What a year it has been, 2021. As we have flexed and grown to fit a world settling into year two of a global pandemic, we also have found ourselves settling in as champions of change and adaptation. Our library system has not only adjusted to fit this new way of life for our communities, but also has found ways to diversify our services in order to support the true needs of Tulsa County.

Our theme this year, Kaleidoscope, A Rich Tapestry of Time, beautifully represents this past year and what we see for the future. Navigating the pandemic has been similar to looking through the opening of a kaleidoscope where at first the color and light appear disjointed, but as we have remained nimble to the twisting and turning, we saw beautiful patterns emerge. Our library, staff and customers came together as never before to engage and connect over our shared love of reading.

We started the year by looking back in order to move forward as we pointed our lens at an enlightening months-long series, TCCL Remembers: Commemorating Tulsa’s 1921 Race Massacre With Education, Empathy and Healing. We ended the year on a high note as we returned – in person – to Central Library to celebrate our long-awarded 2020 Peggy V. Helmerich Distinguished Author Award winner Marilynne Robinson, known for her grace and intelligence in writing. The pages in between are the journey that we invite you to take with us.

When I think of meeting the library needs of all Tulsa County citizens, I think of a kaleidoscope; a rich tapestry, filled with beautiful colors and intricate designs. If you ever watch a child play with a kaleidoscope, you will see their faces light up as each twist of the lens reveals a different color, a different pattern, a new delight.

As you turn the pages of this annual report, I hope your faces will light up too as you take a look back at the beautiful dimensions of diversity reflected in our many accomplishments and take a look forward to a promising new year.

- Kimberly Johnson, CEO
Friends of the Collinsville Library

This group supports the Collinsville Library through generous donations.

Friends of Genealogy Inc.

Founded in 1998, this group supports the Genealogy Resource Center, located at Hardesty Regional Library, through memberships and donations.

Friends of the Helmerich Library

The purpose of this organization is to aid and promote the activities and goals of the Peggy V. Helmerich Library. Every year, this dedicated group hosts a very successful book sale and uses the proceeds to fund programming across the TCCL system. Since its inception in 2004, the Friends of the Helmerich Library has given more than $108,000 to benefit TCCL locations.

Friends of the Rudisill Regional Library

This group supports the Rudisill Regional Library and the African-American Resource Center by raising funds, volunteering at library programs, encouraging new customers to use the library, hosting book discussions and supporting TCCL staff in continuing education with the Freddie Martin Rudisill Scholarship Award.
**QUICK STATS**

- **Library Cardholders**: 375,079
- **Population Served**: 669,279
- **Library Sites**: 26 (24 public, 2 nonpublic)
- **Outreach Vehicles**: 3
- **Personnel**: 310 (Full-time Equivalents)

**Owned Materials**

- Physical: 1,189,034
- Digital (eBooks/eAudio): 109,253
- Total Owned Materials: 1,298,287

**Physical Materials Breakdown**

- Children’s Items: 419,131
- Adult Items: 769,903

**Subscription eMaterials**

- eBooks/eAudio: 1,057,906
- eMagazines and eNewspapers: 23,805
- Access to Streaming or Downloadable Music: 13,241,090
- Streaming Movies and TV: 51,154

**Note**: Stats reflected are for calendar year and include estimated numbers for November and December.

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**FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

**June 30, 2021**

**Revenue**

- Ad Valorem Taxes: $34,735,361
- Services and Fees: $874,840
- Interest Earned: $80,151
- Grants: $20,600
- State Aid: $165,975
- Library Trust: $499,672
- Miscellaneous: $320,653

$36,697,252

**Expense**

- Personnel Services: $21,601,413
- Maintenance and Operations: $3,333,081
- Materials: $3,393,527
- Miscellaneous: $116,383
- Capital Outlay: $2,749,367

$31,193,771

**Net Change in Fund Balances**: $5,503,481

**Note**: Totals reflected are from unaudited financial statements.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2021

Catch a Storytime Star!

Build A Reader Storytimes bring the joy of books to young children, while helping them develop early literacy skills and practice socializing. With in-person programming suspended for most of 2021 due to COVID-19, TCCL children’s librarians rose to the occasion, perfecting the art of conducting storytimes virtually so families could enjoy this beloved tradition at home. Over the course of the year, many Storytime Stars emerged as more than 50 storytimes and countless more storytime bites were uploaded to TCCL’s website – much to the delight of children and families who checked back weekly to catch a new Storytime Star!

