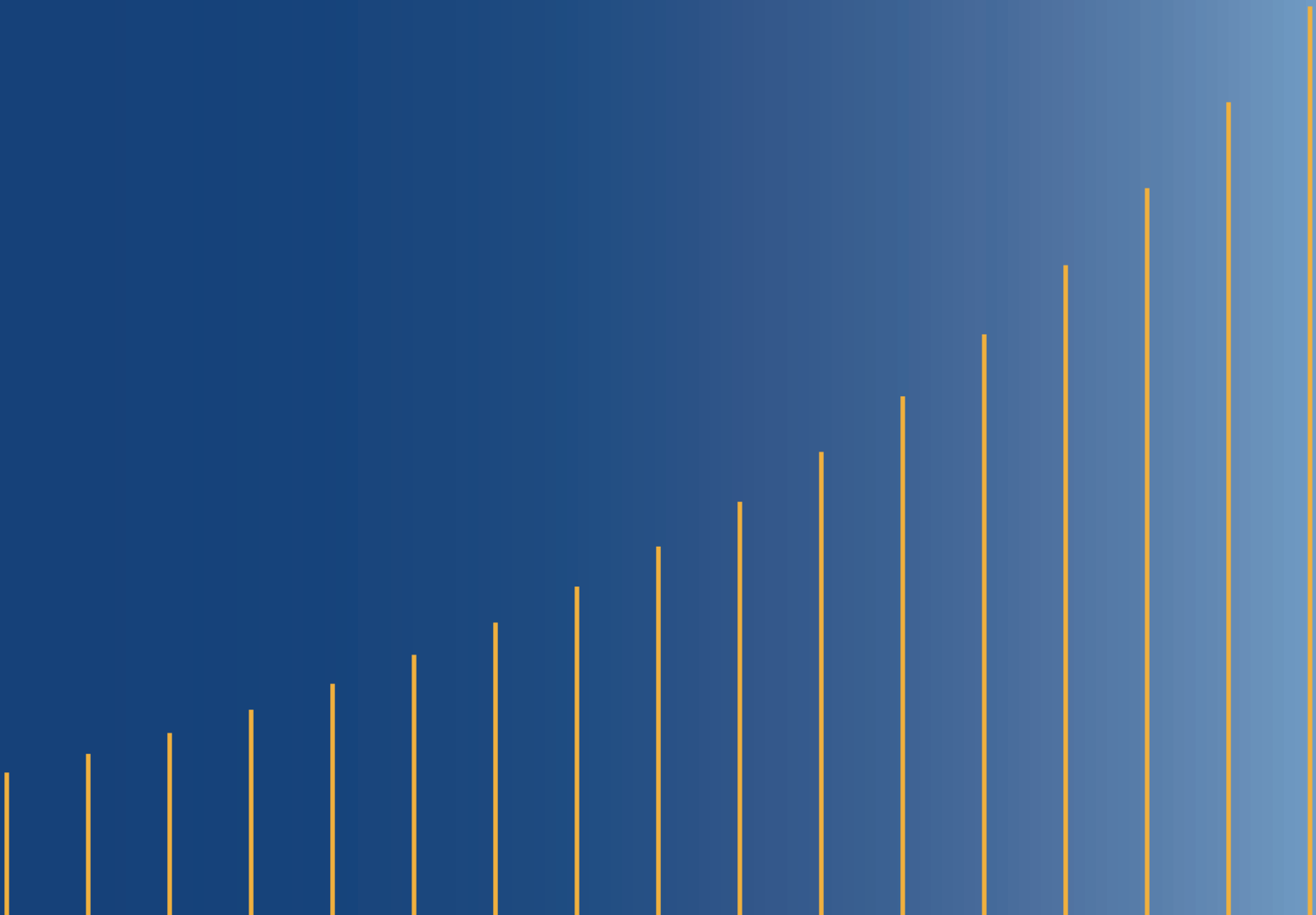




2019 Annual Report





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Superintendent of Montclair Public Schools*
- Lois Whipple

Founded in 1893, Montclair Public Library serves the citizens of Montclair, New Jersey through two facilities: the Main Library and the Bellevue Avenue Branch. The mission of Montclair Public Library is to change lives every day, through words, ideas, and community building. Our vision is to provide unlimited opportunities for lifelong learning, discovery, and community engagement.

