

TEAMWORK

2025
IMPACT REPORT



Working Towards a Common Goal

Looking back on this past year, if I had to choose one word to define the success of the Allegheny County Library Association (ACLA) and our member libraries, it wouldn't be "growth" or "innovation"—though we've seen plenty of both. The word would be "teamwork."

In a county as diverse as ours, spanning 46 member libraries and all the unique communities that they represent, no single entity can meet the evolving needs of our residents alone. Our success is built on a complex, beautiful web of collaboration.

The relationship between ACLA and our member libraries is a masterclass in behind-the-scenes coordination. While our librarians are on the front lines, ACLA works as the "team behind the team." This year, we've worked together to provide shared services ensuring that even our smallest neighborhood libraries have the same resources available as our larger library locations. When we work together, we turn individual local libraries into a strong countywide network of resources from which every citizen of Allegheny County can benefit.

One of ACLA's greatest strengths is the teamwork between our libraries. We aren't 46 competing sites. We are a team, focused on providing information and materials to all. Through our resource-sharing initiatives, a book sitting on a shelf in Bethel Park can be in the hands of a reader in Penn Hills within days. Our directors regularly meet to share best practices, solve regional challenges, and lift one another up. This spirit of cooperation ensures that a cardholder's address never limits their access to information.

Beyond our libraries, ACLA staff have focused on teamwork with county leadership, literacy advocates, and corporate partners to make sure that we are fully meeting the needs of our patrons. These alliances allow us to tackle big-picture issues like the digital divide and early childhood education. By aligning our goals with those of our community partners, we've secured the funding and advocacy needed to keep our doors open and our collections ready for all.

Finally, the most vital teamwork happens every day between our libraries and the residents they serve. Our libraries are no longer just repositories for books. They are community hubs shaped by the people who walk through our doors. Whether it's a local business owner using the 3D printer, a senior attending a computer class, or a student finding a safe space to hang out after school, the library is the place where you can find community.

At ACLA, teamwork is what keeps us going. We cannot do what we do without everyone working together to make our libraries better. We thank each and every one of you for being a part of our team!

Amy Anderson
CEO
Allegheny County Library Association

At a Glance

ACLA and its member libraries continue to provide a foundation for learning and exploring all throughout Allegheny County. The continued expansion of resources and programming has led to increased library activity during 2025 from the previous year.

PC Logins 639,092	Library Visits 4,825,154
PC Minutes 30,962,587	Programs 38,565
Wi-Fi Logins 2,088,725	Program Attendance 744,095
Total Circulation 12,546,701	



Talent Comes in Many Forms

ACLA is celebrating the continued success of The Talent Bank – a resource that has helped county libraries cultivate interests and talents of community members to serve in leadership positions.

Since the inception of the program in 2021, ACLA and its 46 member libraries have discovered several new members who are providing strong leadership and representation on our local library boards.

While staff are the faces seen behind the circulation desk or leading programs, boards provide the strategic vision that is critical for the library's long-term success. Library boards and volunteer committees are in a unique position to serve communities. Interested individuals can visit ACLA's website (aclalibraries.org/the-talent-bank) and submit an interest form.





Experiencing our Region's Cultural Attractions

In September 2025, the Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD) announced the year-round expansion of RAD Pass, an online ticketing platform that gives Allegheny County residents who are library cardholders free and discounted access to some of the region's most favorite cultural destinations.



Removing the cost barrier ensures everyone can enjoy the region's arts and entertainment from classic attractions like the Pittsburgh Zoo & Aquarium and National Aviary, to beloved institutions like the Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh and Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, or world-renowned performing arts like the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh Opera, and more.



Since April 2024, more than 100,000 attendees have enjoyed an experience booked through RAD Pass - a number that is expected to grow with even more opportunities to visit with new offers being added every month.

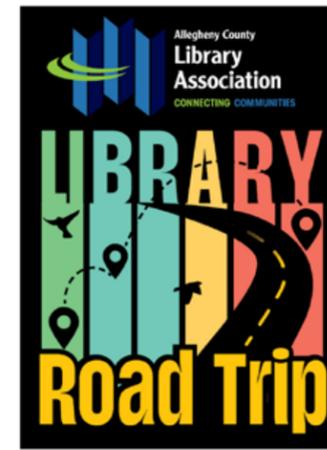


RAD Pass is open to all Allegheny County residents with a valid library card, though most destinations require users to be 18 or older to make a reservation. For a full, growing list of the participating organizations, head to RADPass.org.

LOVE Has No Boundaries

In 2025, the libraries of Allegheny County raised a record-breaking \$2,393,197.41 in charitable contributions during the month of September's annual Love Your Library campaign. The results are a tremendous 40.2% increase from the previous year. Of this amount, \$1,039,478.43 qualifies for a prorated match from a \$202,500 donor pool contributed by the Jack Buncher Foundation and NiSource Charitable Foundation of Columbia Gas.

