

BIRMINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY



PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST



FY 2017-18 ANNUAL REPORT





MISSION

The mission of the Birmingham Public Library is to provide the highest quality experience to our community for lifelong learning, cultural enrichment, and enjoyment.

VISION

The Birmingham Public Library will play a vital role in the city by recognizing the potential of our community and transforming lives through community, education, and technology.

CORE VALUES

The Birmingham Public Library is committed to:

- Service
- Employees
- Leadership
- Learning
- Innovation
- Respect
- Diversity
- Integrity



Executive Director Floyd Council

SUMMARY FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Birmingham Public Library (BPL) has set a course to claim a new position as a developing 21st century library system in the Southeastern United States with a beautiful return on our investments in 2018. BPL has a 132-year history of "**putting people first**" in library service to the City of Birmingham, a 41-year history as an independent affiliate member of the Jefferson County Library Cooperative (JCLC), and a proud new member of the Urban Libraries Council (only ULC library and largest public library system in the state of Alabama). BPL continues to "preserve the past and explore the future" via active community engagement, library public service delivery, community programs, books, digital resources, relevant reference, and archival access. We are thankful for the support of Mayor Randall Woodfin, the mayor's leadership team, the Birmingham City Council, the Birmingham Public Library Board of Trustees, the Friends Foundation of the Birmingham Public Library, all current BPL staff, all BPL retirees, and, last but not always first, our library patrons.

STRATEGIC FOCUS:

As a city department we are committed to the mayor's leadership theme of "putting people first" mission: building community through servant leadership; and core values: customer service, efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, accountability. Since the hiring of new Executive Director Floyd Council in the fall of 2017, the library system has returned to the national spotlight as the largest and most impactful library system in the state of Alabama with recent media features in American Library Association publications, Urban Libraries Council newsletters, and a list of local Alabama publications on the impact of library programs and services. In 2018 BPL offered remarkable service, programs, partnerships, and community engagement, strategically focused on *education, technology, and community*. Our talented and accomplished library staff continues to produce excellent programs, partnerships, and community events that support quality of life for all 23 communities in the City of Birmingham. The library system is no longer just a place for books and children's programs. We are a community center for everyday life support, small business development, workforce development, and digital skills training. In 2018 the library system used creativity and staff talent to develop an amazing "efficiency" as we transformed the first floor of Central Library's East Building into a much-needed open flexible auditorium space that will seat about 500 people for programs and large staff events. We estimate that an addition of a large auditorium to the East Building would have cost the city about 2.5 million dollars.



SUMMARY FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STRATEGIC NEXT STEPS:

Leadership changes and new public service demands have resulted in both public and operational challenges as well as amazing new opportunities. However, leadership adjustments and plans for improvement have communicated that *equity, diversity, and inclusion will remain at the heart of the organization to support staff morale and interactive inclusion on all future change management efforts.* Our primary financial objectives include improving critical security services and infrastructure at all library locations to limit city and library liability, enhance our library electronic resources to meet a current need for 24/7 digital access, and long-standing capital improvements that include, but are not limited to, the Central Library stairs project and the new Wylam Library construction project. The library system was identified in the mayor's transition team study as having resources to support the Birmingham Public School System and all community partners via wrap-around services that strengthen education, life-long-learning, and workforce development. Additionally, the library system and director are actively engaged in the current strategic initiative for High-Performing, 21st Century Education and Workforce Development Systems where the City has set a clear objective to expand opportunities for summer learning programs, job training, and internship opportunities. To this end, the library system is working in close relationship with the mayor's Division of Youth Services, the Department of Parks & Recreation, and the Birmingham Public School System. At the department operational level, BPL continues to adhere to the strategic plan for 2017-2021 with a focus on Transforming Lives Through Community, Education and Technology. This plan will afford us a clear path to address our 21st century vision for BPL. The strategic plan has focused our direction to educate the community business, citizens, and public officials about the extensive offerings available from today's library. In addition to internal and external partnerships, the library system currently offers a plan of service at 19 library

locations via the use of 20-city occupied buildings. The library mobile application serves as an additional location (all digital). In our daily public service our strategic objective is fully aligned with the mayor's leadership theme to "put people first" by improving the quality of life in every community of our great city.

