“LIBRARIES ARE POWERFUL.

THEY SHAPE MINDS, BOLSTER ECONOMICS, AND ANCHOR COMMUNITIES OF EVERY SIZE IN EVERY CORNER OF AMERICA.”

- COURTNEY L. YOUNG
PRESIDENT
AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
locations

1. CENTRAL LIBRARY
140 SOCKANOSSET CROSS RD, CRANSTON RI 02920 401.943.9080

2. ARLINGTON BRANCH @ THE CRANSTON SENIOR CENTER
1064 CRANSTON ST, CRANSTON RI 02920 401.944.1662

3. AUBURN BRANCH
396 PONTIAC AVE, CRANSTON RI 02910 401.781.6116

4. KNIGHTSVILLE BRANCH
1847 CRANSTON ST, CRANSTON RI 02920 401.942.2504

5. OAK LAWN BRANCH
230 WILBUR AVE, CRANSTON RI 02921 401.942.1787

6. WILLIAM HALL LIBRARY
1825 BROAD ST, CRANSTON RI 02905 401.781.2450

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THE LIBRARY’S MISSION: The Cranston Public Library brings people, information and ideas together to enrich lives and strengthen the community.

WE STRIVE TO PROVIDE:

- Library services that are known and valued by the community, resulting in broad use by the public
- An engaging cultural and lifelong learning center for the community
- Services and collections that are readily accessible and easy to use and that are relevant to community needs
- An enthusiastic, well-trained and highly capable staff that works well together to provide quality service to all library users
- Facilities that are inviting and well maintained
- Technology that expands and enhances service
- Timely and accurate information that informs and empowers the public
- Defense of intellectual freedom and the confidentiality of each individual’s use of the library
- A close working relationship with other libraries, community agencies and organizations that fosters cooperation, and makes the most efficient and effective use of taxpayer resources
- A variety of early childhood programs that brings families together and fosters a love of reading
- A relevant collection of print and non-print materials that meet the developmental needs of Cranston’s youth
- Collaboration and support for parents and teachers as schools adopt the Common Core state standards
- Programs for preteens and teens
- The annual Summer Reading program which focuses on making reading and literacy-related programs fun and accessible for children of all ages to help avoid summer reading loss
The Cranston Public Library has been a member of the Ocean State Libraries cooperative network for more than thirty years. In addition to benefiting from a shared system database, our membership entitles our patrons to the diverse range of materials located at 70 other libraries across the state. A robust telecommunications network allows for high-speed Internet access at all CPL locations, and the unique sharing of resources, services, and training continues to provide our staff and our patrons with an exceptional library experience.
On November 13, 2014, over 100 library supporters gathered at the Cranston Public Library for a statewide program called “Exploring the New Normal: Trends in Library Services”. Librarians from around the state gave short talks on innovative library services including Minecraft, makerspaces and teen video programs. The Cranston Public Library was the perfect site for this program because our library has embraced the “new normal.” The new normal for libraries is to be in a state of constant evolution, always adapting to and anticipating the needs of our users. Often these needs involve technology but can also include new ways of providing our traditional services.

The library was part of some exciting and innovative initiatives this year beginning with the ALLAccess in the Libraries grant. This federally funded grant created a partnership between the library and several adult education organizations to provide one-on-one instruction to adult learners. Library users can schedule appointments to receive help with things like using an eReader, setting up a new computer, or crafting a cover letter.

The library also moved forward with our 3D printing and digital literacy programs. We launched a traveling Minecraft program which provides teens with the opportunity to collaborate at different library locations. A Seed Library was launched at the William Hall Library allowing gardening enthusiasts to share both knowledge and seeds.

We also created the C Lab at the Central Library. Thanks to funding from the Champlin Foundations the C Lab is our new digital media learning space. This configurable classroom space will allow for traditional computer class instruction models, one-on-one appointments, teen programming and open tech time with an ever-growing list of equipment. The library is also working with outside groups to offer a schedule of other services and programs in this space.

As we moved forward with the C Lab, ALLAccess, and other technology programs, we renovated our spaces so we can continue to offer excellent traditional library services, like reference and readers advisory. The Cranston Public Library has one of the largest book clubs offered at a library in the state. We had another successful summer reading program offering over 175 programs for the youth of our city. At the Central Library we launched our Express Collection, making bestselling books and movies more available to a greater number of users.

The library was able to accomplish many important goals in 2014, including the passing of a bond in the recent elections. We want to thank all the voters of Cranston who supported this initiative to provide us with the funding for long-needed capital repairs across the library system.

