




Allegheny County
Library Association
CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

EXPANDING OUR IMPACT

2022 IMPACT REPORT





As we look back on 2022, it is easy to see the impact that Allegheny County's public libraries are having on their communities. People are coming back to the library in numbers we have not seen in the past few years, and they are coming back to a library that offers so much more than it ever has before. With the return to in-person events and programs, our libraries have had an opportunity to expand our impact to reach more people and bring them more of what they need and want.

The Allegheny County Library Association (ACLA) has also worked hard to help our libraries to meet more needs than ever before. The "shared services" model allows our libraries to leverage the assistance of not only ACLA, but also the other member libraries to make sure that each of our 46 public library systems in Allegheny County are providing the highest quality library service throughout the county. Through various shared services, we are working together to ease the burden on the individual libraries as much as we can, leaving them more time to manage the very busy day-to-day activities that their patrons expect from our amazing libraries.

For instance, ACLA's Accounting shared service provides excellent accounting and auditing services to 16 member libraries. Our talented accounting staff members work hard to make sure that each participating library can rest assured that all accounting functions and reporting are being managed accurately and in compliance with all requirements. We look forward to increasing our capacity and adding new libraries in the future.

ACLA's Social Workers in Libraries Program is another high-quality shared service that provides Social Work interns from the University of Pittsburgh's School of Social Work to individual libraries. These interns develop programs and work one-on-one with library patrons to assist them with individual needs and answer questions that fall within the scope of social work.

Additionally, the ACLA Student Library Card Program is an excellent shared service that is seeing a lot of interest. Getting library cards into the hands of our school children opens up opportunities for education and literacy, and we are so excited to see

the level of participation from area school districts increase each year. Our Youth Services department also works closely with library youth service staff to bring professional development and programming opportunities to the libraries across the county.

And I would be remiss if I did not mention ACLA's amazing Mobile Services team! Mobile Services, often referred to as the "bookmobile," provides programming and materials to seniors, children, and areas of the county that may not have easy access to a library building. The service they provide further enhances the work done in the buildings and makes sure that everyone, regardless of location, has access to library services throughout Allegheny County.

In addition to these excellent programs, ACLA also works diligently to advocate on the federal, state, and local levels to make sure that our legislators know that Allegheny County libraries are among the best there are. We also provide professional development opportunities, consulting services, and a wealth of other opportunities to make sure that all the libraries in Allegheny County are able to continue to provide the amazing programs, materials, and services that our patrons have come to know.

As you can see, the Allegheny County Library Association and its member libraries are working hard to make sure that our libraries and our communities thrive. If we have learned anything over this past year, it is that the impact we as libraries can have on our communities and our world is continuing to expand in new and exciting ways.

I look forward to the future of Allegheny County libraries and am eager to see where we go from here.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Amy Anderson", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Amy Anderson
CEO
Allegheny County Library Association

JUST THE FACTS

Things are looking up!

Libraries in Allegheny County remain a staple for learning and exploring. With an ongoing expansion of resources and programming, ACLA and its member libraries experienced an increase in activity during 2022, particularly given the reduction and elimination of COVID restrictions.



Total circulation of resources saw a noteworthy **11% increase during 2022** from the previous year with **11,545,157 resources circulated**.



ACLA also added nearly **36,000 new cardholders**, accounting for a **7% increase from last year, bringing the total to 535,188**.



Patrons came to the libraries in droves to utilize free access to computers and the member libraries' Wi-Fi. ACLA libraries experienced a massive **49% increase in computer minutes (22,808,917)** and a **46% increase in Wi-Fi minutes (48,446,990)**.



Beyond the traditional books and resources, a continual expansion of in-person programming remains popular among library patrons. 2022 included a **66% increase of in-person programs (27,982)** from last year, with a whopping **74% increase in the number of individuals attending the programs (526,495)**.



Given the desire for in-person engagement, libraries reduced virtual programs by **80% with 859 programs and 39,039 attendees**.



Member libraries also continue to build a vast collection of equipment and other practical everyday items for library patrons to check out and utilize for arts and craft, cooking activities and even tools for use in home improvement projects.

STUDENT LIBRARY CARDS

ACLA expanded its reach within Allegheny County during 2022, by partnering with local school districts and providing students with access to resources available at all Allegheny County libraries. Through the ACLA Student Library Card program, students can explore and utilize many free resources, including traditional books, programming and innovative and engaging educational and entertainment e-resources.