Board members as of December 31, 2019

Montclair Public Library Foundation Board of Directors

- Jonathan Simon, *Chair*
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- Jennifer Friedberg
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- Kate Stanford
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- Peter Coyl, *Ex Officio*

The Montclair Public Library Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that develops philanthropic support for the Montclair Public Library. Established in 2002, the MPL Foundation strives to increase funding for Library programs, collection enhancement, staff development, special projects, and other critical needs that exceed municipal funding. Through the development of new financial resources, the MPL Foundation seeks to ensure that the Library meets the needs of its diverse community and maintains its stature as one of the foremost libraries in the State of New Jersey.

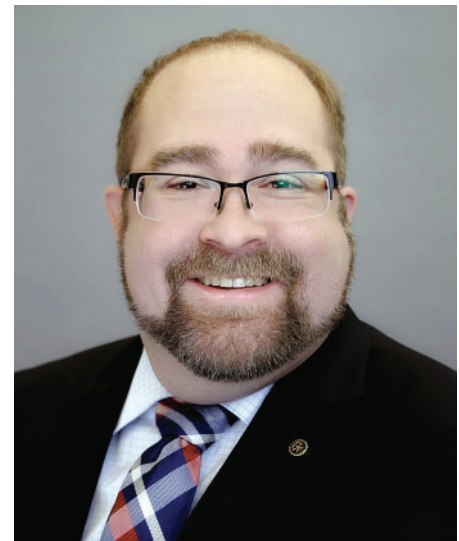


A LIBRARY FOR ALL

Dear Friends,

Across America, more people visit their public library than other places of recreation and entertainment. In Montclair, that is no different. The Montclair Public Library is busier and more popular than ever. Every morning people eagerly wait to come through our doors—and we do our best to greet them with what they want. Whether it's the latest bestseller, or a program on decluttering their life, or help with preparing for an exam, there is probably something at the Library to catch their interest.

Even if they can't be waiting at our door, services like Hoopla, Kanopy, and OverDrive allow customers to download or stream digital content at home, at the park, or on the train. How customers access information has changed, and so has the Library. We remain more relevant than ever before with more materials and services available 24/7 on our website.



From adding more opportunities to be out in the community with our new Bookmobile, to highlighting the racial inequalities in America, or sharing with children that you can be who you want to be, we're proud of the efforts we have made this past year to make the Library **a library for all.**

We appreciate all who use our Library, volunteer their time, teach a class or program, or donate to the Foundation. It takes many hands to make a library work, and we wouldn't be able to do all we do without you.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Coyl". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Peter D. Coyl, MLIS
Director | Montclair Public Library

2019 BY THE NUMBERS

- 443,747** items checked out, including books, CDs, DVDs, museum passes, eBooks, WiFi hotspots, and downloadable content
- 329,261** visits made to the Main Library and Bellevue Avenue Branch—that's 51 people every hour we are open
- 63,848** informational questions answered by Library staff—that's 13 questions every hour we are open
- 32,474** internet sessions provided to the public
- 31,697** attendees at programs and class sessions
- 12,143** items added to the Library collection, including print and audio-visual content
- 684** donors gave to the Library in 2019, supporting our efforts to be a library for all
- 126** years of dedicated service to the people of Montclair

Grants RECEIVED

American Library Association

...support for the Great Stories program

Essex County Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs

...support for the Summer of Shakespeare program

...support for local history digitization projects and building research outreach

Inventors Foundation

...support for the Open Book / Open Mind program

The Montclair Foundation

...support for the Open Book / Open Mind program

Youth & Teen SERVICES

2019 continued the excellent work of the Youth & Teen Services department as it sought to expand young minds and build community. Highlights include:

Michelangelo the miniature therapy horse visited MPL in the winter of 2019 and even autographed (or auto-hoofed) his very own book, to the delight of children. Michelangelo's favorite pastime is visiting residents at assisted living facilities and nursing homes, as well as schools for children with special needs.

MPL presented **Drag Queen Story Hour** with Harmonica Sunbeam. Children and their adults loved Harmonica's stories and messages that underscored the importance of gender diversity, accepting oneself and others, and empathy. The program set out to curb the bullying of LGBTQ children and was followed by a take-home craft.



Children of all ages learned **bicycle repair with shop teacher Mr. G**, including useful skills like fixing flat tires, gear adjustments, and brake replacement on their own bicycles and on examples provided by Mr. G. Participants enjoyed this hands-on outdoor workshop that demystified bicycle repair and taught them what DIY is all about.

