated,” Cruz said. “They’re showing up an hour early for the program. That’s unheard of.”

Zaire Brooks (no relation), who turns 18 in November, said he appreciates learning from the elder Brooks—“especially someone with that much experience on this earth, and being a man of color.”

He’s learned so much about civil rights, human rights, and social justice, he said. “And I get to see that through Mr. Brooks. Knowledge really is power. You can do things with knowledge. And once you have it, no one can take that from you.”

RECOMMENDED READING & WATCHING

pedagogy
of the
oppressed
PAULO FREIRE



Don't miss!

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE YOUTH CONFERENCE

Main Library Veterans Room. Join us for our first annual Restorative Justice Youth Conference, where we will explore the theme “What is restorative justice?” Come share your definition of restorative justice and what it should look like for your community. Our event will host peace circles, panels, workshops, and so much more. Register now.

Saturday, Oct. 6, 10 am–4 pm

Sunday, Oct. 7, 2–5:30 pm



BE AN *informed voter*

YOUR VOTE MATTERS ON TUESDAY, NOV. 6.
DO YOU HAVE THE FACTS?

[OPPL.ORG/CIVIC](http://oppl.org/civic)

➔ PREPARE TO VOTE:

- Check your current voter registration
- Find out where and how to register
- Access a sample ballot
- Learn how to vote early in person or vote by mail

➔ BE MORE INVOLVED:

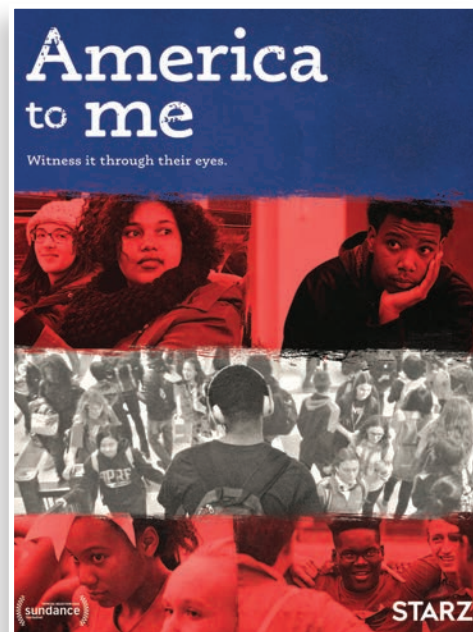
- Apply to become an election judge
- Run for local office
- Get a referendum on the ballot
- Contact your local representatives

➔ GET EXPERT ANSWERS

Do you want to learn more about a particular issue? Ask a librarian and find sources you can trust. Our librarians use their research capabilities and local expertise to deliver fact-based information to meet your needs. See our areas of expertise at oppl.org/staff.

ROCKING THE VOTE

On Saturday, Aug. 4, about 40 young people took part in Wizard Rock the Vote, a Harry Potter-themed event at Scoville Park and the Main Library. The band Tonks and the Aurors and guests like Lauren Fairweather (pictured) energized the crowd and encouraged voting. Partners from the Cook County Clerk's office and the League of Women Voters registered voters and helped librarians educate the electorate.



Images courtesy of Kartemquin Films

WEEKLY EPISODE *viewing & discussion*

SUNDAY EVENINGS,
AUG. 26–OCT. 28,
OAK PARK AND RIVER
FOREST HIGH SCHOOL,
201 N. SCOVILLE AVE.,
OAK PARK

Time to be announced
Free admission, all welcome

Three years ago, Academy Award-nominated director Steve James filmed a year in the life of a dozen Oak Park and River Forest High School students. The 10-part series about race and equity debuts on Starz on Sunday, Aug. 26.

The library previously announced it would be live-streaming episodes. Due to overwhelming response and limited resources for an impactful public screening, we have cancelled our plans to do so.

To find more ways you can take part in this important community event, visit oppl.org/america-to-me.

BUILD A *healthy financial life*

Watch Personal Finance Tips Weekly, a weekly video series of personal finance tips on Lynda.com, available free with your library card. Every Tuesday, investment advisor Jane Barrett and financial therapist Amanda Clayman provide advice on a different financial topic, from talking to family members about money and assessing job offers, to paying off debt and avoiding bad investments. Access it: oppl.org/lynda



“There is a need in our current culture to address a major gap in our financial education. What better place than the library?”

—Bridget Opholt, Business & Government Services Librarian

literacy

Monday, Sept. 17, 6:30–7:30 pm, Main Library Small Meeting Room. Led by Cheryl Terry, Certified Financial Educator at Heartland Institute of Financial Education.

