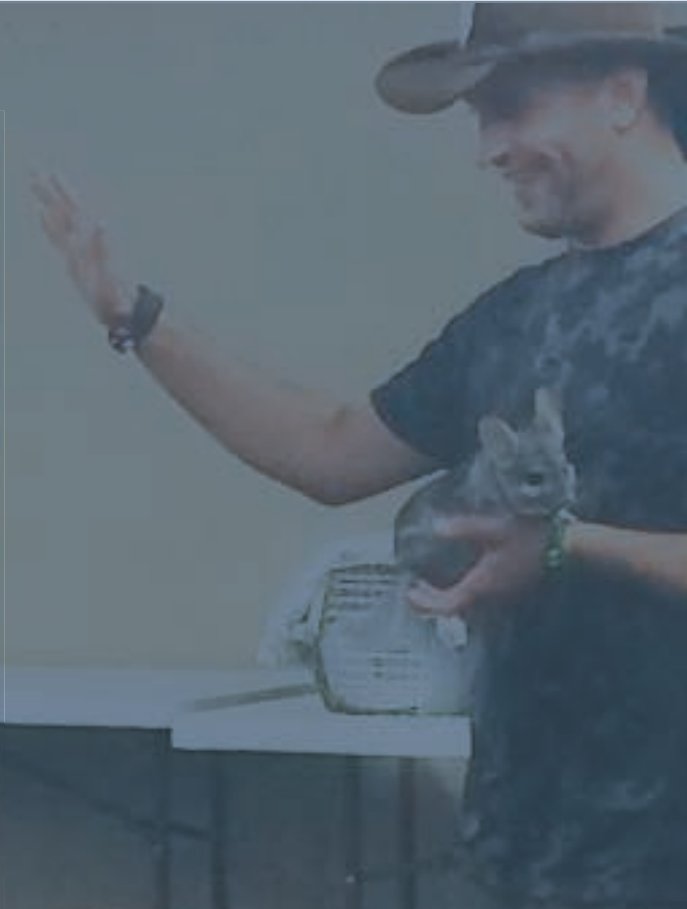




Providence **Community** Library
OUR NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARIES



Annual Report
2014—2015



The Year — BY THE NUMBERS

In difficult economic times, PCL has had to make careful decisions about its limited resources. Demand for new programming continues, and we have responded by increasing the amount of programming we offer at our nine libraries. We have also responded to demand by dramatically increasing the number of videos and ebooks we have to offer our patrons. Despite these investments we have not been able to similarly grow other parts of our collections. Public demand for computer and WiFi access remains strong, and we are noting an increase in patrons using our free broadband WiFi with their own mobile devices. Understanding the changing needs of our patrons is key to keeping the library's services and programs relevant.

Libraries	9
Staff	70
Patrons	53,953
Library visits	740,625
Items in our Collection	349,672
Total Circulation	386,023
Number of Programs	6,141
Program Attendance	62,760
Reference Transactions	59,915
PublicComputerSessions	209,963

Financial Information

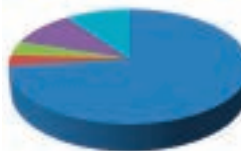
Snapshot of the Providence Community Library operating finances (unaudited) for fiscal year 2014-2015 (July 1, 2014–June 30, 2015). [Note: this does not include \$52,100 in grants for capital purposes.]

Resources: \$5,138,029



- City of Providence 69%
- State of RI grant-in-aid 16%
- Donations and grants 12%
- Donated Materials 1%
- Other Income 2%

Use of Resources: \$5,138,029



- Personnel 73%
- Library Materials 3%
- State Library Membership 4%
- Occupancy 10%
- Other Operating/Program 10%



Your Library's Worth?

If PCL suddenly disappeared, how much would you pay out-of-pocket for library services? The answer is a lot more than you think. Visit the PCL website, click on the **Library Use Value Calculator** and fill in the number of materials or service types you typically buy or borrow in the interactive spreadsheet.

Let's say you are an adult who reads a daily newspaper and a couple of magazines a week, watches two movies, attends a couple of programs and goes online for a couple of hours a day. That very modest usage adds up to more than \$200 a week! For patrons who do not own a computer, have access to WiFi, need help with school or are looking for jobs, the value of a free PCL library card adds up to many hundreds of dollars a week.

