As a Library Director, I am frequently asked, “What is a library?” – a fair question in our ever-evolving world of information and technology. Unfortunately, my answer is rarely satisfying, simply because a library is so many different things to so many different people. I could describe our robust collections of printed books and digital materials, the staples of the most common and traditional view of libraries. I could go on to describe the hundreds of educational classes and hands-on workshops hosted at our libraries each year that inspire people to try new things and build skills. I could attempt to describe the warm, loving, neighborly feeling that overtakes you when you are dancing and laughing alongside community members at concerts and celebrations hosted at our libraries. But none of these would adequately capture all that the Altadena Libraries accomplish as catalysts in the community and places for authentic connection and inspiration that are so rare in these polarizing times.

Over the past several years, it is safe to say that we have collectively lived through tenuous times, and I am proud that despite the challenges we have faced, our Altadena Libraries have unwaveringly continued to fulfill our mission of bringing people and ideas together. Since 2018, we have embarked on and completed a comprehensive strategic planning process. We have taken key steps toward our dream of addressing accessibility issues at both of our libraries to bring our physical buildings into the 21st century while honoring their historical legacy. Our community affirmed that dream when you recently voted to pass Measure Z that will provide the necessary funds to transform our buildings to reflect our values of innovation, empathy, and equity. Amidst our busy schedule of intriguing workshops and engaging experiences for the public, we have expanded our reach and formed valuable community partnerships that allow us to share our services and resources with even more of Altadena. When COVID-19 hit and changed all of our lives, the Altadena Libraries stepped up and became a hub for emergency updates, virtual community gatherings, and educational and cultural enrichment that our community could enjoy while staying safe at home.

So, what is a library? How does a library stay relevant? It adapts to what its community needs it to be. At the Altadena Libraries we strive to always listen to our community and ensure that our offerings are reflective of community needs, and it is through this active listening process that our libraries continuously evolve. Our library district started as a single bookshelf in a local schoolhouse in 1908 – how absolutely thrilling it has been to watch our district expand and become an agent of positive change in Altadena!

Through it all, we are endlessly grateful for supporters like you, who champion our Altadena Libraries in the community and strengthen our ability to be curious, connected neighbors that provide critical resources to our beautiful community. You are the Altadena Libraries. You make what we do possible. Together, we will continue to work toward building an Altadena where all are learning, growing, and thriving together for generations to come.

Nikki Winslow, District Director
Our Why

In late 2019, the Altadena Library District undertook a comprehensive strategic planning process that included the contributions of the Board of Trustees, the community-based Strategic Planning Committee, the Altadena Library District Staff, representatives from the Friends of the Altadena Library and the Altadena Library Foundation, and specific community input from a diverse cross-section of community members, Town Council members, and Altadena Library patrons. From a series of community engagement sessions, focus groups, one-on-one conversations, and a community survey emerged a new mission, vision, values, and strategic framework for the Altadena Library District’s future that prioritizes the community’s needs and aspirations while honoring the unique characteristics that make Altadena a special community. The Altadena Libraries bring people and ideas together to move us toward our vision of an Altadena where all are learning, growing, and thriving together. Over the past year and for years to come, the following priorities will guide our work, along with our values of equity, innovation, and empathy.

We are CURIOSOUS.

We are teachers, learners, and seekers. We are interested in you, your life, your needs, and how we can help. We want to learn from and with our community, and we want to constantly develop, improve, and build our skills to serve you better. We value curiosity and are open to new ideas.

We are CONNECTORS.

We lead constructive collaborations and partnerships, break down barriers, connect groups of neighbors, and centralize communication to improve the quality of life for all of us.

We are NEIGHBORS.

We are more than eight square miles. We are neighbors helping neighbors, whether it’s on the next block or in the next city. We embody the best of our unique town and our diverse community.
Highlights of the Years

Strategic priorities guide and shape our libraries’ services and resources and provide a flexible framework that allows for adapting to any obstacles. While no one could have predicted a global pandemic and its consequences on a local level, the Altadena Libraries have risen to any challenge, continually providing new opportunities for Altadena that spark curiosity, strengthen community connections, and respond to neighbors’ needs. The following pages highlight just a handful of the innovative and impactful efforts achieved from 2018 to 2020.