LIBRARY RESOURCES, MATERIALS & PUBLIC ACCESS TECHNOLOGY:

The last 10 years have seen our materials budget reduced from \$1.4 million to \$786,000. At the same time the cost of electronic resources that patrons are able to use to support digital skills and workforce readiness is increasing drastically due to digital content cost as publishing shifts from print to all digital resources. With recent budget reductions in our materials budget, the library system has been hard-pressed to accomplish department level operational goals. As a result the introduction of alignment with the new mayor's strategic objectives requires an investment in critical additional electronic resources to sustain our support of technology, innovation, and digital skills development. Although we have not been able to maintain the optimal collection level for our community, we investigated national and local trends in how our public is accessing and receiving information. In light of this information, we are moving towards providing electronic resources for the public. Print reference is generally tied to place. Electronic materials can be accessed 24/7 at any library, school, or home. BPL has introduced a new mobile application that is essentially a new digital library location. Conversion to electronic formats reduces the physical footprint of print materials in the library. This leads to greater adaptability in space planning and more appealing facilities. Online services unlock greater catalogs of diverse items than we could afford to collect locally. Online services have been well received within the community and are attracting a wider audience to the library. In addition to our online resources, we are providing free Wi-Fi inside each of our libraries. Our patrons are bringing in their own devices to access the



SUMMARY FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

services that connect them to the world. Our new Wi-Fi hot spots, available for checkout, give our citizens the ability to access the internet from home for a period of seven days at a time. This enables students and entrepreneurs to gain an advantage in their studies or business ventures. Even during our closed hours, we have users that will access the Wi-Fi from our parking lots and sitting areas surrounding our libraries. The Wi-Fi and hotspots enjoy great popularity with our patrons.

PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMS:

In August 2018 BPL became the first library system in America to partner with Google by hosting the Grow with Google digital skills tour. The event was attended by nearly 600 patrons and promoted locally and nationally by BPL, Google, and Urban Libraries Council. For summer learning alone, BPL staff produced more than 500 programs and events for the Birmingham community. We count it a joy to serve our patrons (library users) in the City of Birmingham. Since 2016 we have seen a surge in our educational programming that focuses on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math). That year the Create205 Learning Lab opened at the Central Library. This area is designed for teens to experiment and experience engineering, robotics, and design. In partnership with the UAB School of Engineering, we have UAB mentors working with our afterschool students. The program expanded to the Smithfield and Springville Road Libraries during the fall of 2017 and will continue in 2019. The program was further expanded during our 2018 Summer Learning program with additional offerings of a week-long coding camp at the West End Branch Library. BPL offers Lego programs that build brain connections in young children and Snap Circuit programs (creating circuit boards that drive small items such as alarms, door bells, and flashing beacons) for elementary school students. Our 1,2,3 Play with Me, PRIME TIME Family Reading Time, and emergent literacy storytimes help build the connections for a child to begin their road to reading success.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

Birmingham Public Library locations continue to grow as community gathering places for citizens of all ages. Our younger children and students gather after school and during the summer. We have a growing series of programs that address the needs of our active older adults and senior citizens. The libraries serve as a welcoming station for our seniors who need companionship, as well as the teens who need homework help. BPL exercises great leadership by providing open doors to our brothers and sisters who are between homes (homeless). BPL's future is bright and the needs of our community great. We are ready to seize the opportunities and tackle the challenges that stand before us as we move the library and the Birmingham community into the future. During the next budget and performance year, BPL will fully introduce "Citizen Services" with the community, offering copying, scanning, faxing, and basic home office support at the library (services that may be inaccessible to some of our patrons through conventional channels). This branded program already includes the offering of passport application services at five library locations and 66 current employees trained to issue passports. In 2019 and 2020 BPL will begin offering notary services at several community libraries and the Central Library. Additional recurrent facilitations such as lawyers at the library, doctors at the library, IRS presentations, Veterans Affairs presentations, Social Security presentations, Alabama Power consumer outreach, and other impactful programs to support every need of people in the city are planned to keep citizens at the heart of our new Citizen Services program.

