

# OLA Quarterly

## Marketing and Outreach: Connecting to Our Communities

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DO YOUR  
TEXTBOOKS  
COST ?  
MINE ARE  
**FREE!**



Winter 2024

Vol 28 • No 1

OLA Quarterly

The OLA Quarterly is an official publication of the Oregon Library Association. Please refer questions and input regarding the Quarterly to:

OLA Quarterly Managing Editor:  
Melissa Anderson  
[olaq@olaweb.org](mailto:olaq@olaweb.org)

Copyeditor:  
Teresa Stover  
Stover Writing Services  
[teresa@stoverwriting.com](mailto:teresa@stoverwriting.com)

Graphic Production:  
Julie Weiss  
Tobias Weiss Design  
[julie@tobiasweissdesign.com](mailto:julie@tobiasweissdesign.com)



## Marketing and Outreach: Connecting to Our Communities

*The views expressed in this issue do not necessarily represent the views of the Oregon Library Association.*

## From the Guest Editor



LAURA KIMBERLY (she/her) has been the Library Director for the City of Newport since April 2019. She has worked in libraries for over 16 years in Nevada and Oregon. She holds an MLIS from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. In her free time, Laura enjoys long-distance running, volunteering, and spending time with family, friends, and animals. Contact her at [l.kimberly@newportlibrary.org](mailto:l.kimberly@newportlibrary.org).

“Marketing and Outreach: Connecting to Our Communities” is the theme of this issue of the *OLA Quarterly*. As we continue to shape what our library services look like post-pandemic, we are also finding a need to connect or reconnect with communities we serve. In a world transformed by the COVID-19 pandemic, libraries have emerged as resilient institutions, evolving to meet the changing needs of their communities. As we navigate the post-pandemic landscape, libraries are redefining their roles and focusing on marketing and outreach strategies that connect them more intimately with the diverse communities they serve.

In the wake of the pandemic in my community, the Newport Public Library has emerged as a beacon of support and connection for our diverse and marginalized community. Recognizing the vital importance of inclusivity, we have cultivated strong partnerships and introduced innovative services to bridge gaps and foster resilience. Our initiatives, such as the Newport Seed Library and the Seed and Read Garden, have nurtured both literal and intellectual growth, while our Library of Things collection and mobile hotspots have democratized access to resources. Moreover, our commitment to social welfare is exemplified through our Curiosity Cabinets food pantry and the distribution of Narcan and Naloxone, achieved through a productive collaboration with Food Share of Lincoln County, Rotary Club of Newport, Lincoln County Harm Reduction, and Lincoln County Mental Health. These efforts reflect our unwavering dedication to a more equitable, empowered, and united Newport community, forging connections that transcend the challenges of the pandemic.

The articles in this issue explore how libraries all over Oregon are shaping services in this new era, emphasizing the importance of community engagement, connection, outreach, marketing, and collaboration.

Immer Honorato chronicles how the Tualatin Public Library embarked on a mission to serve underserved communities, particularly the Spanish-speaking population, using little free libraries known as “Bibliotequitas.” Initially targeting schools, the project later found success in local Mexican convenience stores and cultural events. Although it didn’t

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lead to a significant increase in library visitation, it fostered connections, increased the use of Spanish-language books, and forged valuable community relationships.

Magdianamy Carrillo-Sotomayor illustrates how marketing and outreach inside and outside library buildings can support incarcerated patrons and other underserved communities by providing them with a diverse collection of books in Spanish in Washington County Cooperative Library Services (WCCLS).

Ann Matsushima Chiu, Carly Lamphere, Lily De La Fuente, Caleah James, and Angie Beiriger focus on Reed College library efforts to address years of disruptions and to connect with students inside and outside of the library with concentrated and intentional efforts of making space and engaging students.

Kirsten Hostetler chronicles the development of the library space of one of Central Oregon Community College's (COCC) satellite campuses in Redmond, how the development stalled and evolved in the wake of COVID, and the role this space plays in COCC library's strategic outreach efforts moving forward.

Justine Munds recounts the creation of a "gratitude campaign" to increase faculty buy-in and awareness of open educational resources at Clackamas Community College. In the spirit of open access, she also includes examples of her work for other librarians to adapt for their own use.

Carrie Turney Ross of Jackson County Library Services details survivorship bias and how by enhancing outreach offerings, libraries are in a better position to learn why non-users are not coming to the library and to connect the community to the services they might not know the library provides.

After the pandemic, libraries have undergone a remarkable transformation. They have become not only repositories of knowledge but also vibrant community hubs that adapt to the changing needs of their patrons. Through innovative programming, increased community engagement, and thoughtful outreach and marketing, libraries are cementing their role as essential connectors within their communities. As we continue to navigate the post-pandemic world, libraries stand as beacons of resilience and adaptability, offering a guiding light to all who seek knowledge, connection, and belonging. I hope these articles inspire you to think about what you do in your work to connect to your community, how outreach services can bridge the gap, and how to market your library in inclusive ways.



# Connecting with Our Communities with Empathy, Compassion, and Kindness:

## Marketing and Outreach Inside and Outside Library Buildings

by *Magdianamy Carrillo-Sotomayor*  
(she/her/ella)  
Manager,  
Shute Park Library  
[Magdianamy.CarrilloSotomayor@hillsboro-oregon.gov](mailto:Magdianamy.CarrilloSotomayor@hillsboro-oregon.gov)



MAGDIANAMY CARRILLO-SOTOMAYOR (she/her/ella) was the Partnership Team Interim Supervisor for Washington County Cooperative Library Services where she also managed the Spanish Overdrive Collection. She has recently taken the position of manager at Shute Park Library in Hillsboro, Oregon. A native of Puerto Rico, Magdianamy has been a passionate advocate for the Latinx community in libraries for over a decade. She has a long track record of making library services more diverse, equitable, and inclusive for everyone. She focuses on offering bilingual services to diverse and underserved populations. Magdianamy has had a rewarding career in the library field in Puerto Rico, New York, and Florida. She has held numerous positions in each of these three regions, from volunteer to librarian and beyond. Her dedication and perseverance have had a positive impact on many lives. Magdianamy holds a Bachelor's degree in Social Sciences with a major in Labor Relations and a Master's degree in Library Sciences from the University of Puerto Rico. See <https://www.hillsboro-oregon.gov/Home/Components/News/News/15128/4300> to learn more about Magdy and to check out her nine feel-good stories about serving library patrons.

It is undeniable that having access to education and resources can transform a person's life. Books, in particular, can be powerful tools that provide knowledge and understanding to help individuals reach their goals and succeed. Unfortunately, many people around the world do not have access to materials that could give them a much-needed educational boost. For example, in developing countries, where schools are not adequately funded or equipped, students may not have access to the books and materials they need to learn. In impoverished areas, there may be a lack of libraries and bookstores, making it difficult for people to access the materials they need.

### **The Lack of Resources**

I grew up in a housing project in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Growing up in such circumstances can be a very challenging experience; it means dealing with poverty, violence, and a lack of stability. It can also mean having limited access to resources and educational opportunities that can improve one's quality of life. The lack of resources and education was a major contributing factor to why I lost some friends and loved ones and why both of my parents eventually ended up in jail. My family didn't have enough money to provide me with the necessary resources to get a good education. Gossip magazines and the yellow pages were my only reading materials available at home.

One of my fondest childhood memories was going to my neighbor's house where she would lend me her encyclopedia so I could do my homework or sit on her balcony for hours

reading about art, science, geography, sports, animals, and flowers. I imagined my life surrounded by things that were only visible on those pages.

After graduating from the University of Puerto Rico, I had a successful career as an academic librarian. However, as a result of a new law I was laid off and had to relocate to the United States. The language barrier was the greatest challenge I faced, and I had to begin from scratch, find a job, adjust to a new culture, and make new connections.

Despite this, I was determined to succeed professionally. I started volunteering at the library and benefited from the services and resources that helped me develop my skills. As well as helping me recognize the importance of developing, expanding, and promoting bilingual services, they have prepared me to identify inequities and barriers in the library's services.

### **Marketing and Outreach Inside and Outside Library Buildings**

Libraries are places of knowledge, connection, and inspiration. We can reach our patrons from anywhere at any time; our patrons are everywhere. We have the potential to connect with them in a meaningful way no matter where they are.

By listening to and understanding the perspectives of people in their communities, libraries can gain valuable insight into their patrons' needs. Through thoughtful outreach and marketing, libraries can ensure that patrons feel seen and heard, creating an environment of trust and understanding. Libraries can also use this insight to create programming and services tailored to the needs of their communities.

We can market our resources inside our buildings. In my previous library system as head of reference, I observed people studying for tests every day at the same table. When I placed bilingual information flyers about our free practice test database on tables, patrons began asking me about the database. They were thrilled to learn they could access free resources since they could not afford them. Some of them told me a few months later that this practice test helped them better understand the materials, improve their understanding, and pass the tests.