I also want to thank our library staff who continue to provide the users of the Cranston Public Library with excellent customer service. It is their hard work that allows us to provide so much at such a value to the people of Cranston.
cpl by the numbers

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fast fact

Last year, Cranston Public Library delivered 3,973 items to home-bound patrons through the library’s Books @ Home service.

*CORRECTION: IN 2013, THE CORRECT NUMBER OF VISITS WAS 429,280
data & statistics

COLLECTION BY MATERIAL TYPE

292,245 ITEMS
217,231 Books
40,150 Periodicals
16,968 CDs
17,896 DVDs

EZONE CIRCULATION

The eZone is the Ocean State Libraries’ statewide cooperative ebook and digital media lending service. All public libraries in Rhode Island support this service through cooperative purchasing.

The circulation of ebooks and digital audiobooks among Cranston patrons increased by 48% from 2013 to 2014. Cranston Public Library continues to have the second highest eZone circulation totals in the state.

fast fact

On Saturdays, Cranston Public Library locations check out over 200 items an hour.
Cranston Public Library continues to rank high among Rhode Island public libraries in many areas of service:

- Interlibrary Loan Lending
- Total Circulation
- Reference Transactions

- Interlibrary Loan Borrowing
- Program Attendance
- eZone Circulation

- Library Visits
- Public Computer Use

41% of Cranston residents have a library card
NEW ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

In October 2014, Julie Holden was appointed to Assistant Director of Cranston Public Library.

Holden has worked in public libraries for more than 14 years, the last two of which were in the role of Emerging Technologies Librarian at Cranston Public Library. She earned a Master’s Degree in Library and Information Science from Simmons College and a BA in Communications from Boston College.

Julie Holden replaced Cranston Public Library’s former Assistant Director, Ann Osbon, who retired in October 2014.

BALLOT QUESTION #10

On Tuesday, November 4, 2014, the residents of Cranston voted to approve Ballot Question #10. This approval gives the City of Cranston the authority to issue not more than $1,200,000 general obligation bonds and temporary notes to finance the improvement, renovation, repair, upgrading and equipping of the public library system in the city.
In August 2014, Cranston Public Library launched a new Express Collection at the Central Library. The Express Collection, comprised of popular new books and movies, makes it possible for patrons to borrow in-demand items without being put on a waiting list. Items are available on a first-come, first-served basis and have shorter loan periods and a no-renewal policy, getting them back on the shelf and into the hands of new borrowers sooner. The creation of this collection meets a primary goal of the library’s strategic plan by increasing patron access to new and popular items.

The collection has been received enthusiastically by patrons, quickly becoming a popular addition, and yielding high circulation rates. In the five months since its creation, Express DVDs have circulated 5543 times and Express Books nearly 2000 times.

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- Cranston Public Library launched a re-designed library website in September 2014.
- Library Director Edward Garcia served on the Cranston Public School Attendance Counts Taskforce. The Taskforce’s mission is to fight chronic absenteeism and educate the community on the importance of school attendance. In September 2014, the library hosted a collaborative workshop with the Attendance Counts Taskforce, Rhode Island Mentoring Partnership and Rhode Island Department of Education to share ideas and strategies to combat chronic absenteeism. Representatives from 24 school districts were in attendance.
- The library participated in Cranston Safety Day on May 10, 2014 at Garden City.
- Cranston Public Library was a sponsor of the Rhode Island PBS Kids Club Writers Contest.
- The Central Library became part of the OSHEAN fiber ring. As a result, Internet bandwidth increased from 40 mbps to 100 mbps.
- The Library received a $3400 grant from the Felicia Fund to purchase microfilm of the Cranston Herald (1993-2010).
- The Library conducted a series of technology programs at the Cranston Senior Center, instructing seniors about the use of eReaders and tablets.
In October 2014, the library collaborated with the Cranston Public Schools’ Family Center to offer a four-part series of family programs with a focus on hands-on science activities. The library and Family Center were overwhelmed by the response—more than 80 families wanted to participate! Forty families were selected, and more than 100 people attended each program in the series.

Participants were from five different public elementary schools in Cranston and included both regular library users and people who were new to the library. At the first program, library staff gave these families an opportunity to sign up for library cards.

At each program in the series, library staff read two picture books and offered three hands-on science stations, such as designing paper rockets, testing bubble-making tools, and comparing family fingerprints. At the last session, each child chose two books and a small set of science tools and toys to keep.