In my capacity as executive director of the Birmingham Public Library, the purpose for this annual report is to render to the library board a summation of the operations of the library system for the preceding twelve months, consistent with the Birmingham Public Library Board bylaws.

Floyd G. Council Sr.

Floyd G. Council Sr.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



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Floyd Council
Executive Director



The Honorable Randall Woodfin
Mayor, City of Birmingham



The Honorable Valerie A. Abbott
President, Birmingham City Council



Service Area:
City of Birmingham



Population:
212,000



Neighborhoods: 99



Communities: 23



Library Outlets: 19



Funding:
City of Birmingham



Governance:
Public Library Board

FY 2017-18 BUDGET

REVENUES

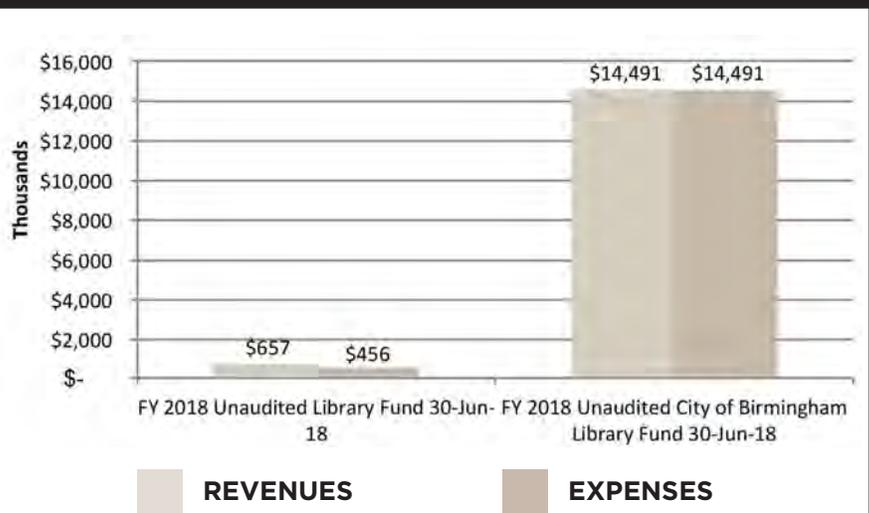
	Unaudited Birmingham Library Fund 6/30/18	Unaudited City of Birmingham Library Fund 6/30/18
Local	\$260,661	\$14,491,391
Federal/State	\$215,415	
Grants	\$88,756	
Benefactor	\$92,406	
Total Revenues	\$657,258	\$14,491,391

EXPENDITURES

Personnel	-	\$12,332,714
Public Service	\$123,575	\$30,079
Business Operations	\$322,852	\$2,128,598
Total Expenses	\$456,427	\$14,491,391

LIBRARY FUND

TOTAL REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES



LIBRARY STAFF



2017 STAFF DAY

The morning session for Staff Day was held at the Boutwell Auditorium. The afternoon session was held at the Central Library where several training workshops were hosted.

What was your favorite part of Staff Day?

"Sessions were relevant and engaging!"

"Pete Blank! It was nice to have lunch in the park with co-workers and have downtime between sessions."