In 2022, ACLA issued **18,304** student library cards to the school districts listed below, as well as students and incoming kindergarten classes from West Allegheny School District and Woodland Hills School District. Both districts served as pilots in 2021.

- Fox Chapel School District (Cooper-Siegel Community Library): **4,128**
- West Jefferson Hills School District (Jefferson Hills Public Library and Pleasant Hills Public Library): **928** digital cards
- Avonworth School District (Sewickley Public Library): **1,933**
- Baldwin-Whitehall School District (Baldwin Borough Public Library and Whitehall Public Library): **4,533**
- Carlynton School District (Andrew Carnegie Free Library and Crafton Public Library): **1,266**
- Plum Borough School District (Plum Borough Community Library): **3,607**
- Wilkinsburg School District (Wilkinsburg Public Library): **507**



FINE FREE

Allegheny County libraries provide residents free access to materials, technology, information, and resources. Overdue fines inequitably restrict access to these library resources and can negatively affect library use. For that reason, ACLA and its member libraries remain committed to improving access to these valuable resources for all Allegheny County residents.

The Fine Free movement in Allegheny County started in 2019, as libraries eliminated fines on overdue resources and materials.

By the end of 2022, ACLA expanded this program by 34% to a total of 32 of its member libraries and ACLA Mobile Library Services (Bookmobile).

TAKING ACTION FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Thanks to the generosity of our funders and continued support from community partners, ACLA's Library Social Work Fellowship program continues to grow in reach and impact.

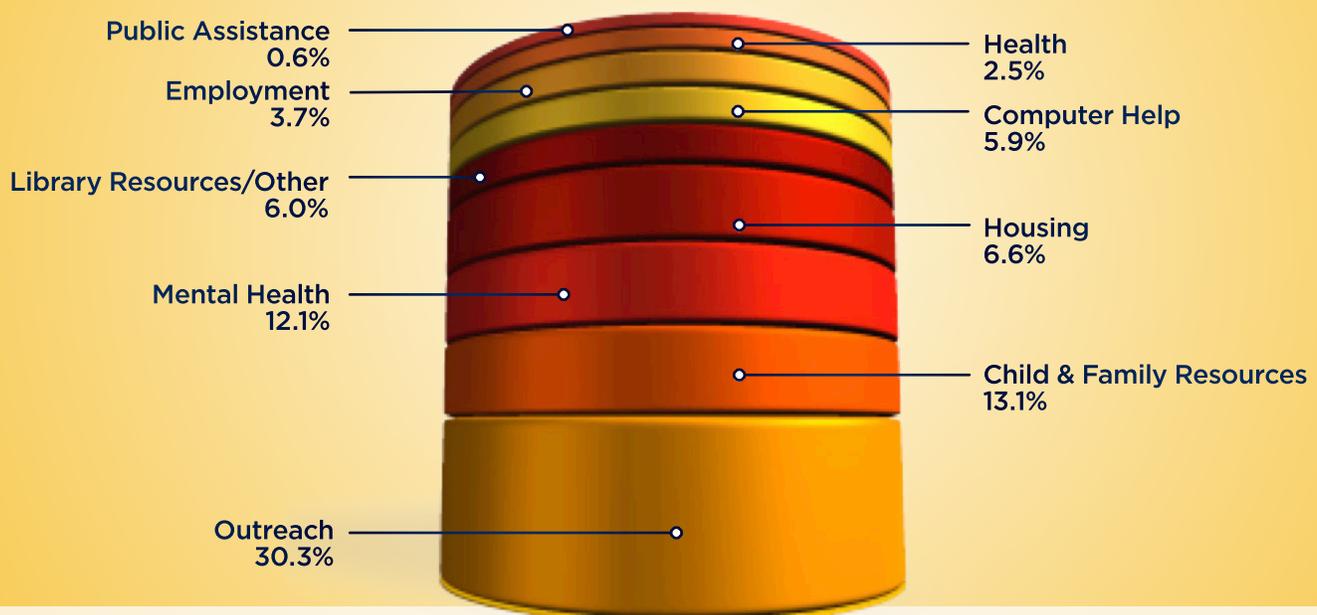
In 2019, ACLA initiated the program to house social work students in their libraries to identify and address areas of need specific to the communities they serve. Students provided direct referral services to patrons. By introducing social workers into the library environment, ACLA has been able to add an additional layer of available services in an already trusted space and is better positioned to address community needs that might otherwise go unmet.