Monday, Oct. 1, 6–7 pm, Main Library Small Meeting Room. Led by Colin Rogers, Financial Advisor with Edward Jones.

Monday, Oct. 15, 6–7 pm, Main Library Small Meeting Room. Led by Tim Lambert, who’s been investing in blue chip stocks for 42 years. Please note: This course is educational and does not recommend or endorse any particular investment.

Monday, Oct. 29, 3–4 pm, Main Library Small Meeting Room. Led by Steven Wollack, President of Wollack Financial Services. Especially for seniors, but all are welcome.

SEMINARS *this fall*

OPPL.ORG/BUSINESSES

OPPL.ORG/JOB-SEEKERS

® BUSINESS 101: INTRODUCTION TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Saturdays, Sept. 15, Oct. 20, 1–3 pm, Main Library Computer Classroom. Interested in launching your own business or pursuing future employment with a startup firm? This 2-hour course will help get you started. In partnership with Chatman Lewis Flaggs Consulting Group and The Economic Growth Initiative. Register now.

® THINGS ABOUT THE JOB SEARCH YOU MAY NOT KNOW BUT SHOULD

Thursday, Nov. 8, 2–4 pm, Main Library Veterans Room. Looking for a job has changed dramatically over the past few years; however, many still follow the rules of yesterday. Learn how to modernize your search in a way that works best with your own personal style. Presenter: Jacqueline Gordon, Career Services, Triton College. Register now.



Our library has thousands of ebooks and audiobooks, and it's gotten a lot easier to borrow them. With the new Libby app by OverDrive, you can borrow digital books instantly, for free, using just the device in your hand. The app is available on iOS, Android, and Microsoft Windows 10+.

- If you prefer reading on your Kindle, Libby can send your library books to it.
- All your loans and holds are consolidated on a single shelf.
- Keep track of your reading history in the Activity tab.
- Positions, bookmarks, and notes are kept in sync across your devices.
- Sample any book with a tap—nothing to download or delete.
- Try a zoomable graphic novel, or a picture book with read-along audio.

STAYING *current*

In July, Oak Park resident Kevin Scott learned how to compose and send email using the Gmail app on his phone, with guidance from Adult and Teen Digital Learning Librarian Rose Barnes. Every month, Barnes visits the Mills Park Tower apartment building, 1025 Pleasant Place, to help residents like Scott with tech issues.

With Barnes, Scott has gotten help with texting, setting up Skype, and installing library apps like Hoopla and Libby to access free digital books, movies, and music. He's also a regular visitor at the Main Library, where he's worked with Barnes in personalized Learning Lab sessions (see below).

"You have to stay current," Scott said. "Seniors should not be afraid to learn about new advancements."

DIGITAL *learning opportunities*

OPPL.ORG/DIGITAL-LEARNING

SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

For personal help with a specific tech topic, schedule a one-on-one Learning Lab appointment (device repair not available) at any library location.

STOP BY WITH QUESTIONS

Visit a Tech Time Drop-In session on Tuesdays, 9–11 am, in the Main Library Computer Classroom. Starting Sept. 4. No appointment needed.

ATTEND A WORKSHOP

Register now for basic and intermediate tech workshops held Mondays, 7 pm, in the Main Library Computer Classroom. Starting Sept. 17.

Checkout and hold limits have been increased to 20 items! And you can now recommend three titles every seven days. More: oppl.org/apps



interest classes

Wednesday, Sept. 5, 7–8 pm, Main Library Veterans Room.
Learn how to keep your information safe as you surf the net.

Tuesday, Sept. 18, 7–8:30 pm, Main Library Computer Classroom. Come learn about different streaming options like Netflix, Hulu, Roku, and Apple TV and cut the cable cord! Bring your own device or use our computers. Register now.

Tuesday, Sept. 25, 7–8:30 pm, Main Library Computer Classroom. We'll explain how to download digital books, audiobooks, magazines, and movies in this interactive class. Bring your own device or use our computers. Register now.

Tuesday, Oct. 2, 7–8:30 pm, Main Library Computer Classroom. Learn about some of the best apps for enhancing your life and having fun with your tablet. We'll be discussing apps for Android tablets and iPads. Bring your tablet or use one of ours. Register now.

Wednesday, Oct. 17, 7–8 pm, Main Library Veterans Room. Apple, Amazon, Google, and others have released products to help make your home smarter. Learn what's available, what's around the bend, and all the trends leading to "The Internet of Things."



for teens

Wednesdays starting Sept. 5, 5:30–7 pm, Main Library Computer Classroom. Girls Who Code is a national nonprofit working to close the gender gap in technology. Join our sisterhood of supportive peers and role models as you use computer science to impact your community. No experience needed; anybody can learn to code. Free and open to all youth ages 13–18 who culturally identify as girls or women. Space is limited. Register now for the Sept. 5 date to save your weekly spot through Dec. 12.

