MONROE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

WORK SESSION
Wednesday, June 12, 2013
5:45 p.m.
Meeting Room 1B

AGENDA

1. Call to Order – Valerie Merriam, President

2. 2014 Budget Preliminaries – Sara Laughlin/Marilyn Wood/Gary Lettelleir/Kyle Wickemeyer Hardy

   a. Budget timeline (page 1)
   b. Update on Affordable Care Act (page 2-4)
   c. Update on digital creativity initiative (page 4-20)

3. Public Comment

4. Adjournment

Monroe County Public Library: 2014 Budget Work Plan

Step	*State Requirement*	*MCPL Date*
Input from managers		**5/15**
State Library/DLGF workshop		**6/13**
Board work session	Discuss budget issues-health care, teen/DCC staff/eq., collection shifts	**6/12**
Board meeting		**6/19**
Board work session	Budget –first draft 2013 budget	**7/10**
Board meeting		**7/17**
AVGQ announced	Estimated date	7/15
Monroe County AV available	Estimated date	8/1
Board work session	Second draft, with revisions from 7/10	**8/14**
Board meeting	**Approve budget for advertising**	**8/21**
Submit budget to County Council for non-binding recommendation	Submit to County Council before 9/3 (last day per DLGF)	8/15
Submit form 3	Gateway Budget Advertising Template	8/22
Advertise budget and public hearing (9-18) for first time – HT and Ell.	Before 9/6 and at least 10 days before public hearing	8/22
Confirm correct advertisement		8/28
Advertise budget and public hearing (9-18) for second time	Before 9/13 and at least 3 days before public hearing	8/29
Confirm correct advertisement		9/4
County Council meeting	By 10/1(last day per DLGF)	9-10
Board work session	3rd Draft with revisions from 8/14	**9/11**
Public Hearing on Library Budget (immediately before Board meeting)	**Before 10/22 and at least 10 days before board adoption**	**9/18**
Objection Petition filed by 10 or more taxpayers	No more than 7 days after public hearing	9/25
Board work session		**10/9**
Board meeting: Adopt budget	**Last day for Board to adopt 11/1**	**10/16**

Affordable Care Act and Monroe County Public Library: Board Update

We met recently with Julia Thomas, JA Benefits, for an update on Affordable Care Act implementation and its impact on the library. Here is a summary of what we learned:

The Affordable Care Act divides employers into small (fewer than 50 employees) or large (50 or more employees). We fall into the large employer category.[1]

For large employers, including the library, the choice is to pay penalties or participate – "pay or pay." The library already meets the four criteria:

1. Offer benefits to employees. We offer health insurance to all employees who work 20 hours or more/week. Not all choose to take the offer and that is OK.
2. Benefits meet 60% actuarial requirements. Only one of our plans must meet this standard. The PPO and the $3000 deductible HSA plan both meet the standards. The $5000 deductible HSA plan does not.
3. All three of our current insurance plans – PPO, $3,000 deductible HSA (HSA 1), and $5,000 deductible HSA (HSA 2) meet this standard. Carriers will send us official notice with renewal proposals.
4. Offer benefits to all employees who work 30 hours or more. We offer health insurance to employees who work 20 hours or more/week, so we exceed the requirements.
5. Offer benefits at an affordable price, defined in the law as less than 9.5% of gross wages for an individual employee, or the federal poverty level.   The library meets this definition for employees who work 25 hours/week or more, although it is only required to meet it for those working 30 hours/week or more.

Details about exchanges – plans, networks, costs – are not yet fully known, although they are supposed to be available by October 1, 2013. Julia expects that rates will be based on age, demographics, , , and smoking status, with a possible subsidy for low-income participants.

Julia listed reasons for health care cost increases over the last few years as different requirements of the ACA have gone into effect:

- Removed the lifetime cap on benefits.
- Increased the age through which children can be covered by their parents to 26.
- Increased the number of preventative procedures covered by insurance.

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[1] Julia noted that Anthem is planning to renew 2013 contracts with small group employers into 2014, without change, in order to delay implementation for these groups, since individual exchange options and "community rating" will make implementation more complicated. Instead, they will focus on large employers initially.

- Women's Care Act added coverage for tubal ligation not performed during C-sections. This was not previously covered.

And

- Changes in pharmaceutical research and development, as well as marketing, have resulted in the development of very expensive "designer" drugs.

Some of these are short-term costs, designed to improve wellness and reduce costs in the longer run.

In conclusion, the library's current health insurance coverage meets Affordable Care Act criteria and will not require any changes. The Affordable Care Act may offer employees additional choices. In the current environment, part-time employees working 25 or 20 hours/week frequently cannot afford even the HSA 2 option through the library. They can either join their spouse's/parent's plan, purchase an individual plan, use the state's back-up plan (which currently is not accepting new applicants), or have no coverage. Under the Affordable Care Act options, they will have to have insurance or pay penalty, and they will have an additional option: the exchange, with a subsidy if their household income meets the federal guidelines. The new environment may offer opportunities for the library in the future. We expect that investing in wellness will continue to be the best strategy.