*Below:* The Community Room was filled to the brim with community members eager to see Michele Zack and Jeffrey Stewart discuss Alain Locke, Octavia Butler, Charles White, and more

“Love love love this library. They have a section specifically for children... the environment is comfortable, accepting, and open... They have great resources for all levels of reading and all ages. Thank you, Altadena, for such a wonderful library!”
JULY 2018
Readers of all ages enjoyed an engaging summer of being transported by stories and experiences to places never before imagined through the Summer Reading program themed “Reading Takes You Everywhere!”

Altadena Library District Teen Services was chosen as one of 100 libraries across the country to receive a Great Stories Club grant to provide a book club themed “Empathy” for underserved, local teens through a partnership with Day One.

AUGUST 2018
Summer readers gathered to celebrate the end of summer and enjoy the first outdoor movie screening, debuting with The Wizard of Oz, on a huge screen in the Main Library parking lot.

NOVEMBER 2018
The Youth & Family Services team partnered with Professional Child Development Associates to bring a Sensory Storytime to the Altadena Libraries especially for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and sensory processing difficulties.

JANUARY 2019
The Altadena Libraries introduced a newly designed, user-friendly website with needed updates and a variety of new features to improve the patron experience.

The 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program launched, inviting families with children ages 0 to 5 years old to take on the challenge of reading 1,000 books and building early literacy skills to prepare young readers for success.

FEBRUARY 2019
A new suite of self-checkout machines powered by state-of-the-art RFID technology was unveiled at both libraries.

Hundreds of community members gathered for a special presentation by historian Michele Zack and 2019 Pulitzer Prize award-winning author Jeffrey Stewart highlighting the contributions of Altadeners like Charles White and Octavia Butler through the philosophical lens of Alain Locke, the subject of Stewart’s 2019 book.

MARCH 2019
Deposit Libraries were installed at several locations around Altadena to make it easier for busy families and children to access books while running errands.

MAY 2019
The Altadena Libraries became a site of the Growing Together PASadena initiative, a network of parents, caregivers, service providers, and early childhood advocates that fosters development of children ages 0-5 and supports families with tools and resources to thrive.

Top: Community members can hone their skills on library sewing machines in the FabLab; Above: Library staff can always be found at local events with resources to share; Left: Self-checkout machines make checkout easy and quick!

This place is a hidden gem with free wifi. There are so many free activities they hold here like eclipse viewing party, movies nights and wine events after hours. Most people forget to use the local library.
MAY 2019 (continued)
Teens and local comic fans picked up 500 free comics and gathered for the first Free Comic Book Day, featuring a panel with a famed illustrator and screenwriter.

Open Studios Art Tour hosted their annual Opening Reception at the Main Library, debuting a collection of Open Studios artists’ work on display for library patrons and neighbors.

JUNE 2019
Local tweens (ages 10-12) collaborated on the creation of self-published graphic novels and expanded their writing and illustration skills through the Panel & Pages program, made possible by an Ezra Jack Keats Foundation mini-grant.

Summer Reading 2019 kicked off with the annual Truck Day event, attended by over 340 parents and children!

JULY 2019
Through the NASA @ My Library grant, local adolescents explored the cosmos through innovative STEM programs.

AUGUST 2019
In partnership with the Altadena Town Council and Altadena Historical Society, the first Hidden

Right: Families gather around for an in-depth tour of a Los Angeles County Fire Department truck at the annual Truck Day event

Histories event put a spotlight on previously untold stories of Altadena at the Bob Lucas Memorial Branch, overflowing with guests eager to learn the hidden histories of our community.

OCTOBER 2019
Upwards of 370 community members danced the night away to the tunes of Upstream at the launch of the 2019 Second Saturday concert series.