In a survey conducted the last week of the program, participants expressed their appreciation. “My son has been asking to read more. Thank you,” wrote one participant. Another participant added, “We will also continue to use the library as an endless source of information.”
This year, 530 elementary school age children and 131 teens signed up for Cranston Public Library’s Summer Reading Challenge, an incentive program that encourages young people to read every day and visit the library regularly over the summer. In addition, 160 preschool children signed up for our brand new preschool summer reading challenge, which encourages parents to complete easy early literacy activities with their kids. Overall, sign-ups for the summer reading challenge increased 20% from 2013.

Every year, the summer reading kickoff at East High School is the capstone of collaboration between school and public librarians in Cranston. During May and June, school librarians host visits by public librarians to promote summer reading. On a June evening, they come together to hold the kickoff, during which fun activities are offered at various stations all over the East High School library. In 2014, more than 250 parents and children attended the kickoff, where they made mad scientist puppets and invisible ink, applied for library cards, and shared books they hoped to read over the summer.

During the summer, the library introduced an online option for summer reading, allowing children and teens to enter weekly raffles online when they could not visit the library. About 10% of raffle entries were entered online rather than in person.

“I can’t begin to express my thanks to the Cranston Public Library for their summer reading program. It’s been a great experience for my granddaughters, and made for a very interesting and enjoyable summer. Great live events every week, like The Great Baldini or the Hampstead Stage Company’s Alice in Wonderland, Biomes, the animal guy, and many others. Just great!”

ROD CARRI
Generous donations from local businesses and charities, in addition to statewide funding from the Office of Library and Information Services, allowed the library to offer 179 free cultural and educational performers and a range of incentives for summer readers, including tickets to a PawSox game, a chance to win a Kindle Fire Tablet, and a bookplate recognizing their achievement in a library book of their choice.

The 2014 summer reading program concluded with a chance for children who read at least 35 days over the summer to participate in a special service project: the annual tree planting at Meshanticut Park. Children who wanted to be “tree planters” filled out an entry form that asked them what their favorite way to share their reading was, and seven winners were drawn. The winners, along with their families, library staff, and Councilman Steven Stycos planted five trees in the park on August 16. The trees will help divert rainwater and replace trees destroyed by recent storms.
In an effort to expand innovative technology programs for young people, the library began offering a Teen Minecraft Club at the Central Library in March 2014. By the end of the year, the library was offering five regular Minecraft programs at three locations for people as young as seven and as old as 18. Every program had a waiting list, and participation was only limited by the number of laptops available. Total attendance, between September and December alone, was 193 young people at 22 programs.

Minecraft is a collaborative building game with simple graphics and no imposed goals or levels. At library programs, staff members define goals for participants and emphasize the positive social aspects of gaming. Participants are encouraged to create rules together, and teen volunteers play an important leadership role. While many young people have their own Minecraft accounts, the library offers participants the opportunity to play using a library account on a library laptop, equalizing access.

In order to offer these programs, library staff had to learn the basics of gameplay, set up LAN networks, recruit and train teen volunteers, and transport seven laptops and peripherals to three locations each week. Since beginning this project, Cranston Library staff members have been consulted by staff at six other libraries interested in offering similar programs.
Due to a generous donation from the Friends of the Cranston Public Library, the Oak Lawn Branch held one of the most popular Cranston Public Library events of the year with a Frozen-themed party complete with a visit from the popular film’s Queen Elsa.

The Elsa appearance was booked with “Dreams Come True,” a Warwick, RI-based company specializing in popular film character appearances.

Due to early indicators of the program’s popularity, and room capacity concerns at the branch, the Oak Lawn Baptist Church, across the street, offered the use of their program room for the event.

Approximately 100 children and their parents and grandparents attended. Many little girls donned frosty blue Elsa dresses or other Frozen-related clothing to show their enthusiasm. Elsa received a warm reception before singing songs from the popular movie, reading a story, and taking pictures with children and families.

Six teen volunteers assisted with the hour-long program.

(Above) Queen Elsa sings to a group of 100 children (Below) A Cranston child poses with the “ice queen”
Over the past year, the Cranston Public Library has designed and implemented new adult programs through ALLAccess in the Libraries, an initiative made possible through a $500,000 grant received from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

ALLAccess is the joint effort of representatives from the Cranston Public Library, Providence Public Library, Rhode Island Family Literacy Initiative, MJIF Consulting, Adult Education Professional Development Center, Tech Access of Rhode Island, and the University of Rhode Island.

One-on-one technology appointments began in May 2014 as the first service launched in Cranston. Appointments allow patrons to work individually with librarians to develop basic computer literacy skills. Appointment topics include instruction for setting up email, operating iPads and tablets, maneuvering the Windows 8 operating system, and using basic software applications, such as Microsoft Excel. To date, 50 library patrons have increased their digital literacy skills through 81 appointments with librarians.