Creating a Teen-centered Digital Creativity Initiative: Update, June 2013

Based on feedback from our community and opportunities presented by the upcoming renovation, we are planning to add a digital creativity space focused on teens.

Needs Assessment

Monroe County has a substantial audience of middle and high school age, comparable to pre-school and elementary school audiences:

    a.   Age 0-4   (Stats Indiana)   6,976

    b.   Age 5-9   (Stats Indiana)   6,567

    c.   MCCSC + RBB Grade 7-12   6,322

These 6,000+ middle and high school-aged students are at a unique adolescent developmental stage. Their needs are different from those of elementary students and from adults. They live digitally-embedded lifestyles, as documented in Mizuko Ito's research.[1] Their digital use is socially-driven – "hanging out" and "messing around" (trying new things, light interest, one-time participation) – and interest-driven – "geeking out" (serious, long-term interest, with connections not limited to their age group, friends, or local contacts). We already have substantial spaces, staff, and programming appropriate for pre-school and elementary school audiences, but much less for middle and high school students.

The library already has a strong digital literacy service. In 2012, patrons logged 163,000 hours on the library's 60+ public access computers. Staff in Childrens, Adult and Teen Services, and at Ellettsville provided assistance on a wide range of technology questions, supported public computer use, and offered one-on-one sessions by appointment for those who needed extended help. A full-time instructional designer coordinated training for the public, including regular classes on basic software and new applications in a dedicated technology classroom (2C) at the Main Library and in the meeting room at the Ellettsville Branch, and for staff, including classes, individual coaching, and webinars and tutorials on a wide range of topics. We intend to continue this essential support for information seeking and communication.

Conversations with teens and youth-serving professionals in summer 2011 confirmed the need for community-based digital creativity resources. The library's hackjam and video camp in Summer 2012 attracted large audiences. Recent interest in the "maker" movement across the country suggests opportunities and partners; maker programs in 2013 have confirmed there are interest and willing partners in our community. On June 20, consultant Kimberly Bolan Cullin will be conducting focus groups, on behalf of architect Christine Matheu, with middle and

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[1] Ito, Mizuko, et al. *Hanging Out, Messing Around, Geeking Out; Kids Living and Learning with New Media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010.

high school students, their parents, digital creativity thought leaders, and staff, in order to discover their needs and preferences.

We expect rapid change in our current collections in the next few years: end of DVD and CD production, increase in e-book use, probably accompanied (although not right away) with decrease in traditional book use. With introduction of ipads for every middle school student, homework will look different, perhaps be completed during school in 'flipped instruction' approach, and certainly will be more dependent, if not totally so, on digital access. With the renovation and creation of digital creativity space, we hope to improve upon the current location of teen collection on the second floor that is claustrophobic, not well-lit, and too far away from the children's department for staff to make comfortable referrals of younger teens.

Steps to Implementation

Implementing the digital creativity will require several decisions and implementation over the next year:

- ✓ Engage teens and others in the design and furnishing of the space and the ongoing programming. We will hold 5 focus groups on June 20, with middle school students, high school students, parents of teens, digital creativity thought leaders, and staff.
- ✓ Decide if other audiences will be permitted to use the space. We will be asking that question during the focus groups on June 20.
- Develop a mission statement to guide planning and work with architects. Our working draft: ***Incorporate digital media into a public environment of learning that allows teens to express themselves creatively.***
- Identify space during the architectural program development and make whatever moves are needed – collections, offices, storage, etc.
- Develop a staffing plan, probably beginning by hiring/selecting a leader for the planning efforts in early 2014, followed after opening with one or more other library positions plus interns.
- Identify and solidify partnerships for interns, programs, promotion, etc.
- Purchase equipment and furnish the space, and allocate an annual budget for maintenance and updating.
- Figure out how to manage the space: Will admission be controlled? If so, how? If teen collections are here, how can we provide access to others? Will adults be allowed to use the space at the same time or at different times?

Research and Other Libraries Engaged in Teen Digital Creativity

I have attached two articles and a link to a third that provide general overviews of digital creativity spaces and programs in libraries:

Jacobsen, Mikael and Anthony, Carolyn. "Build Your Own Digital Media Lab," Library Journal, November 1, 2011.

Landgraf, Greg. "Geek Out," *American Libraries*, September 1, 2012 (see attached)

King, David Lee. "Content Creation, Media Labs, and Hackerspaces": http://www.davidleeking.com/2011/12/15/content-creation-media-labs-and-hackerspaces/

Teen space references:

Bolan, Kimberly. *Teen Spaces; The Step-by-step Library Makeover* (second edition), Chicago: ALA Editions, 2009.