Now in its 10th year, Love Your Library continues to spotlight the transformative role libraries play in strengthening communities. More than 9,500 donors contributed to this year's campaign, including 1,482 first-time supporters. The gifts help sustain the free and essential services libraries provide including print materials, digital resources, career development, community programs, and facility improvements.



Exploring all the County Libraries Have to Offer

ACLA's Library Road Trip program had another successful summer tour in 2025. The program encouraged patrons to visit the wide diversity of libraries that make up ACLA.

From big to small, from urban to rural, each of the 52 library locations on the passport offer unique collections, including local history, Library of Things, play spaces, maker spaces, and more. With so many historic libraries in

the county - some even dating back more than 150 years - the Library Road Trip was packed with beautiful architecture.

Since the program launched in July 2023, library patrons have had passports stamped at different library locations nearly 800 times. Ten library patrons completed a full passport, visiting all 52 county library locations along the way.

Patrons with completed passports also received a prize, with special thanks to ACLA's partner Spark Books.



Library Road Trip Odometer

774 total passport stamps

10 patrons completed the entire passport and visited all 52 county library locations

26 patrons completed at least one region and the South region was completed the most times

Planting the Seeds for Success

ACLA worked with a very talented group of interns in 2025 on a variety of projects within social needs programs and social media.

Maddie Lundquist & Kimberly Gray

Maddie and Kim researched, vetted and organized a list of local social services organizations. Their work has been compiled into a database for library staff to assist them in connecting patrons with resources for housing, food, healthcare, and other essential human needs.

Sydney Altfather, Courtney Craig, Rory Garofalo & Nadia Waller

Nadia, Sydney, Courtney, and Rory created much of ACLA's social media content. Their work shared information about library resources and programs on all of ACLA's channels, including Facebook and Instagram.



Guiding our Youth

ACLA Youth Services plays a critical role for children and families throughout Allegheny County. In partnership with key organizations, ACLA has expanded its programming to include the continuous implementation of innovative and engaging educational and entertainment resources.



Community Services

ACLA aims to bring early literacy and learning resources to children and families where they are, including local green spaces or even the county jail.

ACLA and its member libraries are meeting children and families in the community with the same services offered at the public library. These three initiatives help to achieve that goal.

StoryWalks®

ACLA provides a collection of StoryWalks® to promote early literacy, family engagement and outdoor exploration. Each StoryWalk® sign includes a spread from the book, early literacy tip and a discussion prompt or activity idea for the adult and child to do together. StoryWalks® grew in popularity as a safe activity during the pandemic and by providing a collection of titles, all libraries can offer this program to their community.

In 2025, StoryWalks® were regularly being used by schools and organizations, in addition to the libraries. Below are just some of the participating partners.

- Beechwood Elementary School (Pittsburgh Public Schools)
- The Children's Institute of Pittsburgh
- Environmental Charter School
- Homewood Early Learning Hub
- Latodami Nature Center (Allegheny County Parks)
- Marzolf Elementary School (Shaler Area School District)
- Pittsburgh Botanic Garden
- Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy
- Ross Township
- Spring Garden Early Childhood Center
- Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

Baby Bags

Learning begins at birth, and ACLA and its member libraries are dedicated to building awareness of early literacy and promoting the value of the public library to new and expectant parents through Baby Bags. As part of the program, bags are distributed at libraries and through community partners. The project highlights the importance of reading, singing, talking, and playing with their child. Bags include books, learning tools and tip sheets for parents to help their child learn and grow.

Helping Kids in Unique Places

ACLA launched its first book vending machine at the Allegheny County Jail in June. The initiative strives to provide all kids with access to books, including those that might be in a tough situation. Since then, the organization has added book vending machines in other locations that might be difficult or challenging spaces for a child or teen, including Allegheny County Family Court and Jeremiah's Place.

Any child or teen visiting that visits these spaces receives a token to choose a free book from the book vending machine. The book selection includes a variety of classics (*Goodnight Moon*, *Because of Winn-Dixie*), formats (picture books, graphic novels, chapter books) and titles where the child or teen might see themselves reflected in the main character.

The hope is that these books are a bright spot for children in what might be an unknown time.



Books Transform Lives

The Children's Choice Awards (CCA) hosted annually by ACLA and the Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU) celebrates reading and encourages school and public library collaboration.

Students in grades 3-6 are encouraged to read three of the titles to attend the culminating event. Some read on their own, others participate in a library program, and many attend a school that includes the program as part of the curriculum. Throughout the months of March and April, students voted online for their favorite book. This year's CCA winning title is *Max in the House of Spies* by Adam Gidwitz.

The 2025 culminating event featured Matthew Holm, author and illustrator of the *Babymouse* series, *Sunny Side Up*, and *Squish*, among other titles. In addition, musicians Josh & Gab returned to offer a crowd-pleasing musical performance. The event also included the ever-popular Battle of the Books. Spark Books was also on hand to provide books for students to purchase and Holm to sign.



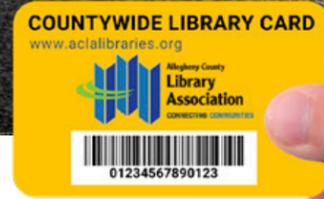
More than 400 students from across Allegheny County and region attended the CCAs' event. Participants included students from one charter school, 14 school districts in Allegheny County and five school districts from outside of Allegheny County.