All year long, children, tweens, and teens attended the popular **Game On drop-in series**. From Wii games like Just Dance to board games like Mancala and Monopoly, these communal activities helped to build new friendships among our young patrons.

Adult SERVICES

2019 saw the introduction of citizenship exam prep classes, expanded outreach to seniors, and a 246% increase in “Book a Librarian” appointments. Concerts, English classes, and other favorites remained popular. Summer reading participation increased, with 695 books read by 105 adults.

A trio of concerts featuring talent from Montclair State University entertained audiences at the Library: the Heimat Quartet on January 26, a woodwind concert by the Arctic 5 quintet on April 1, and “Sounds of South America” by guitarist Darren O’Neill and flautist Guilherme Andreas on October 7.



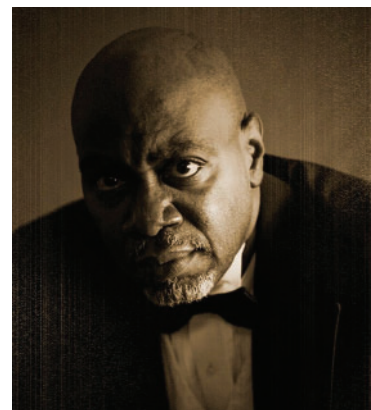
Summer of Shakespeare started on May 11 with “Romeo & Juliet,” performed by the Shakespeare Theatre of NJ (STNJ). A total of 418 people enjoyed our series of movie screenings; another STNJ performance; and an Elizabethan concert by Jason Priset, Tracy Cowart, and John Mark Rozendaal. The series was funded in part by a grant from the Essex County Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs as part of their Essex County Local Arts Grant Program.

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With the Undoing Racism Committee of The Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Montclair and the Montclair History Center, MPL observed the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first Africans to be sold into bondage in North America. The **400 Years of Inequality** series included a talk by Dionne Ford, editor of “Slavery’s Descendants: Shared Legacies of Race and Reconciliation” on October 15; and a talk by Marcus Nevius, author of “City of Refuge: Slavery and Petit Marronage in the Great Dismal Swamp, 1763-1856” on October 19.

Additional highlights include:

- KonMari organizer Cassidy Nasello’s “Declutter Your Life” sparked joy on January 15.
- Attendees learned about media literacy at “Don’t Fall for Fake News,” led by journalist Theresa Walsh Giarusso on May 14.
- Acclaimed author and journalist Kevin Powell presented “Having Love and Hope in a Time of Hate: An Interactive Conversation” to a riveted crowd of almost 100 on May 31.
- Actor Marvin Jefferson portrayed artist and activist Paul Robeson in a **Chautauqua performance** to an audience of 115 on September 4.
- Author Dale Berra shared stories from his book “My Dad, Yogi” and Montclair memories on November 6.



Marvin Jefferson

Adult SCHOOL

Over 400 classes, lectures, and trips were offered in four semesters, with over 16,000 attendees in the 1,534 sessions held at the Library and offsite locations around town.

Winning a New Jersey State Library Award for Multicultural Programming, the day-long **Celebration of Peruvian Culture** on June 19 welcomed one of the largest turnouts for any Library event. Over 300 people joined us for singing, dancing, food, and much more. The event was presented by the Adult School in partnership with Kristine Massari and Enrico Granafei of Trumpets Jazz Club.



Trips took students near and far to experience a variety of exhibits and locales, including Winterthur, the Gold Coast Mansions of Long Island, Grounds for Sculpture, Chuang Yen Monastery, St. John the Divine and the Wallach Gallery at Columbia University, Princeton's McCarter Theater for Harlem 100, and a whale- and dolphin-watching boat trip from Cape May. Locally, many residents enjoyed gourmet cooking classes with our partners at The Montclair Culinary Academy.

With generous support from a donor, the Adult School offered **outSPOKEN: Empowerment / Writing / Fitness / Organization for Young Men**, a summer program to empower rising 9th grade male students as they transitioned to high school. A team of local educators taught literary arts skills through hip hop and performance poetry, as well as fitness (non-contact kickboxing), healthy eating, and confidence building. This holistic approach prepared the students for academic engagement and future success.