In 2022, student fellows were placed in 11 libraries around the County, offering warm and welcoming, barrier-free assistance, resources, and referrals to a combined total of 2,329 patrons. In addition to individual interactions, student fellows at six locations launched new programs and events to promote community health, personal wellness, education, and support, including:

- **Smithfield SWEET** - Solutions for Wellness and Ending Enduring Trauma (CLP-Downtown)
- **Lavender Club** - LGBTQIA Youth Activity and Support Group (Sharpsburg Community Library)
- **Relaxation, Meditation and Mindfulness** (C.C. Mellor Memorial Library)
- **Stress Less** (Carnegie Library of Homestead)
- **Computer Literacy** (Millvale Community Library)
- **Mindfulness Group** (Carnegie Free Library of Swissvale)
- **Winter Clothing Drive** (Carnegie Library of McKeesport)
- **Food Collection and Distributions**
(CLP-Downtown, Millvale Community Library, Sharpsburg Community Library)

They have collected and analyzed community data and feedback to better inform future initiatives and have provided helpful guidance toward improving diversity, equity, and inclusion in collections, programming, and policies.

The chart below highlights the areas of services provided by ACLA's Library Social Work Fellowship program.



BACK ON THE ROAD AGAIN

ACLA's Mobile Library Services is in the business of delivering direct library service to unserved and underserved communities within Allegheny County. ACLA's fleet of bookmobiles provides critical access to community organizations, preschools, senior centers and special needs adults facilities.

As COVID restrictions loosened in the summer of 2022, ACLA's Mobile Library Services was able to restart direct service to all three of their routes. As a result, the Bookmobiles made **1,043 visits to 101 locations** within Allegheny County, which encompassed more than **1,110 hours and 16,411 miles on the road**.

They traveled to **49 senior facilities, 46 Head Start/Preschools in 62 classrooms, and six community sites throughout 49 municipalities in Allegheny County**.

During the stops, the staff provided **434 programs to 5,710 individuals**.



LOVIN' ALL THE LOVE

ACLA and Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (CLP) continued to find love during September's annual *Love Your Library* campaign.

The 2022 campaign raised a record-breaking \$1.26 million in charitable contributions. Of that total, nearly \$825,000 qualified for a \$200,000 prorated match contribution from the Jack Buncher Foundation. ACLA and CLP are gracious to the Jack Buncher Foundation for their ongoing commitment to libraries.

More than **7,450 donors** contributed to the campaign, including nearly **1,205 new supporters**.

The Love Your Library campaign continues to reinforce the importance of library services available to people of all ages and backgrounds at no charge. Many libraries are increasing their efforts to raise funds from individuals, corporations, and foundations in order to meet community needs for essential library services, facility improvements, and in-demand programs.

Since its inception in 2016, *Love Your Library* has helped Allegheny County libraries raise more than \$7.76 million during the annual September fund drive.



ACLA CEO Amy Anderson (bottom right), CLP President and Director, Andrew Medlar (bottom, 2nd from left) & CLP leadership receive a proclamation from Allegheny County Council recognizing Love Your Library Month.



HARVESTING TALENT FOR OUR COMMUNITY LIBRARIES

In an effort to diversify the leadership positions in our member libraries, ACLA launched The Talent Bank in 2021. This program was developed to help local libraries acquire the interest and talents of community members to serve on boards and committees - particularly ones who reflected the true fabric of the community.

In 2022, ACLA's Talent Bank connected nine individuals with their local libraries. Applicants to the program came from a variety of backgrounds, including attorneys and teachers.

Below is a sampling of the responses ACLA received from applicants:



"The services the library provides for their communities - internet, literacy programming, access to a variety of media - are invaluable. I want to serve on a library committee or board because I strongly believe libraries are important civic institutions. In order for this important institution to continue to thrive, community-minded folks need to volunteer their time and talents."

"I hope to support Allegheny County's vibrant libraries as they continue to serve our community and offer access to critical resources."