Successful outreach sometimes starts by simply talking to a patron. One fine day, a 42-year-old White man showed up at the library with olive-green ripped pants and a plain white shirt. He sat down in front of the computer for a couple of hours without using it and then left. The next day; he came back wearing the same clothes and did the same thing. I approached him and I said, "I noticed that you were here yesterday but did not use the computer. You are here again today, but you are not using the computer. Do you need any help?" He looked at me and said: "I was just released from prison with a bus ticket and 40 dollars after being there for 20 years, and I don't know what to do." He did not know about computers, smartphones, or other technological advances. After he was connected to the appropriate social services, I offered to teach him how to operate a computer. He started attending all of my classes. A few months later, he learned the basics of operating a computer, building a resume, using a cell phone, and searching for a job. After a few months of lessons, he could use a computer to search for work. He eventually found a factory job and a place to live. He was so grateful that he proudly promoted our services, telling others that he was born again in the library building.



Taking the time to notice signs of distress  
and being willing to help can make a huge difference.

Observation and willingness are powerful tools that can impact positive outreach. We can make a real difference in a person's life lives by being observant and open to the needs of others. Taking the time to notice signs of distress and being willing to help can make a huge difference. A few years ago, I was participating in a job fair inside a correctional facility when an inmate walked by our table but did not say anything. I noticed that his name was Hispanic, so when he walked by our table again, I said, "Hola," and he replied, "Hola" to me. He then asked if I spoke Spanish. After I said yes, he said in Spanish, "I will be released tomorrow, but I have no idea where to begin or who to contact." I told him to visit the downtown library and the next day, he showed up at the library. He connected with people and found a place to stay after I helped him create an email and Facebook account.

### **Language is the Major Obstacle**

As the United States becomes increasingly diverse, the challenge of language barriers is becoming more and more prevalent. In the last 10 years, Oregon added nearly 140,000 residents of Latin American descent, according to the 2020 census (KGW, 2021). With Spanish being the primary language of many Latinx immigrants, this population often faces a steep learning curve when mastering English. As a result, Latinx individuals may struggle to gain access to essential resources such as education, employment, and healthcare due to their limited knowledge of the English language.

In a more metaphorical sense, language can also be seen as a wall that separates us from fully understanding and connecting with one another. I remember that a few years after I relocated to the United States, I always felt disconnected from the English-speaking world around me due to my inability to express myself fluently. Being unable to communicate with others created a sense of isolation, as though I were a spectator. I felt like I was on the sidelines, unable to fully engage in conversations and activities that were important to me and those around me.

It is no secret that language can be a barrier to effective communication, and this can be especially true when it comes to outreach initiatives. When organizations try to reach a broad range of people, language can be a major obstacle. For libraries to effectively engage with language communities, it is important to develop targeted outreach strategies. This should include the use of multiple languages and cultural and community-specific approaches. Libraries should also consider creating programs and services tailored to the needs of language communities. This can include language classes, cultural celebrations, or other events and activities designed to build relationships and foster a sense of belonging.

For instance, translation services are invaluable for libraries looking to reach a wider range of individuals. By utilizing translation services, libraries can create materials in multiple languages, expanding their outreach and making their services more accessible. To ensure accuracy and cultural sensitivity, it is important to hire translators who are native speakers and familiar with the language and culture. In addition to translation services, libraries can also use interpretation services to assist inside and outside of libraries' buildings.

Libraries can provide the best possible service to Latinx communities by providing Spanish classes for staff members interested in serving them. As a result, cultural understanding can be enhanced, and a more meaningful and effective service can be provided.

In addition, the functions of libraries are often misunderstood by Latinx community members since, according to Ruhlmann (2014), the word "library" resembles *librería*, the Spanish word for bookstore. Some Spanish speakers do not use libraries because they think they can't afford them, or if they do use them, they ask how much the books cost. Promoting our services

in Spanish and emphasizing that they are free to everyone is important. Simply saying “Gratis para todos” can help bridge the language barrier and ensure all community members can access and understand our library services.

Sometimes potential patrons face both language and distance barriers. As part of the Migrant Education program, I was able to provide outreach to farmworkers who move from one state to another. They don't have easy access to public transportation and often cannot get to libraries. We met them at a bus stop and provided them with English Language Learning and Spanish books of different proficiency levels. Their bus did not arrive until 9 p.m., but I waited for them knowing this resource would positively impact their lives. I distributed the books to the farmworkers using my cell phone and car lights. Those sacrifices meant nothing when I saw how grateful the farmworkers were when they saw books in their languages that would help them and their children learn.

### **Outreach to the Incarcerated**

As a child, I remember making books for my parents out of magazines while they were incarcerated; my letters and books were my way of keeping them happy. Literature is essential for incarcerated individuals, providing a wealth of benefits that can help them prepare for successful reentry into society. Books provide mental stimulation and help stave off boredom while allowing individuals to stay engaged with the world outside prison. They can also allow individuals to escape from their current situation into the world of their imagination.

In 2021, Washington County Cooperative Library Services received American Rescue Plan Act grants totaling \$7,125 from the State Library of Oregon to support incarcerated patrons and other underserved communities by providing them with a diverse collection of books in Spanish (Washington County Cooperative Library Services, 2021). Providing library services to incarcerated individuals is rooted in the belief that access to books and other materials can help incarcerated people gain knowledge, develop skills, and stay connected to the outside world. By reading, inmates can learn more about themselves, their families, and the world beyond their prison walls.

This project was successfully completed for three facilities in Washington County: the County Jail, Harkins House (a juvenile shelter), and the Community Corrections Center. Each collection, containing more than 100 books, was tailored to meet the distinct needs of the patrons residing at each facility (Washington County Cooperative Library Services, 2022). I thoughtfully curated the collections to include bilingual (English/Spanish) and Spanish-only books. Nonfiction topics ranged from self-help and learning English to trade skills and business.

Each book was selected with consideration of the rehabilitation process and how the power of literature can help people overcome their past. I believe that reading creates an experience of transformation for reintegration into society and preparation for people's future release. Providing library services to the incarcerated is an important way to support the rehabilitation process and provide a sense of hope and possibility. By providing inmates access to books, magazines, and other reading materials, library services can help promote personal growth and development, build connections, and create a sense of hope.



### **The Key is Empathy, Compassion, and Kindness**

Libraries are truly a paradise of information; we have various tools that can be used to transform people's lives. As a bilingual public librarian, I have been on a journey to help bring about positive change in the lives of those I serve. I have seen firsthand the power of books and information to help people learn new skills, explore new ideas, and discover new perspectives. I have seen how public libraries can serve as a safe haven for those needing a place to learn, grow, and heal. I have seen how libraries can unite people and help bridge divides.

It is essential to emphasize that empathy, compassion, and kindness are key to connecting with our communities. We can build stronger and more resilient communities when we come together with these values in mind. Creating safe and supportive spaces for all people can foster an atmosphere of understanding and inclusivity. This sense of unity and acceptance will help strengthen our communities and bring us closer together.

One of the most rewarding experiences in my career has been facilitating access to information and resources for those traditionally overlooked and underserved in our communities. Many of these people have come to this country looking for a better life, just like I did. I have found a deep sense of satisfaction in being able to make a difference for people who may otherwise have been left in the dark.

I am proud to have been part of a movement to provide access to information and knowledge for all. I am humbled and grateful for the opportunity to help transform people's lives, one book and kind gesture at a time.

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# Making Space, Engaging Students:

## How One Department Built Outreach into Our Community of Practice

**by Ann Matsushima Chiu**  
(she/they)  
Social Sciences Librarian,  
Reed College  
[chiua@reed.edu](mailto:chiua@reed.edu)

**and by**

**Carly Lamphere**  
(she/hers)  
Science Librarian,  
Reed College  
[lampherec@reed.edu](mailto:lampherec@reed.edu)

**and by**

**Lily De La Fuente**  
(she/her/ella)  
Humanities Librarian,  
Reed College  
[delafuente@reed.edu](mailto:delafuente@reed.edu)

**and by**

**Caleah James**  
(she/hers)  
Performing Arts Librarian,  
Reed College  
[jamesc@reed.edu](mailto:jamesc@reed.edu)

**and by**

**Angie Beiriger**  
(she/hers)  
Director of Research Services,  
Reed College Library  
[beiriger@reed.edu](mailto:beiriger@reed.edu)



ANN MATSUSHIMA CHIU (she/they) is the Social Sciences Librarian at Reed College. Having earned an MLIS from University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, a BA in Visual Arts from University of California, San Diego, and currently pursuing a MEd in Curriculum and Instruction, Ann is inspired by the intersection between information literacy instruction, zines, and culturally responsive outreach. Ann is particularly excited about outreach through the Reed Zine Library and zine programming. Their work on zine librarianship can be found in *Librarians with Spines: Information Agitators in the Age of Stagnation* (2016) and *Zines in Libraries: Selecting, Purchasing, and Processing* (2022). Besides programming zines, Ann is found gardening, going to live music shows, and hanging with her artist spouse and two exuberant daughters.



