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Eugene Public Library Foundation Engages the Community to Show Love for Eugene Public Library

EUGENE, OR - February 6, 2024. In light of last year's cuts to Eugene Public Library's budget, and the looming possibility of more cuts to come this year, Eugene Public Library Foundation (EPLF) has launched a **Love Your Library** campaign with activities to engage public support of the library.

EPLF is hosting a **Library Love-In** on **Thursday, February 8**, in the Bascom/Tykeson room at the downtown library. Library supporters can drop in between 5:30 and 7:30 pm to fill out and decorate postcards to send to elected officials. All materials, including postcards, art supplies, and postage will be provided. This event is free to the public. Postcards can also be downloaded from the foundation's website at eplfoundation.org/advocacy.

In January EPLF announced the **Love Your Library design contest**, inviting the public to submit designs that convey their love for Eugene Public Library. Winning entries will be used on materials that will help to promote or organize support around the library, including t-shirts, yard signs, and stickers. **The deadline for entries is March 31**. The public will have the opportunity to choose the winning designs in early April and the Grand Prize winner will be revealed at *Booked for the Evening*, EPLF's premiere annual fundraising event, on May 4. Prizes range from \$1,000 for Grand Prize to \$100 for Third Place. This project is supported by the Oregon Cultural Trust. More information about the Love Your Library contest can be found at eplfoundation.org/love-your-library-contest.

"Raising awareness of the need to support Eugene Public Library is crucial. This award-winning public library serves as the cornerstone of our community, and we believe it is important to keep this important asset front of mind. Libraries are among the few third places left - a space that is not home or work - where all ages can go to relax and engage with others in a public space and have access to a wealth of free resources." said Dana Fleming, EPLF's Executive Director.

In the 2023-25 biennial budget, the City of Eugene cut the library budget by 15%, nearly \$4 million. Though the library only represents 3% of the City's operating budget, it absorbed 16% of the City's cuts. And despite employing only 6% of City staff, it sustained 31% of the staff cuts. These budget cuts immediately reduced on-site programs, eliminated all off-site programs, and created a noticeable lag time in re-shelving materials and processing holds for pick-up.

Despite the reduction in staff and resources, Eugene Public Library provided effective and valued services in the 2023 fiscal year, supporting literacy at all ages, as well as access to shared materials and indoor public space. Over 2.7 million materials were circulated in all three



locations, more than 30,000 Eugene residents attended 798 programs, and the total number of visits to all three locations was 826,982.

Fleming states, “Working together, we can support our public library system in a positive and persistent way, so that it continues to provide welcoming spaces that are full of helpful staff and abundant information for *everyone*. We hope that our community members use their voices to show our city leaders that residents value their library, whether they frequent the downtown location or the branches in Bethel and Sheldon.”

About the Foundation: Eugene Public Library Foundation (EPLF) supports Eugene Public Library in its efforts to inspire lifelong learning and to enrich the entire community. We secure and responsibly manage contributions from individuals, businesses, and foundations to build community support for our Eugene Public Library.

EPLF was established in 1983 to work with members of the Eugene community to enhance programs and materials at Eugene Public Library. As the philanthropic partner of Eugene Public Library, we are truly honored to serve the public and Eugene Public Library by providing resources that are open and free to all.

The Foundation supports Eugene Public Library and our community through funding and advocacy for library services, programming, and materials. Additionally, the Foundation endorses and organizes support for local option library levies and bonds.

For more information, visit the Foundation's website, eplfoundation.org, or call the Foundation office, (541) 338-7018.

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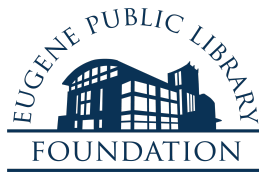


Photo caption: Library supporter, Milagra Tyler, poses with *I Love Eugene Public Library* sign outside the downtown Eugene Public Library location.



Photo Caption: *EPLF Staff Members, Madison Wilson and Dana Fleming, pose with We Love Eugene Public Library sign outside the downtown Eugene Public Library location.*