
7010 LIBRARY

Service Description

Learning is a core value of our community. We place great value in our great schools, universities, and ongoing professional development opportunities for a highly skilled work force and beyond. Learning is a lifelong pursuit for Fairfielders. The Fairfield Public Library supports this lifelong pursuit. In effect our community can be seen as a “community of communities” where the Library provides people with different ways to explore, learn and succeed. People learn using resources, studying on their own, in groups, attending classes, programs, sharing information, creating and innovating. The Library’s Vision reflects this: **“Dream...Discover...Innovate...Create...@Fairfield Public Library.”**

Budget Summary

The Library is committed to a very modest budget. FY18 Library Main request is a 0.1% reduction from FY17 budget and FY18 Library FW request is a 2.19% reduction from FY17 budget. We are committed to being fiscally prudent while continuing to provide the very best library experience for our community. We will provide a rich assortment of learning experiences using the expertise of our staff to seek out new partnerships with organizations and volunteers who understand the direct relationship between a vibrant library and a thriving community.

Highlights and Goals

Sharing resources has always been one of the hallmarks of public libraries. Last fiscal year patrons borrowed 868,639 items – equivalent to each resident borrowing 14 items – **twice the state average**. Time and time again Fairfielders tell us that they rely on the Library to provide much of the educational and enrichment materials because they simply cannot afford to buy them. As a 21 century library we provide an array of resources to support different learning styles of users. Print for all ages remains the most popular format representing 61% of usage with DVDs with 21% and digital items being 11%. We offer over 60 formats to satisfy the diversity of learning styles of our patrons. For example, library resources such as foreign language databases and online tutorials allow for enriched self-directed learning.

The Fairfield Public Library embraces its role as “the peoples’ university” where no formal curriculum exists but engaging, enriched, interactive learning opportunities abound. Last year the Library hosted **44,264 people at library programs** – equivalent to 73% of all Fairfield residents. Attendance increased by 3% over the previous year. We developed, hosted or led 1,907 programs from story times to sewing classes to small business seminars and beyond. Many times we are considered leaders in program development and execution and our colleagues in other communities ask us to guide them as they develop new programs.

“Discovered Fairfield restaurants are great. No need to go to New York.” E.S.

“Wellness is a wonderful education.” R.G.

Connected learning in libraries means people learn new skills or new information that they can use in their daily lives. Job seekers can learn how to use social media tools to market themselves to prospective employers. Young patrons and their caregivers learn how to use microcontrollers, circuits and coding to explore possible future career opportunities. Teens and their parents prepare for college with test prep, admissions and financial classes. Entrepreneurs gain knowledge about new business trends in branding, social media, etc.

"Today I discovered that I have the power and ability to create my own budget with the financial boot camp." T.R.

"...(my teenage daughter) made friends, adopted your teachers as models and mentors, developed greater skill and confidence in her...abilities and in herself." E.H.

State of the Town Address, First Selectman Mike Tetreau, Jan. 30, 2017:

"It is so easy to take our libraries for granted. We have a remarkable library system. Over half a million people visited our libraries last year. Our residents check out books at an astounding rate – twice the state average. Over 44,000 people participated in library programs.

Our library is recognized for excellence. It received national attention when it was featured in Country Gardens Magazine and Connecticut Parenting.

This is a real tribute to Karen Ronald and her team."