Young Adult Library Services Association. National Teen Space Guidelines: http://www.ala.org/yalsa/guidelines/teenspaces

Other libraries engaging in digital creativity with teens (and sometimes adult audiences):

Chicago Public Library You Media: http://youmediachicago.org/2-about-us/pages/2-about-us

High school students only at Harold Washington Branch; middle and high school students at three other branches. We visited the Harold Washington Library. The most complete implementation of Ito's research to design space and programs.

Skokie (IL) Public Library, Digital Media Lab.

> All ages, located in former closet initially, but now expanding to add music studio at request of young people; "messing around" and "geeking out" only. We visited them and have their list of software and equipment.

Gail Borden (Elgin, IL) Public Library, Studio 270: http://www.gailborden.info/high-school (and click to their Facebook page from there)

High school students only, and primarily "hanging out." We visited them.

> Blue Island (IL) Public Library, Tech Annex: http://www.blueislandlibrary.org/techannex/index.htm.

> All ages; "messing around" and "geeking out" only. We visited them and have their list of software, equipment, and sample programs.

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, The Lab @ CLP: http://www.clpgh.org/teens/events/programs/thelabs/

> Teens only. We attended a webinar about their implementation and have notes about software, equipment and programs.

Tippecanoe County Public Library, The Portal: http://www.tcpl.lib.in.us/theportal

> All ages, technology-rich center for learning, research, training, collaboration and content production.

Allen County Public Library has both maker space and media lab for age 11-19 (grades 6-12), Studio D: http://acplteen.wordpress.com/2013/02/04/2495/

Tiny studio, within their young adult space, so they have all three Ito pieces: "hanging out," "messing around," and "geeking out." They're adding a sound booth.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg (NC) Public Library, ImaginOn: http://www.imaginon.org/default.asp

One of the first and still most amazing active learning spaces for children and teens.

HTML Full Text

Geek Out

Contents

ListenPause   Stop   Select: [American Accent ▼] Settings
Download mp3? Close

Digital learning labs convert consumers into creators

Teenagers are natural and voracious media consumers. But new research suggests that teens can learn more effectively in hands-on projects where they can be creative and think critically.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation made $100,000 grants this past November to eight libraries and four museums to plan and design their own digital learning labs where teens can hang out, mess around, and geek out. In the process, the young people learn to create media rather than just consume it.

"Libraries and museums are part of reenvisioning learning in the 21st century," said Susan Hildreth, director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services(IMLS). "They are trusted community institutions where teens can follow their passions and imagine exciting futures."

"We aim to be a launching point in the science, technology, engineering, and math pipeline of future scientists, mathematicians, and engineers to fill 21st-century global economy jobs," said Christie Lassen, director of public relations for Howard County (Md.) Public Library, one of the grant recipients.

Mentors are key

The grant program was inspired by Chicago Public Library's YOUmedia, a space where teens create game podcasts, record

music, perform poetry, and produce an online literary magazine. Naturally, it's a technology-rich space. But as appealing as that technology is, it's not the most important element.

Earlier this year, the IMLS and MacArthur grantees visited YOUmedia to confer with one another and see how teens use the space in person. "Not one of the students talked about technology," said Debbie Willms, deputy director of St. Paul (Minn.) Public Library. "They all talked about their relationship with their mentors. It was a real eyeopener for us."

YOUmedia recruits artists in fields of interest to its teens to serve as mentors, said librarian Taylor Bayless of Chicago Public Library. Those mentors also receive training through DePaul University's Digital Youth Network in how to teach and work with teens.

Other grantees have taken the mentorship lesson to heart. At San Francisco Public Library, planning for the learning lab is still underway, but the library has already hosted programming classes taught by employees of Twitter, whose offices are nearby. Nashville (Tenn.) Public Library has tapped existing relationships with a spoken-word artist and a software developer for its steering committee.

"I think that our patrons have always looked to the library to have collections and computers, but they love the idea of having staff that would help them use the tools in a more robust way," added Tricia Bengel, emerging technology administrator at Nashville Public Library.

Teens also learn from each other. Angela Brade, chief operating officer and director of Howard County Public Library's HiTech project, has observed that even teens who don't know each other work well together in a library learning lab environment. "They are very good at sharing and collaboration," she said. Since receiving the grant, the library has started hosting mentor-led technology sessions, but she has already promised three teens the opportunity to present sessions on their own passions.

Outreach needed

"I don't think you can do librarianship without an outreach component," said Crystal Faris, director of teen services at Kansas City (Mo.) Public Library. The library's plans involve a partnership with a local science museum where the lab will be housed. But for teens in the city who don't take advantage of that museum and wouldn't feel comfortable there, Faris said she hopes to incorporate a mobile component into the library's learning lab.

St. Paul Public Library also plans a mobile component, although the importance of relationships between teens and the library staff has made that a challenge to define so far. "We don't want a bunch of strangers just bringing a bunch of machines to the library buildings," Willms said.