CARLY LAMPHERE (she/hers) is the Science Librarian at Reed College. Hailing from Southern California, she now resides in Portland, OR alongside her husband and cat Schrödinger. As a mixed-race Latina, and first-generation master's degree recipient, Carly is passionate about helping others attain their educational goals in whatever capacity they envision. She is dedicated to information literacy instruction within a DEI lens, STEM Librarianship, and technological literacy education beyond the classroom in our communities. When she is not in the library you can find her at home binging horror movies, building mini models, and decorating her living room with the hopes that one day it will resemble her own mad scientist cabinet of curiosities museum.



LILY DE LA FUENTE (she/her/ella) is the Humanities Librarian at Reed College. She completed an M.S. in Information Studies from the University of Texas at Austin iSchool. She also holds a B.A. in International Studies (Arts & Culture) and French Language from Texas A&M University. Her primary focus is to highlight immigrant, diaspora, and multicultural materials while advocating for low-income and first-generation college students. She's passionate about user experience (UX) and incorporating design thinking to improve library services and outreach. Outside of work she enjoys going analog and exploring the beauty of the Pacific Northwest with her trusty terrier Jack.



CALEAH JAMES (she/hers) is the Performing Arts Librarian at Reed College. Caleah came to Portland to work at Reed from Southern California bringing along her mom and French Bulldog Mochi. While studying for her MLIS at the Pratt Institute in New York City, Caleah focused on special libraries, particularly performing arts librarianship, which makes her position at Reed practically perfect. Caleah enjoys managing the Performing Arts Resource Center and is interested in active learning techniques, peer research, and acting as a mentor for her student workers. Caleah is a true crime/paranormal podcast junkie, and enjoys all things spooky and weird.



ANGIE BEIRIGER (she/hers) is the Director of Research Services for Reed College Library. She earned her MLS from Emporia State and has a Bachelor's Degree in Journalism from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. As a long-time librarian and intentional manager, she strives to create a culture of inclusion and belonging for staff, students, and faculty. Her professional experience and interests include digital scholarship, staff development, and the intersection of librarianship and technology. She loves to explore the back roads of Oregon with her spouse and spends her days gardening, cooking, and listening to records with her two boisterous Boston Terriers.

Reed College is a small liberal arts college located in Portland, Oregon. Students work and study on a mostly residential campus and the library has historically been the heart of academic and campus life. This relationship was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic as Reed shifted to online learning and library staff worked remotely. After more than a year, students and library staff returned to campus but other disruptions impacted student use of services and physical library space. A major seismic renovation closed a large section of the library. During this 18-month renovation, almost 40 percent of library seating and assigned desks were unavailable for student use. These major disruptions meant that both incoming and some upper-level students had no established relationship to the library beyond virtual interactions. It became evident there was a need to re-engage and re-energize students' relationship with all aspects of library spaces and services.

The Research Services Department consists of liaison librarians who initiate co-curricular student outreach efforts in addition to their academic reference and instruction roles. The department stresses that there are other departments in the library doing successful outreach but this article focuses on Research Services efforts to address years of disruptions and to connect with students both inside and outside of the library.

Through department meetings and a focused summer retreat, the Research Services team concentrated intentional efforts on **making space**: space in our jobs to do this work, space for the students to be present in the library, and space to gather user feedback. Secondly, Research Services librarians sought to **engage students**: through reference pop-up events, campus collaborations, and cultural displays and programming.

### Who We Are

This is a collaborative article written by the Research Services Department, 80 percent of whom are librarians of color working in a predominantly White institution. We collectively embody and apply a lens of diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and anti-racism in all our work, including these outreach efforts. This article discusses the process for devel-

oping outreach opportunities, the challenges associated with these efforts, and the details on how we center traditionally underrepresented students in our planning. We hope our journey will inspire and empower fellow library workers in Oregon and beyond to make space for their unique student and community populations.

### **Making Space**

As the campus returned from emergency online learning and work from the pandemic, it became apparent that the students were not engaging with the library like they used to. Gate counts and reference desk visits were down, implying that students were studying outside the library. An uptick in online consultation requests with subject librarians showed that students were unsure how to use and navigate library resources and still needed help. After studying remotely for over a year, did students feel they belonged in the library? Did our increasingly diverse community of students see themselves represented in the space? The department began to brainstorm new ways to make space for students beyond traditional areas of interaction to determine how to create a space that was welcoming, intuitive, and appealing.

#### ***Making Space for Students***

**Reference Desk Revamp.** In fall of 2022, students returned to a reopened library with service desks that were unfamiliar and even unwelcoming. The reference desk struggled to promote itself as a relevant service for student research since the space had not been updated in years and lacked appropriate signage. As the student reference assistant supervisor, the newly hired Science Librarian embraced the opportunity to reimagine the space. This makeover was part of an effort to help create a space that is useful, welcoming, and approachable.

To update the reference desk, new signage and bulletin boards were added, new artwork was framed, and plants were used to green up the space. The loaner art from the library's archives collection was replaced with black-and-white photos of a diverse representation of students in the library throughout the years. New additions like a neon sign that says "Ask Us!" boosted the visibility of the desk and its services. The long-standing tradition of offering candy and library swag at the desk enthusiastically continued with the purchase of library-themed stickers, bookmarks, and pronoun pins.

These additions elevated the reference desk to a new and improved space made possible by the Research Services team's dedication to making the reference desk a place that encourages new and returning students to visit the desk more throughout the year with questions, ideas, and, if needed, a little bit of candy while they're on the go!

**Zine Library.** In order to make space within the library for students' voices, especially identities that have been historically excluded, underrepresented, and marginalized, there has been an intentional effort to advocate for event programming, internships, and student-led collection development for the Reed Zine Library. Founded in 2018 by the former head of Special Collections and Archives to diversify the primary source collection, the Zine Library currently has over 1,000 zines and is now known to be one of the largest circulating academic zine collections in the state of Oregon (see Figure 1). Currently, the Zine Library is curated and run by the Social Sciences Librarian, who came to Reed with experience organizing community-run zine and art festivals, running a small art press, writing scholarship on zines, and hosting numerous zine-making workshops.

While the Zine Library was closed during the pandemic, it remained one of the few spaces open during the main library's seismic construction. The Zine librarian's intention was



Figure 1  
The Reed Zine Library

to revisit the zine collection that had sat dormant for a year and a half in order to represent the COVID-19 pandemic experience and to capture zines covering the 2020 racial justice reckoning and other emerging student interests such as accessibility, sexuality and gender, and DIY/punk culture. The Zine librarian hired student interns to develop displays and exhibitions that included the Zine Library space and envisioned new forms of zine-related programming. The result of two years of effort was more than 150 new zines added into the collection, four student interns hired to focus on programming and exhibits, and 10 zine-making workshops. Newly engaged student groups, such as the Queer Student Union, the Latinx Student Union, the Multicultural Resource Center, and the Students for Education, Equity and Direct Service showcased and celebrated zines they created.



Figure 2  
Students hang out in the Performing Arts Resource Center

**Performing Arts Resource Center.** Nestled on the opposite side of campus from Hauser Library is the Performing Arts Resource Center (PARC), managed by the Performing Arts Librarian. The PARC is part library and part equipment rental and serves faculty and students in the departments of Music, Theatre, and Dance. The space consists of one large room with a service desk, stacks, computers, three work spaces, and two staff offices. The space felt wide open but not necessarily inviting or “lounge-worthy.”

As part of an effort to attract new students to the space as well as returning students who had been in lockdown or learning from home, new equipment was purchased to support co-curricular learning and meant to inspire play. Department funds purchased high-engaging equipment like Nintendo Switch players, drones, Go-Pros, instant cameras, virtual reality headsets, and guitars (see Figure 2).



Figure 3  
A student adds a comment to a talk-back board in the library lobby

Reimagining the PARC meant providing a comfortable and inclusive hangout space where students could study, practice music or theater, and engage with faculty. Through the addition of artwork, a listening station featuring a new vinyl collection, and a modular couch, the PARC became a cozy hangout area that students gravitate to. As a result, student use and circulation of items increased.

