2017

1,619,779 items checked out

596,098 library visits

59,204 program attendance
Dear Valued Customers,

Welcome to our 2017-2018 Annual Report, which presents us with an opportunity to showcase some of the many new services, accomplishments, and initiatives we offer to the residents of Chester County. We are extremely proud of our designation as one of America’s Top Rated Libraries at the end of 2017. We also wish to demonstrate the many ways that the staff of the Chester County Library and its Henrietta Hankin Branch strive to meet the needs of current and future library users, which are constantly changing and growing.

In November of 2017, the Chester County Library was selected to participate in the Office of Commonwealth Libraries’ Turning Outward Initiative sponsored by the Harwood Institute. The program is a three-year commitment of training, coaching, and mentoring in Community Engagement. Through our Community Engagement efforts, surveys, and focus groups, we have found that, in addition to traditional library services, our residents are seeking places to connect and collaborate with others in the community. They also like to try something new, familiarize themselves with the latest technology, and learn or improve their skills to prepare them for the workforce.

With this in mind, we have added some items to enhance our Digital Media Lab/Makerspace, which opened in March of 2017. Coming soon is virtual reality equipment and software that will allow patrons to experience such things as travel, outer space, time travel, architecture and design, art, and music in a three-dimensional, computer-generated world.

During 2018, we will be working with a library designer to evaluate the Checkout and Returns area to improve the workflow and help eliminate some of the congestion in the lobby. We will also be evaluating the Reference Area with an eye toward several ends: to provide additional seating for study and personal computer use; to create enclosed workspaces for private study or use by small collaborative groups; and to design a Business Center including technology and copy, fax, and print services.

As our population changes, demographically and culturally, we see demands for more diverse, thought-provoking programs that bring current issues to the forefront. Our XYZ Committee has been focusing on the information needs of our Millennial (18 to 30 year old) residents and held programming on budgeting, financial management, tax preparation, online dating, alternative lifestyles, and specific health issues. Through our Pride Party and LGBTQ-themed movie series and panel discussion, we demonstrated that we welcome that community into the library. We also held interesting and informative programs on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Native American issues, Feminism, and Veterans affairs.

Although libraries are continually evolving to meet the information needs of our patrons, the heart of library service is to encourage reading in all formats among residents of all demographics. If you need recommendations for a good read, our staff has the expertise to help. You can also visit our website 24/7 at www.chescolibraries.org under the Books, Movies & Music tab for Staff Recommendations and other reading lists.

Marguerite Dube, Director
A Message From Our Branch Manager

I am so glad that you are taking the opportunity to review our Annual Report and see the many ways that the work done at our libraries is enhancing our communities. The relevancy of libraries cannot be understated.

First and foremost, we are providing reading and educational opportunities for all ages. At the Henrietta Hankin Branch we have a large customer base of families with children. Throughout the year our storytimes, bookclubs, and special events provide them with experiences to learn both intellectually and socially. Children improve processing skills, develop an appreciation of nature, prepare for school, and improve their reading comprehension. Teens and adults participate in technology classes for basic skills and more. Our librarians teach customers how to locate materials for research and use the many facets of our website. From gaming to crafting to retirement decisions, the library provides reading suggestions and instruction for all.

Libraries strengthen our communities in a multitude of ways. The financial stability of the community is heightened since individuals can pursue their business or seek employment opportunities in our quiet spaces using our Wi-Fi. Librarians help with job applications, exam proctoring, and basic Word skills so that people can create their resumes. Thriving businesses and employed individuals improve the economy.

Stronger communities evolve as citizens meet and have the opportunity to learn about each other and grow together. Families are meeting in the Youth Services Department. Scout troops meet regularly at the library, bringing like-minded individuals together. Seniors are meeting others who are transitioning into retirement while attending our topical seminars.