While new relationships have to be formed to ensure the success of the digital learning labs, in many cases new skills need to be

developed as well. Stacie Ledden, communications manager for Anythink in Adams County, Colorado, said the library has instituted plans to train staff on their own content creation skills this fall so they will be able to help customers when the lab opens next year.

St. Paul Public Library is examining how staffers, particularly those working in the new digital lab, can become fully confident in working with teens. "We're continually reminded that they'll have the most frequent relationship," Willms said.

The Chicago model

Many grantees have also used the grant as an opportunity to let adolescents shape the library. The Free Library of Philadelphia held an engagement summit with teens and youth organizations that the library feels embodied best practices for working with young people. "They want to be listened to, opportunities for dialogue, social opportunities, and a place of their own," said Vice President of External Affairs Sandy Horrocks.

In San Francisco, Public Relations Officer Michelle Jeffers said that 80 teens applied for the IS spots on the project's teen design board.

"YOUmedia has been very honest," added Stacie Ledden of Anythink. "You can set your plans, but the community is going to make it what they want it to be."

That notion has required some transition for Chicago Public Library, Bayless said. "You have to make a few cultural shifts," she admitted, including policies about food and noise level. And because YOUmedia connects students with the library as a whole, those changes start to seep into the rest of the library. "It can start on the road to greater institutional change."

The 400-500 Chicago teens who visit the space each week have made good use of the opportunity, though. "They're connecting with professionals in fields they're interested in"--in some cases on a national level, Bayless said.

Earlier this year they participated in "What's Going On ... Now," a project from the Kennedy Center in which teens remixed Marvin Gaye's album What's Going On to reflect similarities and differences between the now of today and that of 40 years ago, when the album was released. Winners performed in Kansas City, and one of the Chicago teen poets was invited to perform onstage with Grammy winner John Legend.

YOUmedia teens also helped to design an educational bus that went with Lady Gaga on her Born This Way Foundation tour. That work involved both business and creative work; the adolescents had multiple conversations with the foundation's senior advisor David Washington.

Many of YOUmedia's projects have demonstrated significant longevity as well. Library of Games, YOUmedia's gaming podcast, has been running for more than three years. YouLit, the center's

online literary magazine, is going strong after more than a year and a half. "The programs with longevity developed from teens saying they wanted to do something or demonstrating their interest," Bayless said. "Don't develop programs without talking to teens first and determining the needs of teens who will use the space."

Variety in approaches

While the ultimate goal of creating a space for teens to engage with technology and use it to create is pretty consistent among grantees, the precise form that each library's plans are taking varies widely.

Anythink plans to repurpose the existing teen space at its Wright Farms branch, with minor construction this winter leading to a March 2013 launch. Ledden said the library has been working to "figure out how the project is scalable and how it fits into what the library is already doing." Anythink plans to adapt some of the library's existing Sidekick volunteer program into its teen mentorship initiative, and it will build on existing hands-on programming, such as Battlecars, in which participants put remote-control cars through obstacle courses to compete against one another.

Columbus (Ohio) Metropolitan Library has started "Teen Columbus' in partnership with four other institutions--the Columbus Museum of Art, the Center of Science and Industry, WOSU Public Media, and the Wexner Center for the Arts. "We're building a web, rather than a central hub and spokes," said Helene Blowers, the library's digital strategy director. She said that three or four of the partners will likely have a physical learning lab location initially and that the model allows for new locations to be created in the future.

The Free Library of Philadelphia's plans include a space dedicated to teens at its Parkway Central Library and six hot spots throughout the community that provide computer training, job search help, and basic literacy assistance. "They're meant to be outside the library walls in neighborhoods where people don't necessarily go into a public library," said Sandy Horrocks. Gena Seroogy, the library foundation's director of grants and foundation giving, added that these hot spots serve as a loose model for the lab by providing "a supportive environment where teens can experiment," particularly those who are reluctant users of the library.

Howard County (Md.) Public Library received a gift of space adjacent to its Savage branch when the business that had occupied it relocated. The branch is already using that space for its HiTech lab, although construction to adapt and improve the space won't begin until next year. "We're looking at this as a STEM lab," said Christie Lassen. Angela Brade said that sessions the library has hosted on music, multimedia, and 3D design have averaged more than 5 0 attendees, and she expects those numbers to grow when the library begins offering sessions on a more stable schedule.

Kansas City (Mo.) Public Library has formed a new partnership with a museum, Science City at Union Station. "The first challenge is recognizing the different missions and trying to realize how those missions can align enough for a partnership," said Crystal Faris. Both organizations want to serve teens, but as Science City has to

generate revenue to sustain its facility, Faris said that service won't look exactly like it does at the library.

Nashville (Tenn.) Public Library plans to create a primary learning lab in its downtown facility adjacent to an existing teen space, said Tricia Bengel. The system is building two new locations and renovating a third, and hopes to incorporate learning labs into those facilities in some fashion, as well as creating a mobile lab.