The demand has been very high for this service and we hope to increase our instruction capacity from one librarian to multiple librarians and interns for the upcoming year.

fast fact

More than 5000 visitors pass through Cranston Public Library doors every week.
As a member of the Rhode Island Family Literacy Initiative (RIFLI), Cranston Public Library has offered English as a Second Language (ESL) and Citizenship classes for over 16 years. Classes are conducted at the Auburn branch and the William Hall Library.

In 2014, RIFLI served 79 students. 72% of ESL students increased two or more grade levels in reading. Seven unemployed students found jobs after completing the program and two continued on to post-secondary education. Thirty students became United States citizens.

In 2014, the Cranston Public Library and RIFLI received a $5000 Library of Rhode Island grant from the Office of Library and Information Services, as well as additional funds from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, to pilot a Computer Literacy for Non-Native English Speaking Adults class. Conducted at the William Hall Library, the premiere class was so successful that it has been moved out of the pilot phase and will be offered again in 2015.

Cranston RIFLI programs received additional funding from a $4000 Cranston Community Block Development Grant and a $2000 legislative grant from Senator Joshua Miller.
COMMUNITY

CANDIDATES FORUM

In October 2014, the Cranston Public Library partnered with the *Cranston Herald* to host a Candidates Forum for Cranston City Council and School Committee candidates. Candidates were allowed up to three minutes to make their statements and discuss the issues and goals of their platforms. Audience members were invited to participate in a public Q&A session near the end of the event.

KOREAN SPIRIT & CULTURE @ WILLIAM HALL LIBRARY

The Korean Spirit and Culture Promotion Project visited William Hall Library on April 25, 2014 to teach members of our community about the many cultural, artistic, historical and technological wonders that come from South Korea. Audience members were treated to a documentary film series, free books, a re-enactment of a traditional Korean wedding and a tasty Korean feast.
In April 2014, the William Hall Library launched a Seed Library in an effort to spark interest in the community agriculture movement. With donations from High Mowing Seeds, Small State Seeds and the Open Source Seed Initiative, the library distributed over 500 packets of seeds to patrons.

As part of the Seed Library initiative, William Hall Library also partnered with candidates enrolled in the University of Rhode Island’s Master Gardener program to host several free workshops on gardening, harvesting, and seed preservation.

In November 2014, librarians and library enthusiasts from across the state of Rhode Island gathered at the Cranston Public Library’s Central Library to discuss the newest, latest and greatest in library trends.

From 3D printers and vinyl cutters, to iPads, gaming programs and digital literacy, the Rhode Island library community shared thoughts, tips and visions for the future of Rhode Island’s libraries.

The program was sponsored by the Office of Library and Information Services, Rhode Island Library Association and Coalition of Library Advocates.
MONEY SMART WEEK @ WILLIAM HALL LIBRARY

On April 5, 2014, William Hall Library was the kickoff location for the statewide financial literacy activities that comprise Money Smart Week. The kickoff event was open to the public and included booths from the CollegeBound-fund, the office of the Attorney General, Junior Achievement of Rhode Island, and more. In addition, RI State Treasurer (now Governor) Gina Raimondo as well as Lt. Governor Elizabeth Roberts were on hand to speak and show their support for Money Smart Week.

CONCERT SERIES @ WILLIAM HALL LIBRARY

The William Hall Library has continued its tradition of providing free, seasonal concerts to the public. With support from the Cranston Department of Parks and Recreation, the library hosted the “Music In Our Town” series during Summer 2014. These outdoor concerts take place on the front lawn of the William Hall Library and are a neighborhood favorite.

A generous donation from David and Judy Pelkey sponsored William Hall Library’s Spring and Fall 2014 concert series. The performances take place in the William Hall Library Auditorium.
In 2014, the Cranston Public Library received a $130,000 grant from the Champlin Foundations to continue major renovations to the interior of the Central Library. The project included the installation of a larger reference desk, a dedicated local history room and the creation of the C Lab.

The new reference desk provides an improved workspace for library staff. The new layout also consolidates service areas across the library, allowing for improved customer service and an improved user experience.

The C Lab is the library’s new multi-use digital media learning space. The lab features a configurable classroom that can be used for digital literacy classes, teen tech programs, workforce development and as an open technology space.

The C Lab features a 3D printer, analog-to-digital transfer equipment and digital media creation equipment. The ALLAccess in the Libraries grant funded 15 new laptops for the lab and the Exploration Station. The Exploration Station, the brainchild of Tech Access RI, is designed to provide on-site exploration of the accessibility features available at the library.