***Making Space through User Experience***

Making space also means improving user experience (UX) through design thinking and collecting feedback from library users. In spring of 2023, we expanded services into the library lobby in order to survey the community and identify pain points while remaining mask- and social distance-friendly. A talk-back board with questions was left at this main focal point for student, staff, and faculty interaction between class periods. The community started responding and we realized it was a much-needed dialogue that had ceased to exist during the pandemic. These talk-back boards were left up in four- to six-day intervals to try and reach the Reed community after hours and on the weekends. We left sticky notes and markers out, and, as a result, we received unfiltered results (see Figure 3).

Some talk-back boards were used to provide bite-sized instruction moments highlighting essential services like Reed’s “Ask a Librarian” chat and email services. On another talk-back board we highlighted the library’s list of A–Z Databases the week before finals when students

were actively looking for resources. As part of the reference desk revamp, we conducted A/B testing using low-fidelity prototypes and asked community members to cast their votes on the visual redesign of that space. The goal was to understand how community members were using services that extend beyond the reference desk.

### **Engaging Students**

The Research Services department believed it was important to engage with students in co-curricular, informal ways in addition to the established reference, instruction, and consultations that make up the core of traditional liaison work. By focusing on engaging students outside the library, librarians could establish crucial relationships, introduce themselves, and break down library walls which may be preventing some students from asking questions or seeking help. After several semesters of isolation, anxiety, and trauma that impacted everyone in different ways, it was also time to create opportunities to simply have fun and bring lightness to our work.

#### ***Engaging Students Outside of the Library: Reference Anywhere***

If students weren't coming to the reference desk, Research Services decided to take the reference to the students. "Reference Anywhere" was launched as a pop-up reference support for students in an environment outside of the library. Over three semesters, Reference Anywhere set up at different high-traffic locations on campus. The first effort featured a couple of librarians on the patio outside the Student Commons, where students pass on their way to and from the dining hall. The pop-up offered library swag, handouts with library resources, and friendly librarian faces in an informal setting. The result was dozens of students stopping by the table to ask questions, grab some stickers, and engage in casual conversation with the librarians.

There were more pop-ups over the next two semesters with more librarians, music, balloon arches, and candy to draw students in. Toward the end of year, Reference Anywhere sought seniors who needed support for their capstone thesis project. As the department is responsible for thesis research and formatting support, it was important to have a space for seniors to come ask questions, get feedback, and make sure their thesis was formatted correctly. Having real-time interactions was so valuable as some students just had quick questions or minor corrections that we could easily answer face to face.

The simple act of relocating to a nonacademic space that was convenient for students was successful, not only in numbers of students approaching the table, but in the volume of reference questions answered. Moving forward, Research Services plans to hold strategic tabling events at points of need (i.e., before finals week, for incoming freshmen, at the residence halls) and to participate in other tabling events throughout campus. Through evaluating the Reference Anywhere turnout and feedback, we have found that having a library presence outside the library is invaluable for increasing student engagement and building relationships with library staff and spaces.

#### ***Engaging Students through a Collaborative Campus Book Club***

Through the library's renewed efforts to engage students both inside and outside of the library, liaisons redoubled their focus on outreach to established student groups and centers of campus activity. One example is the long-standing Multicultural Resource Center (MRC) Book Club created in 2019 as a partnership between Reed Library, the MRC, and the Office of Institutional Diversity. The club was established by the Humanities Librarian and the former MRC director as a way to collect student input and acquire new titles that help deepen understanding of cultural roots and promote self-exploration of identity through



radically tender and honest storytelling. The MRC Book Club has become a bridge between the students who frequent the Multicultural Resource Center and the library, ensuring that all students feel equal ownership of academic spaces. Not only do students, faculty, and staff enthusiastically participate, but several library departments now also actively reach out to this flourishing student community to advertise upcoming events, employ student workers, and ensure that the library represents all student interests.

In its current form, the MRC Book Club provides free paperback copies by poets and authors of color to the campus community twice a year. Each semester, titles are chosen and selected by MRC student staff composed of the team's Black/African Diasporic Events Coordinator, Asian American Pacific Islander Events Coordinator, LatinX Events Coordinator, Indigenous Events Coordinator, and Arts & Communications Coordinator. Top book titles are then voted on by the wider campus community via the MRC listserv mailing list. With each selection, material is ingested into the library collection representative of Reed's BIPOC and LGBTQ+ student interests. Diversifying the collection with student input in such a visible way has encouraged other campus partners to reach out with their own book club ideas as related to pandemic healing and the new normal.

The book club readings are currently accessible and available for checkout in ebook and print format at Reed Library. When financially feasible, authors are invited to campus to join the conversation surrounding their work. Previous author visits have included Safiya Umoja Noble (see Figure 4), Tommy Orange, Gabby Rivera, and Taylor Johnson. Being able to read the text and then interact with the author has been a memorable experience for the students and staff. The conversations have been facilitated by members of Reed faculty and staff and offer fresh perspectives on timely topics of intersectionality.



Figure 4  
Author Safiya Umoja Noble speaks with students in the Multicultural Resource Center Book Club

### ***Engaging Students through Cultural Displays and Programming***

One of the ways the library has worked to alleviate our students' feelings of isolation and feeling unwelcome was to increase culturally specific event programming through library displays and exhibits. Research Services has hired four student exhibit interns so far, giving students the opportunity to explore their personal interests and identities in order to address gaps in the collection. To date, our interns have been students of color who were also international students, work-study students, first-generation college students, and first-year students.

Recent exhibits took a predominately White space and highlighted diverse stories and scholarship such as *Echoes of Harlem* based on the Harlem Renaissance unit in the introductory Humanities course; *Decolonizing Identity Through the Lens of Latin America: Art and Storytelling* based on the Mexico City unit in the introductory Humanities course; *Counter-narratives: Critical Race Theory in Context*; *Selena: Queen of Tejano*; *Exist, Resist: Uncovering Queer Narratives*; *Navigating Climate Activism*; and *Continued Resistance: A Legacy of Activism in the Asian American and Pacific Islander Diaspora*. Interns then connected and shared their displays with their peers in order to celebrate diverse representation, unique perspectives, and their communities' take on the next generation of who the library showcases.

### **Conclusion**

While liaison librarians in Research Services are expected to engage in academic outreach as part of their core responsibilities, co-curricular outreach is additional work that should feel authentic and personally rewarding. Creating an environment where this work is possible is also crucial to its success. Librarians need to be aware of their workload, consider marketing and assessment of these events, and seek funding. Library leadership needs to advocate, direct resources, and clear barriers to this work. Many of the Research Services librarians began to explore opportunities for outreach while being granted the flexibility in their regular job duties. This gave Reed College librarians an opportunity to pursue passion projects, gain professional development, and be creative in outreach endeavors. Each librarian was able to contribute their unique ideas and collaborate with others on new outreach efforts. They used their individual interests, expertise, and lived experience to effectively create outreach opportunities that were authentic and personal.

Some of the robust ideas that came to fruition were reference stations outside the library, book clubs for underrepresented students, zine events, cultural exhibits and other gatherings for the Reed community. We leveraged our knowledge of social media and marketing to boost engagement numbers and ignite a renewed excitement about library services. These events and activities have become an engagement-centered catalyst for cultivating co-curricular and academic relationships with students and faculty that we hope will sustain itself for many years to come.

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# Survivorship Bias, Or How Outreach Will Help Win the War on Libraries

by **Carrie Turney Ross**  
(she/her/hers)  
Area Manager,  
Outreach & Programs,  
Jackson County Library Services  
[cturneyross@jcls.org](mailto:cturneyross@jcls.org)



CARRIE TURNEY ROSS (she/her/hers) graduated in 2017 with a Master's Degree in Library Science from Texas Woman's University. She began her library career at a small library in Texas as a library associate while attending graduate school. Turney Ross is a born-and-raised Texan, but an Oregonian by choice. She moved to Medford, Oregon to begin a new position as the Adult Services Coordinator at Jackson County Library Services in February 2020 and was promoted to Area Manager, Outreach & Programs in September 2021. She is passionate about library outreach services, community engagement, and selecting the perfect meme or gif for any occasion. When not working, she spends her time playing with her nine-month-old, exploring the southern Oregon wine country with her spouse, and/or reading science fiction or fantasy.

Jordan Ellenberg (2016) explains that during World War II, the US military needed to find a way to reinforce their planes so that more returned than were lost to the Axis forces. The available data revealed that aircraft were coming back with bullet holes in the fuselage. US officers asked Statistical Research Group (SRG) mathematicians to help them determine where to add armor to the warplanes. The challenge was to make them lighter and to use less fuel. The officers assumed the answer would be to add armor plating around the fuselage but wanted the SRG to confirm this. However, mathematician Abraham Wald's response surprised them. Wald did his mathematical magic and determined that to ensure the survival of more planes, they must reinforce the engines instead. That is where the planes that did not return were most likely taking the fatal bullets. The officers, focusing on the surviving planes, exhibited survivorship bias.