St. Paul (Minn.) Public Library is planning a new physical space, which broke ground in July for a planned opening in the fall of 2013. "The building is a new concept, a co-located parks and recreation center and library," Willms said. Within that new building, services between the two departments will be fully merged.

San Francisco Public Library plans to design a space within its existing library building for the learning lab. But Teen Services Specialist Jennifer Collins said that the library will also follow a hive model, in which the library will have "a network of learning institutes, formed around events that provide fun learning opportunities for youth" at locations throughout the city. The library was also planning to get a sound booth that can be taken from branch to branch this summer.

IMLS will announce the winners of a second round of grants late this fall. Much has been written in recent years about the importance of libraries as a venue for patrons to create rather than just consume media. These digital learning lab projects are working to ensure that when teens need a place to support their creative efforts, a library is the first thing that comes to mind.

Clockwise from bottom: Teens race remote-control cars at Anythink's Wright Farms branch in Colorado. At Skokie (III.) Public Library, video editing software and design books lure students into the Digital Media Lab. Rachel Safe (top, right) talks with Bonnie McGrew at Anythink Bennett. Former Skokie computer lab coordinator Adam Wisniewski stands next to a mural he created for the lab, which has a snowball mike.

Howard County (Md.) Public Library's HiTech project. Since receiving a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the library has started hosting mentor-led technology sessions for teens.

Utah Lambert (left) and Jonathan Manning use the new laptops available for checkout at Anythink Brighton in Colorado.

A student uses Howard County (Md.) Public Library's HiTech lab. The library has hosted sessions on music, multimedia, and 3D design, with each session averaging more than 50 attendees.

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By Greg Landgraf

GREG LANDGRAF is a freelance writer in Chicago and former associate editor of American Libraries. His first book, Citizen Science for Families, is scheduled to be published by Huron Street Press in spring 2013.

BUILD YOUR OWN DIGITAL MEDIA LAB

By Mikael Jacobsen & Carolyn Anthony

The Skokie Public Library's state-of-the-art media lab lets patrons get creative with technology

A patron with no experience producing movies came to the Adult Services Computer Lab at Skokie Public Library (SPL), IL, requesting to use the Digital Media Lab (DML). She wanted to scan images of her recently deceased uncle as part of a video memorial. She also wanted to use music he wrote and recorded as the video's audio track.

A staff member began by teaching her how to use one of the lab's flatbed scanners—and the basics of Photoshop Elements 9—to digitize and enhance her images. Since she had nearly 100 images, a portable hard drive was checked out to her. At the next session, the patron was shown how to add the scanned images to an iMovie time line along with background music. Once all the images and music were added, she was shown how to put the credits at the beginning and end of the video and add statements to the images (such as dates, names of people in the pictures, and locations)—a considerable project—with staffers making suggestions throughout to help her realize her vision. Finally, the patron burned the movie to a DVD to show it to her family.

It's all in a day's work for the Digital Media Lab.

SPL staffers have given many tours of the DML and answered many emails and phone calls from libraries interested in starting their own. The Learning Labs in Libraries and Museums project from the Institute of Museum and Library Services has further highlighted the need and provided the opportunity for digital media labs in large public libraries like Chicago Public Library's YouMedia, smaller ones like Barrington Area Library's Media Lab (see "Making Space for Creativity," p. 38), and Skokie's DML.

A digital media lab is a space designed for patrons to have access to software and hardware to create digital media—such as videos, music, podcasts, images, ebooks, websites, animation, and more. Most people have asked similar questions: Who is using the DML? What programs and equipment are popular? How does it work? What are the statistics like? What is the library doing for staff training? How is the library promoting it? Here are the answers to these questions—which will hopefully allow you to make a stronger decision on whether to create a digital media lab for your library.
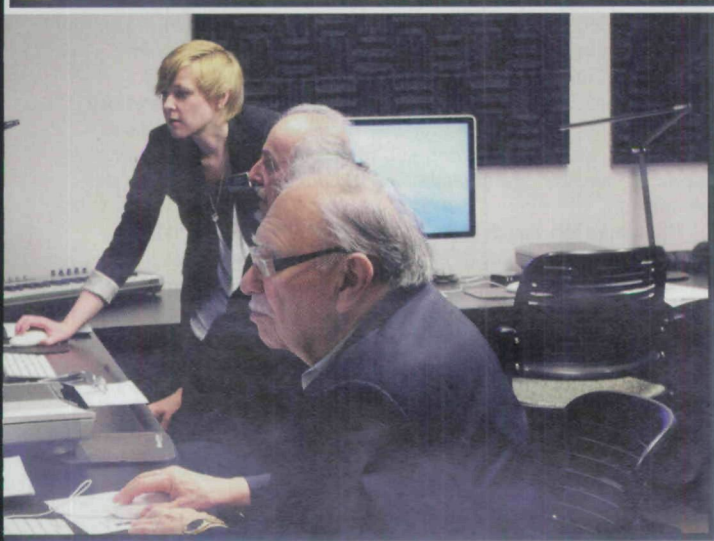
A digital start-up

For more than 20 years, SPL had been part of the Library Production Studio, in which four partner libraries paid for two employees to film selected library programming for viewing on cable television channels. The staff for the Library Production Studio had undergraduate degrees in film studies and used high-end cameras and an Avid digital editing system. The end of that partnership in 2009 spurred the establishment of an in-house studio. By 2009, equipment had become sufficiently inexpensive, and it was possible for laypersons without much training to both film and edit, achieving quality results. Streaming video was clearly taking on the role that public access cable TV had previously filled. The socially interactive nature of the Internet as well as the new emphasis on 21st-century skills development convinced us to invite the public into the production studio.