The total out-of-pocket value to its patrons of all materials and services provided by PCL in 2014-2015 was more than **\$8 MILLION!** Next time you hear someone say that libraries aren't worth funding, tell them about our calculator!

MARK McKENNEY

President, Board of Directors

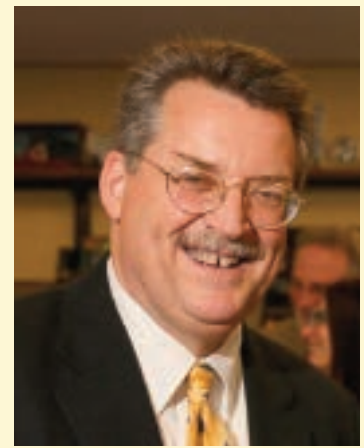
It's been another busy year and we have much to celebrate. A *Library of the Year* award, the institutionalization of our innovative *Ready For K!* program, a prestigious *SoryCorps* grant and the completion of renovations at Smith Hill are just some of the highlights you can read about in this report.

Of course, it hasn't been easy. Despite our best efforts to persuade the City of Providence to increase our funding, our allocation for 2014-15 remained unchanged. We understand that these are lean times for Providence but it's hard for PCL to maintain the excellence it strives for on such a bare bones budget. Sadly, the City of Providence lags behind almost every city and town in Rhode Island, and almost every comparable city around the country, in providing support for its library.

And yet, somehow, our outstanding staff does maintain the excellence! Take a look at the range of programming and services that PCL provided for our patrons over the past year. Like any modern library, PCL is changing. We don't just lend books; through our collections, services and programs, we help people explore their potential and achieve their dreams – all for a free library card. We serve many economically underserved neighborhoods. And the educational and training opportunities we offer, to our GED or technology students for example, can be life-changing. Aren't such opportunities worth every dollar of the City's investment?

I'm writing this message, in September 2015, at a time of transition. As our Executive Director recently stepped down to pursue other opportunities, we have appointed a very capable interim leadership team. In a fortuitous development, the Library was just awarded a \$10,000 grant by the Rhode Island Foundation, through the Initiative for Nonprofit Excellence. Using that, we are engaged in a thorough reassessment of the library's organization and structure, at the same time as we commence a search for a new Director. The PCL leadership team is looking at every aspect of how our library is run, so we can continue to provide the best possible service to our patrons.

The Library continues to look to the future. These are exciting times for PCL!



“These are exciting times for PCL!”

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*S*ister Ann Keefe —everyone at PCL was saddened at the passing of PCL founder and Board member, Sister Ann (pictured here with Senator Sheldon Whitehouse). She was a tireless supporter of PCL and never lost an opportunity to tell people of its importance. PCL has named the community room at South Providence Library in her memory.



PCL Receives “Library of the Year” Award!

PCL was named Library of the Year by the University of Rhode Island’s Graduate School of Library and Information Studies at its 2015 Annual Gathering.

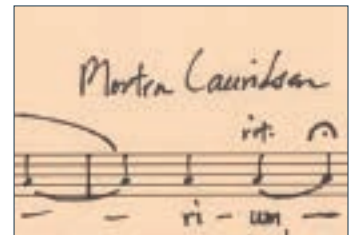


Business Director Sue Gibbs, Mount Pleasant Library Manager Dhana Whiteing and Board Vice-President Cyndie Wilmot (*pictured left, with Senator Jack Reed*) proudly accepted the award, which recognized our staff’s tireless efforts to take a group of small neighborhood libraries and not only keep them open but help them thrive through collaboration and community.

More Awards!

Knight Memorial Friends received the William E. Reeves Friends Award for 2015 from the Coalition of Library Advocates. The award recognized the Friends’ work in the areas of community outreach and fundraising. The Friends have been very successful in raising funds through sales of items at public auction and on eBay, including the sale of a handwritten music manuscript by Morten Lauridsen, generously donated by the composer.