Emma Cramer gives her favorite Storytime Star, Alice Shipman, a virtual hug during storytime. Emma started coming to Charles Page Library’s storytimes when she was a very shy 2-year-old. Now she is in second grade and reading chapter books.
Education, empathy and healing

TCCL Remembers: Commemorating Tulsa’s Race Massacre series kicked off during Black History Month and featured virtual presentations by authors Hannibal B. Johnson, Robin DiAngelo, Clifton L. Taulbert, Mira Jacob and Jayson Reynolds. The series culminated with an in-person exhibit offering a unique, immersive way to learn about this tragic historical event and racial and political conditions leading up to and following the massacre. More than 3,000 people viewed the exhibit during its six-week run at Rudisill Regional Library. A grant from the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre Centennial Commission, made possible by WPX Energy, provided funding for the series, along with support from the Tulsa Library Trust.

Outlet for expression

The Young People’s Creative Writing Contest gives youth ages 10 to 18 an outlet to express themselves. In his second-place informal essay “The Fear Among Immigrants,” Oswaldo Atilano recounted his family’s experiences as immigrants in the U.S. The 2021 contest attracted 265 youth who submitted 355 entries. You can read the 2021 winning entries here: www.tulsalibrary.org/ypcwc.
**MARCH 2022**

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**Daylight Saving Time begins**
Set clock ahead one hour

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**Dreamland Burning**

**Women's History Month**
March 1-31

**Read Across America Day**

**American Indian Festival of Words Circle of Honor Award**

**St. Patrick’s Day**

**Adult Creative Writing Contest deadline**

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2021**

**Tommy Orange receives 2021 American Indian Writers Award**

Bestselling author Tommy Orange – whose debut novel *There There* drew widespread acclaim – accepted the American Indian Festival of Words Writers Award on March 6 at a virtual award presentation broadcast live from his home in California via TCCL’s YouTube channel. The program featured an interview with Orange by three-time U.S. Poet Laureate Joy Harjo. Orange, who is an enrolled member of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma, was the 10th recipient of the award, given biennially by TCCL’s American Indian Resource Center and the Tulsa Library Trust to an outstanding American Indian author, poet, journalist, or film or stage scriptwriter. Recipients receive a ceremonial blanket and $5,000 cash prize, provided by The Maxine and Jack Zarrow Family Foundation.

**Adult Creative Writing Contest draws record participation**

The Friends of the Tulsa City-County Libraries received a record-breaking 250 entries for its 44th Annual Adult Creative Writing Contest, held in March. *Dreamland Burning* author Jennifer Latham hosted the virtual awards ceremony in May.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2021

Let’s talk about diversity!

In 2021, hate crimes rose to the highest level in 12 years with increasing attacks on Blacks and Asians. In response, TCCL provided resources to the public through its Let’s Talk About Diversity webpage, featuring a wide range of resources to help in these uncertain times. After launching the webpage, many customers commended the resources via the “How’d We Do?” online survey available on TCCL’s website. Whether you are discussing current events with your children, engaging in dialogue with other community members or simply looking to educate yourself, the resources on this page are a great place to start. Learn more here: www.tulsalibrary.org/lets-talk-about-diversity.

Spanish language materials more accessible

As Tulsa’s Hispanic community continues to grow, so too does TCCL’s Spanish language collection. Previously, TCCL housed Spanish language materials at Martin Regional Library and five other branches identified to have larger Hispanic communities. Now, Spanish language materials are located throughout TCCL’s 24 branches to diversify the collection and make these materials more accessible. TCCL began the diversification project last spring.
All American Boys author wins Zarrow award

Jason Reynolds received the Tulsa Library Trust’s 2021 Anne V. Zarrow Award for Young Readers’ Literature at a virtual presentation held May 6. Reynolds talked about his family, recounting his father’s final days and lifelong advice about the key to life: “Service is the greatest gift that we all have to give. You never want to give anyone the things you don’t want. You always want to make sure that you give people all the things that you do want. That way you’ll know true sacrifice.” Reynolds said he took this advice to heart many years ago. “These stories [that I write] are connected to me; these are not my throwaways. I’m giving them away; I am sharing them with you as they mean so much to me.” Later in the broadcast, Reynolds answered questions from the audience, including one viewer who wanted to know if writing has to be your full career. “There are days that I wish writing wasn’t my full career. If I can give any advice to a lot of young writers, it would be to keep a job. It’s hard to write what you want to write when you got to worry about writing paying your bills. Just write because you love it.”
### HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2021