In addition to the CCA, ACLA also hosts the Picture Book Children's Choice Awards (PBCCA) for students in grades K-2. This program provides libraries with an opportunity for outreach to elementary schools. As with the CCA, the students vote on their favorite title and this year's title was *100 Mighty Dragons All Named Dragon* by David LaRochelle.

This year, ACLA created two new outreach programs - Preschool Picks and PBCCA Nonfiction Extension Program. Preschool Picks is for preschoolers, ages 3-5 and the goal is to provide libraries with books and supporting materials to start or continue a preschool outreach program. PBCCA Nonfiction Extension Program is for students in second and third grades but is scalable for younger and older children in a library setting. Students are introduced to recently published nonfiction or STEM-related titles through elementary school partnerships and special library programming.

Have Resources, Will Travel

In 2025, ACLA Mobile Library Services provided a total of **1,065 visits to 17,515 Allegheny County residents** in communities, senior facilities, and preschools. Visits to preschools included **546 story times in 81 classrooms** along with **56 senior facilities and three community (fee-based) sites** covering more than **14,000 miles**.



Libraries and Schools Work Hand in Hand

Students with access to the public library are more likely to succeed in school, develop a lifelong love of reading and continue to use the library into adulthood. However, not every student has a library card. To remove barriers, ACLA has provided more than 50,000 students in 17 school districts across Allegheny County with new library cards since 2021.

Sixteen of these districts received full-access, physical library cards that give access to all public library materials with no limitations and no fines. One district gave digital cards to the high school students, which provided access to all eResources with the option of receiving a full-access card upon visiting the library. Participating libraries all saw an increase in circulation and eResources usage.

“Whether it is reading for recreation, or adding extra supports for their academic work, these library cards have made a monumentally positive impact in improving the learning experience of our student body, and I can only express my greatest support for the continued development of the program.”

Annie McGaughey,
Keystone Oaks High School Librarian

Perfect Partnerships

ACLA and its member libraries are successful only because of the dedicated support and partnership with like-minded organizations. Their investments allow ACLA to evolve in how we reach, educate and engage with all members of our community. To them we say, thank you!

Allegheny County Department of Human Services
Allegheny County Family Court
Allegheny County Jail
Allegheny County Parks
Allegheny Intermediate Unit
Allegheny Land Trust
Brooklyn Public Library
Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh
Deer Lakes School District
Jeremiah’s Place

KDKA-TV
The Mentoring Partnership of SWPA Pittsburgh Marathon
Reach Cyber Charter School
Senator John Heinz History Center
Spark Books
Trying Together
United Way
West Mifflin School District
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

Investing in our Community

ACLA relies on various contributions to implement new programming and to maintain and update the vital resources used by Allegheny County residents of all ages. The following organizations have been gracious in their support.

Eden Hall Foundation
\$117,000 (2022-2025)

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

PA Department of Economic and Community Development
\$50,000 (2025-2026)

Accessibility audits for county libraries to ensure ADA compliance

PA Department of Education
\$290,000 (2025-2027)

Installing book vending machines at Allegheny County Jail, Allegheny County Family Court, Jeremiah’s Place and the Children’s Home of Pittsburgh

Jefferson Regional Foundation
\$50,000 (2025)

Period products and dispensers for 10 libraries in the South Hills

Allegheny County Library Association Board of Directors, 2025

Paul Wittman, President
(South Region Representative)

Paul Kohberger
(West Region Representative)

Cynthia Potter, Vice President
(North Region Representative)

Bruce Kraus
(Central Region Representative)

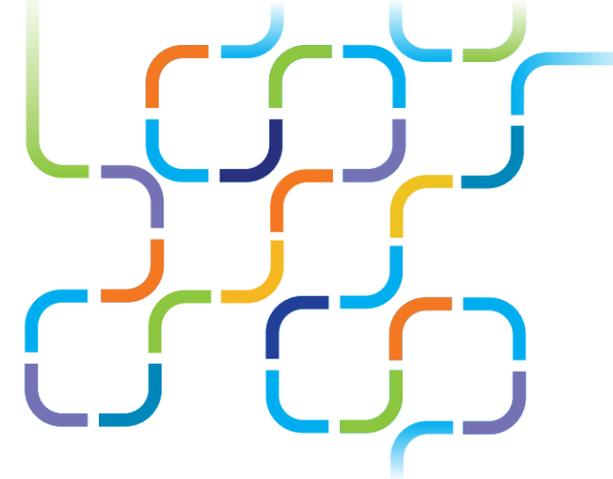
F. Charles Spence, Treasurer
(ARAD Representative)

Amber Spells
(At Large Representative)

Nicole Henline, Secretary
(LAC Representative)

Josh Taylor
(At Large Representative)

David English
(East Region Representative)



2025 Expenses Breakdown

63.8%
staff

12.4%
collections

23.8%
other