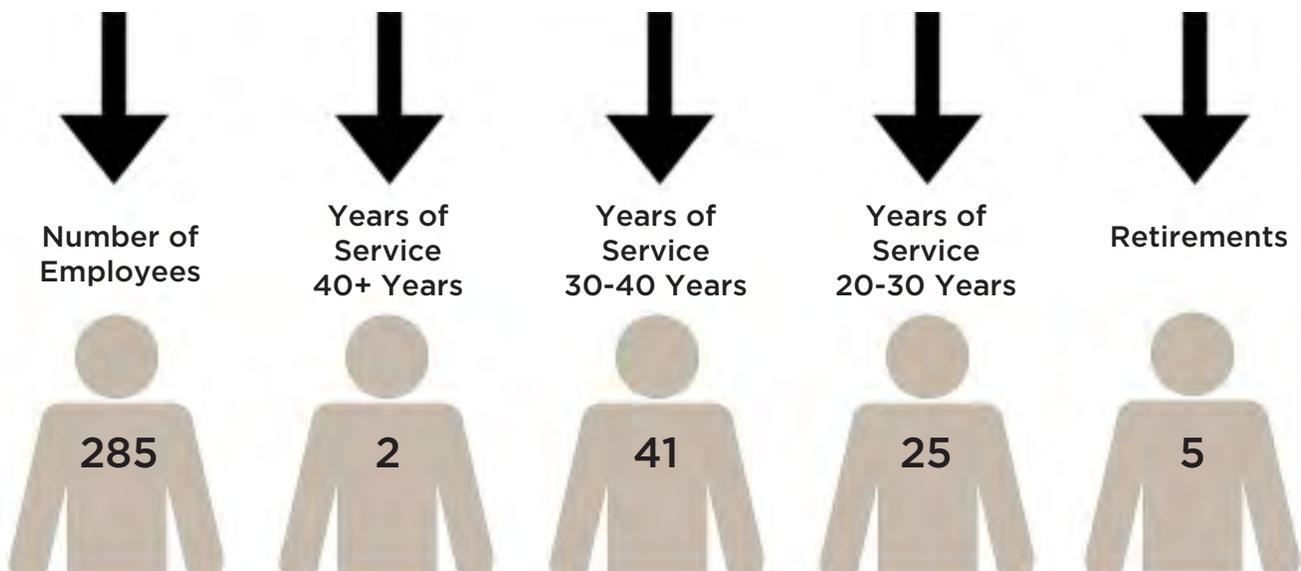
"Pete Blank is an excellent, professional speaker."

"The technology breakout session was very informative."

2017 INVENTORY DAY

Each location was responsible for working on projects to clear out old equipment, straighten shelves, inventory books, or discard old items.

BIRMINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF NUMBERS



FY 2017-18

SERVICE PERFORMANCE

LOCATIONS

	Performance Areas	Performance	Strategic Impact
Avondale			
Central	Hours Open to Public	42,693	C,E,T
East Ensley	Visitors to the Libraries	1,410,540	C,E
East Lake	Meeting Room Bookings	1,374	C
Eastwood	Library Card Accounts	149,019	C,E,T
Ensley	New Library Cards	9,373	C,E,T
Five Points West	BPL Website Visits	661,232	C,E,T
	BPL Collection Size	717,625	C,E
Inglenook	Print Checked Out	748,974	C,E
North Avondale	Digital Checked Out	77,007	C,E,T
North Birmingham	Total Checked Out	825,981	C,E
Powderly	Holds Placed	77,197	C,E
Pratt City	Holds Filled	135,661	C,E
Smithfield	Public Computers	293	C,E
Southside	Wireless Solutions	Unavailable	C,E,T
	Reference Questions	381,784	C,E
Springville Road	Public Programs	2,999	C,E
Titusville	Program Attendance	61,007	C,E
West End	Summer Learning Registrations	5,390	C,E,T
Woodlawn	Volunteer Hours	28,697	C,E,T
Wylam	C=COMMUNITY, E=EDUCATION, T=TECHNOLOGY		

SYSTEM-WIDE

LIBRARY VISITS & RANKING

Rank	Region	Location	Visits	Adjusted Visits
1	Central Region	Central	340,889	340,889
2	Southern Region	Avondale	169,485	169,485
3	Eastern Region	Springville Road	127,615	129,504
4	Western Region	Five Points West	105,557	105,557
5	Southern Region	Southside	85,597	85,597
6	Eastern Region	East Lake	69,346	69,346
7	Northern Region	North Birmingham	61,902	61,902
8	Western Region	Smithfield	56,854	56,854
9	Northern Region	Pratt City	55,241	55,241
10	Western Region	West End	45,789	45,789
11	Southern Region	Titusville	40,653	40,653
12	Eastern Region	Woodlawn	36,019	36,019
13	Southern Region	North Avondale	35,667	35,667
14	Southern Region	Eastwood	35,411	35,411
15	Northern Region	East Ensley	32,540	32,540
16	Western Region	Wylam	30,004	30,004
17	Northern Region	Ensley	29,532	29,532
18	Western Region	Powderly	26,005	26,005
19	Eastern Region	Inglenook	24,545	24,545
Total Visits			1,408,651	1,410,540