Also this year, the U.S. Small Business Administration honored Knight Memorial Friend and PCL Board member Deborah Schimberg with the 2015 Rhode Island Woman-Owned Small Business of the Year Award.



PCL’s beloved teacher of the Spanish language, Luis Contreras—pictured above with his sister Magaly Angelony during their performance at Feria del Libros—won the Folk Arts Apprenticeship award from RI State Council on the Arts for the 2nd year in a row for traditional Ecuadorian folk dance.



Knight Memorial Friends Doug Victor, Deb Schimberg, John Marks, and Karen Hlynsky receive their award.

PCL and Smith Hill – A Double Celebration!

PCL turned five years old on July 1, 2014! At a fabulous street party at Smith Hill, we celebrated PCL’s birthday with a special reveal of newly completed renovations at the historic Smith Hill library building. Over the last two years, thanks to \$825,000 from the Champlin Foundations and \$255,000 in City of Providence Community Development Block Grants, the building has undergone major renovations to its roof and walls as well as additional building work to make it accessible to patrons with disabilities. Air conditioning and an upgrade of the heating system will be completed by the end of 2015. Smith Hill’s upgraded facilities will attract patrons and provide a year-round boost, not just to the Library, but to the whole neighborhood.



Staff member Cheryl Hunt celebrated 50 years of dedicated library service on April 13. Over the years, she has greeted thousands of patrons with her friendly smile.

Ready For K! Now Available at all Locations



Following a successful two-year pilot, *Ready For K! (R4K)*, PCL's innovative school readiness program, became permanent in 2015. Designed to meet a critical need for school readiness, *R4K* provides high quality preschool education for children aged 3½–5, accompanied by parent or caregiver. Graduates receive a certificate, a backpack full of goodies for school, and, most importantly, the vital skills they need in kindergarten and beyond.

FACT: *Half of children who enter kindergarten in Providence have no formal preschool learning and many students struggle to meet language and literacy benchmarks in the classroom.*

In June, Program Coordinator Michelle Novello and Youth Services Coordinator Cheryl Space were invited to speak about *R4K* at the American Library Association's annual conference in San Francisco. In an interview published on the *School Library Journal* website, Cheryl reported "We're providing a fun experience for the children and an enriching experience, but what we really want to do is affect what's happening at home. We want to show them activities they can do they might not have considered. We want to encourage them to read and share books."



2015 saw the introduction of new, dedicated children's spaces at all locations. Equipped with age appropriate children's toys, they will ensure that PCL's youngest patrons enjoy a safe, well-equipped learning environment.

PCL Responds to Demand for More ESL, GED and Spanish Language Literacy Programming



This year, the City of Providence awarded PCL \$22,000 in CDGB funds to help fund PCL's year-long General Equivalency Diploma (GED) preparation course in Spanish. The award recognizes the importance of our GED training courses in workforce development and is the first such award we have received for our work in this area. Four classes were offered from September through May to 100 low-income students who have faced extra hurdles since the GED test moved to a computer-only format. PCL now incorporates computer instruction into the classes to support successful test-taking.

PCL offered seven English as a Second Language (ESL) courses at six locations during each of two semesters, at beginner and intermediate levels. Courses were in high demand with more than 100 students participating each semester. Waiting lists for places on ESL courses existed at several libraries and we worked to meet the demand.



Hipolito Reyes (pictured left with student), PCL's in-house Latino Education teacher, oversees GED and other Spanish-language literacy classes.

A New Cultural Festival for Providence: Feria de Libro y Las Artes de Providence

Book Fairs are popular events all over the Spanish speaking world. In 2014, PCL's Latino Programming Coordinator Carolina Briones and her team brought the tradition to Providence. Lovers of Hispanic arts and literature flocked to South Providence Library in October for an event featuring books, poetry, storytelling and creative workshops with 40 authors and 10 visual artists from New England, New York, New Jersey, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and all over the Latin American world. A highlight of the National Hispanic Heritage Month, *Feria* returns in 2015.



Latino Program Coordinator, Carolina Briones and bilingual Children's Specialist Antonia Garcia, founding members of the Spanish Book Club, shown above at the ten year anniversary, showcasing the 100 books the Book Club members read.

