



Riverside County  
Library System

# ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2020-2021



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# STARTING POINTS



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# Letter from the County Librarian

Every year I am struck by the depth, breadth and quality of services that we provide throughout the Riverside County Library System (RCLS). From early literacy programs that prepare our youngest residents for kindergarten to one-to-one job search coaching to programs for Spanish speakers - and everything in between - RCLS is a strong resource for a growing and diverse County. While Fiscal Year 2020-2021 was certainly different, bringing unprecedented challenges and amazing opportunities, those vital services and access did not change.

The past year was busy with planning three beautiful, state-of-the-art new libraries in Desert Hot Springs, French Valley and Menifee. The Desert Hot Springs Library opened as Fiscal Year 2020-2021 was coming to a close on June 26. French Valley and Menifee opened as the new fiscal year began in July. These new libraries, funded through public-private partnership, are the culmination of years of work and planning. The Canyon Lake, Glen Avon and Woodcrest branches received a fresh new look after extensive renovation or relocation.

These new and renovated facilities underscore the Riverside County Office of Economic Development's commitment to learning, literacy and services that lift the entire community and make Riverside County an even better place to live.

Planning, furnishing and curating collections for three new libraries opening in a three-month span would be an accomplishment in any circumstances, but doing so during the COVID-19 pandemic is nothing short of amazing. Despite facility closures, supply chain disruptions and the demands of shifting to virtual library service, the new and renovated buildings opened on time to the delight of residents.

The Riverside County community came together to support one another and their library system during the pandemic. RCLS staff quickly and creatively found ways to ensure patrons could access the library. Curbside express service and eLibrary card registration kept library materials flowing, broadband was expanded to 24/7 outside all



locations with additional access points and quality literacy and enrichment programs, including take-home kits, were offered outdoors and online.

I have opened many new libraries during my career. The three new RCLS libraries are far and away the most beautiful and advanced I have seen. I have also navigated many challenging periods. The dedication, determination and flexibility the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, Office of Economic Development and the library staff showed throughout the year were truly inspiring.

Thank you to everyone for making this a year to remember. I am grateful to our fantastic County leaders and community for their unending support of RCLS. We are looking forward to our next chapter and hope you will join us!

**Barbara Howison | County Librarian**



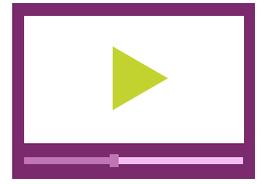
# RCLS USE AT A GLANCE



NEARLY  
**113,000**  
EAUDIOBOOKS  
CHECKED OUT



OVER  
**145,000**  
EBOOKS  
CHECKED OUT



NEARLY  
**15,000**  
FILMS  
WATCHED



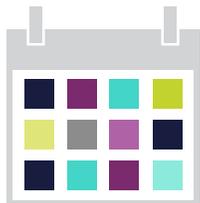
OVER  
**26,000**  
EMAGAZINES  
CHECKED OUT



**>1.1 M**  
PHYSICAL ITEMS  
CHECKED OUT



OVER  
**90,000**  
VIEWS OF  
RECORDED PROGRAMS



HOSTED  
**2,300**  
LIVE PROGRAMS  
(VIRTUAL OR FACE TO FACE)



WITH  
**67,000**  
PEOPLE VIEWING  
OR ATTENDING



WELCOMED **14,000** NEW USERS TO THE LIBRARY

# Pandemic Response

When library buildings were forced to close because of the pandemic, RCLS staff were not satisfied with complacency and the status quo. Staff members got to work envisioning ways to not only maintain existing library access, but add new services and enhance existing ones. Staff put themselves in patrons' shoes, asking, "How can we make it easier to access electronic resources? How can we connect patrons with staff? What roadblocks can we remove to make access seamless?"

**These questions were answered with improvements to services and access.**

Added **over 5,000** new eBooks & eAudiobooks

Added streaming film

Added streaming concert, ballet, and opera recordings

Added Live Chat service, assisting **nearly 10,000** patrons

Added a local and independent author publishing platform

Added both live and recorded virtual programming, including storytimes, coding classes, books clubs, and more

Added job/career assistance platforms

Created Community Resources guide for health and safety, remote learning, work from home

# State-of-the-Art New Libraries

It was an incredible year of growth for RCLS as three new libraries were planned and the first opened during Fiscal Year 2020-2021.