SYSTEM-WIDE

LIBRARY CIRCULATION & RANKING

Rank	Region	Location	Adult	Teens	Children	Circulation
1	Central Region	Central	192,096	5,524	31,660	229,280
2	Eastern Region	Springville Road	77,972	2,668	33,370	114,010
3	Southern Region	Avondale	49,327	2,120	36,251	87,698
4	Western Region	Five Points West	34,665	1,022	16,167	51,854
5	Southern Region	Southside	33,366	994	9,968	44,328
6	Southern Region	Eastwood	19,520	226	3,326	23,072
7	Northern Region	North Birmingham	16,329	303	5,973	22,605
8	Western Region	Powderly	16,073	1,040	4,686	21,799
9	Eastern Region	East Lake	16,563	337	3,061	19,961
10	Eastern Region	Inglenook	6,334	98	11,471	17,903
11	Eastern Region	Woodlawn	14,275	254	2,295	16,824
12	Western Region	West End	11,980	686	2,755	15,421
13	Southern Region	Titusville	11,826	108	3,018	14,952
14	Western Region	Smithfield	10,445	174	2,955	13,574
15	Northern Region	East Ensley	9,556	105	3,002	12,663
16	Southern Region	North Avondale	8,238	169	3,220	11,627
17	Northern Region	Pratt City	8,758	155	2,621	11,534
18	Northern Region	Ensley	8,163	197	2,297	10,657
19	Western Region	Wylam	7,309	94	1,809	9,212
Total			552,795	16,274	179,905	749,974

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



Summer Learning

The Birmingham Public Library adopted two major changes for the 2018 Summer Reading program. As a new member of the Urban Libraries Council, BPL joined other libraries in transitioning from the traditional Summer Reading program to a Summer Learning program. The goal: to curb the problem of “summer learning loss” and to spark interest in reading for pleasure. The second change was in the way the library recorded participation. Rather than counting the number of books read, participants were encouraged to count the amount of time spent reading. By counting time, all readers were rewarded equally for their efforts. BPL had 5,390 participants in the 2018 Summer Learning program with over 27,694 recorded reading hours. The library offered over 577 programs with a total attendance of 15,540.



Bards & Brews

Bards & Brews is one of BPL’s most popular programs, a combination of spoken word poetry and free craft beer held monthly from January through November. Bards & Brews, with host Voice Porter, attracts a diverse group from across metro Birmingham and talented spoken word artists. Most programs are open mic events opened to both experienced and novice poets. Once a year, BPL hosts a poetry slam event providing cash prizes.



Teens Engineer BHM

Teens Engineer BHM, a partnership between the Birmingham Public Library and The University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Engineering, was expanded to more than a dozen BPL locations across Birmingham in 2018, thanks to a \$95,000 two-year grant from the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham. The program is free for middle and high school students with an interest in math and science.



Mock Trial Program

From January through March 2018, BPL exposed 20 teens to careers in the criminal justice field through the BPL Mock Trial Program, a partnership between the Birmingham Public Library, Northern District of Alabama's U.S. Public Defender's Office, and the Birmingham Bar Foundation. The students, mentored by actual lawyers, learned how to conduct interviews on the witness stand, both their own and opposing witnesses, and played the roles of lawyers, judge, and bailiff while presenting a mock trial inside a Jefferson County courthouse.

Miss Iwate Returns

Miss Iwate, BPL's Japanese Friendship Doll, returned on March 26, 2018, from a four-month 90th birthday celebration tour in Japan. She was part of an exhibition across the Iwate Prefecture in Japan from December 5, 2017, to March 22, 2018, with other dolls as part of a traveling tour.