The DML was unveiled in September 2009. SPL director Carolyn Anthony and community outreach librarian Frances Roehm met with then State Representative Elizabeth Coulson

Mikael Jacobsen is Supervisor of Adult Computer Labs and a librarian, and Carolyn Anthony is Director, Skokie Public Library, IL

IN THE LAB Former Skokie Public Library coordinator of computer labs Adam Wisniewski (top photo) shows off a poster about the DML; current coordinator of computer labs Erika Kallman assists patrons

about the idea for a digital media lab in the library to produce digital media content for, and by, the public (and also about the statewide Illinois Clicks online information project). Coulson secured a Member Initiative Grant, $35,000 of which the library used to start the DML. Moving forward, the library has kept the $10,000 in its operating budget for the DML for its share of the Library Production Studio costs.

Community connection

Community media projects are nothing new. When Comcast sought a franchise in Skokie, it built a studio for public access, which people could then book for filming and editing. Various volunteers helped with camerawork, editing, and other tasks. This kind of grassroots programming would never be featured by large media corporations and helps give those involved in the production a strong foothold in the community. The public sees their neighbors and friends in local productions and become better informed about community activities.

More recently, the exploding popularity of YouTube shows that people are interested in small, personal productions. Giving people the means to express themselves, such as the DML, is empowering. They can promote their entrepreneurial activities, for example, or proudly display their art, or simply reach out in a visible and audible way to find others interested in their cause and receive feedback—a major improvement over public access television. As costs decrease and ease of use increases, it seems natural that the library would make this equipment and software available. It is still prohibitive for many, if not most, people to purchase high-end Macs, microphones, musical keyboards, green screens, professional-grade software, and other tools.

As community members gain experience using professional-level technologies available in the DML, they are becoming more employable. Skills such as editing video, audio, and images are all in demand in careers in education, sales, and technology—as well as video and audio production and graphic design.

Many new partnerships and interest groups have been formed at the DML. For example, a guitarist helped out a rapper in recording a track, and the rapper in turn helped out a video director by providing original background music. It is amazing watching these relationships take root.

The DML was used more than 1200 times in the last fiscal year, the first year the library has taken statistics—that is, computers were "booked" that many times. DML projects are often group-based, so the number of users is significantly larger than the number of bookings.

Obtaining the tools

The DML is 100 percent Mac-based, with three iMacs and one Mac Pro. Macs were chosen because of the outstanding programs available in the Mac operating system environment. (For a full list of the software currently at the DML, visit ow.ly/6ODkP. A list of hardware is at ow.ly/6ODoR.) The most popular programs by far are part of the inexpensive and surprisingly robust iLife '11 Suite: GarageBand, iMovie, iDVD, iPhoto, and iWeb.

GarageBand, with separately purchased Jam Packs (loops of music that make it simple to create complex and occasionally amazing pieces of music), is very popular with patron musicians. The many rap artists also love to use the Yeti Pro Microphone by Blue to record audio. Rockers work with one of the two M-Audio Fast Tracks interface devices to record electric guitars on top of GarageBand drumbeats. For musicians looking for more power, there is Pro Tools 9, a professional-level audio recording program—a useful tool, especially as many of them are considering music as a career path.

Video production is probably the most popular use of the DML. IMovie is the most sought after program in the DML—an extremely easy-to-learn application that allows patrons to create quality videos quickly. Patrons use it, along with a chroma key wall (a single-color wall, usually bright green, which allows for the addition of background effects), to create mock weather reports or memorial slideshows and more. For more advanced patrons, we have two copies of the professional-level Final Cut Pro Suite 3 (and the library plans to upgrade one

Making Space for Creativity By Ryann Uden

The Barrington Area Library, IL, is relatively small in size but that hasn't stopped it from developing a one-computer digital media lab of its own.

In 2009, library staff began dreaming of how to help patrons create and communicate using various platforms and tools. In 2010, this dream took form but not in the way it was expected. The idea evolved from providing one basic Apple computer in youth services to converting a study room into an all-ages media lab. It has been used 493 times since November 2010.

Planning began with tours to established spaces at Skokie Public Library, Chicago Public Library, and Loyola University, Chicago. Barrington staff also visited the local high school to tour its labs and learn about the classes offered.