## Survivorship Bias in Libraries

*Encyclopedia Britannica* states that "survivorship bias occurs as a kind of cognitive bias in which successes tend to garner more attention than failures" (Eldridge, 2023). In the case of the World War II aircraft, the planes that received damage to the fuselage were the successes—they made it back to base. Evidence of survivorship bias is present in all fields, including librarianship. This is especially true when searching for ways to attract new patrons. Libraries focus on the successes, that is, the patrons who come back. At all levels, from front-line staff to directors to board members, we focus on the current users, thinking that focus will bring new patrons. We want a higher percentage of community members to have library cards, so we look at what the current patrons are doing in our spaces and with the resources they are using. We dedicate our marketing and promotional efforts to programs with the highest attendance. We purchase more materials like the ones with the highest circulation. We look at when patrons will likely be in the building to schedule programs. This makes our current library users happy but misses the mark with our non-users. Outreach services can bridge the gap, though, and help libraries connect better with non-users.

Library outreach serves three primary purposes: 1) to raise awareness of library services in the community; 2) to meet the community where they are—outside of the library—and discover their needs; and 3) to bring targeted library services to the community. Outreach services reinforce the idea that libraries are for everyone and are vital to the community, leading to more direct supporters. In a time when libraries across the country face funding threats and are central to so-called “culture wars” (Fuzy & Kaylor, 2023; Kim, 2023), direct support from all parts of the community is crucial.

Ellenberg suggests that we can overcome survivorship bias by using “an old mathematician’s trick” to “set some variables to zero” (pp 6–7). We can apply this concept to libraries and use it to show how reinforcing outreach can transform non-users to users and supporters. To illustrate setting the variables to zero, let us assume that a particular set of non-users know nothing about the community library. Without the work of an outreach team raising awareness, the probability of this group ever becoming users is zero. Next, without discovering what non-users want or need from the library, the probability of them venturing into the library remains low. Furthermore, without targeted services for underserved communities who traditionally lack access to the library, they probably will not become users or supporters.

### **How JCLS is Reinforcing Outreach**

Jackson County Library Services has a long history of providing targeted outreach services. The Outreach department originally launched the books-by-mail program in 1921. In 1952, it was named “Outreach to Homebound,” emphasizing its purpose of bringing books to patrons who cannot traditionally access materials due to age, illness, or disability. More recently, while retaining the program’s purpose and much of its format, the library rebranded “Outreach to Homebound” to “At Home Services” (AHS) to remove the negative connotation of the term “homebound” and to focus on the inclusiveness at the heart of the service. Then the “Outreach to Child Care” (OCC) program was born in the early 90s to bring books and storytimes to children in daycare. The parents of these kids often work during typical library hours, meaning they may need access to traditional resources in a nontraditional way. These services were largely unchanged throughout their history and, at times, operated with little support or oversight.

Support for these services began to change with the 2016–2021 Strategic Plan. The plan called for growth in library card users, circulation, and community engagement. The library added new services to engage with the community and respond to their needs. A business librarian was hired to connect the economic ecosystem to library resources. The library established the Education Services program to boost education outcomes for students and to provide extra resources to local teachers. OCC added a Spanish bilingual position to reach Spanish-speaking childcare facilities and families. The Digital Services team was created to support computer and technology literacy, enhancing the ability of some patrons to utilize library resources and the wider digital world more fully. In 2021, to round out the Outreach department, JCLS received Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) funds to jumpstart Direct Access to Resources & Technology (DART), a mobile technology van, to bring Wi-Fi and resources to people and locations with limited or no access to the internet.

Through administrative support and reinforcement, the Outreach department saw growth and found innovative ways to meet the needs of Jackson County residents, even as the COVID pandemic wreaked havoc on lives and communities. At Home Services was the first library service to be reinstated in May 2020, ensuring that some of our most vulnerable patrons could

access library services when many of them could not interact with anyone outside of their homes. Education Services staff focused on resources to support remote learning for students and teachers. DART was created as a direct result of the pandemic’s impact on low-income communities. Mobile Services Specialists began taking the mobile technology van to Housing Authority sites and to communities affected by the 2020 Almeda fire that destroyed over 2,000 structures in Phoenix and Talent while the pandemic raged on.

After the COVID restrictions eased, JCLS increased efforts throughout the county resulting in more interactions within the community than before the pandemic. In addition to targeted outreach, staff now attend more community events and festivals to meet non-users and users alike. Partnering with the library’s Marketing department has increased resources and materials to attract and engage community members. This includes new ways of presenting traditional library services and fun swag like stickers, tote bags, temporary tattoos, and water bottles. Sometimes an exciting sticker and a new tote bag are just as effective in convincing someone to register for a library card as a best-selling book. It is important to note that, while Outreach department staff do targeted outreach daily, everyone who works at JCLS is also empowered to participate in outreach. Library staff from all 15 branches regularly find opportunities to connect with their communities through school visits, tabling events, and more.

The charts in Figure 1 illustrate the trajectory of outreach within Jackson County in both activities and reach from 2018 to 2023. In fiscal year 2019 (July 2018–June 2019), JCLS engaged with 17,903 community members by providing or participating in 1,344 outreach activities including OCC storytimes, business outreach, community events, and school visits. Fiscal year 2020 saw numbers decrease due to the “stay home” order initiated in March throughout the state to flatten the COVID-19 curve. Outreach staff reached more community members in FY 2021 even though the staff participated in slightly fewer activities. By the end of FY 2022 both activities and reach exceeded pre-pandemic levels. From July 2022 to June 2023 (FY 2023), JCLS increased the number of outreach events by 4.61 percent from 2019 numbers. What is most notable is the 67.81 percent increase in community members reached from FY 2019 to FY 2023.

Another tactic for reinforcing outreach was providing more technology that allows staff to provide library services in the field. Outreach staff are now equipped with laptops and hotspots

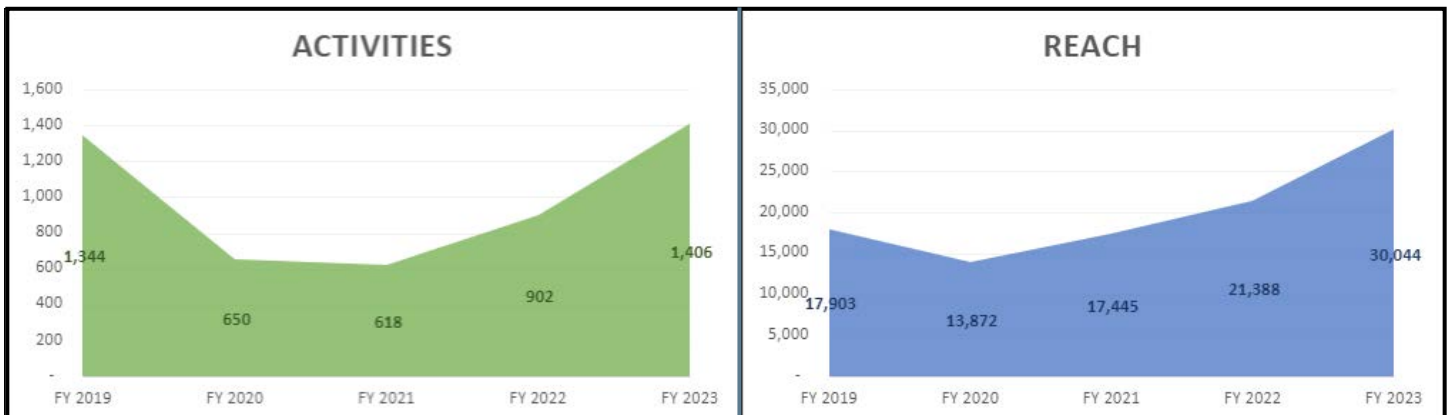


Figure 1  
Growth of Jackson County Library Outreach from 2018 to 2023

to register new library card holders during community visits and to demonstrate usage of the JCLS website and e-resources. The DART van is a Wi-Fi hotspot on wheels, providing access up to a 300-foot radius. Patrons can check out laptops for use at a DART stop, charge their devices, or even watch a JCLS-produced short documentary on the television display on the side of the van. New technologies and innovations in outreach services will play a larger role in the new strategic plan which places an even greater emphasis on community engagement.

### **Conclusion**

The war on libraries is real; it plays out daily nationwide and in Jackson County. Books have been removed from the shelves in local school libraries, and there have been complaints about some library services among community members. Libraries throughout the US are facing calls for defunding or, at the very least, for heavily restricting their activities. At JCLS, we are taking our services to the people and showing them that the library has something for everyone. We are adding innovative ways to reach patrons based on community needs. We are dedicating our efforts to win over more residents through outreach services. Outreach is how we turn non-users into users and users into library supporters.

