

Chair's Report March 21, 2016

Partnerships, outreach and other community initiatives

Toronto Public Library continues to coordinate a system-wide **response supporting both privately sponsored and government-assisted Syrian refugees**. Through partnerships with leading community agencies – including the Arab Community Centre, Catholic Crosscultural Services, East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership, COSTI, Toronto Newcomer Office, the Armenian Community Centre and Armenian Family Support Services – the Library has been offering support and resources for Syrian families and private sponsors, including information/training sessions that have so far served well over 200 sponsors; a monthly sponsor meet-up hosted at the Maryvale Branch; outreach efforts that bring children's programs to government-assisted Syrian families temporarily staying in local hotels; and a welcome event scheduled for April 5 at North York Central Library. In addition, new children's materials in Arabic have been purchased and will be designated "rush" in order to make them available as soon as possible.

Programs and exhibits

In its latest bid to make cultural programming accessible to everyone in Toronto and beyond, Toronto Public Library recently launched a **podcast channel on SoundCloud and iTunes**, featuring audio from select Bram & Bluma Appel Salon programs. Currently, listeners can download or stream audio from talks featuring Yann Martel and Marlon James, both of whom appeared in the Appel Salon in February.

soundcloud.com/toronto-library

itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/toronto-library/id1081453668

A new LGBTQ teen drop-in program at Fairview Branch has been underway since the middle of February, when it was launched with a Diverse Youth Night. Monthly drop-ins provide a safe, fun and educational meet-up and hangout for LGBTQ youth and their allies. The program is presented in cooperation with Gay Straight Alliance groups from high schools all across the Fairview community and involves partnerships with Family Community Health Centre, the Iranian Women's Organization of Ontario, Toronto Parks and Recreation and The Griffin Centre. The program increases awareness of Library literacy efforts, programs, services and LGBTQ collections. Fairview will also be hosting the first ever LGBTQ Inside Out North York Film Festival, presented by the group that presents the popular downtown festival every spring.

Spaces

The Toronto Renewable Energy Office (TREO) has identified 14 **Toronto Public Library buildings that may be suitable for solar PV (photovoltaic) systems** that would feed into the city's energy grid. TREO, which is part of the City's Environment and Energy Division, helps deliver on Council's renewable energy agenda by facilitating the development of renewable energy on City facilities. The fourteen eligible library buildings are: Albion, Bendale, Brentwood, Danforth/Coxwell, Ellesmere Administration

Building, Jane/Sheppard, Mount Dennis, Mount Pleasant, Palmerston, Parliament Street, Richview, S. Walter Stewart, Thorncliffe and York Woods. While the installation at Ellesmere is complete and active, the other proposed buildings continue to undergo detailed reviews to determine the feasibility for solar PV panels, including structural and roof condition assessments, space analysis of electrical rooms, and future development opportunities for the Library or properties adjacent to the Library that could block exposure to the sun.

Innovation

As part of ongoing efforts to increase support for digital literacy and lifelong learning needs, **seven Toronto Public Library Learning Centres, in all areas of the city, will offer** new technology this spring – including 3D printers, scanners, and Adobe design software. These enhancements will help meet demand for courses on topics like 3D Certification, 3D Design, and Photoshop.

In addition to enhanced learning centres, the Library is offering **Pop-Up Learning Labs** that will tour library branches on a monthly rotation, bringing a collection of various emerging technologies and staff-led programs and classes to users of all ages, backgrounds and skill levels. The Pop-Up Learning Labs will feature 3D printers, Macbooks, Arduinos, Lego Mindstorms, Snap Circuits and Makey Makey kits.

Foundation

The Foundation is excited to announce a gift of **\$650,000 from the estate of the late Lilly Quack** who passed away in 2013 at the age of 78. Ms. Quack designated her gift to the purchase of materials that are sensitive to the needs of the visually impaired as her own failing eyesight made her aware of the need.

Thank you to the **Rotary Club of Toronto** for their grant of \$15,000 towards Retiring on a Low Income programming. A pilot program last year drew a capacity crowd indicating the demand for this new program.

Prepared by Toronto Public Library staff