The Year in Review —



JULY The 2014 Summer Reading Program got off to a flying start with some great performances from guest entertainers. At Olneyville, Illusionist Darren Yong attracted a crowd of 60 children and 18 adults to his daytime performance.

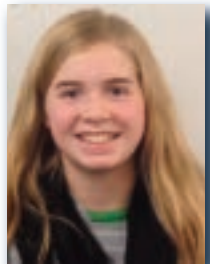
AUGUST Best selling children's author Kate Klise visited PCL and gave several popular story writing workshops for elementary and middle schoolers.



SEPTEMBER Rochambeau turned heads on Hope Street with a fashion parade of glamorous pooches during the Mutt Strutt as part of the Hope Street Merchant's annual festival.

OCTOBER Happy 90th birthday, Knight Memorial Library! On October 4, the Friends group, library staff and local community joined forces to celebrate the beautiful building on Elmwood Avenue. A huge book sale, a flea market, live music and children's activities made for a whole afternoon of fun!

NOVEMBER Rochambeau's 12-year-old Catherine Brunzos made headline news when she was declared 2014 International Games Day Minecraft Hunger Games Tournament World Champion! PCL took on 90 teams from around the world – and won! PCL has its own Minecraft server that allows young patrons at different PCL locations to play online together in safety.



DECEMBER Children at Knight Memorial, Olneyville, Rochambeau, Washington Park and Wanskuck adored Providence Festival Ballet Nutcracker Workshops.

JANUARY PCL's Rochambeau launched a *Girls Who Code Club*, part of a nationwide initiative to encourage girls to take up careers in information technology. It is the only public club in Rhode Island.



— HIGHLIGHTS

FEBRUARY encouraged patrons to return their overdue library materials and to contribute food items in lieu of fines. PCL collected more than 950 pounds of food for the Rhode Island Community Food Bank during *Bring 'Em Back! Week*. Many local leaders supported the event, including Councilman David Salvatore, (seen right) reading to a group of young patrons.



The “Dear Diorama II” competition at Rochambeau produced some amazing shoebox-sized masterpieces depicting favorite books. Illustrated here is People’s Choice award winner, Markus Zuzak’s *The Book Thief* by Jill Colinan. The dazzling dioramas remained on display at City Hall through March.



MARCH Knight Memorial brightened up the late winter by holding its first ever the *Book Face* contest! Eighteen children submitted entries and patrons voted to decide the winners.

APRIL National Jazz History Month brought great live music to Mount Pleasant, Olneyville and Wanskuck. Pictured right Paul Alexander Williams, Mibbit Threats, Jhony Keys and Zeffro Gianetti who gave a rousing and lively concert to a packed room!



MAY The reigning Miss RI World, dressed in crown and sash, thrilled young patrons when she visited PCL to read and play games with patrons!

Children’s author and illustrator Eva Jimenez helped celebrate Latino Books Month at Olneyville.

JUNE Where did that year go? Staff got ready for the 2015 Summer Reading Program with some great window displays on superhero themes. As part of the program, children would read books and raise funds for the Kitengesa Library in Uganda.





Supporting and Celebrating our Neighborhoods

PCL is a *community* library. We value the diversity of our community and strive to help patrons celebrate their heritage and preserve their history. We play close attention to the needs of Providence's large Latino community and other diverse communities. In April, Smith Hill hosted a weeklong series of events for adults and children commemorating Armenian Heritage and Genocide Remembrance Month. In June, Rochambeau Library helped the Cape Verdean community mark the 40th anniversary of the independence of the tiny island state with a special *Virtual Cape Verde* event. We serve Providence as a neighborhood library and honoring the traditions of our patrons is an important part of PCL's mission.



Providing Practical Help and Solutions for Patrons

These days, it's often difficult to get far without being able to use a computer. PCL provided more than 200 one-on-one and group sessions in how to use a computer, access the internet, and use everyday software packages. According to Computer Instructor Stephanie Shea, requests for help come from people of all ages and backgrounds, though the need is particularly acute in older age groups. Stephanie and other PCL staff trained as Healthsource RI "Navigators" have assisted over 200 patrons to understand their rights under the Affordable Care Act and to select and obtain health insurance.