The new Desert Hot Springs Library, officially opened June 26, is a modern, state of the art, 15,000 square foot single story library that replaced a 50 year old, 3,527 square foot building. The new library includes amenities residents want and need, including private study rooms, community meeting rooms, opportunity rooms, furniture with outlets and USB ports, more public computers, teen library space, children's library space, storytime room, and a Friends of the Library bookstore. The new library includes more than 31,000 titles in the collection.

Planning and construction of new libraries in Menifee and French Valley continued during Fiscal Year 2020-2021 and the buildings opened early in Fiscal Year 2021-2022. The City of Menifee is one of California's fastest growing communities. Residents now have a modern, 20,000 square foot single story library nearby with high quality amenities and more than 35,000 titles in the collection.

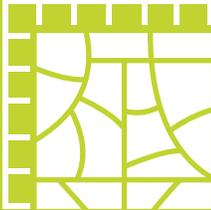


The French Valley Library, also opened early in Fiscal Year 2021-2022, is an open and airy aviation-themed library with 25,000 square feet of space for community gathering, independent study and collaborative work and a 52,000 title collection. Like the Desert Hot Springs and Menifee buildings, French Valley includes space for community meetings, flexible opportunity rooms, furniture where devices can be charged and plenty of space for children, teens and adults.



All three libraries were built through public-private partnership with Riverside County, Omni West Real Estate, CFP, McCarthy Building Companies, Inc., and Cannon Design.

# RCCLS IMPACT



**7,000**  
SQUARE MILES



**35**  
LIBRARY LOCATIONS

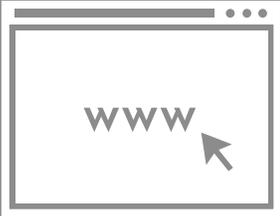
**+2** MUSEUMS  
**+2** BOOKMOBILES



**1.4 M**  
RESIDENTS SERVED



**>1.1 M**  
ITEMS CHECKED OUT



**820,000**  
WEBSITE VISITS



**14,000**  
NEW LIBRARY  
CARDS ISSUED



**>850,00**  
SEARCHES IN THE  
CATALOG



**230,000**  
HOLDS PLACED

# Innovative Library Services

## Outreach

Service beyond library building walls is an RCLS hallmark. Working through pandemic-imposed limitations on in-person gatherings, staff brought the Library out into the community.

## Library Connect

Library Connect, comprising two new mobile literacy resource vans, bring library services and educational programs to the underserved regions of Riverside County.

Library Connect was created to serve the large population in many rural regions of the County. Unlike the bookmobile model, Library Connect brings both library services and educational programs with a focus on building literacy skills. Library Connect vehicles are Wi-Fi enabled with computers and printers for use under the shade of an external awning.

Patrons can choose from a small collection of books for all ages and pick up holds. Educational programs include:

- Educational kits for children, teens and adults
- STEAM programming for children
- Raising a Reader – a family engagement reading program
- Storytime
- Adult Educational Services
- Job searches, resumes and application assistance



## Project Connect

Project Connect, an initiative of the RCLS Homelessness Resource Committee, is a series of events in which participating branch libraries partner with local government and non-government agencies specializing in resources for the homeless community and those at risk of becoming homeless. These services can include Social Security application assistance, free legal services, addiction recovery and mental health clinics. Beginning in Fall 2021, Project Connect will expand with grant funding to provide in-library social workers at a number of RCLS locations. Social workers will provide one-on-one assistance, library staff training and support and direct connections services.



Ready Access is an initiative of the Social Justice team of the 2021 Dare To Lead Challenge of the California Library Association

Did you just get out of Juvenile Hall, Jail or prison? Ready Access was made for you! We offer educational, fun and cultural support for people who have been recently release.