THE DESEGREGATION OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN THE JIM CROW SOUTH
Civil Rights and Local Activism

WAYNE A. WIEGAND

BIRMINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
2100 PARK PLACE
EAST GRAND READING ROOM
TUESDAY, MAY 1, 2018 - 6-7:30 PM

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

ALABAMA HUMANITIES FOUNDATION

Sponsored by the Alabama Humanities Foundation and Patrick Long in memory of Patricia Long, Librarian and Educator

The Desegregation of Public Libraries Author Talk with Professor Wayne A. Wiegand

Renowned national library historian Wayne A. Wiegand gave a lecture at the Central Library in May 2018 about his book, *The Desegregation of Public Libraries in the Jim Crow South: Civil Rights and Local Activism*, co-authored with his wife, Shirley. The talk was part of a nationwide lecture and book-signing tour promoting the book. Wiegand has a chapter detailing the 1963 sit-ins by Miles College students that led to the desegregation of the Birmingham Public Library.

Former federal judge U.W. Clemon, retired radio broadcaster Shelly Millender, and Jeff Drew, whose late mother Deenie Drew was among the blacks whose sit-in led to the desegregation of the Birmingham Public Library, participated in a panel discussion during the event. Wiegand's book lecture in Birmingham was sponsored by the Alabama Humanities Foundation and Patrick Long in memory of Patricia Long, librarian and educator.

BPL Joins Urban Libraries Council

In March 2018 the Birmingham Public Library became the first public library in Alabama to join the Urban Libraries Council. Based in Washington, D.C., and founded in 1971, the Urban Libraries Council is one of the premier membership associations of North America's leading public library systems, with 151 members in the United States and Canada. BPL's membership in the Urban Libraries Council was spearheaded by BPL Executive Director Floyd Council, who began leading the city system in November 2017 after a nationwide search spearheaded by the BPL Board of Trustees.



COMMUNITY LIBRARY HIGHLIGHTS



Avondale Regional Branch Library

Avondale Library is known throughout Jefferson County and beyond for offering phenomenal educational and entertaining programs for patrons of all ages. Among them: adult crafting, book groups, Teen Time, preschool storytimes, family nights, Wacky Wednesdays, afterschool programming, 1-2-3 Play with Me, From Page to Stage, Ukulele 101, and more.

Central Library

The Central Library hosted a variety of programs in fiscal year 2018. Among the most popular: Civil Rights Through the Eyes of a Young Poet Camp in July, Local Authors Expo in August 2017, four quarterly free art exhibits in the Fourth Floor Gallery, Vocational Readiness workshops to help job seekers throughout the year, genealogy workshops, and the debut of the BPL Spinners Club.



East Ensley Branch Library

The East Ensley Library expanded its STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) programs through the acquisition of 10 Chromebooks. Youth and teens used the Chromebooks to prepare for the ACT, play games with their friends, or learn how to code a robot. For adults, East Ensley Library offered programs on how to use Google's job search engine and how to format a resume.

East Lake Branch Library

East Lake Library partnered with an avid chess player who taught patrons of all ages how to play chess during a free afterschool program held on Mondays.



Eastwood Branch Library

Vincent Solfronk, former teen librarian at the Central Library, became Eastwood Library branch manager in January 2018. Thanks to a small Innovative and Cool Award grant from the BPL Board of Trustees, Eastwood Library acquired several board games and became the first branch in BPL to allow patrons to check out board games with their library card.



Ensley Branch Library

In early 2018 the Ensley Library was one of three Birmingham Public Library locations (along with Powderly and Wylam) invited by the McWane Science Center to participate in Vocabby's World, an educational hands-on exploration initiative for parents and children. The ultimate goal of the program, integrated with library storytimes, is to develop vocabulary, reading-readiness, and problem-solving skills through fun and exciting science and art activities.

Five Points West Regional Branch Library

The Five Points West Library in 2018 partnered with a local JCCEO Head Start Center to offer a series of bilingual family literacy programs, PRIME TIME Family Reading Time, funded by a grant from the Alabama Humanities Foundation. The library also offered multiple sets of coding courses developed to expose patrons to higher technology fluency. Different classes, designed from kids to senior adults, had various themes ranging from web and game design to beginner coding technique.



Inglenook Branch Library

During 2018 Inglenook Library hosted several programs targeting many demographics, from youth served through its Readers are Leaders Book Club to An Expression of Appreciation for the Women of the Inglenook Community, a popular adult program designed to enable women to empower themselves, fellowship with other women, and make an impact in the Inglenook Community.