With a 10' x 13' room and a donation of $20,000 from the Ferry Family Trust, the library initially planned to provide two workstations in the media lab. However, taking into account the space and funds available, it was determined that having one fully loaded workstation with advanced software and a variety of peripherals would best meet the library's goals.

The media lab contains a Mac Pro with dual 24" monitors, a wide range of software including iLife '11, Final Cut Pro, Aperture 3, iWork 2009, and the Adobe Creative Suite 5 Design Premium. Peripherals include a Canon film and negative scanner, an M-Audio MIDI keyboard, a Yeti microphone, a Bamboo tablet, and more. (For a complete list of the media lab equipment, visit www.balibrary.org/media-lab.html.) Furnishings include a chroma key/green screen wall, a Shuttle desk with power/USB pop-ups and wire-management channels for the computer table, and a locking cabinet to house circulating equipment.

The Ferry Family Trust donation funded the entire project. Anticipated upgrades and equipment replacements are budgeted for and would use existing library money. The library has plans to upgrade the scanner to one that can batch scan. Other minor equipment replacements would be covered under the technology department's allotment.

The media lab provides resources to the community that many people could not afford, or would not want to invest in for long-term use. Patrons can record and preserve their history. They can interview a family member or scan slides and negatives from generations before them. Small-business owners can use the equipment and software to create professional-looking brochures or videos to market their enterprises. Aspiring artists can edit photographs, graphic designs, or music compositions. Students can use the lab to develop new talents or to complete class projects.

Media lab users generally fall into two groups: adults who reserve the lab on a regular basis and elementary and high school students who use the lab less frequently but in greater numbers. Staff members also use the space to complete library projects or to learn new skills—converting video files, editing video footage for a library promotional video, recording oral histories, or experimenting with the software. Staffers also work with volunteers to scan and digitize documents, slides, photographs, or negatives for the library's local history collection. Several programs are offered to highlight activities available in the lab, and one-on-one training is also available.

Cardholders can make two-hour reservations one day in advance through the adult services department. A staffer holds the patron's library card or ID while they use the room. LaCie Portable Hard Drives are available for patrons to check out and use to save their work for longer projects. A digital camera, Flip Video camcorders, an HD camcorder, and tripods are also available for one-week checkout. Peripherals have circulated 81 times since the lab opened.

The media lab was designed to be an unstaffed area. While the library could not provide staff members proficient in every software or tool provided, it could insure that all staff members are comfortable using a Mac, so staff were sent to classes at the local Apple store. Some were specifically assigned with learning and sharing skills related to the media lab. The library has also started recruiting student volunteers to provide assistance. The library provides access to Atomic Learning videos for patrons interested in the advanced software offerings.
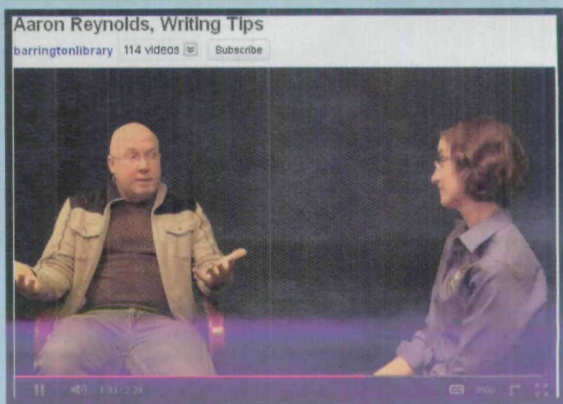
When the lab opened, staffers created a short promotional video that was shared on the library's website, Facebook, and Twitter accounts, since viewed nearly 800 times (youtu.be/2krOJOieJzM). The library also held a before-hours

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to the latest Final Cut X soon) and two copies of Adobe Premium Pro CS5

Photoshop CS5 is also popular, as is the easier-to-learn Photoshop Elements 9, which is on each computer. Beginners use Photoshop Elements 9, and a not insignificant number of graphic design students and professional graphic designers use the "real" thing. A large amount has been spent to purchase such professional-level graphic design software, including the Adobe CS5 Master Suite, Adobe CS5 Design Premium Suite, and the Adobe CS5 Production Premium Suite. With these come many other programs, such as Illustrator and InDesign.

Hands-on classes on GarageBand (for music and podcasting), iMovie (for video production and converting VHS to digital), and Photoshop Elements 9 (for the basics, touching up old photos, and digitizing old slides) are available in support of demand.

Peripherals such as Flip Video cameras, LaCie portable hard drives, Canon PowerShot cameras, and H2 Handy MP3 recorders, available only to confirmed cardholders, may circulate for three days (or seven days for the hard drives). These are important for a robust DML—especially the portable hard drives. Patrons' content requires lots of storage and cannot be saved to flash drives or other devices. Since these projects take a lot of time, circulating hard drives are important to provide. They circulated nearly 600 times in the last fiscal year.

Who is using the DML?