Cranston Public Library’s dedicated Local History Room is the first step towards a renewed emphasis on the rich cultural history of Cranston and its surrounding communities. The room will feature a new ScanPro microfilm reader, increased microfilm collections, Cranston yearbooks, and materials from a new partnership between the library and the Rhode Island Genealogical Society.
OAK LAWN REPAIRS

The library continued repairs to the Oak Lawn branch after basement flooding in 2013. The library completed a state-approved asbestos abatement, as well as major repairs to the building’s drainage system in an effort to mitigate future flooding.

AUBURN BRANCH HEATING, VENTILATION AND AIR CONDITIONING

Thanks to the voters of Cranston, Cranston City Council and Mayor Allan Fung, the library was able to use a capital bond of $200,000 to complete a replacement of the HVAC system at the Auburn branch. The branch was closed for five weeks, but now has a fully operational and energy-efficient system.

OTHER PROJECTS:

- Replaced outdated alarm system at the William Hall Library
- Completed extensive repairs to crumbling front stairway at the Knightsville branch
- Installed a new picture window at the Oak Lawn branch
- Patched and repaired front walkways at the Central Library
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Cranston Public Library operating budget for fiscal year 2014 was $3,029,001.

In fiscal year 2014 the library received a 2.8% budget increase from the City of Cranston with an appropriation of $2,400,420.

The library also received $541,181 in state grant-in-aid. The remainder of our operating budget came from fines and fees.

CRANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The Cranston Public Library Association (CPLA) is the nonprofit fund-raising arm of the Cranston Public Library. CPLA assists the library in providing programs and services that exceed the level of tax-based funding. CPLA is recognized by the IRS as a 501c3, making all contributions fully tax deductible.

CPLA welcomes donations from individuals, organizations, corporations, and foundations. Donations assist with the promotion of early literacy, expansion of book and media collections, provision of programming, and more.

To make a donation to the CPLA, please call 401-943-9080 x 100 or visit: cranstonlibrary.org/support-library

fast fact

Cranston spends $33.16 per capita on library services, ranking 25th out of 29 Rhode Island communities
LIBRARY SUPPORTERS

The Cranston Public Library and Cranston Public Library Association seek donations and grants throughout the year to fund additional programs and improvements to the library. The following is a list of selected supporters (July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014):

$200,000+
CITY OF CRANSTON CAPITAL BOND (AUBURN HVAC REPLACEMENT)

$100,000+
CHAMPLIN FOUNDATIONS (FOR RENOVATIONS TO THE CENTRAL LIBRARY)

$35,000+
INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES (ALLACCESS IN THE LIBRARIES GRANT)

$5,000+
LIBRARY OF RHODE ISLAND (LORI) GRANT (ESL DIGITAL LITERACY PILOT PROGRAM)
SUSAN SUROVA

$2,000+
CRANSTON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
FELICIA FUND
CRANSTON MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES CREDIT UNION
FRIENDS OF THE CRANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
SENATOR JOSH MILLER LEGISLATIVE GRANT

$1,000+
AUBURN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
BANKNEWPORT
IDA BALLOU LITTLEFIELD TRUST
WALMART FOUNDATION

$500+
SENATOR HANNA GALLO LEGISLATIVE GRANT
TACO/WHITE FAMILY FOUNDATION
WHOLE FOODS MARKET, CRANSTON

$100+
ALEX AND ANI, CHARITY BY DESIGN
PAWTUCKET CREDIT UNION CHARITABLE FOUNDATION
BOB’S DISCOUNT FURNITURE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION
HOPE HIGHLANDS PTO
HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF RI (PAUL HOLLIDAY MEMORIAL COLLECTION)
library administration

ED GARCIA DIRECTOR
JULIE HOLDEN ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
BARBARA HAYDEN OFFICE MANAGER

EMILY BROWN COORDINATOR OF YOUTH SERVICES
BETH JOHNSON COORDINATOR OF ADULT & INFORMATION SERVICES
CORRIE MACDONALD COORDINATOR OF TECHNOLOGY
STEFANIE BLANKENSHIP OAK LAWN BRANCH LIBRARIAN
ADRIENNE GALLO WILLIAM HALL LIBRARY BRANCH LIBRARIAN
KAREN MCGRATH AUBURN BRANCH LIBRARIAN
NANCY GIANLORENZO KNIGHTSVILLE BRANCH LIBRARIAN
LINDA ARCHETTO HEAD OF TEEN SERVICES
KATY DORCHIES COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

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