Healthy communities are strong communities. The library has been able to offer short sessions of Pilates and Tai Chi Qigong to introduce people to something new and to learn its benefits. Other programs provided information on dementia and how to become stronger and more resilient through nutrition and simple lifestyle adjustments.

Communities benefit from having a “place” to go, and the Henrietta Hankin Branch is that. We strive to provide a safe, welcoming environment for everyone. We don’t track your activities and we certainly don’t give your information to others. We work to provide customers with information, either historical or current, that is truthful and accurate.

We have recently improved the accessibility of some materials, installed audio/visual equipment in our largest meeting space, and added two Early Literacy Stations to the Youth Services department. Children are drawn to these systems that provide interactive, touch screen learning. We are very grateful for the additional funding from The Friends of the Henrietta Hankin Branch Library for many of these improvements.

I could continue to list our activities and offerings, but, from what I have said, hopefully you agree that the library is truly a gem for the community. It is hard to believe that the Henrietta Hankin Branch Library has been open 15 years! We’ll be painting and enhancing our facility over the next year to continue to be the welcoming, open, pleasant “place” you know us to be!

Beverly Lawler, Branch Manager
### 2017 In Numbers

#### REVENUE

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<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<td>Charges &amp; Fees</td>
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<td>Fines and Overdues</td>
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#### EXPENSES

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**EXPENSES**

**$7,737,309**

**REVENUE**

**$8,008,078**
2014–2019 County Strategic Business Plan--Year 4

In 2008, the Chester County Board of Commissioners made a commitment to develop a strategic plan to set priorities and goals, giving direction to all county departments in how best to meet the needs of residents and helping to increase accountability, transparency, and performance in Chester County government. During this planning process, the Commissioners identified six priority areas: Health and Human Services, Public Safety, Economy, Transportation, and Smart Financial Management. In 2010, the County implemented Managing for Results, an integrated management system that provides a framework under which strategic planning, budgeting, and performance measurements are aligned, demonstrating accountability to County citizens.

Eight years of development and implementation of the Strategic Plan have led Chester County to the achievement of a very high percentage of its goals. Reviews of the Plan were undertaken in 2013 and 2015, and the 2015 review resulted in the re-establishment of goals relating to the original six priorities and the addition of a seventh priority, Governance, and its related goals.

As a department of County government, the Chester County and Henrietta Hankin Branch Libraries set targets based on these priorities. The following are some of our accomplishments for 2017:

- Our catalog, internet, and other technological functions were available nearly 100% of the time.
- 96% of customers who took a technology class said they learned a new skill or increased their knowledge.
- 99% of our preschool programs were based on Pennsylvania’s Early Learning Standards, attended by nearly 30,000 children.
- We helped to support business development and employment in the community:
  - 431 people attended our job seeking programs.
  - 557 people attended our business programs.
  - 243 attended our grant seeking programs.
  - Of those surveyed, at least 96% said that our programs and resources will improve their ability to job search, start or develop their own businesses, or attain grant funding.
- We distributed over 5,000 items to elderly and homebound patrons through our Adult Outreach Program.

For more information on the Chester County’s Strategic Plan, please visit www.chescolibraries.org/about/strategic-business-plan.
Chester County Library Nationally Recognized and Named as a Top-Rated Library in America

The Chester County Library was named as one of America’s Top-Rated Libraries in 2017, earning the designation as a Star Library by the profession’s leading periodical, Library Journal. This is the first year the Chester County Library (CCL) has received this distinction in the ten years that Library Journal has published this index. This year, the index evaluated 7,409 U.S. public libraries across the country. CCL joins just 259 other libraries honored in the nation.

The designation groups libraries with similar operating budgets together, then rates the libraries in five main categories: number of visitors, circulation, program attendance, public Internet use, and electronic circulation. Libraries were evaluated and compared based on expenditure categories. In order to qualify for consideration, libraries must be a public entity, have a service area with a population of at least 1,000 residents, and have a total operating expenditure of at least $10,000. CCL received a three-star designation within the $5 million–$9.9 million expenditure category.