**THINGS TO KNOW:**

**Membership at the library is free!**

**You can get a library card today and get access to:**

Books, Computer Time, Movies, Programs for Your Children, Programs for Teens, Adult Programs, Learn to Read and Write Better, Tutoring

**The library has these services for you!**



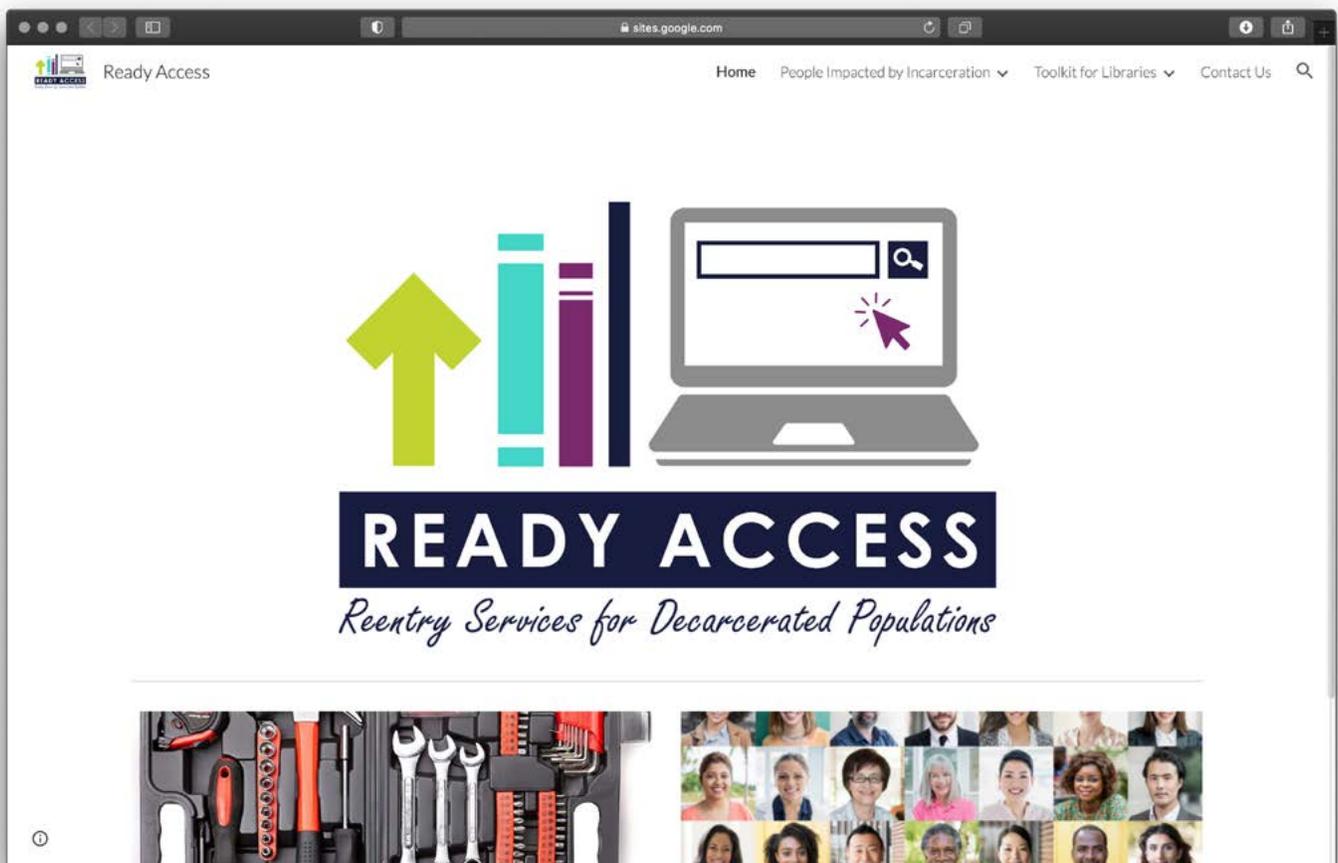
**Address:**

**Phone:**

## Ready Access: Reentry Services for Decarcerated Populations

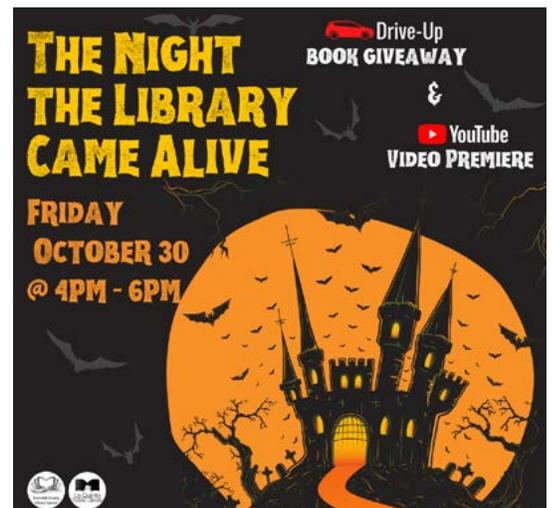
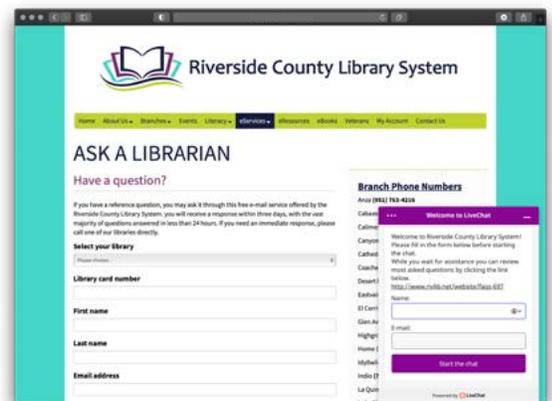
Ready Access: Reentry Services for Decarcerated Populations, a California Library Association Leadership Challenge initiative, was created in part by a RCLS staff member. Ready Access provides a toolkit for California librarians and those impacted by incarceration. It includes:

- Web page template
- Workflow, scripts, letter templates and flyers for initiating partnerships and promotion
- Programming ideas and workflow
- Maps to locate your nearest carceral institutions
- A brief video on working with decarcerated patrons
- Additional resources for your patrons
- Reading List
- Glossary of terms



# Responsive Services During COVID-19 Pandemic

- Express Service (curbside) was RCLS's primary method of circulating materials while library buildings were closed. Simplicity and ease of access were the keys to success and robust customer engagement and circulation. The process was carefully designed to remove barriers to Library service. Patrons deeply appreciated being able to access Library materials during an unsettling time.
- Patrons and staff connected through telephone and online reference with Ask A Librarian online service as well as Live Chat.
- The RCLS Mecca Community Library served as a distance learning hub, providing learning and recreation opportunities, assistance with school work and a place to go when parents were working.
- The Library served the youth of Riverside County through a dynamic Summer Reading Program in June and July 2021. Children and Teens checked out more than 200,000 items, helping prevent summer learning loss. Nearly 3,000 children and teens registered for the program. Activities included programs, reading incentives and take home crafts, all centered around the joy of reading.
- RCLS was a strong and active presence on Facebook, Twitter, and other social media platforms before the pandemic. When buildings were closed, staff quickly adapted to delivering virtual programming including storytimes, bilingual storytimes, online book clubs, tutoring, English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) classes and much more.
- Partnership with Riverside County to provide COVID-19 testing and vaccines at several library branches.
- La Quinta Library's Halloween program "The Night the Library Came Alive" was a creative mix of a high quality promotional video and an outdoor "Trunk or Treat" program. Information about library services was part of each treat package. Program promotion won a California Library Association PRExcellence Award in the \$10 Million+ Budget - COVID-19 category.



# Literacy Services

RCLS Literacy Services provided services in a virtual, one-on-one or small group settings.