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# Thank You, OER Champion:

## Utilizing a Gratitude Campaign as a Marketing Tool

by **Justine M. Munds**  
(she/her/hers)  
Textbook Affordability Librarian,  
Clackamas Community  
College Library  
[justine.munds@clackamas.edu](mailto:justine.munds@clackamas.edu)  
[@MsMintheLibrary](https://www.instagram.com/MsMintheLibrary)



JUSTINE MUNDS (she/her/hers) is the Textbook Affordability Librarian at Clackamas Community College Library in Oregon City, Oregon. Justine has worked at Clackamas in multiple capacities since 2018, serving as both a Student Services Specialist and an Associate Faculty Librarian before her current position. As a first-generation college student, Justine is passionate about removing barriers to education for all students. While not in the library, you may find Justine hiding amongst the racks at her local thrift store, saving her neighborhood squirrels from the wrath of her dog, or with her nose deep in a good book (as you might assume a librarian would be want to be!).

In September of 2022, I began my first term as the Textbook Affordability Librarian at Clackamas Community College (CCC). Clackamas’s librarians had successfully convinced the college to create this position the previous year, and we were all excited about its potential. *Textbook affordability* is a general term used to describe a variety of initiatives, but they all have one goal in common: to reduce the financial barriers students face when obtaining their course materials.

In 2022, the average college textbook cost an estimated \$105.37, and the price increased by an average of 12 percent with each new edition (Hanson, 2022). That upward trend in cost is not new; between 1977 and 2015, the cost of textbooks increased by 1,041 percent, outpacing inflation by 238 percent (Hanson, 2022). For college students, textbook costs are often about more than just the price tag. A 2016 survey of over 20,000 college students found that textbook costs can have negative impacts on academic performance and even extend students’ time to graduation (Florida Virtual Campus). In 2020, textbook affordability was defined as a social justice issue by a study that found that textbook costs were a significant barrier for all students, but “those barriers were even more significant among historically underserved college students” (Jenkins et al., 2020, p. 9).

While all college students are affected by the rise in textbook costs, community colleges like Clackamas have seen textbook prices disproportionately impact their students. The United States Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) found that 28 percent of students at four-year public colleges report using financial aid to pay for their textbooks, while 50 percent of community college students report the same. Additionally, two-year institutions have a consistently higher average annual cost of textbooks than four-year institutions do (Hanson, 2022).

*Open educational resources (OER)*, which are openly licensed course materials that are free to use and share, have become a particularly popular textbook affordability initiative among college faculty. See Table 1 for an explanation of textbook affordability in relation to OER. As OER have grown in popularity, so has OER research. Studies have shown that using OER in college courses positively impacts all students in a variety of ways, but they have also found that those positive impacts are magnified for traditionally marginalized students. A 2018 study found that OER improved final grades (+8.6%) and reduced drop, fail, and withdrawal rates (-2.68%)

for all students, but improved these at higher rates for non-white students (+13%, -5%), Pell-eligible students (+12.3%, -4.4%), and part-time students (+28%, -10%) (Colvard et al., 2018).

Textbook Affordability	Open Educational Resources (OER)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Textbook affordability is a broad term that encompasses a variety of initiatives.</li> <li>Any initiative designed to reduce course material costs is a textbook affordability initiative.</li> <li>Textbook affordability includes OER.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>OER are in the public domain or are licensed through Creative Commons.</li> <li>Anyone can legally and freely copy, use, adapt and share OER.</li> <li>OER are not limited to textbooks. There are OER course shells, assessments, tutorials, worksheets, and more.</li> <li>Free does not necessarily mean OER. Some free course materials are not openly licensed, so they are not considered OER.</li> </ul>

Table 1  
Textbook Affordability and OER

With these findings in mind, I spent the months leading up to my first day on the job learning about what others had done to bolster textbook affordability at their institutions. I browsed listservs, watched webinars, and scoured textbook affordability guides. I started a list of potential initiatives, which quickly doubled and then tripled in length. Among the many possibilities I had gathered was a clear need to get CCC’s community as excited about textbook affordability as I was. I ended up with a bolded question at the top of my list: How should I market textbook affordability and OER?

The 2022–23 academic year was the first year that the Clackamas community was back on campus after the pandemic had transitioned all our classes to an online-only modality. Most faculty returned to campus part time, on the days they taught in person, and students returned with them. It did not take long, however, before I realized that most faculty weren’t on campus every day. Stopping by empty offices and struggling to find in-person time in common was not helping me achieve my marketing goals; I was going to need a better way to connect with people who were hard to catch in person.

Cold-calling (or cold-emailing) was decidedly not the best way to get faculty on board with textbook affordability projects. The work I was proposing would require some level of course redesign, which our already-busy faculty would be hesitant to sign up for without a clear understanding of the benefits. While I could easily share textbook affordability facts and figures with faculty, I thought it would be more effective to see how their peers were already doing textbook affordability work. I was further encouraged to explore this idea by Lumen Learning’s playbook for building OER awareness and enthusiasm, which includes a “play” dedicated to recognition of faculty successfully doing textbook affordability work (2018). With some further brainstorming, I decided to utilize a gratitude campaign as a way to showcase CCC faculty who had transitioned to teaching with OER, even with limited time and resources.

While OER are becoming more popular among faculty, their positive outcomes are not common knowledge. I wanted to make sure that faculty already using OER were aware of the



impact they were having on their students. After many iterations of potential ways to celebrate CCC faculty and their OER successes, I stumbled across an example of an OER gratitude campaign designed by Jonas Lamb from the University of Alaska Southeast. The campaign consisted of a thank-you letter that included pertinent information about savings and the positive impacts of OER on student success. I adapted the letter (which was permitted according to its open licensing) to include current facts on textbook affordability and to encourage faculty to reach out to me with their experiences (see Figure 1).

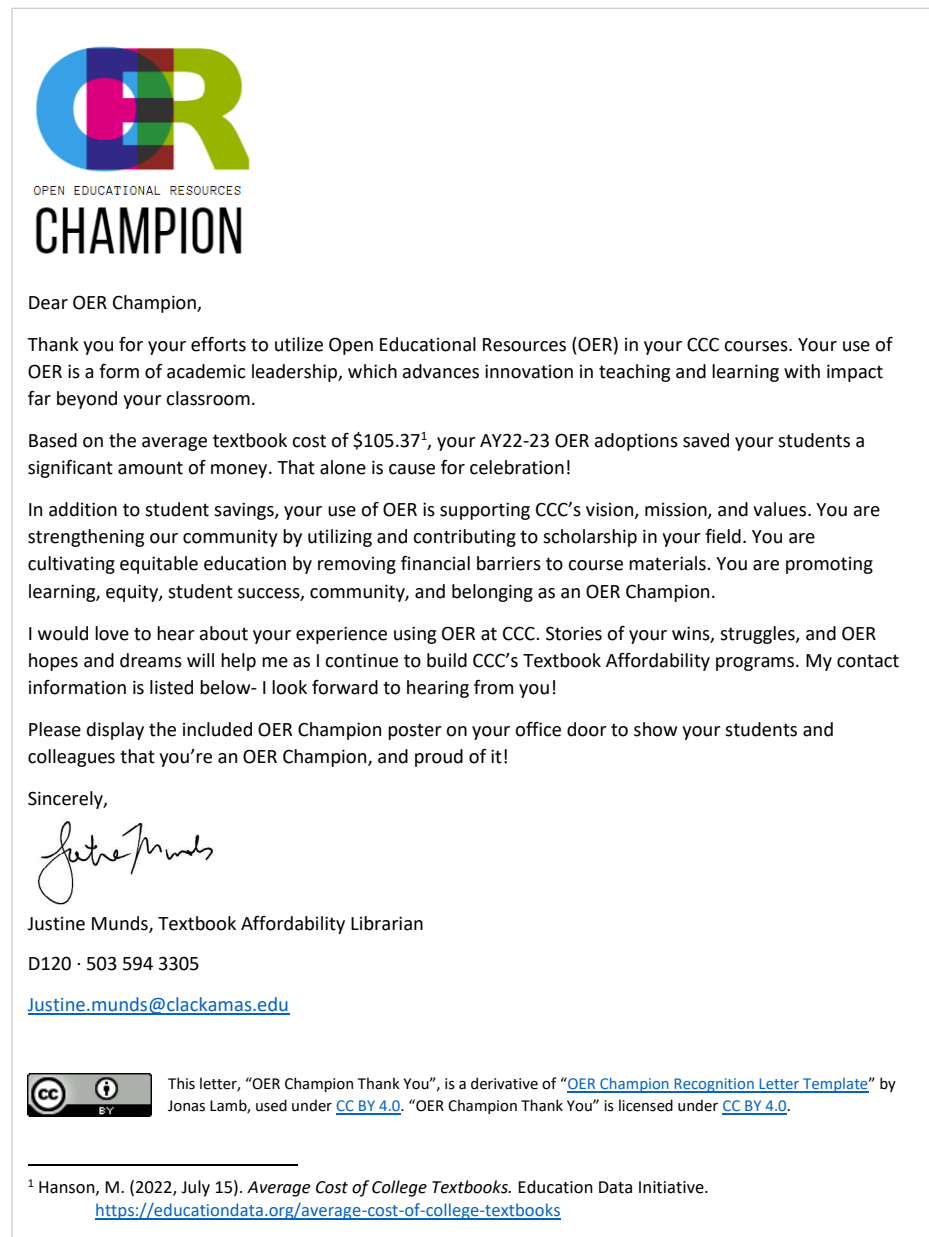


Figure 1  
Thank-you Letter for OER Successes

While the thank-you letter was a good start, I wanted to include additional items that faculty could display as markers of their OER champion status—this was a marketing initiative after all. Ultimately, I decided on an OER informational poster containing my contact information for faculty to place on their office doors, in hopes that it would spark interest in their students and peers (see Figure 2). I also included a small sticker in the gratitude package, because everyone loves a good sticker! Figure 3 shows the sticker.