**Coupon books return to Summer Reading Program**
The Summer Reading Program is a beloved tradition for all ages. Coupon books, prizes and outdoor performances were among the highlights of the 2021 program, which focused on virtual events but provided in-person registration at all libraries. “With the theme of ‘Tails and Tales,’ the simplified hybrid program made it easy for parents and caregivers, children, teens and adults to participate in a manner that helped to maintain the safety and health of our communities while still achieving our goal of encouraging people to read,” said Suanne Wymer, youth services manager. More than 38,000 individuals participated in the program and read 234,544 books in all. Presenting sponsors included the Tulsa Library Trust, FC Tulsa, Mazzio’s, Oklahoma Department of Libraries, Safari Joe’s H2O, Tulsa Drillers, TulsaKids magazine, Tulsa State Fair, Whataburger and Williams.

### TCCL hosts Asian American Festival virtually
Cooking tutorials, meditation sessions, take-home crafts, panel discussions and community profiles were among the highlights of TCCL’s 19th Annual Asian American Festival, held virtually June 13-26. The festival also featured interactive online training for bystander intervention against anti-Asian harassment.

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**Families enjoyed special outdoor performances during the Summer Reading Program.**
HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2021

American Library Association’s Black Caucus visits Tulsa

TCCL hosted the Black Caucus of the American Library Association’s (BCALA) 11th National Conference of African American Librarians (NCAAL) from July 28 to Aug. 1. Originally scheduled for summer 2020, NCAAL XI was a virtual conference with a touch of Tulsa that also celebrated BCALA’s 50th anniversary. As the host library, a TCCL staff committee helped plan the conference, presented and facilitated conference presentations, and welcomed members of the BCALA Executive Board and NCAAL Conference Planning Team to Tulsa. Keith Jemison, TCCL regional manager, co-chaired the conference. More than 900 librarians and library workers enjoyed the conference, which included keynote speakers Michael Eric Dyson, Carla Hayden, Terry McMillan, Jason Reynolds, Sharon M. Draper and Nikki Giovanni. While in Tulsa, the BCALA Executive Board visited Black Wall Street to commemorate the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre.
Reading initiative features Mexican Gothic

Each year, TCCL hosts a communitywide initiative called One Book, One Tulsa, during which residents of Tulsa County are encouraged to read the same book. The purpose of this program is to foster literacy and get folks talking about an important, meaningful book. Mexican Gothic by Silvia Moreno-Garcia was the featured selection for 2021. About 75 people joined Moreno-Garcia virtually Sept. 3 to discuss her mesmerizing feminist Gothic fantasy, in which a glamorous young socialite discovers the haunting secrets of a beautiful old mansion in 1950s Mexico. Sponsored annually by the Tulsa Library Trust, One Book, One Tulsa will move to August beginning in 2022.

Genealogy Center hosts virtual Q&A with favorite genealogist

Every summer, genealogy enthusiast eagerly await professional genealogist Mark Lowe’s presentation as a part of TCCL’s annual Family History Month series, presented by the Genealogy Center in July. In 2021, the center hosted a live virtual Q&A with Lowe on Aug. 3, with more than 100 people attending. Lowe’s genealogy knowledge is extensive, as he has researched families for more than 55 years.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2021

Black Buck author helps raise awareness for literacy

After numerous rejections from literary agents and several complete rewrites, Mateo Askaripour finally hit a homerun—five years, three manuscripts later—with his debut novel, Black Buck, released in January 2021 and an instant New York Times bestseller. Askaripour shared his long journey from director of sales development to bestselling author as the featured speaker for Chapters, a casual evening helping to raise money and awareness for TCCL’s Ruth G. Hardman Adult Literacy Service, held virtually Sept. 9. “For me in my life what has pushed me forward more than anything else is asking myself why am I doing something, why am I here, what is the purpose,” said Askaripour, who donated his time for the Chapters event. “So when I was down and out with writing, I said why am I writing, what am I doing this for? And when I realized that the answer was to first prove to myself that I could do it and then, secondly, positively impact others through my work through empowering so many people who have ever felt less than because they’re different in an environment or so forth, that is what sustained me every day.”