First and third Thursdays, Sept. 6–Nov. 15, 3:30–5 pm, Main Library. Experiment and learn with creative technologies, including a 3D printer and sewing machines. No registration needed.



Supplement digital learning with tangible artifacts and books from our Multicultural Collection. Learn more: oppl.org/multicultural

RAISING CREATIVE CRITICAL THINKERS, *global citizens*

To become creative critical thinkers and global citizens, it's not enough for kids to know how to operate the latest device.

"Kids need adult guidance in a networked world," said Children's Digital Learning Librarian Anne Bensfield, who together with Multicultural Learning Librarian Naomi Priddy led a workshop in July full of ideas and resources for caregivers and educators looking for ways to use tech more intentionally with kids.

"There are all these digital tools and devices that families have or are using through the schools," Priddy said. "We're pausing to ask, how can we use them more meaningfully?"

Bensfield, who has served on the technology committee in Oak Park Elementary School

District 97, said she's always looking for ways to share resources and strategies with teachers and teacher librarians, to help them use digital tools in meaningful ways toward the district's mission to foster equity and inclusion.

Inspired by *Digital Play for Global Citizens*, a guide from by The Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop, the librarians curated apps, websites, podcasts, and more for different age groups, that "stretch kids, are inclusive, and can open windows into the lives of others around the world," Priddy said.

See some of the librarians' picks here, in a brochure available in the library, and at oppl.org/kids-digital.



- AtoZ Maps Online
- AtoZ World Culture
- CultureGrams
- Mango Languages
- Muzzy
- World Book for Kids

Find a full list of our favorite digital apps at oppl.org/kids-digital.



Big History Project



Circle Round



Duolingo



One Globe Kids

meaningful language

This spring, parents and caregivers of children from birth to age 5 participated in a special workshop at the library, learning how to enrich their children's lives with language and play.

Pediatric speech-language pathologist Clare Kilbride from Kids Unlimited Therapy Services in Oak Park joined us to discuss communication milestones, red flags for communication, and practical ways to encourage spontaneous, meaningful language. Here, Kilbride shares some tips:



WAYS TO ENRICH YOUR CHILD'S LIFE

TALK OUT LOUD about what you or your child is doing. Use simple words during routines, such as:

- “Wash, wash” during bath time
- “Eat, eat” during feeding/meal time
- “Mix, mix” while cooking
- “Put on” while dressing

MAKE MISTAKES!

Miss a step in routine to see if your child notices or fills in the missing part.

MODEL SIMPLE LANGUAGE and expand (e.g., “up” becomes “go up”).

READ ALOUD, even if it's just saying one word per page.

GIVE THEM ONLY ONE of a desired item to increase opportunities for communication and interaction.

TRY NOT TO PREDICT YOUR CHILD'S NEEDS when possible. Allow your child to use any mode of communication to request something (e.g., sound, words, pointing, looking between you and the object).

IMITATE THEIR SKILLS, whether their play, gestures, or words.

REPEAT IT BACK THE CORRECT WAY if your child makes an error.

GIVE IT TIME. Silence is okay! Pause and allow your child time to process language and all of the sights and sounds of their environment before giving a response.

For more information on your child's communication, contact Kilbride at clarekilbrideslp@gmail.com. To learn about services provided at Kids Unlimited Therapy, visit kidsunlimitedtherapyservices.com.



ADAPTIVE technology

Shelley Harris, Early Literacy Librarian

“One way we welcome all families into the library is providing supports for kids with disabilities.

Take a look at the giant poster of words on our Main Library train room window [pictured above]. This is augmentative/alternative communication for people who can't use their voices to speak, or sometimes need assistance. All children can practice talking and putting together sentences with it!

We create schedules and supply fidgets for kids to use in programs like Supported Storytimes and Play, and we also support struggling readers with scanner pens that can be used to read books aloud, and even define words as they go.”

➔ For more information, email Harris at sharris@oppl.org. See the schedule for *Supported Storytimes and Play*, and all storytimes, at oppl.org/storytimes.

AN INVITATION *to learn*

Earlier this year, Library Assistant Hal Patnott saw an opportunity to spark conversations about gender identity with families in the Main Library Children's Services department.

As a transgender man who's often mislabeled as “she,” Patnott said, “it gets exhausting after a while.”