Above (top): After observing earthworms during a R4K session, children and parents released them into the new garden box at South Providence Library.

Above (below): Staff installing the garden box in April during the Earth Day community clean-up.

StoryCorps@your Library

PCL is one of just ten libraries nationwide chosen to pilot StoryCorps@your library, a program of the American Library Association (ALA) and StoryCorps, the national oral history project, with support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. PCL will receive equipment, training and resources to develop a community documentation project based on the StoryCorps interview model. PCL will record more than 40 interviews in 2015 with patrons, staff, program providers and volunteers, who will describe what the library means to them and, in some cases, how it has changed their lives. All interview participants will receive a copy



of their recording and, based upon a written agreement with StoryCorps, PCL will retain copies of fully released interviews, which will be archived at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.



Silaphone Nhongvongsouthy of the Laotian Community Center (and a PCL Board member) presented Oral History: Textiles of the Lao People program at Smith Hill.

David Sok and Leah Lubman (right) direct a StoryCorps training session.



Thank you, Supporters of Providence Community Library

Providence Community Library proudly acknowledges all donations made between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015. PCL receives 85% of its funding from the City of Providence and the State of Rhode Island. In difficult economic times, our resources are stretched, so every dollar we receive means a lot—and goes straight to maintaining PCL's collections, providing diverse programming, access to computers and technology training as well free cultural and arts events. Our libraries are open to everyone, regardless of income or background. PCL provides potentially life-changing possibilities for our patrons. **A donation to PCL is a donation to the future of Providence.**

\$1,000,000+

City of Providence

\$500,000+

State of Rhode Island

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Children's Specialist Edilberta Trejo gets things moving with a Zumba for Tots class.

How to Give

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To make tax-deductible donations, visit the Support PCL page on our website where you can donate via Paypal or credit card, or you can send a check to Providence Community Library, P O Box 9267, Providence RI 02940. To set up a recurring gift, or to inquire about legacy giving, please contact our Development Director, Steve Kumins.

—Businesses

PCL makes a huge impact on Providence. Our resources, services and programs raise literacy levels, provide education and training, help people find jobs, build community engagement, promote the arts and much more. If your company has goals for community involvement and charitable giving, PCL can help you achieve them. Please contact our Development Director.

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... and the many readers who
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 books to our libraries.



*Laken Hottle reads The
 Very Hungry Caterpillar in
 American Sign Language to a
 Storytime group at Fox Point.*

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Mount Pleasant students built The Minotaur That Didn't Wear Her Seatbelt at the RIDOT/ Comics Consortium workshops. When people walked by the model, it would mournfully proclaim "I should've worn my seatbelt!"

RIDOT Seatbelt Grant
 PCL offered more creative programs this year thanks to a grant from the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT). Activities included Comics Consortium Workshops, a Mad Science program at all libraries, plus 10-week media classes – all focused on a seat-belt safety media campaign. Thank you, RIDOT, Mad Science and Comics Consortium!



Our annual fundraiser, BookstoBank On, generated \$43,000 to pay for new materials and programs. Thanks to everyone who attended, donated items or bid on our silent auction! Pictured left are long-time supporters David Berman, Jason Tranchida, and Deborah Del Gais.

PHOTO ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS We would like to thank Allyson Barth of Animal Reflections Photography, Dhana Whiteing for her professional images, and the many other PCL staff and Board members who have contributed to this report.

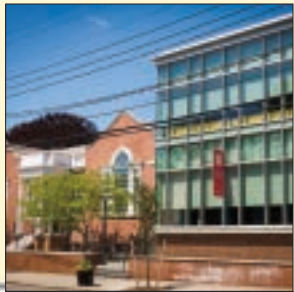
Everyone in Providence has a library!