A RISING TIDE LIFTS ALL LIBRARIES

Last year, the Allegheny Regional Asset District created the RAD Transformative Community Library Fund. The program established a \$5 million investment over the next four years to assist libraries serving communities that have been designated as distressed.

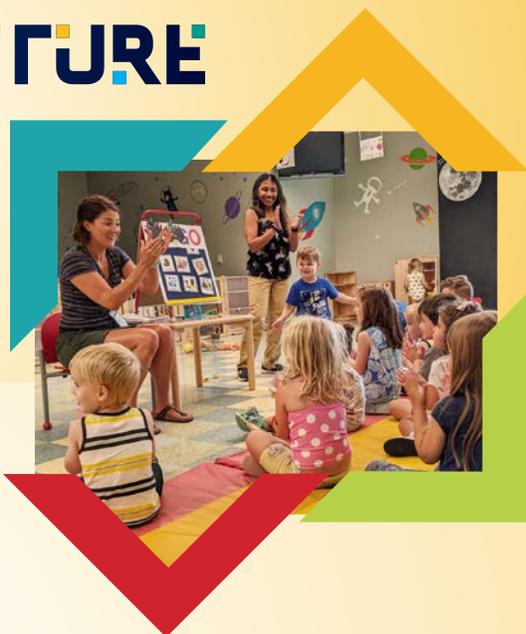
Eligible libraries can apply for project grants that focus on programming, partnerships and planning to strengthen the future of Allegheny County's public libraries.

In addition, ACLA has also modified its funding formula twice in recent years to strengthen libraries in underserved communities.

More information on the RAD Transformative Community Library Fund can be found at www.radworkshere.org/pages/rad-transformative-community-library-fund.

OUR YOUTH = OUR FUTURE

ACLA's Youth Services continues to provide valuable services and programming for children to learn and explore. Programs deliver learning opportunities through educational adventures, while bridging the gaps between libraries and schools. Below are some of the Youth Services highlights from 2022



BOOKS & BEYOND

ACLA's Youth Services program partnered with KDKA's Pittsburgh Today Live (PTL) to highlight the many non-traditional resources and programs available to children and their families. Each month, the five-minute segment showcases a different topic featuring ACLA and its member libraries, along with a book of the month and activity sheet. A schedule and previous episodes of Books & Beyond can be seen by visiting www.aclavirtuallearningprograms.org.

NEVER TOO YOUNG TO START LEARNING

Many parents do not realize that learning and kindergarten readiness begins at birth. It is the simple daily interactions that parents have with their child that set the foundation for reading and prepare them for school – talking, singing, playing, writing, and reading. Libraries are in a key position to help educate new parents about the importance of reading and learning with their child, regardless of their age.

In 2022, eight libraries started baby bag programs. Each bag contains related items such as books, manipulatives, and other resources for parents. However, each bag is individualized to the specific library. For example, the baby bags at Bethel Park Public Library include *Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes*, a shaker egg, baby flashcards, crayons, and a scarf, as well as resources and tip sheets for parents.

The items and resources will extend the work done at the library in baby programming to the home and give parents the confidence to be an active participant in their baby's learning.



KEEPING BOOKS FRONT AND CENTER

Libraries in Allegheny County remain focused on introducing thousands of children to new and quality literature each year through the Picture Book Children's Choice Awards and the Children's Choice Awards provided by ACLA.

The Picture Book Children's Choice Awards reaches students in kindergarten to second grade, many of whom have never interacted with a public library. Librarians engage students through outreach visits at the local elementary school, introducing them to a set of new books every year.

In 2022, 34 schools in Allegheny County received in-person or virtual outreach from their local library. The winning book was *Friday Night Wrestlefest*.

The Children's Choice Awards, which is a collaboration between ACLA and the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2022. CCA is conducted by schools, libraries or a collaboration of both to promote eight titles, which students read throughout the winter and then vote on their favorite.

More than 20 schools and nearly 500 students participated in last year's culminating event, which remained virtual due to the ongoing pandemic. The event included a keynote address by author/illustrator Victoria Jamieson (*When Stars Are Scattered*), musicians and comedians Josh and Gab, Illustrator Joe Wos and the popular *Battle of the Books*. The winning book was *Amari and the Night Brothers*.



PARTNERS

The work of ACLA and its member libraries would not provide the amount of impact on our communities without the commitment, resources and partnerships with many trusted organizations.