## Adult Literacy

- One-on-One Tutoring
- Small Group Sessions
  - Basic Grammar Class
  - Citizenship Preparation Class
  - Computer Basics Class
  - English Conversation Club
  - Learn How to Stay Healthy Class
  - Work Ready! Workshop
  - Reading & Writing Club
- Career Online High School (COHS)

## Family Literacy

- Literacy Care Packages
- Raising a Reader
- Small Group Sessions
  - Family Learning Place

**45%** INCREASE IN LEARNERS FROM 2019-2020 TO 2020-2021 ALL IN A VIRTUAL SETTING

**1,270**  
LEARNERS

**419**  
LEARNING  
SESSIONS

**1,894**  
LEARNING  
HOURS

**70** FAMILIES IN SMALL GROUP LITERACY SESSIONS

FAMILIES  
RECEIVED  
**110**  
BOOKS AND  
EDUCATIONAL  
MATERIALS

**40**  
TOTAL  
VOLUNTEERS  
DONATED  
**670**  
HOURS

**571**  
LEARNING  
SESSION  
HOURS EACH  
MONTH

# Collection

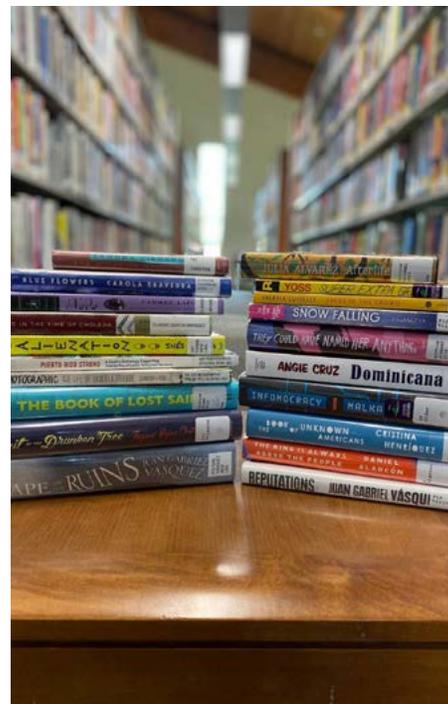
During Fiscal Year 2020-2021 RCLS implemented the LibraryIQ platform for collection performance management. The platform integrates with and analyzes data from the RCLS Integrated Library System, providing clear actionable insights. This means a clear understanding of which materials in the collection circulate most, which least and which areas need more titles to best meet the needs of each location's community.

The LibraryIQ platform enables staff to see where libraries are reaching and engaging the community, identify goals and track performance improvement.

When the pandemic forced library buildings to close, staff quickly pivoted to provide current, relevant information and resources through the RCLS website. Some budget resources were shifted to digital materials, which enhanced the RCLS eBook, eAudiobook, eMagazine, and eMovie collections.

The ZipBooks program, provided through a partnership with the California State Library and the NorthNet Library System, purchases patron-requested books that are not currently on the RCLS collection. Items are shipped directly from the vendor to the patron and then returned to the library. ZipBooks was particularly important during the pandemic; about 27 patrons used the service each month and 1,730 items were added to the RCLS collection.

The rare book collection of the County's Edward Dean Museum was cataloged and all items were added to the RCLS catalog. The Museum is home to 2,700 rare books which are now visible in the RCLS catalog and available for use by library patrons. The books can be accessed by visiting the museum.