Many people assume that the DML is primarily a space for young adults. However, Skokie's DML is designed for all cardholders high school age and up—and, happily, all age groups actually use the space, although the demographics do skew a little young.

Teens come after school to work on personal and school projects. College students come when they have some free time. Generation X-ers, especially stay-at-home moms, show

MEDIA LAB IN ACTION Patrons and staff have used the Barrington Area Library's one-desktop media lab (above) to create a range of projects; for example, a promotional video for the library's Midsummer Knight's Adventure Summer Library Club (top r.) and a video interview with local children's book author Aaron Reynolds (bottom r.) were both created using the lab's tools

open house for school librarians and teachers. However, nothing beats the power of talking directly to patrons and helping them discover how the media lab might fulfill a need they didn't even know they had.

The needs of Barrington Area Library's patrons continue to evolve, and staffers have learned a lot from how patrons use the room. For example, based on a patron's request, the library put in a dimmable light, since a darker room is often preferred when editing video. Patrons also help build the software collection by requesting specific software for purchase.

The library hopes to provide more space to encourage patron creativity in the future. It will be interesting to see if future areas like these are contained in one room or designed with mobility in mind.

If you are considering a digital media space, do not be intimidated by the technology involved, the funding required, or the space needed. Talk to your students, parents, teachers, small-business owners, amateur photographers, and others to gauge the needs of your community. Look ahead and imagine what skills your patrons will need to communicate and engage with the world—and help them develop those skills any way you can. Finally, remember that other librarians are successfully creating spaces large and small, and they are happy to help you get started.

up during the day while their children are in school. Small-business and nonprofit owners and workers also take advantage of daytime hours, while seniors generally sign up for classes before experimenting on their own.

The library has had so much interest from junior high and elementary school students that another DML is being designed specifically for them, to open at the end of the fall 2011. In the meantime, the library instituted a "Kids' Swim" this summer in which fourth- to eighth-graders used the space, supervised, for an hour each day.

Staffing the space

Although it is centrally located on the main floor and has a glass door to stimulate visual interest, the DML itself is generally unstaffed and remains locked. A patron checks with a technology assistant in the computer lab in order to use a specific computer. A staffer "books" the computer after a short Q&A session to ascertain which computer they will need. The patron then exchanges a picture ID for a key card that unlocks DML. The patron is guaranteed two hours of use; if no one wants to use the same computer, that person can stay longer.

Staff training is a priority, and the library has folded in a digital media component into its yearly objectives. When SPL planned to create a video tour of the library, staff instead of outside contractors were asked to produce the programs. This required participants to set up a camera, shoot, edit, and upload a video to a hosting site such as YouTube, with assistance when required. Soon the library will be undertaking a program called Video Boot Camp, about planning and producing videos with iMovie. Online screencast instructional resources Lynda.com and Atomic Learning have also been invaluable for training on higher-end technologies such as Illustrator CS5 and simpler programs such as GarageBand.

The library's hiring requirements for Computer Lab technology assistants have changed to include knowledge of the Mac

A Few Digital Media Lab Projects by Patrons and Staff

This video was made by the library's youth services librarians for a program called "*The 39 Clues*: The Live Event." It was filmed in the DML using the chroma key (green screen) wall and a Flip Mino HD camcorder. It has been viewed more than 7600 times.

Operating under a strict deadline, two students were asked to produce a music video for their Spanish class. They were able to check out a Flip Video camera from the library, shoot the video, and edit the footage all within a matter of hours.

A volunteer and user of the DML produced a poster for a church event using Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, and a Bamboo Fun Tablet along with a video showing how she did it (ow. ly/6PFyk) using ScreenFlow screencasting software.

A local high school freshman was given an assignment to design a video of the history of her family. Although she had never produced a video before, she found the library's software easy to use and scanned family photos using a scanner and made a video. She incorporated background music and recorded a voice-over to tell her story.

OS and often higher-end programs like Photoshop CS5. This is also becoming more important when hiring librarians.

Promoting the DML

The library also developed a blog (blogs.skokielibrary.info/medialab) that promotes the software and hardware in the DML as well as patron created content and points to it often via the library's social media presence.

This month, the library will be starting a Digital Media Lab advisory committee to help promote the idea of a library as a creative space for various populations. As an advisory group, it will also have a voice in how the DML is run and help guide it.

The library is also planning an open house, open-microphone session for patrons who create content in the DML.

Musicians will play, video directors will see their work on a big screen, and artists will have work displayed. One of the main goals of the DML has always been to give exposure to our content creators, be they teens creating videos for a community portal (skokienet.org) or projects about local history (skokiestories.org) or other types of productions (ow. ly/6OHPB). Word of mouth has been the biggest driver—and the DML is a space that fosters that with audiences the library does not traditionally draw.

Libraries that are providing digital media production tools to patrons are still learning best practices. Skokie Public Library has discovered what has worked as much through trial and error as with intention. We hope its experience will help your library make its digital media lab decision. ∎