“This national recognition is further proof of the ongoing support we receive from our loyal and engaged community,” said Marguerite Dube, Director of the Chester County Library and Henrietta Hankin Branch Library. “The Chester County Library has always been a special place. I’m thankful for our innovative and hardworking staff, their commitment to customer service, and the support exhibited by our Board of Trustees and the County Commissioners.”

CCL’s star status is a direct reflection of the community’s engagement both physically at the library and through the use of the library’s remote services through www.chescolibraries.org. For more information on the top-rated libraries in America, visit lj.libraryjournal.com.

“In Chester County we are extremely fortunate to have a nationally recognized library, as befits a county which is the best educated in the state! Our staff does a remarkable job providing us with all forms of information on a current and friendly basis.”
– Earl Baker, President, Board of Trustees

“Congratulations for a well-deserved honor! We are proud to have a gem like the Chester County Library in West Whiteland and appreciate our close working relationship.”
– Mimi Gleason, Manager, West Whiteland Township
Collections, Patron & Community Engagement

- 596,098 Library Visits
- 58,588 Registered Cardholders
- 101,530 Reference Questions Answered
- 59,204 Program Attendance
- 4,615 Summer Reading Participants
- 51 Public Computers
- 146 Volunteers
- 18,096 Volunteer Hours
- 43,000 Hours of Public Computer Use
ITEMS CHECKED OUT: 1,619,779

- BOOKS 376,742
- eBOOKS 30,357
- DVDs 26,636
- AUDIO BOOKS 26,225
- eAUDIO BOOKS 7,186
- MAGAZINES 361
- DATABASES 23

5,661 SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

14,541 WEB SITE VISITS PER MONTH

17,790 eNEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS:
The Chester County Library is a proud partner of the Foundation Center of New York’s Funding Information Network (FIN). As part of this international network of libraries, community foundations, and other nonprofit agencies, the Chester County Library provides visitors with free public access to grantmaker directories, books on fundraising and nonprofit management, the Foundation Center’s electronic databases, and a variety of programs to assist grant seekers.

In April, we held our flagship program, “Meet the Grantmakers,” with May Pritchard of the Pew Charitable Trusts and Charles L. Huston III of the Huston Foundation. These area grantmakers discussed how their foundations operate, funder perspectives on the grantmaking process, expectations for grantseekers, and what distinguishes a successful grant application. Following the discussion, the attendees had an opportunity to ask questions of the grantmakers and learn about the resources available at the Chester County Library.

In May, we held “Planning for Leadership Transitions in Your Nonprofit Organizations,” a panel discussion with nonprofit leaders on best practices for managing and surviving executive leadership transitions. The program was co-sponsored by the Brandywine Health Foundation, Chester County Community Foundation, Chester County Fund for Women & Girls, Phoenixville Community Health Foundation, and United Way of Chester County.

Along with these events, our Funding Information Network supervisors teach classes on finding grants as well as how to use the Foundation Online Professional Directory. They also hold one-on-one appointment sessions for those interested in learning how to use the database. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, visit the Reference Desk at the Chester County Library, call us at 610-280-2620 or email ref@ccls.org.

This year, we held a new program: “Grantmaking—Behind the Scenes.” At this event, the grantmaking process was described from the perspectives of both the funder and the grantee. The panelists included Christina Kind of the Patricia Kind Family Foundation and Alisa Jones of La Comunidad Hispana, and they spoke about the grantmaking process, tips for creating a successful grant application, and cultivating a relationship between funder and grantee.
Libraries Lead Workforce Development

On November 15, 2017, the Chester County Library hosted 44 attendees from 16 community organizations and representatives from libraries throughout Chester County at a workforce development informational networking meeting. Planned in coordination with the Chester County Workforce Development Board, the goal of this meeting was to bring together workforce stakeholders from around the county to share information about programs and services and to hold a discussion about how to create new partnerships or extend existing ones.