Figure 2  
OER Poster



Figure 3  
OER Sticker

My intention for this marketing campaign was for faculty already using OER to feel proud of what they were doing for their students (and themselves), for students to recognize what their instructors were doing, and for other faculty to perhaps be envious enough of the poster to give me a call. Buy-in is the driving force of textbook affordability work; without faculty participation, there is only so much I can do. Investing in faculty and student awareness and showing gratitude for those who engage in textbook affordability work are imperative to my program's success.

This gratitude campaign is still in its early stages. Packages went out to CCC faculty in the spring of 2023, and some faculty have already reached out with excitement about displaying their posters. My intention is to continue the project's momentum by sending new packages to faculty who adopt OER in the future. It's my hope that the majority of CCC's office doors will soon have OER champion posters taped to them.

In keeping with the spirit of open education, all the materials I created for this campaign are openly licensed. I encourage you to run a gratitude campaign of your own!



*Buy-in is the driving force of textbook affordability work.*

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# Bibliotequitas para Tualatin (Bibliotequitas for Tualatin)

by **Immer Honorato**  
(he, him)  
Library Outreach Specialist,  
Tualatin Public Library  
[ihonorato@tualatin.gov](mailto:ihonorato@tualatin.gov)



IMMER HONORATO (he, him) is the Library Outreach Specialist at the Tualatin Public Library. He is an immigrant of Mexico and has a passion for social justice through library work.

The City of Tualatin is home to around 5,000 individuals who identify as Hispanic or Latino (US Census Bureau, 2020). Uniquely, many of the Spanish speakers who immigrated to Tualatin are from Guerrero. Guerrero is located in the southwest region of the Mexican west coast, sandwiched between the Mexican states of Jalisco and Oaxaca. Although many Mexican immigrants in Tualatin are from this particular region, we have a growing community from all over Central America and South America. This shift in immigration shows us the increasing need to provide relevant Spanish-language programs and materials for our community.

Before my time at the Tualatin Public Library, staff discussed creating Little Free Libraries for underserved communities in Tualatin. Little Free Libraries are not common in these underserved communities, and could be a way to bridge the gap between those communities and the library. The State Library of Oregon helped bring this concept to fruition by awarding an American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant to the Tualatin Public Library. According to the State Library, these grants were intended to “help libraries, museums, tribes, and their partners respond directly and immediately to community needs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic” (State Library of Oregon, 2021).

The Tualatin Public Library received the ARPA grant at a time when the library was emerging from the pandemic and eager to serve the community. Rebuilding trust with the community was one of our top priorities. Historically, the relationship between the library and the local Spanish-speaking community was somewhat neglected. We identified needs in the community in order to provide new programs with relevant information. Our hope was to make the library accessible for those communities.

After we received the grant, we were ready to use the Little Free Library format as the framework of our project. We renamed them “*Bibliotequitas*” or “little libraries” for our target audience. We connected with local businesses, apartment complexes, and family partner advocates in our school district; these partners helped us identify the best locations for the Bibliotequitas. Having this network of connections would also allow us to pivot if the model needed to be changed. During the planning stage, we also gained a lot of insight into what communities were experiencing during this time.

As funds rolled in, we purchased books for all ages. We decided early on to only purchase Spanish-language titles. We made this decision because we recognized that accessibility was important to our program. We knew we had to buy books that our Spanish-speaking community members could read. The reality is that many Spanish-speaking community members come from low-income and rural backgrounds; often this is why they decide to immigrate to the US. There is a comfort in seeing, receiving information, and communicating in your native language. With the books, we also included bookmarks promoting ebooks and other resources available with a library card.

We decided public schools in Tualatin would become the initial location for the Bibliotequitas. We chose two elementary schools, the middle school, and the high school. We rolled out the program mid-October of 2021 (see Figure 1). However, throughout the school year, we did not achieve what we projected. We were hoping to reach more people through public schools. In retrospect, we realized there may have been confusion about the free books amongst the student body. We were also unable to promote the program effectively. Traditional methods of promotion through library programs and newsletters were not yet reestablished, and physical access to the schools was limited. Our partners at the schools were working so incredibly hard to help students adjust post-pandemic, and could not devote time to promoting our program. As a result, we determined that our school model was not effective enough. The schools were adjusting to a regular school year. Students were also adjusting to school routines. It was clear that schools were struggling with student's needs and dynamics. The more we spoke with teachers and family partner advocates, the more apparent



Figure 1  
The Bibliotequita Poster for Schools

it became that they had their work cut out for them. These factors all had an effect on the interest and visibility of the Bibliotequita project in schools.

As the school year came to an end, summer of 2022 was on the horizon. The schools had to close their doors to us for the summer, but this gave us an opportunity to change course. I have to admit that at this point, I was not confident we would be able to get these books into people's hands, but we decided to try another type of location. We identified two local Mexican convenience stores that would serve as locations for two magazine racks full of books. We would check in every two weeks and restock books if needed. These two locations were a huge success! The foot traffic and the visibility piqued people's interest. We received positive feedback from the owners telling us that customers would ask when books would be restocked. These stores serve as a hub for everyday life for many immigrants in the community. The stores provide services such as cashing employment checks, sending money to Latin American countries, and, of course, offering products for sale. These businesses are pivotal components in the Spanish-speaking communities.

As the 2022 grant report deadline approached, the fall books from our Bibliotequita project made their way into outreach events. As a supplement to the magazine stands, we gave away several hundred books at *Viva Tualatin*, an annual cultural festival put on by the City of Tualatin. The Bibliotequita effort at the festival was a huge success and a complete 180-degree change compared with the previous year. Viva Tualatin is a celebration of arts and culture, and it is an event designed to highlight our diverse community. This event hosts a couple thousand people every year and takes place at Atfalati Park, which is located near a large concentration of Tualatin's Spanish-speaking community. Because the general population was now more confident and comfortable with fewer COVID restrictions, the city was able to put on a larger event than in previous years. It truly felt like a culmination of many projects and goals. The community as a whole was eager to connect and be a part of the celebration.

As difficult as it was in the beginning, we were able to accomplish the goals we established. While the Bibliotequitas did not directly lead to a significant increase in library visitation by our Spanish-speaking community members, we did see an increase in the use of our Spanish and bilingual children's books. Because ebooks are provided through the Washington County Cooperative Library Services, we were not able to measure whether local use of Spanish-language ebooks also increased. On the other hand, we established meaningful relationships with new members of our community. We were also able to rekindle relationships that we had prior to the pandemic and are continuing to develop new opportunities for partnerships.

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# Flexibility in Outreach:

## Developing a Student Commons Space on an Auxiliary Campus

by **Kirsten Hostetler**

(she/her/hers)

*Instruction and Outreach*

*Faculty Librarian,*

*Central Oregon*

*Community College*

[khostetler@cocc.edu](mailto:khostetler@cocc.edu)



KIRSTEN HOSTETLER (she/her) is the Instruction and Outreach Faculty Librarian at Central Oregon Community College, where she leads the library's instructional program and assessment efforts. Kirsten is also a Research Analyst with Project Information Literacy, a nonprofit research institute that conducts national, mixed-methods studies on how adults find and use information during their higher education years. This year she is serving as the Association of College and Research

Libraries/Academic Division of Oregon Library Association (ACRL-OR) past president. Her research areas include information literacy instruction, instructional design in academic libraries, open educational resources, and professional development for librarians.

When COVID-19 shut down college libraries across the country, Central Oregon Community College (COCC) was no exception. In the ensuing scramble to close all in-person services and spaces during finals week, COCC library staff also were faced with closing the doors on a location that had not yet opened: a space that was almost 10 years in the making on an auxiliary campus.