So he put up a sign at the service desk: “Ask Me About My Pronouns.”

Patnott, who uses “he” and “him,” said: “I see it as an invitation to learn. People can ask if they're interested, and it's less awkward than correcting people after the fact.”

Based on the “Hello There” project by

artist Toni Latour, the other side of the sign offers ideas for gender-neutral ways to address people: instead of saying “ladies” or “guys,” try “friends,” a favorite in the library's Children's Services department.

Patnott said he's had conversations with kids about how you can't assume things about people just by looking at them, and how everyone should feel welcomed and comfortable at the library. “It's also important for kids to see a transgender adult who's able to be themselves, which in turn makes them more comfortable being themselves,” he said.

NEW! SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING WORKSHOP SERIES

For families with children ages 5–8. “The hope is that the conversation we begin in the library will be continued more in depth between families when they return home,” said Children's Outreach and Programming Specialist Jenny Jackson.

Wednesdays, Dole Branch Meeting Room

- **Sept. 5, 3:30–4:30 pm:** Compassion (family workshop)
- **Nov. 7, 7–8 pm:** Gender identity (caregivers only)
- **Nov. 14, 3–4 pm:** Gender identity (family workshop)

TOOLS FOR TALKING ABOUT *race with kids*

Last year, the founder of the Facebook group Raising Race Conscious Kids in and around Oak Park reached out to us. Although she had been raised to be “color-blind,” Andrea Kovach wrote, she is raising her 3- and 6-year-olds differently because “research has shown that instead of dismantling structural racism, that way of parenting just reinforces it.” The library would be the perfect place to have “race explicit” storytimes, she added.

In July we held a Race Conscious Readers family storytime workshop, sharing tools and strategies for caregivers and educators, especially those who are white, to talk about race with young children. This fall, join us for a three-part series for families with kids in early elementary school (see below).

“Developmentally, kids notice difference. It’s about engaging in the conversation rather than shying away,” said Multicultural Learning Librarian Naomi Priddy. “Otherwise, a kid learns that talking about race is bad, that difference itself is bad or shameful. Then maybe they hear another kid say something at school, and it snowballs. This is about disrupting that process.”



TALKING POINTS

- **Ask questions.** Instead of rushing in for a “teachable moment,” ask kids what they already know and where their question is coming from: “What do you think? Did you see or hear something that made you ask that?”
- **Prepare what you’ll say.** Think about how you want to talk about big topics before they ask, and practice out loud.
- **Take time before you answer.** “Wow, what an interesting and important question. Let me think and learn a little more before I answer.”
- **Share your feelings.** “It makes me mad/sad/confused when I see _____.”
- **Share when you are learning too.** “I want to learn more about that too! I am going to read a few books, and then let’s talk more about it.”
- **Revisit missed opportunities.** If you said the wrong thing or nothing at all, it’s not too late. “Remember in the store when you said _____? I want to talk more about it.”

NEW! RACE CONSCIOUS READERS FALL SERIES

Wednesdays, Sept. 19, Oct. 17, Nov. 14, 6–8 pm, Main Library Storytime Room. Find ways to talk to your kids about race, using literature to raise consciousness and start conversations about equity. We’ll demonstrate strategies in a storytime, and share resources on selecting books, preparing questions and responses, and rethinking some children’s classics. Attendance at all three events is recommended, but not mandatory. For caregivers of children in grades K–3.

CHECK IT OUT

Something Happened in Our Town: A Child’s Story About Racial Injustice, designed to be read with kids ages 4–8, shows the different ways a white family and a black family discuss a police shooting of a black man. It models conversations about race, sparks discussions about racial injustice, engages young children, and provides messages of acceptance, empowerment, and community support.





Photo by Robert Carani Photography

WHEN YOU'RE NOT sure where to start

Your privacy and your ability to find what you need are important to us.

- Locate books on topics such as abuse, anxiety, eating disorders, and sex without having to ask. Find a list of topics and call numbers at oppl.org/tough-topics or pick up a bookmark at any library location.
- Check out any book, no matter your age.
- Use the self-checkout machines to check out materials without interacting with library staff.
- Know that your checkout records are private and won't be shared.

The library also has a social worker on staff who can help you figure out next steps for your situation. Ask at any library service desk to speak to Robert Simmons or Stephen Jackson, or call 708.697.6910. See pages 4-7 for more.

SPECIAL EVENTS *this fall*

BLACK HISTORY QUIZ SHOW PARTY

Saturdays, Dole Branch.

Test your knowledge of black history facts, events, and historic sites at this fast-paced quiz show party! All ages.