Meghan Lynch, Chester County Library’s Business Outreach Librarian, spoke about library resources to support the un- and underemployed in Chester County as well as resources to support nonprofits in our community. Presenters from Chester County’s Economic Development Council, PA CareerLink, and the United Way Financial Stability Center educated attendees about how they provide complementary services in order to support the educational, financial, health, and emotional needs of the job-seeking community. The floor was then opened to discussion as to how we can create or extend partnerships to try to promote these resources and make them more available to citizens that may have barriers preventing them from accessing these services.

The feedback we received was overwhelmingly positive. Attendees stated that they were pleased with the connections they had made and how much they had learned and were looking forward to sharing the information with other members of their organizations. We hope to continue this conversation between members of the Chester County Library System and our local workforce development organizations in order to better support jobseekers in our community.

Chester County Library Starts Sensory Story Time

In January 2018, the Youth Services Department of the Chester County Library began offering once-monthly Sensory Story times.

Sensory Story times are specially designed for children on the autism spectrum, or with sensory processing disorders, who function at a preschool level. Children with developmental disabilities often find it challenging to stay focused or to transition from one activity to another. In story time, parents may worry that their child will disrupt the learning of other children. By offering a program tuned to the specific needs of these children, we aim to create a safe place where children on the spectrum can enjoy books and literacy programming.

Sensory Story times include all of the early literacy elements that are part of every story time—stories, fingerplays, songs, and activities—but presented in an environment where all families can feel secure and relaxed. Parents can be comfortable that, even if their child is noisy or distracted, they will always be welcome.

Monthly Sensory Story times will resume in September and continue through the end of the year. Beginning in January 2019, Sensory Story time will be offered in four-week sessions.
Our Friends & Volunteers

The Chester County Library and Henrietta Hankin Branch volunteer community is one hundred sixty strong, and they are busy everywhere in the library sharing their skills and talents performing a multitude of tasks. While our most needed job is shelving books daily, there are many other responsibilities that our volunteers assume.

Our computer-savvy volunteers teach computer classes, such as Microsoft Word and Excel. They also help out in our “shiny new” Digital Media Lab/MakerSpace in the Jacobs Technology Center and facilitate our Girls Who Code Club. Many of our teen volunteers join us in ninth grade and return every summer while in high school, some continuing on throughout their college years. Volunteers are trained to offer a program called Welcome to the Library to familiarize new users with library services. They are the smiling faces you see at our Greeter’s Desk and even some of the service desks.

Both the Chester County Library and the Henrietta Hankin Branch have Friends groups who have been strong supporters of the libraries. Through their dedication and hard work, these volunteers raise funds through their bi-annual book sales that help us serve our community better by providing furniture, programming, staff development, materials, and other services that would not be possible otherwise.

Finally, the Board of Trustees of the Chester County Library is a dedicated group of volunteers who steer the organization towards a sustainable future by adopting sound, ethical, and legal governance and financial management policies as well as by making sure the libraries have adequate resources to advance our mission.

We are proud to have such a loyal and committed group of volunteers who faithfully support the libraries and staff and, as a result, support our community.
In the spring of 2018, the Chester County Library and Henrietta Hankin Branch hosted two Girls Who Code Clubs, one at each library, for teens entering grades 6 through 12. These Clubs met weekly and offered an excellent opportunity to begin learning the concepts of computer programming. Girls Who Code Club, a non-profit organization whose mission is to close the gender gap in technology, provided the curriculum.

Our facilitators encouraged the members to work through activity sets to learn the concepts of loops, variables, conditionals, and functions that form the basis for all programming languages. Between the two libraries, we had over 15 participants complete the courses. The participants not only learned how to code but also learned to work in a team environment. During their collaborations, they used Scratch, Khan Academy, Codesters, and Github to complete several projects. “Around the World” was a website one club created to explore places they would like to visit. Another club created games Spin-off “Project: Magic 8-Ball” and Ghost Hunt.