ACLA greatly appreciates the trusted relationships and valuable resources of these partners.

Allegheny County Department of Human Services

Allegheny County Parks

Allegheny Intermediate Unit

Allegheny Land Trust

Alzheimer's Association Greater Pennsylvania Chapter

Area Agency on Aging

Autism Connections of PA

Carnegie Science Center

Children's Institute of Pittsburgh

Children's Museum of Pittsburgh

Fred Rogers Institute

Hello Neighbor

ISAC (Immigrant Services and Connections)

Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh

KDKA-TV

Kids Plus Pediatrics

League of Women Voters

Library Juice Academy

Millie's Homemade Ice Cream

PGH Equality Center

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

Remake Learning

South Hills Interfaith Ministries (SHIM)

Spark Books

University of Pittsburgh School of Computing and Information

University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

SOLID AS A ROCK

ACLA and its member libraries rely on many of our trusted foundations to provide project-specific contributions. Their gracious investments allow for the delivery of specific programming and resources to Allegheny County residents.

FOUNDATION GRANTS:

Hillman Foundation

Social work program: \$150,000 over two years

- Established a full-time social work program coordinator position, and funds student stipends for two years.

Jefferson Regional Foundation

JRF 2018-19: \$200,000 over two years

- Enabling South Hills libraries to develop stronger connections with their patrons, their communities, and their municipalities.

JRF 2020: \$50,000

- Emergency COVID funding to cover costs related to PPE and virtual programming.

JRF 2021: \$45,000

- Social work student stipends, baby book bags, and Clairton transition support.

McCune Foundation

Sunset Grant Pilot: \$200,000 over two years

- Innovation and collaboration grants, school library card project, board training and development.

Eden Hall

Social Work Program \$117,000

- Continued funding for student stipends and funded two years of salary for ACLA's Social Work Program Coordinator position.

Transformative Community Libraries Fund \$40,000

- Supplemental funding for administration of the RAD Transformative Community Libraries Fund and training opportunities for grant-eligible libraries

Grable Foundation \$76,500

- Grant to provide one year of Books & Beyond and two years of Baby Bags and student library card funding.

Pittsburgh Foundation \$28,000

- Funding for Baby Bags

Dollar Bank \$20,000

- Accounting Services

GOVERNMENT GRANTS:

PA DECD Keystone Communities Accessibility: \$131,018

- Capital improvements for library facilities to make them more accessible.

PA Dept of Education

Workforce Development: \$50,000

- Library projects supporting workforce education and training.

ARP-IMLS \$288,742

- eResources, Storywalks and Bookmobile support.



INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY LIBRARIES

ACLA, its 46 member libraries, and the Mobile Library Services rely on multiple revenue streams to ensure our local libraries provide exceptional resources and programming to the residents of Allegheny County.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania provides an annual subsidy to public libraries through the Department of Education's Office of Commonwealth Libraries. Funding is secured through a portion of table gaming revenues from the local casino.

The Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD) continues to provide ACLA with a substantial investment by committing one-third of its total allocation to library services, while municipalities and school districts throughout the county also provide necessary funding to support their specific community library.

Finally, other local revenue is generated through a combination of donations, grants, fundraisers, fees, and fines.

The graph below displays the breakdown of these investments.



2022 - 2023 ACLA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Aliya Khan (President)
At-Large Representative

Christine McIntosh (Secretary)
LAC Representative

Paul Kohberger
West Region Representative

David English (Vice President)
East Region Representative

Russell Ayres
Central Region Representative

Cynthia Potter
North Region Representative

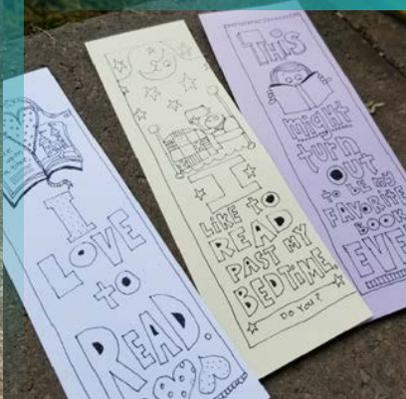
Richard Fuller (Treasurer)
At-Large Representative

Pam Golden
ARAD Representative

Paul Wittman
South Region Representative



ACLA and its member libraries appreciate the enduring support of the Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD).



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aclalibraries.org