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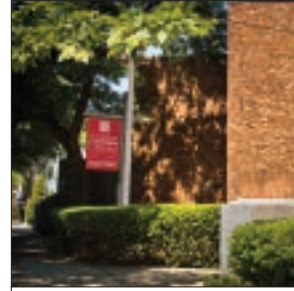
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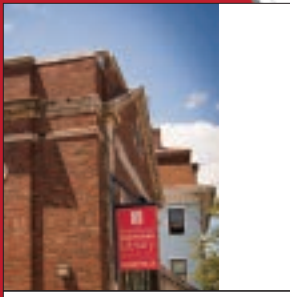
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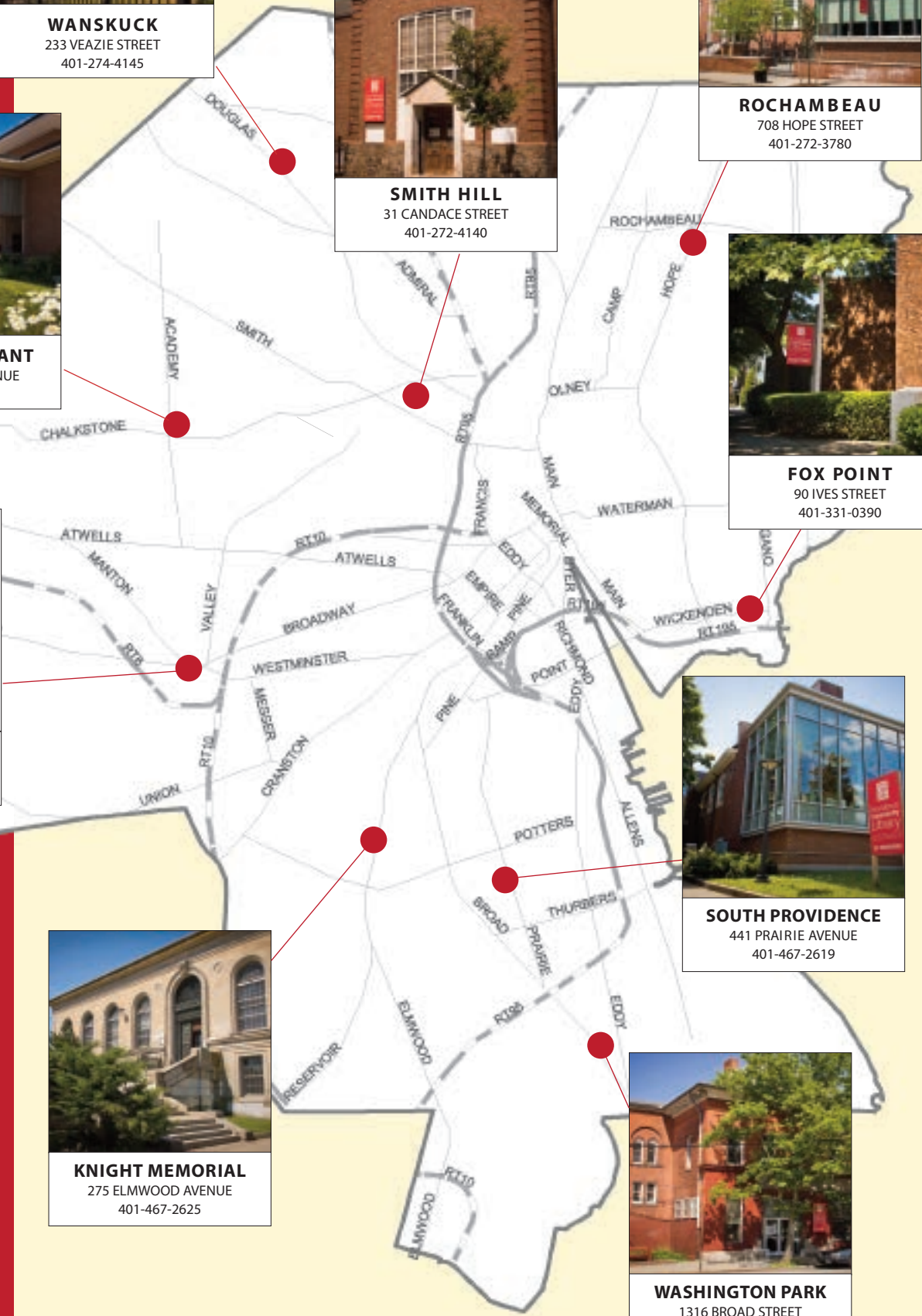
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