



Providence **Community** Library
OUR NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARIES



ANNUAL REPORT

2009 — 2010

Our First Year



MARCUS MITCHELL

President, Board of Directors

Friends,

Congratulations! The Providence Community Library has completed our first year of managing nine neighborhood libraries located throughout the city, serving over 170,000 Providence residents at a savings of \$3million, expanding services, and salvaging dozens of jobs which were targeted for elimination; all done under budget. Many people said, "It can't be done;" some said this effort would fail. Now everyone has been convinced. How was this unprecedented success achieved? The answer is simple: Each of you made this victory possible.

Every one of you had a hand in this grand achievement. Your support was critical in bringing this vision to fruition. Be proud of your work. Every aspect of this effort added tremendous value towards reaching our goal; from our patrons who provide support and feedback, to our amazing staff who impress me daily with their dedication, to everyone who signed petitions and all those who talked to friends and family about PCL, to our donors who wrote modest and grand checks, to our volunteers who fill in gaps and provide valuable insights. We at the Providence Community Library thank you all for your valuable support and for granting our city this overwhelming success.

Libraries are a vital part of any vibrant city. The library services provided by PCL deliver tremendous benefits to our society. PCL libraries are not simply repositories for books, but function as meeting places for children, seniors and families. Additionally, a myriad of educational and cultural programs are available through our facilities including after-school tutoring, music, movies, computer courses and internet access, poetry, and featured topic speakers. These are only a few examples of the services and programs offered at PCL. The social impact of our libraries is far reaching, as many of our patrons and supporters recognize the benefits garnered by their visits to libraries as youngsters and in adulthood. The return on investment to our community is undeniable. This concept and our commitment to Community are key to our mission at the Providence Community Library system.

The Board, staff and volunteers are working hard to expand on the hard won success of this first year and expect to see marked growth and enhanced programs this year. We need your continued support to achieve the true vision of the community library concept for our children, families, students, and neighbors.

The unity generated in our communities around this Grand Social Experiment may be the greatest accomplishment of PCL. Together we all recognized the importance of libraries in our neighborhoods. Together we fought and won a battle to preserve them. Together we can make Providence Community Library the envy of cities across the nation.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Marcus Mitchell", written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned below the text "Best regards," and is centered horizontally.

ANN ROBINSON

Executive Director

A close friend of mine recently exclaimed “You librarians have the best job in the world! You have the ability to change children’s lives.” I agree. Public libraries open so many possibilities for children by introducing them to great literature, art, music, and ideas. Indeed, a child may choose a different path to follow just by being offered a new way of viewing the world.

My move to Providence to head the Providence Community Library has certainly brought home the truth of my friend’s statement. This year we have witnessed renewed vitality and activity at the Providence neighborhood libraries. Our libraries handled over 800,000 patron visits this year. We presented 3,133 programs to more than 50,000 patrons, and our circulation of 557,790 books, CDs and DVDs was near the top in the state. We also increased the number of public computers at our libraries by 25%, and, as you probably know, it is rare to find one not in use.

This year reaffirmed my belief in and commitment to library service at the community level. Local neighborhood libraries are at the core of the future of library service in the United States. PCL with its insistence on accessible libraries in the neighborhoods is at the forefront of this movement. We are committed to providing free, accessible information to all residents of Providence. The nine PCL libraries function as vital community centers where preschool children are introduced to reading during Cradle to Crayons, school-age children get assistance with their homework in a safe and nurturing environment, and teens participate in after-school programs. Adults gather to attend meetings, discuss topics important to the neighborhood, and to continue lifelong learning.

As I look back on our first year, I would like to take the time to thank all the people involved in establishing this new and evolving library system. First, I must thank Mayor Cicilline and City Council for their financial support of PCL. Without this vote of confidence from the Mayor and City Council, most of our neighborhood libraries would not exist. I am also thankful for the State Grant-in-Aid funding for which the library needs to qualify on an annual basis. In addition, I appreciate the many donations made by individuals, foundations, and corporations that have supported PCL and its mission.

I want to thank the Board Officers and Directors who are a great resource and inspiration to administration and staff. But central to our wellbeing is our staff; the top-notch administrative team, the inventive maintenance department, our behind the scenes tech service and IT people and the staff you see at our libraries. All must be commended; they responded to the challenge of a new organization that requests more from them than ever was expected in the past by offering first rate, customized, neighborhood library service with a smile. Finally, I want to thank our many generous and involved community partners including first and foremost the Friends groups at each of our libraries, as well as the Institute for the Study and Practice on Nonviolence, Ready to Learn Providence, the Rhode Island Family Literacy Initiative, the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, and the Providence After School Alliance to name just a few.

The Providence Community Library is a work in process and with such great creativity and support, I look forward to our next year serving the people of Providence.