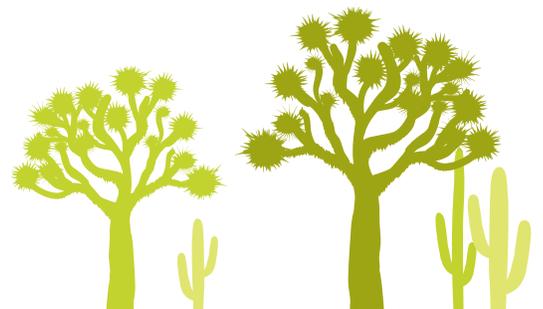
# Grants

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| <b>Career Online High School   California State Library</b> .....                             | <b>\$85,680</b>  |
| RCLS Literacy staff time, operational, and materials cost                                     |                  |
| <b>eResources   Inland Library System</b> .....   | <b>\$54,041</b>  |
| Additional eContent added to eResources collection  |                  |
| <b>Learning Juntos   Nora Roberts Foundation</b> .....  | <b>\$3,000</b>   |
| Diverse Literacy Programs   |                  |
| <b>Library Innovation Lab   California Humanities</b> .....                                   | <b>\$5,000</b>   |
| Immigrant life in Riverside County  |                  |
| <b>Zip Books   California State Library</b> .....   | <b>\$35,000</b>  |
| Patron-direct online book purchasing  |                  |
| <b>Crisis Collection   California State Library</b> .....                                     | <b>\$5,000</b>   |
| Additional eResources during pandemic   |                  |
| <b>Propagating Promising Practices   Providence Public Library</b> .....                      | <b>\$3,000</b>   |
| Literacy Services   |                  |
| <b>California Library Literacy Services   California State Library</b> .....                  | <b>\$102,213</b> |
| Literacy Services   |                  |
| <b>Whole Kids Foundation Garden Grant   Whole Kids Foundation</b> .....                       | <b>\$3,000</b>   |
| Build a community garden  |                  |
| <b>STEM-ulate!: STEAM and Socializing in a Virtual World   California State Library</b> ..... | <b>\$12,000</b>  |
| Tools to create digital programs  |                  |
| <b>Wildomar Reserve Seat   California State Library</b> .....                                 | <b>\$12,000</b>  |
| Tools to create digital programs  |                  |
| <b>Dia   California State Library</b> .....   | <b>\$6,500</b>   |
| Bilingual crafts, books and programs  |                  |
| <b>Project Connect Now   California State Library</b> .....                                   | <b>\$33,527</b>  |
| Free onsite and/or virtual social welfare and legal services                                  |                  |
| <b>California Public Library Meal Programs   California State Library</b> .....               | <b>\$9,400</b>   |
| Programming materials at library summer meal sites  |                  |
| <b>CARES Act: Bridging the Digital Divide   California State Library</b> .....                | <b>\$65,000</b>  |
| 83 Chromebooks and 90 Mobile Hotspots to help bring technology to the underserved             |                  |

# RCLS Key Partners

Special thank you to the partners who support RCLS throughout the year.

- **Riverside County Board of Supervisors**
- **Riverside County Office of Economic Development**
- **County of Riverside Community Action Partnership**
- **Desert Hot Springs Historical Society**
- **Desert Recreation District**
- **Edward Dean Museum**
- **First 5 Riverside County**
- **French Valley Historical Society**
- **Indlandia Institute**
- **Malki Museum**
- **REFORMA: The National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish-Speaking**
- **Riverside County Law Library**
- **Riverside County Library System Foundation**
- **Riverside County Library System Friends Groups:**
  - Friends of the Cabazon Library
  - Friends of the Cathedral City Library
  - Friends of the Desert Libraries: Coachella, Desert Hot Springs, Indio, Lake Tamarisk, La Quinta, Mecca, Palm Desert, and Thousand Palms
  - Friends of the Idyllwild Library
  - Friends of the Jurupa Libraries - Glen Avon Chapter
  - Friends of the Jurupa Libraries - Louis Robidoux Chapter
  - Friends of the Nuvview Library
  - Friends of the Perris Library
  - Friends of the San Jacinto Library
  - Friends of the Sun City Library
  - Friends of the Temecula Grace Mellman Library
  - Friends of the Temecula Public Library
  - Friends of the Wildomar Library
  - Friends of the Woodcrest Library
- **Riverside County Office of Education**



# RCLS Locations



**rivlib.net**

Visit us online or in one  
of our locations!

*\*new mobile library service to be introduced in FY 2021/22*

Anza  
Cabazon  
Calimesa  
Canyon Lake  
Cathedral City  
Coachella  
Coachella Valley Bookmobile  
*(as of May 2021, it is no longer in service)*  
Desert Hot Springs  
Eastvale  
Edward Dean Museum  
El Cerrito  
French Valley  
Glen Avon  
Highgrove  
Home Gardens  
Idyllwild  
Indio  
La Quinta  
La Quinta Museum  
Lake Elsinore  
Lake Tamarisk  
Lakeside  
Mead Valley  
Mecca  
Menifee  
Norco  
Nuview  
Palm Desert  
Perris  
Robidoux  
San Jacinto  
Sun City  
Temecula Grace Mellman  
Temecula Public Library  
Thousand Palms Art Sampson  
Valle Vista  
Western County Bookmobile  
*(as of May 2021, it is no longer in service)*  
Wildomar  
Woodcrest