Fitness, Games, and Arts & Crafts continued to be some of the most popular categories. In 2019, the Adult School added basket making, pottery, and—in partnership with GlassRoots Studio in Newark—glass beadmaking and glassblowing classes. Two other new classes, indoor rowing and beginner mah jongg, also proved very popular.

Over 50 lectures covered topics ranging from music and art to world history and science. The **Golden Anniversary of Apollo XI** was a highlight of the summer. In addition, the Adult School participated in Library-wide themes, including 400 Years of Inequality and Black History Month. It also continued its lecture partnerships with the Louis Armstrong House Museum and Montclair State University.



Courtesy of the Louis Armstrong House Museum

Bellevue Avenue BRANCH



2019 introduced many new events at the Branch and also continued traditional programming for patrons of all ages.

The **9th annual “Music Mondays,”** sponsored by the Friends of the Bellevue Avenue Library, brought families together to listen to free concerts on the Branch’s plaza.

Many preschools visited the Branch to hear **themed storytimes**, learn what libraries are, and explore how to use them. For older children, the **“Friday Gameday”** program connected teens with the latest video games to de-stress after a long week of school.

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Outreach AND ACCESS

Thanks to generous funding from the MPL Foundation, the Library gained a new vehicle for outreach and continued offering access to the area’s many cultural institutions.

The Library purchased an eco-friendly **Bookmobile**, also known as the “eTuk,” to travel to community centers, street fairs, parks, and other public gathering spots in Montclair. Patrons with their library card can check out books on the spot.

The **Museum Pass Program** provides free admission to over a dozen cultural institutions in the New York City area, including the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens, Guggenheim, Montclair Art Museum, MoMA, New-York Historical Society, and Newark Museum of Art.



**Montclair
Public
Library
Foundation**

MONTCLAIRPUBLICLIBRARY
OPEN BOOK OPEN MIND
 AN OPEN DOOR TO TOP WRITERS & THINKERS



Photo by Chanda Hall

In 2019, MPL continued to offer its popular Open Book / Open Mind series. Readings and conversations included:

- Chris Wilson in conversation with Charles Rosen
- Benilde Little and Ylonda Gault Caviness
in conversation with Veronica Chambers
- Lidia Bastianich in conversation with Marissa Rothkopf Bates
- Julia Alvarez in conversation with Yvonne Latty
- Edward Tenner in conversation with Steve Lohr
- David Itzkoff in conversation with Alan Sepinwall
- Marcy Dermansky in conversation with Kate Tuttle
- Dan Barry in conversation with Matthew Purdy
- Dan Okrent in conversation with Jonathan Alter
- B. A. Shapiro in conversation with Caroline Leavitt
- Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey
in conversation with Matthew Purdy

We are grateful for the generous sponsors of Open Book / Open Mind:

- Montclair Public Library Foundation
- The Montclair Foundation
- Investors Foundation
- Watchung Booksellers

Special thanks to series founders Jennifer Dorr and David Jones and to the rest of the Advisory Board:

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Jonathan Alter | DT Max | Kate Tuttle |
| Neal Caruth | Juan Milà | Susan Weinberg |
| Ivan Held | Margot Sage-el | Abby West |
| Marc Lacey | Rachel Swarns | |

The 11th edition of The Little Read took place from October 16 to 19. This read-aloud marathon, geared toward children in preschool through fourth grade, brought together Montclair neighbors, writers, local heroes, and celebrities in a town-wide celebration of literacy and community. Readings consisted of 10-minute slots, featured a wide variety of books, and took place throughout Montclair.

Funds raised through sponsorships support the Youth & Teen Services department and its Summer Reading Program. A big thank you to our Little Read sponsors:

- Scholastic
- Hackensack Meridian Health
- Mountainside Medical Center
- Don Katz and Leslie Larson
- Rose Cali
- Rosemary and Al Iversen
- Montclair State University
- Judith Tilton
- Bobbi Brown and Steven Plofker
- Cornerstone Montclair
- Watchung Booksellers
- Blue Foundry Bank
- Montclair Orthodontics
- Sparkles Dentistry for Children
- Joe's Tea





A LIBRARY FOR ALL

Thank you to all of our 2019 donors! Your generosity makes it possible to offer valuable programs and resources to everyone in our community.

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Jonathan Bellack and Jennifer Bonnell
Stephen and Evelyn Colbert

10

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