COVID taught librarians a lot about how flexible we can be and the value of delivering highly accessible remote service options. We also learned the value of our physical spaces and that an open door can literally and figuratively guide students to our services, especially on an outlying community college campus where nontraditional students already experience significant barriers finding, navigating, and using library resources. In this article, I will chronicle the development of the library space on one of COCC's satellite campuses, how that development stalled and evolved in the wake of COVID, and the role this space plays in COCC library's strategic outreach efforts moving forward.

### **COCC Context**

COCC is the oldest two-year college in Oregon, awarding associate and transfer degrees and career and technical education degrees and certificates, as well as providing non-credit offerings like developmental courses, continuing education and community learning classes, industry-specific training programs, GED preparation classes, and business management assistance. The main campus is located in Bend, the sixth largest city in Oregon and the largest city east of the Cascades. But COCC serves a 10,000-square-mile district (an area approximately the size of Maryland) and has opened campuses in the smaller communities of Redmond, Madras, and Prineville to better reach students in the outlying districts.

COCC's 6,763 full-time equivalent (FTE) credit students are able to enroll in classes on any COCC campus or online. However, without a single program fully accessible online and with many student support services offered only in Bend full time, many find it necessary or preferable to attend or contact the Bend campus for a full complement of services and classes.



The Redmond campus is 20 miles from Bend and is COCC's second largest and second most comprehensive campus, with four buildings housing classrooms, computer labs, academic services (e.g., testing and tutoring), and a small bookstore. Prineville and Madras, 35 and 45 miles from Bend, respectively, are currently single-building campuses. Students primarily attending the Redmond campus can piece together a schedule to complete the Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer (AAOT) degree, but the campus specializes in career and technical programs, including the two-year Veterinary Technician program, the Automotive Technology program emphasizing the hybrid electric automotive field, and the Manufacturing and Applied Technology Center (MATC) which trains workers in the manufacturing field with several certificate and degree options.

### **The Development of a Redmond Library Space**

In 2012, I was still in my graduate program at the University of Washington iSchool when I reached out to COCC librarians looking for an internship. It was opportune timing as they already had a project in mind.

The previous year, during a visit from COCC's accrediting body, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), evaluators emphasized the need for the library to serve all COCC campuses equitably, stressing the standard requiring "appropriate instruction and support for [users] to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness in obtaining, evaluating, and using library and information resources ... wherever offered and however delivered" (Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, 2010, p. 6). The COCC librarians wanted to explore the needs of the students and faculty on the auxiliary campuses to better meet the standard and serve our various communities.

My internship scope was surveying students and faculty who primarily attended or taught classes on the Redmond, Prineville, or Madras campuses. The results highlighted the importance of faculty relationships as reflected in the literature (Cunningham & Lanning, 2002; Øvern, 2014; Thi Lan & Tuamsuk, 2018) since many classes on the auxiliary campuses are taught by part-time and adjunct faculty who do not receive the same level of outreach to familiarize them with library resources and services, and because students frequently rely on faculty for guidance on where and how to search for information. Additionally, students reported that getting started with research was one of the most difficult skills and expressed that they would take advantage of a librarian who was available to answer assignment-specific questions (see Hostetler and DeSilva, 2016, for a full report of the survey findings).

The survey confirmed anecdotal reports that in Redmond, Madras, and Prineville, there was a perception among faculty and students there was no library or library services on their campuses. With the data to back us up, the library team began advocating for changes to our team, service, and space structures that would address this perception and make library resources more visible and, thus, more accessible.

Minor changes like offering delivery services and developing marketing material specifically targeting the auxiliary campuses were low-effort adjustments. Larger recommendations, like creating a position that only served auxiliary campus users or opening a new library space, required more effort and creativity.

Starting in 2013, I was hired in a faculty role that was revised as a result of my internship recommendation that focused, though not exclusively, on outreach to the auxiliary campuses. The next step was to focus efforts on increasing the library's presence on campuses so that students felt that the library was not exclusive to Bend students.

Ideally, that presence would have been a physical space on all campuses, but as the Redmond campus was the second most developed behind Bend and a more convenient central location, the library team decided that just one new location was ambitious enough to start.

Three years after the survey, the library secured college strategic planning funds to develop and grow the Redmond campus. A space next to the Veterinary Technician program classrooms was identified as ideal for a library commons area because the program's accreditation standards have high expectations for library services and students are frequently assigned research projects.

However, the college was unable to commit to the space as new needs arose. The strategic planning funds were reassigned to other more pressing initiatives and the library re-assessed the most appropriate location to attract students from all programs.

In fall 2019, after a few more years spent advocating for a Redmond library space and during a period of transition at the Redmond campus in which the campus director retired and the structure of the position was reorganized, the library team received permission to open a library learning commons in the Redmond Technology Education Center, a 34,000-square-foot building that houses technology-centered programs which opened in fall 2014. This new space was bigger than the original vision, was a more central location for students from different programs, and provided a more welcoming footprint that the library could retrofit for our needs. The library budget was not increased to accommodate staffing or resources, but the team was excited for an opportunity to be a larger presence on the Redmond campus seven years after identifying a physical space as a pressing need for students and faculty.

The library team began planning, hoping for a spring 2020 opening. Of course, our plans came to a screeching halt in winter 2020 with COVID.

Like many Oregon colleges and universities, COCC was shut down starting in March 2020 through the end of academic year 2020–21. Once the campus reopened in 2021–22, it was difficult to maintain staffing to keep the Bend campus library open, so the Redmond library space once again took a backseat to the more pressing priority of maintaining day-to-day operations.

However, by spring 2022, the library team was able to advocate for increasing services and resources once again on the auxiliary campuses, and new grant opportunities emerged through the State Library of Oregon. COCC librarians applied for and received Library Services and Technology Act funds to develop a print-based collection of 350 new items supporting coursework and programs taught on the Redmond, Madras, and Prineville campuses, including veterinary technician, early childhood education, manufacturing, welding, and transfer programs.

The newly purchased Redmond collection also expanded the Bend library's children's literature center that highlights indigenous voices, Latinx voices, equity and access for LGBTQIA+ peoples, and books that focus on family, community, and resilience.

In addition, the library wanted the new space to feature print newspapers and journals supporting Redmond campus programs and student interest in current events and lifelong learning. COCC strategic planning funds supported the purchase of an optical character recognition (OCR) scanner and a student print station, and the library expanded its technology lending program to provide laptops and hotspots for checkout on the Redmond campus.

The new space was designated as the Redmond Student Commons and opened in fall 2022.

### **Strategic Directions Moving Forward with the Redmond Student Commons**

In its first year of opening, the library worked with the Redmond campus director to staff the Commons with part-time student workers. Without a dedicated librarian to market the

Commons space and build the necessary relationships with faculty to create Commons supporters, it was underutilized and did not develop the greater library presence we had originally envisioned.

To meet our goals, we began looking creatively at our current services offered on the Bend campus. Even as headcounts increased at the Bend campus library during the 2022–23 academic year, in-person reference transactions maintained a declining trend that started prior to the pandemic. As a result, the library team decided to focus efforts on establishing the relationships with faculty and students that was the original recommendation from my 2012 internship study.

Now that the space and collections have been established, our next direction with the Redmond Student Commons is to commit a dedicated staff member who will be responsible for the space, offering programming, delivering instruction, and marketing directly to faculty and students. Without an increased staffing budget, the library is reorganizing its current reference team. Instead of offering drop-in reference support on the Bend campus staffed by an MLIS-credentialed librarian, we will instead encourage students to utilize scheduled reference appointments through our Book a Librarian program and move our part-time reference librarian to the Redmond Student Commons. By thinking creatively about our long-term goals to expand library use on the auxiliary campuses in the context of declining in-person reference needs, we were able to dedicate library staff to provide greater attention to the needs in Redmond and build the necessary relationships for growing buy-in from stakeholders.

The new responsibilities for this librarian will not focus on point-of-need instruction, but rather on faculty outreach, student programming, and instruction tied to credit classes and programs offered on the Redmond campus. This librarian will begin staffing the Redmond Student Commons in 2023-24 with the goal of playing a larger role in our strategic efforts to support COCC's auxiliary campus communities and create a library presence in Redmond that can truly be felt by our students.

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# OLA Quarterly Publication

The *OLA Quarterly (OLAQ)* is the official publication of the Oregon Library Association. The *OLAQ* is indexed by *Library Literature & Information Science* and *Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts*. To view PDFs of issues, visit the OLAQ Archive on the OLA website. Full text is also available through HW Wilson's *Library Literature and Information Science Full Text* and EBSCO Publishing's *Library, Information Science and Technology Abstracts (LISTA) with Full Text*.

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**Oregon Library Association Inc.**  
PO Box 3067, La Grande, OR 97850

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