Many thanks to our volunteers Rebecca Manuel, Jim Bowen, and Abby Cengel, and also to Jeremy Way, a staff member of the John W. Jacobs Technology Center, for their hard work to make this initiative successful. Look for additional opportunities to participate in the fall of 2018.

Lois Paul, 30 years of dedication

Lois Paul started her career at the Chester County Library in 1987 as a Circulation Clerk. She worked for four years in Circulation, enjoyed the interaction with the public, and found it satisfying to see familiar customers on a regular basis. Lois moved to her current position as Library Assistant/Cataloger in Technical Services in 1991.

As a cataloger, Lois works behind the scenes, but customers see her work whenever they search for material in our library catalog. She catalogs adult, children’s, and young adult materials in both book and audiobook formats. One of her major tasks is getting our “shelf date books” ready for their Tuesday release dates, and she enjoys seeing all of these new books, especially children’s, as they arrive at the library.

Lois is a valued member of the Technical Services Department and a great asset to the library. Congratulations to Lois on her years of service, and we look forward to many more!
Library Installs StoryWalk® to Promote Health and Reading

Congressman Ryan Costello, the Chester County Commissioners, representatives from the Chester County Library Trust, and library supporters attended a ceremony as the Chester County Library unveiled a new StoryWalk® at Exton Park during National Trails Day in early June.

The StoryWalk® is installed along a ½ mile paved walkway surrounding two playgrounds and a picnic area. The project consists of 20 reading stations, each featuring a page in a children’s storybook, which promotes health and literacy in young children by encouraging exercise and reading. The first book featured is *On Meadowview Street* by Henry Cole, and the book will be changed quarterly.

The funding for this project was made possible by the Chester County Library Trust. The displays were installed by Voya Financial employees on their volunteer in-service day in May, in cooperation with the Chester County Library and the County’s Facilities & Parks Departments.

The StoryWalk® is located in Exton Park, located at 132 Church Farm Lane, Exton, PA.

*Pictured from Left to Right: Earl Baker (Chester County Library Trust Board), County Commissioner Michelle Kichline, County Commissioner Kathi Cozzone, Congressman Ryan Costello, County Commissioner Terence Farrell, JoAnn Weinberger (Chester County Library Trust Board).*
2017 Food Truck Festival

The Chester County Library held its second annual Food Truck Festival on Friday, September 15th, from 3-8 p.m. The library partnered with The Wolfson Group, owners of the Main Street at Exton shopping center to host the event.

The family-friendly event doubled in size from the previous year and attracted over 6,000 attendees. Guests enjoyed unique cuisines from 24 food trucks and vendors and live music provided by Marchwood Music.

This event was a tremendous success thanks to our vendors and event sponsors, The Friends of the Chester County Library, The Wolfson Group, Waste Management, and Elite Treatment Detailing.

Our next Food Truck Festival will be held again at Main Street at Exton on Friday, September 14th, 2018, from 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Library Hosts Historic Solar Eclipse Viewing Parties

The Chester County Library joined more than 1,000 libraries across the country to participate in the celestial event of the century, the August 21, 2017 Solar Eclipse. During this national event, the shadow of the moon swept across the United States in a narrow band from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean in a spectacle that hasn’t occurred in decades. In fact, the last total solar eclipse for the United States was nearly 40 years ago. The 2017 event is aptly named the Great American Eclipse.

Our community came together to celebrate on August 21 with over 600 attendees at our Exton Park viewing party and 200 at our family-friendly viewing party at the library. The Chester County Library received a grant from NASA and distributed over 200 solar eclipse glasses at the events.

The library offered an array of special programming in August to bring the excitement of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) to children, teens, and adults. The library hosted NASA Solar System Ambassador Dennis O’Leary on August 9th and Mather Planetarium Director Dr. Karen Schwarz on August 17th.