Juddie Williams, literacy tutor, and Adonis Escobar, adult literacy learner, met through TCCL’s Ruth G. Hardman Adult Literacy Service.
HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2021

TCCL celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month
TCCL’s Hispanic Resource Center kicked off Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15–Oct. 15) with a conversation with Felicia Rose Chavez, award-winning educator and author of The Anti-Racist Writing Workshop and The BreakBeat Poets Volume 4: LatiNEXT. The enlightening monthlong celebration included a community mural project honoring the legacy and culture of Latinx authors, plus weekly cooking tutorials featuring Latin American dishes, presented by TCCL staff. Participants also enjoyed a reading and discussion with Marcelo Hernandez Castillo, poet and author of Children of the Land, and a lively chat with the curator of the Art Museum at the National Hispanic Cultural Center.

Culture and diversity expert Jane Hyun coaches TCCL staff
“Rediscovering Balance” was the theme of TCCL’s Staff Development Day, held virtually Oct. 11. The annual all-day staff training featured professional development classes, plus a keynote address by Bamboo Ceiling author Jane Hyun, an internationally recognized expert in cross-cultural effectiveness, inclusive leadership and talent management.
### Highlights from 2021

**Local authors get valuable advice**

About 60 aspiring writers and authors attended TCCL’s second annual Local Author Conference, held virtually Nov. 6 and featuring a keynote address by Art T. Burton, who writes about African Americans in the Wild West. “I appreciate that the library plans events such as this for local authors to learn about writing and publishing, but also to give us a platform to showcase our work,” said Betty Selakovitch Casey, local author and TulsaKids editor. “It’s exciting to see the variety of writing and the creativity of Tulsa-area writers!”

**TCCL celebrates the beauty of children’s literature**

Nearly 12,000 Tulsa-area second graders received a free copy of *Why am I me?*, a beautiful picture book about humanity and diversity, co-illustrated by Selina Alko, the featured illustrator for TCCL’s 2021 Books to Treasure. Children and their families got a chance to meet Alko virtually Nov. 19, as she talked about her artistic inspirations, shared her childhood artwork and did a live drawing. The Tulsa Library Trust sponsors Books to Treasure through a grant from the Anne and Henry Zarrow Foundation.
## HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2021

Peggy V. Helmerich Distinguished Author Award celebrates 36 years

Led by Kim Brilz, 2020-21 gala chair, and supported by TCCL staff, the Peggy V. Helmerich Distinguished Author Award Gala Committee turned Central Library into a beautiful winter wonderland to set the stage for a black-tie gala to honor Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist and essayist Marilynne Robinson as the recipient of the 2020 Helmerich award. For nearly two years, the gala committee, composed of 61 volunteers, helped Brilz and her vice chair, Denise Payne, plan and prepare for the elegant dinner and a free public address, as the 2020 Helmerich award was postponed until 2021 due to the pandemic. Gala attendees received as table favors copies of Robinson’s renowned Gilead sequence: *Gilead, Home, Lila* and *Jack*. The following morning, Betty Selakovich Casey, TulsaKids editor, moderated a Q&A with Robinson at the public presentation, also held at Central Library. While in Tulsa, Robinson also spoke with students from McLain, Memorial, Rogers and East Central high schools at a special student presentation. Given by the Tulsa Library Trust and Tulsa City-County Library, the prestigious Helmerich award consists of a $40,000 cash prize and an engraved crystal book.

### Calendar

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MORE 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

TCCL software engineer named Support Person of the Year

Roger Gee, TCCL software engineer, received the 2021 Oklahoma Library Association Support Person of the Year Award, given annually to library support staff who has greatly affected their library organization or community, promoted library services, and demonstrated service above and beyond. “Roger Gee’s software is utilized at TCCL to make a difference in the community,” said Rebekah Cowan, TCCL chief technology officer. “Roger creates tools for library and support staff across Tulsa County that affect operations at all locations. His work has a large impact on the level of customer service that TCCL is able to provide to Tulsa community members.”

10 longtime employees retire from TCCL in 2021

TCCL extends best wishes and a happy retirement to: Mark Carlson, branch manager, Charles Page Library; Kathy Huber, manager, Genealogy Center; Beverly Jemison, children’s library associate, Suburban Acres Library; Alicia Latimer, coordinator, African-American Resource Center; Cindy Lister, youth library associate, Nathan Hale Library; Mary Moore, reference librarian, Central Library Research Center; Gail Morris, chief financial officer; Will Thomas, teen library associate, Martin Regional Library; Louan Torres, sponsorship coordinator; and Mary Winn, human resources specialist. TCCL greatly appreciates your dedication to libraries and years of service.
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www.TulsaLibrary.org

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