Providence Community Library

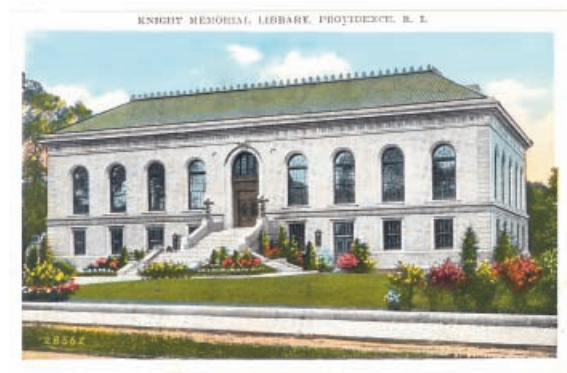
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The PCL Board is a coalition of the many constituencies that have a stake in the continued existence and vitality of neighborhood libraries in Providence. To ensure adequate representation of these constituencies, PCL's By-Laws specify that members are appointed by the Friends organization of each of PCL's nine libraries, the Mayor, the City Council, the Governor, and the PCL staff. In addition, up to nine at-large community members are elected by the Board of Directors. The Board elects four of its members to be officers.

Board meetings are held monthly (except for the month of August) and are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Open Meeting Law of Rhode Island. The Annual Meeting takes place in September.

Board of Directors 2009-2010

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- Patricia Raub **VICE PRESIDENT**
- Linda J. Kushner **SECRETARY**
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- Ken Wise **FRIENDS OF FOX POINT REPRESENTATIVE**

Board Officers with library patrons, from top: 1) President Marcus Mitchell; 2) Vice President Patricia Raub speaking with Linda Kushner; 3) Secretary Linda Kushner; 4) Treasurer Ellen Schwartz.



Fifth Year Anniversary celebration of the Spanish Book Club with Bilingual Outreach Specialist, Carolina Briones, third from left.

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR FIRST YEAR

July 1 — Independence Day

Independence Day is celebrated three days early by PCL because July 1, 2009 is the day that PCL was born. Five of Providence's neighborhood libraries—Fox Point, Olneyville, Smith Hill, Wanskuck, and Washington Park—had been scheduled by prior library management to shut their doors forever on June 30. Instead, on July 1 the staff of those five libraries, along with the staff of Knight Memorial, Mount Pleasant, Rochambeau, and South Providence, opened their doors as usual to throngs of patrons who rely on quality library service in their own neighborhoods. It may have rained that day, but the celebrations that took place citywide were far from dampened.

A Night at Knight

PCL held its first gala fundraiser on a Friday evening in March in the stunning Knight Memorial Library. More than 125 guests celebrated PCL's successful inaugural year while marveling at the grandeur of the library—a focal point of the Elmwood neighborhood. Thanks to the gracious donations of a number of generous artists—and the spirited bidding for their works (thank you guest auctioneer Valerie Tutson)—PCL's first fundraiser was a smashing success! PCL must also thank the many neighbors and City Year members who devoted a long Saturday to scrubbing and polishing Knight Memorial Library to make it ready for its gala debut.

GTECH After-School Advantage Labs

One of the important public services that PCL provides is free access to computers and high-speed internet connectivity. It is easy to forget how many people in Providence, both children and adults, lack their own computers or internet access. Without PCL too many children would be unable to complete their homework and adults unable to search for work or communicate with their loved ones abroad. GTECH has enabled PCL to increase dramatically the number of computers available to the general public by donating computer labs designed for and dedicated to use by our children. During PCL's first year, After-School Advantage computer labs were installed at Mount Pleasant, Wanskuck and Fox Point. GTECH's generosity continues as a fourth lab was just installed at Olneyville in August 2010. GTECH has promised more computer labs to come. PCL must also note that GTECH donated the computers and printers used by PCL's administrative staff. Hats off to GTECH, PCL's first corporate partner!

Cultural Events

A number of different cultural events took place during the year at the various libraries, including musical performances by Greg Abate, Aurea, Lloyd Kaplan & the Aristocats, and the Mike Miller Swingtet; author Ann Hood; poet Kate Schapira; and the fifth anniversary celebration of the Spanish Book Club.



"This past year Wanskuck Library received a new GTECH computer lab. There is no more waiting! Adults and teens can come and go at their leisure. College students are even using our library services to take online tests—we are reaching a new target audience of Young Adults. Agencies and lost patrons are returning. They are seeing the great value that libraries offer once more. As one of our patrons said, "PCL has opened the doors to the world." This quote ties everything together, and our staff feels like they are at the center of things happening in the community. It is most definitely a wonderful feeling."

—CHERYL HUNT, LIBRARY MANAGER, WANSKUCK LIBRARY

“We want the children to do well in life.”

— SANDY OLIVIERA, PCL LIBRARY STAFF



Assistant Director Laura Marlane looks on as patron explores a newly-installed computer donated by GTECH.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Ann A. Robinson EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Laura Marlane ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
Steve Kumins DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
Sue Gibbs BUSINESS DIRECTOR
Michelle Novello PROGRAM COORDINATOR
Carolina Briones BI-LINGUAL OUTREACH SPECIALIST
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Karina Veras LIBRARY CLERK

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Barbara Reddington TECH SERVICES SPECIALIST
Cynthia Reed AV TECHNICIAN/CLERK
Donna Pettigrew LIBRARY CLERK

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Stephanie Chausse WEB/TRAINING SPECIALIST

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Moses Lilly MAINTENANCE ASSISTANT
Nathan Izzi MAINTENANCE WORKER
Frank Grinchell LABORER
Luis Garcia DRIVER
Keith Paiva CUSTODIAN
Doel Sanchez CUSTODIAN



“Working at Washington Park Library often involves connecting people with social services, with homework help, or with access to whatever information and services they need. We help people who are new to online job applications learn to navigate those sites and how to attach documents to an e-mail. One woman we were working with regularly, came in to tell us that she got the job. That was a great feeling for all of us.”

