



City of Arts & Innovation

Board of Library Trustees

TO: BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES
FROM: RIVERSIDE PUBLIC LIBRARY
SUBJECT: SUMMER READING PROGRAM 2023

DATE: NOVEMBER 13, 2023

WARDS: ALL

ISSUE:

Receive an informational report on the 2023 Summer Reading Program at the Riverside Public Library.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Board of Library Trustees receive an informational report on the 2023 Summer Reading Program at the Riverside Public Library.

BACKGROUND:

The Summer Reading Program (SRP) at the Riverside Public Library is held every summer to provide enrichment activities for the community and help prevent students from losing reading skills over the summer. Children and teens participating in SRP spend more time reading over the summer, which prevents learning loss, increases their literacy skills, and prepares them for returning to school in the fall. The Library also offers free lunches provided by Riverside Unified School District for kids and teens through the Lunch at the Library program and participates in pop-up visits at City parks.

DISCUSSION:

This year's Summer Reading Program ran from May 30 through July 29, 2023, and the theme was Find Your Voice. Library programs and performances were designed around the theme to encourage participants of all ages to express themselves and share their stories through writing, art, and movement. 2,538 people registered for SRP through the Beanstack app this summer and over 31,600 books were read. Each week a different prize was offered for kids who completed a reading or program challenge. Teens and adults that participated were entered into raffles for prizes given out at the end of the summer. Over 30 businesses and local organizations sponsored the prizes, including Barnes & Noble, Old Spaghetti Factory, Pepito's Mexican Restaurant, Market Broiler, Riverside Community Players, and the Mission Inn Foundation.

Free programs and performances were offered every week at each library location. Over 4,500 people attended SRP programs over the summer, a 40% increase over last year. Some of the programs offered included: Summer Paint Night, California Joe Magic Show, Poetry Open Mic Night, Thor's Reptile Family Animal Show, and Teresa Smith Dance to Express Your Story. Participants said the programs were "really fun" and "thank you so much for all the summer activities and shows".

The Main Library and the SPC. Jesus S. Duran Eastside Library also offered free lunches to anyone 18 and under as part of the Lunch at the Library Program, funded by a grant from the California State Library. The Riverside Unified School District partnered with the Library to provide free lunches and the Library provided free books, crafts, and activities, including performers to entertain families. 2,423 lunches were served to kids and teens over the summer.

As part of the Library's summer outreach to the community, staff provided pop-up programs at four Riverside Parks. Over 2,100 kids and families participated in outside storywalks, crafts, and activities, including self-portraits and engineering challenges. Library cards were issued and free children's books were handed out so families could continue to build their home libraries.

Approximately, \$13,824.35 was spent on the Summer Reading Program from the Library's Gift fund account and \$47,785 was spent on the Lunch at the Library and Pop-Up Park Visits from a grant awarded to the Library by the California State Library.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This item contributes to **Strategic Priority No. 1 Arts, Culture & Recreation** and **Goal No. 1.1** - Strengthen Riverside's portfolio of arts, culture, recreation, senior and lifelong learning programs and amenities through expanded community partnerships, shared use opportunities and fund development. **Goal No. 1.2** – Facilitate equitable access to arts, culture and recreational service offerings and facilities. **Goal No. 1.5** – Support the development, literacy, health, and education of children and youth throughout the community.

This item aligns with each of the five Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – This informational report for staff focuses on literacy resources and services for inclusive community engagement.
2. **Equity** – This informational report provides members of the community for equal access to share the benefits of community progress.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – There were no fiscal impacts to the General Fund with this information report. The Riverside Public Library is a prudent steward of public funds and ensures responsible management of the City's financial resources while providing quality public services to all.
4. **Innovation** – This informational report on Summer Reading Program is timely in meeting the community's changing needs and prepares for the future through collaborative partnerships and adaptive processes.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – This informational report on Summer Reading Program relates to meeting the needs of the present without compromising the needs of the future and ensuring the City's capacity to persevere, adapt and grow during good and difficult

times alike.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this informational report.

Prepared by: Jessica Herdina, Assistant Library Director

Attachment: Presentation