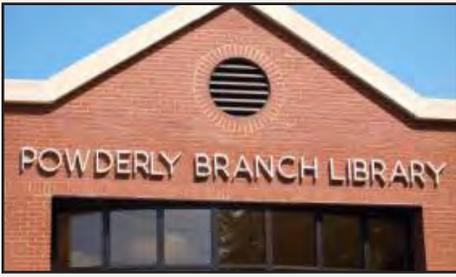
North Avondale Branch Library

A partnership between North Avondale Library and Tom Brown Community Center provided opportunities for children to participate in afterschool activities, enjoy computer time, and join the branch's Picture Book Club. Library staff also signed up Tom Brown Community Center for a group membership card to check out materials to use at the center.



North Birmingham Regional Branch Library

The North Birmingham Library developed a new monthly program for adults called An Afternoon of Games, allowing patrons to play a variety of traditional board games and video games, including new board games purchased with funds awarded as a recipient of the BPL board's Innovative and Cool Award.



Powderly Branch Library

Powderly Library is the home to the popular Books-By-Mail program, a free library service offered to Jefferson County residents who are unable to avail themselves of traditional library services. The library also offered a six week diabetes education class. Powderly Library's youngest patrons enjoyed participating in storytimes featuring *Vocabby's World*, an educational vocabulary program developed by the McWane Science Center.

Pratt City Branch Library

The Pratt City Library hosted two popular weekly programs in 2018 for senior patrons, including residents of the nearby Dugan Avenue Senior Apartments Community Center. Its Chair Aerobics class allowed elderly patrons to exercise in a relaxing library atmosphere. *Needles & Threads* allows seniors to stay active with various needle crafts from crocheting to quilting. The library also hosted a monthly book discussion group called the Pratt City Readers.



Smithfield Branch Library

During 2018 the Smithfield Library helped high school students throughout Birmingham through both its ACT Prep and Power Hour programs. ACT Prep is a program offered throughout the year to help high school students improve their ACT skills utilizing Learning Express Library, one of the free databases offered to BPL patrons. Power Hour is a one-hour tutoring session for elementary and middle school patrons.

Southside Branch Library

In 2018 Southside Library offered computer services, meeting space for neighbors and groups, and a variety of programs for patrons of all ages. Southside Library partnered with UAB to offer 1,2,3 Play with Me, providing structured family play time for parents and their babies/toddlers.



Springville Road Regional Branch Library

Springville Road Library offered a variety of popular programs for adults, including weekly Coffee, Conversation and Crafts, Body Changers, Bend & Stretch, and Card Games. Monthly programs included book discussion groups, Beginning Quilting, Basic Sewing, and Introduction to Belly Dancing. For youth, the weekly Grubdown and monthly Creature Features were especially popular.



Titusville Branch Library

In 2018 the Titusville Library implemented a new Let's Get Crafty program series that has been a huge hit with adult patrons. On the first Wednesday of every month, patrons get in touch with their creative side while making a craft to take home.

West End Branch Library

In the spring of 2018 the West End Library received a Public Library Association Inclusive Internship Initiative grant, designed to expose underrepresented groups to librarianship as a career through a paid summer internship. West End Library's intern recipient was Parker High School graduate Tamika Green, who worked with her library mentor, West End Library Branch Manager Maya Jones, on a community-based learning project.



Woodlawn Branch Library

For the ninth year, Woodlawn Library partnered with Impact Alabama to provide space for its free low-income family tax preparation service, SaveFirst. Other BPL locations offering SaveFirst were Smithfield, West End, and Springville Road. Every year hundreds of thousands of dollars in tax preparation fees are saved for the people who file through SaveFirst. Woodlawn Library staff also provided a free service helping patrons create new resumes or modify existing resumes.

Wylam Branch Library

Wylam Library offers a variety of programs for adults (such as the Wylam Book Club) and youth through programs such as its Summer Push program offered in partnership with Faith Chapel Christian Center to help Wylam K-8 students avoid the "summer learning slide." Wylam Library is also one of a few BPL locations participating in Vocabby's World, an educational vocabulary program developed by the McWane Science Center.