— LANHAM BUNDY (pictured above) LIBRARY MANAGER, WASHINGTON PARK LIBRARY

Our First Year

— BY THE NUMBERS

Number of Libraries	9
Number of Staff	65
Number of Patrons	59,603
Library visits	813,042
Size of Collection	408,025
Total Circulation	557,790
Reference transactions	88,801
Number of Programs	3,133
Program Attendance	53,690
Computers available for public use as of 07/01/09	133
Computers available for public use as of 07/01/10	165
Public use of library computers	159,048 sessions

(10 month total; counted with software installed in September 2009)



“A class from a local school came to our poetry program, Read and Rap. One of the boys was autistic. In an evaluation, the Dean of Students wrote, ‘There were two boys who attended the program who rarely talk. These boys wrote some very expressive poetry. In fact, it was so wonderful to see, that I have talked to some of the teachers at the school to see if we can have them write poetry more frequently.’ I was told that the autistic boy, especially, never expressed himself, and they viewed the program as a breakthrough.”

— JENNIFER ROMANS (pictured above with Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse) CHILDREN'S SPECIALIST, READ AND RAP PROGRAM DEVELOPER, SMITH HILL LIBRARY



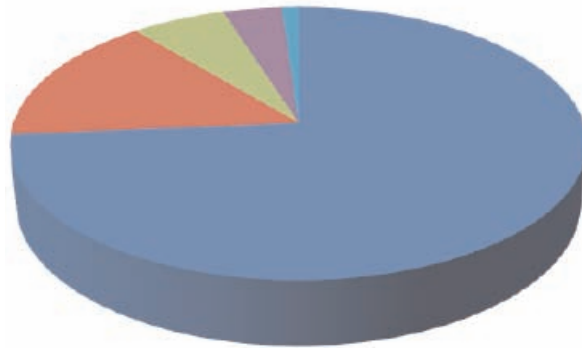
“One thing that a lot of people don't understand is that when children are left in the library every day, like quite a few are, we library staff form a special type of bond with them — even the ones that drive us crazy. They become part of our family unit. I know that I often feel like their adopted mom, grandmother, aunt, or cousin. We care about them and are proud of their accomplishments. We even scold them when they're naughty, but we always do it because we care about them. We want them to do well in life.”

— SANDY OLIVIERA, LIBRARY CLERK, FOX POINT LIBRARY

Financial Information

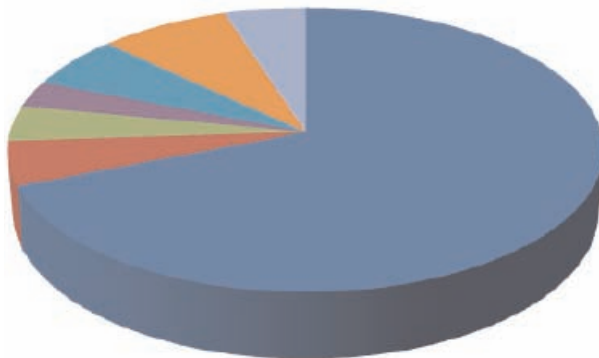
Snapshot of the Providence Community Library finances for the first Operating Year –(unaudited) for fiscal year 2009-2010 (July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010)

Resources: \$4,754,035



- City of Providence 74%
- State of Rhode Island 15%
- Donations 6%
- Donated Materials 4%
- Other Income 1%

Use of Resources: \$4,754,035



- Personnel 69%
- Library Materials 5%
- State Library Membership 4%
- Equipment 3%
- Reserves 6%
- Occupancy 8%
- Other operating / program 5%



“We not only educate the children with interesting trivia theory, games, and crafts, but we try to keep the children off the streets with our programs and special events. It’s important to provide a safe environment. I have been told by more than one child that hanging out in the library—instead of on the streets with friends—has kept them out of trouble.”

—CHERYL HUNT, LIBRARY MANAGER, WANSKUCK LIBRARY

Providence Community Library SUPPORTERS

Providence Community Library wishes to thank these hundreds of donors who helped make our first year possible and successful (gifts made through June 30, 2010):

\$1,000,000+

City of Providence

\$500,000+

State of Rhode Island

\$25,000+

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(continued next page)

*"PCL has
opened the
doors to
the world."*

— LIBRARY PATRON



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by more than
one child that
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the streets with
friends—has
kept them out
of trouble.”*

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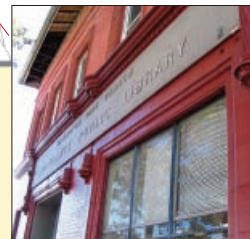
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