

MARTIN REGIONAL LIBRARY a melting pot of cultures, races and generations

Every day, the Martin Regional Library vibrates with activity as varied customers come in to check out favorite books and DVDs, work on business or homework, use the public computers and free Wi-Fi, attend a class or event, or read a newspaper or magazine.

Located near major highways and in the immigrant-friendly east side of Tulsa, the Martin Regional Library defies categorization as it is a melting pot of cultures, races and generations, said Amy Stephens, library manager.

"Many immigrants settle in this part of town," said Stephens. "Russians, Pakistanis, Africans, Latinos, Asians and people from a variety of other countries use our library. A lot of times we are their first experience with a library as they come from places without public libraries. At any given time, you literally can stand in the middle of the library and hear languages being spoken from all over the world. This makes Martin Regional Library a very exciting place to visit and to work!"

The library's staff, collections and programming also reflect the diversity of the community, said Stephens. "We have several culturally diverse staff members who speak Spanish or another foreign language. Plus, our staff range in age from 17 to 80, enabling us to better serve the generations."

As a regional location, the Martin library offers a wide breadth of collections. "We have more subjects and in-depth resources than you will find at a branch library," said Stephens. "We also have a large graphic novel/manga collection that is very popular with our customers. Plus, we are home to the library system's Hispanic Resource Center."

In addition, the Martin Regional Library features a Plan4College Center, offers a monthly Job Lab class and hosts the library system's annual Asian-American Festival on the first Saturday in June.

Recently, the Martin Regional Library got a face-lift that included new paint with vibrant colors; new Wi-Fi laptop counter; new roof; and a reorganization of the computer stations. The new computer arrangement, along with the addition of a few more computers, made customers happy and, in turn, made the library much quieter. Out of Tulsa City-County Library's 25 locations, the Martin Regional Library has the highest computer usage.

The Martin Regional Library opened in 1976 and was expanded in 2002. It is named after Allie Beth Martin, Tulsa City-County Library's first director, who dedicated her life to the development of modern library service, focusing on the public library as a center for community education, information, culture and recreation.

activities abound

The Martin Regional Library offers a wide variety of free programs for babies to seniors.

For youths, the library offers weekly "My First Storytime" programs, preschool and bilingual storytimes, and "Book Buddies," featuring crafts, books and activities for first-through third-graders. "Teen Time" features Wii and board games. Manga fans in sixth grade and up are invited to attend the monthly "Manga Ail!" meetings to discuss their favorite books, characters and plot twists from this popular Japanese publishing trend.

English and Spanish computer classes also are offered regularly, as well as a variety of other free programs for seniors and adults including film showings, book discussions and guest speakers.

east meets west

In 2003, Tulsa City-County Library offered its first Asian-American Festival at the Martin Regional Library; more than 500 attended. Since then, the festival has grown to attract 2,500 to 3,000 festivalgoers each year by celebrating the colorful cultures of Asia with entertaining, educational events for the entire family.

Funded and sponsored by the Tulsa Library Trust, the free festival features martial arts demonstrations, dance presentations, authentic arts and crafts booths, children's activities, a food concession with traditional Asian cuisine, as well as other activities and presentations. The ninth annual Asian-American Festival is scheduled Saturday, June 4 from 10:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. Bring the kids, grandparents, uncles and aunts, and enjoy the customs and traditions of our Asian-American neighbors!

south of the border

Experience the beauty and vibrant culture of our Hispanic neighbors whether they live south of the border or right next door. The Hispanic Resource Center provides cultural, informational and educational resources, activities and services. It serves both Spanish- and English-speaking customers.

The Hispanic Resource Center offers bilingual librarians and storytimes, Spanish-language resources, computers with Spanish-language software and keyboards, plus free workshops, guest speakers, art exhibits, educational programs and entertainment such as flamenco dancers, mariachi bands and classic Hispanic movies.

Visit the Hispanic Resource Center in person at the Martin Regional Library or virtually at TulsaLibrary.org/hrc.

visit us daily

Martin Regional Library
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TulsaLibrary.org/martin
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