- **Aug. 18, 1-3 pm**
- **Sept. 29, 2:30-4 pm**
- **Oct. 27, 2-4 pm**

MORE THAN A MIC WITH AFRICARIBE

Wednesday, Sept. 26, 5:30-7:30 pm, Main Library Veterans Room.

Speak your mind at this freestyle open mic hosted by the library's More Than a Month team. Your voice is your power! This event will feature AfriCaribe musicians and dancers. All ages.

BRINGING IT WITH STORYTELLING!

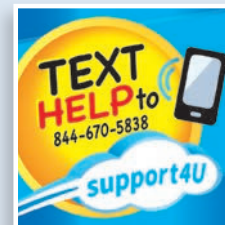
Tuesdays, Sept. 18, 25, Oct. 2, 4:30-6 pm, Main Library Idea Box. Share your talents (and discover new ones!) as we explore and recreate classic stories through art, music, and drama.

Presented by Rita Cassiano and Gingi Lahera, founders of A.L.M.A. (Arts Language Music Alliance). The goal of A.L.M.A. is to guide people in exploring paths of authentic self-expression, cultural consciousness, and human connection. They believe that through creativity one can find the keys to open-mindedness and compassion. For students in grades 4-6. Register now.



HELP IS A TEXT AWAY

Oak Park and River Forest high school and middle school students who need confidential support on any mental health issue can now text with licensed mental health clinicians 24/7. This new service, Support4U, is sponsored by Oak Park and River Forest townships, the Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, and the Oak Park-River Forest Rotary Club.



For District 200 students



For District 97 students



For District 90 students

Some events require registration. See all events and details at oppl.org/calendar.

MAIN LIBRARY

834 Lake St. | 708.383.8200
Monday–Thursday: 9 am–9 pm
Friday: 9 am–6 pm
Saturday: 9 am–5 pm
Sunday: 1–6 pm

DOLE BRANCH

255 Augusta St. | 708.386.9032
Monday: Closed
Tuesday–Thursday: 10 am–9 pm
Friday: 10 am–6 pm
Saturday: 10 am–5 pm
Sunday: 1–6 pm

MAZE BRANCH

845 Gunderson Ave. | 708.386.4751
Monday–Thursday: 10 am–9 pm
Friday: Closed
Saturday: 10 am–5 pm
Sunday: 1–6 pm



BARBARA BALLINGER LECTURE

2018 PRESENTER: JOSÉ OLIVAREZ

Sunday, Oct. 28, 2–4 pm, Main Library Veterans Room

Poet, educator, and artist José Olivarez joins us as we recognize former head librarian Ms. Ballinger for her many years of dedicated service. Olivarez is the son of Mexican immigrants, co-author of the book of poems *Home Court*, and co-host of the podcast *The Poetry Gods*. His debut book of poems, *Citizen Illegal*, will be released in September. Sponsored by the Friends of the Oak Park Public Library. Books available for signing and sale from The Book Table. More: oppl.org/ballinger

REGISTRATION

Some events require registration. Call 708.383.8200 or visit oppl.org/calendar for the latest information and all events.

ACCESSIBILITY

For accommodations at an event or class, please contact us, allowing seven days' notice to best serve you. More: oppl.org/accessibility

PROMOTION

Library programs and classes are often photographed and/or recorded for promotional purposes. Please let us know if you prefer not to be photographed or recorded.

BUILDING CLOSINGS

All library buildings will be closed Monday, Sept. 3, and Thursday, Nov. 22. All library buildings will close at 5 pm on Wednesday, Nov. 21.

MORE GUEST SPEAKERS & AUTHORS

All events take place in the Main Library Veterans Room. More: oppl.org/calendar

UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD OF ISLAM: MALIHA CHISHTI

Wednesday, Oct. 3, 7–9 pm. The ideas exchanged in our six-part Understanding Islam series from last fall through spring were enlightening, and we thank the many participants who came to learn with us. We're happy to extend the learning this October with Dr. Maliha Chisti, who shares with us her on-the-ground work advocating for women in Afghanistan and her

feminist interpretations of the Qur'an. In partnership with the Center for Middle Eastern Studies.

AUTHOR PAUL TEODO: PASTAMAN

Tuesday, Sept. 25, 7–9 pm

AUTHOR ROBERT K. ELDER: THE MIXTAPE OF MY LIFE

Wednesday, Oct. 10, 7–9 pm

BOSNIAN WAR VETERAN TOM KENS: A GRATEFUL VETERAN

Saturday, Nov. 10, 2–4 pm

SEPT. 2018

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