NOVEMBER 2019
Community members gathered at Town Hall meetings to engage in interactive visioning exercises about the future of the Altadena Libraries and to share inspiration for the new strategic plan.

DECEMBER 2019
Altadena Library District staff were chosen to participate in the Mental Health Initiative of the California State Library and California Center for the Book, which included training and support for library staff to assist in providing programs and fostering community partnerships related to mental health, as well as new books for all age groups on related topics.

JANUARY 2020
Music lovers of all ages enjoyed a concert by the Mt. Lowe Chamber Players in the Reading Court of the Main Library, sponsored by the Friends of the Altadena Library.

Altadenans shared ideas for the architectural planning process to make critical updates to both library buildings.

A staff-led Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) team was formed to guide EDI efforts and ensure that EDI concepts are continually incorporated into all District operations.

FEBRUARY 2020
A member of the Youth & Family Services team became certified through the Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors parenting workshop program, thanks to a First Five LA grant.

The Altadena Libraries joined the
cloudLibrary digital consortium, expanding patrons’ access to hundreds of thousands of digital titles from ours and other libraries.

FEBRUARY 2020 (continued)
Partnering with local representatives of the US Census Bureau, the Altadena Libraries played a vital role in helping spread the word about the census, ensuring that as much of Altadena was counted as possible.

MARCH 2020
In response to community need for centralized updates about COVID-19 and related local resources, the Altadena Libraries launched an email service called Altadena Connections, compiling regular updates from a variety of local news sources to streamline communication and connect neighbors with critical resources.

APRIL 2020

MAY 2020
The libraries launched curbside pickup, fulfilling 566 appointments for 2,125 items in the first month.

JUNE 2020
In partnership with Pasadena Literary Alliance, library staff produced 9 videos in the Open Book On Location series featuring world-renowned authors in conversation.

"I think the Altadena Library is doing an INCREDIBLE job navigating the pandemic. It’s admirable all the ways in which you're striving to keep serving the community."
By the Numbers

229,717
Circulation in 2018-19

183,646
2018-19 Visitors to the Libraries

124,576
2019-20 Visitors to the Libraries

2,740
New Library Cards Issued in ’18-19

2,190
New Library Cards Issued in ’19-20

182,866
Circulation in 2019-20

668 Events & Programs in 2018-19 with 12,550 Attendees

563 Events & Programs in 2019-20 with 10,605 Attendees

118,020
Average Annual Computer Sessions

8,624
Holds Placed on Items in 2018-19

6,154
Holds Placed on Items in 2019-20

When library buildings temporarily closed in March 2020 due to COVID-19, our operations shifted focus to virtual offerings with great success!

- From March 2020 through June 30, 2020 (end of fiscal year)...
  - 120 YouTube Videos
    Produced of Activities, Literary Readings, and More!
  - 6,200+ YouTube Video Views & 450 Hours of Watch Time
  - Increase in digital circulation from monthly average of 1,200 to 6,688!
**FISCAL YEAR 2018-19**

**Revenue (Left)**
- Property Taxes ($2,682,567)
- Parcel Taxes ($831,231)
- Interest & Misc. ($113,724)
- Fees & Passports ($131,994)
- Donations & Grants ($46,936)

**Expenses (Right)**
- Personnel Expenses ($2,406,219)
- Professional & Technical ($653,722)
- Library Materials ($262,156)
- Operating Expenses & Misc. ($252,043)
- Capital & Depreciation ($107,285)
- Trustee Election ($77,770)
- Facilities & Maintenance ($65,691)
- Programs ($42,632)

**FISCAL YEAR 2019-20**

**Revenue (Left)**
- Property Taxes ($2,830,477)
- Parcel Taxes ($849,727)
- Interest & Misc. ($66,428)
- Fees & Passports ($98,789)
- Donations & Grants ($69,655)

**Expenses (Right)**
- Personnel Expenses ($2,675,493)
- Professional & Technical ($405,435)
- Library Materials ($320,087)
- Operating Expenses & Misc. ($276,902)
- Capital & Depreciation ($99,431)
- Facilities & Maintenance ($61,884)
- Programs ($50,099)

**FY18-19 Highlights**
Total revenue increased 5.4%, including a property taxes increase of 2.7%. Overall expenses increased 10.7%, due to an unexpected increase in legal fees and settlement expenses, and the net position of the District decreased 5.3%.

**FY19-20 Highlights**
Donations and Grants increased 48.4% from previous year. Property taxes also increased 4.7%. While overall expenses increased 0.6%, the District’s net position increased 2.3%.
Friends of the Altadena Library

Established is 1959, the Friends of the Altadena Library is an organization committed to the support of the Altadena Libraries by stimulating public interest in the District, assisting with funding to purchase materials, and supporting cultural and educational programs. We thank our many Friends below from 2018-2020 for their generosity, enthusiasm, and passion for our libraries!

Emily Abbott
Hafsa Abdus-Shakur
William Akcutagawa
Ashley Albert
Jennifer Albert
Jamie Albertson
Senem Alkac
Tolga Alkac
Jannette Allen
Tracey Alsobrook
Alvis Alverado
Gretchen Anderson
Warner Anderson
Terry Andrus
Anne Armbrust
Carrie Ashby
Kimberly Ashley-Robinson
Sully Asmundson
Alison S. Axeem
Damon Azlan
Robert Balbou
Mike Balbou
Anne Bannan &
Michael Holland
Danielle Barry
Lois Bascom
Laurie Bashian
Jonathan Bennett
Priscilla & Richard
Benson
Stephen Berkman
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Dawn Dignius
Natasha Disephus
Natasha Disephus
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Barbara Freberg &
Mark Ely
Jacqueline Freeman
Jurry Friedman
Marcy Froehlich
Steven Furlanetto
Joyce Sumi Futa
Melvin Galvez
Steven Hawkins & Anne
Garrett
Karen Gilson & Gerry
Rothman
Anita Ghazarian
Danielle Gladding
Thomas & Jeanet
Glavich
Tamra Goins
Dr. Bruce Goldberg
Andrew Gonzales
Robert B. Gounley &
Paula J. Defosse
Jackson Gourdian
Phillip & Susan Grant
Corinne Grant
John & Janice Green
Jennetta Gregorio
Edwin Gregorio
Fred Grossbard
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Robert Hallwachs
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June Newberry
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Forrest Robinson Paige
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Rothwell
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Learn more and get involved at www.altadenalibrary.org/friends
The Altadena Library Foundation is a nonprofit organization with a mission to support and enrich the facilities, resources and services of the Altadena Libraries through fundraising and advocacy. We extend our most sincere gratitude to the following donors to the Foundation in Fiscal Years 2018-2020 and supporters of the annual Taste of ‘Dena fundraiser in 2018 and 2019!

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Learn more and get involved at www.altadenalibraryfoundation.org
Looking Ahead

The achievements of the past several years have equipped the Altadena Libraries for momentous transformation in years to come. With a fresh strategic plan reflective of community needs and interests, an imaginative staff and Board of Trustees always working to develop and improve library offerings, and a community of dedicated neighbors passionate about their local libraries, the Altadena Library District is ready to embark on ambitious and innovative projects to become a leader among public libraries and an even more valuable community resource. The essential steps that have been taken, through the conversations with community members and the hiring of an architectural firm to lay out plans for a phased renovation of both library buildings, form a solid foundation from which our building issues can be addressed and our libraries can lead the way into the future.

If you are interested in helping shape the future of the Altadena Library District buildings, contact District Director Nikki Winslow at nwinslow@altadenalibrary.org to join our team of passionate library advocates.

Main Library
600 E. Mariposa Street
Altadena, CA 91001
(626) 798-0833

Bob Lucas Memorial Library & Literacy Center
2659 Lincoln Avenue
Altadena, CA 91001
(626) 798-8338

Digital Library
www.altadenalibrary.org
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