



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### ***A LIBRARY CARD IS THE MOST IMPORTANT SCHOOL SUPPLY***

*Library cards empower students and fuel academic success*

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September is Library Card Sign-up Month, a time when all 37 Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries join libraries nationwide to remind parents, caregivers and students that getting a free library card is the first step on the path to academic achievement and lifelong learning.

During a media announcement at the downtown Central Library earlier today, Library Director Mary Jean Jakubowski said, "This year in particular, as the school year begins, families have a lot on their minds. It is important parents and caregivers be reminded our libraries are open and we are here to support their child's educational needs and requirements. With free WiFi, public computers, databases, reference materials and millions of books, eBooks, audio books and more – I hope you will consider us an extension of the classroom; whether it is in school or from home, we are here to help!"

There is nothing more empowering than signing up for your very own library card. This year, children who get a new or replacement library card at the library will receive a free book (while supplies last), compliments of Wegmans.

Library cards and library services are free to Erie County residents and available at all 37 Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries and the *Library on Wheels* bookmobile. Online eLibraryCards for ages 13 and over are available at: <https://www.buffalolib.org/library-cards-borrowing-information>.

The two new library card designs selected from a community-wide contest held last fall were debuted at the media event. Winning designer Allison Panek, a senior at Alden High School, participated. Ms. Panek's design represents the diversity of Erie County, from farmland to the bustling cityscape, and includes an iconic buffalo, the Library logo and a stack of books!

Director Jakubowski added, "Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries are adapting to these challenging and ever-changing times. Electronic resources are available 24/7 and many libraries are producing virtual literacy and fun family activities and programs via their Facebook and YouTube channels." See the program calendar here:

<https://tinyurl.com/y3wpwlvw>.

To sign up for a library card or to learn more about library resources and programs, please visit any of the 37 libraries, call 716-858-8900 or check out [www.BuffaloLib.org](http://www.BuffaloLib.org).

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## Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Fun Facts and Advantages & Benefits to Having a Library Card

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### FUN FACTS:

- The year 1836 marked the beginning of continuous public library service in Western New York.
- Over 380,000 Erie County residents have library cards.
- The new 2020 library cards were designed by Allison Panek, a 17-year-old senior at Alden High School and Abigail Swiger, a Canisius College student.
- There are 37 Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries and the *Library on Wheels* bookmobile. All have free WiFi and public computers.
- There are more than 3.2 million items (books, periodicals, DVDs, e-materials) available for borrowing.
- Over 6.63 million materials were borrowed in 2019.
- Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries can be followed/friended on social media including [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Pinterest](#), [Instagram](#) and [Flickr](#).
- The Library produces a free weekly podcast, [All Booked Up!](#), with timely discussions on books, movies and pop culture (<https://soundcloud.com/allbookedup/tracks>).

### ADVANTAGES and BENEFITS:

- A Buffalo & Erie County Public Library card provides:
  - Free access to books, audiobooks, magazines, DVDs, Blu-Rays and CDs of all genres, for all ages;
  - Free access to downloadable eBooks and eAudiobooks;
  - Free access to music downloads and streaming with hundreds of thousands of choices;
  - InterLibrary Loan borrowing, meaning if our System doesn't have a book, the item can be requested from another institution and delivered to a local branch; and
  - Library cardholders can make a request to borrow popular materials from any of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Libraries.

### OTHER:

- A new exhibit, *B is for Book*, opens at the Central Library on September 8 and will run for two years. It features early works of children's literature, including the fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen, Mother Goose editions, Dr. Seuss classics, ABC books, readers, picture books, and other beloved tales.
- Leaves/pages from the original handwritten manuscript of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* are on display in the Mark Twain Room located at the Central Library. The room also features multi-language editions of the novel, Twain ephemera and other collectibles, currently numbering more than five hundred items.
- Of interest to many researchers and writers are collections featuring local history, genealogy, maps, music and Rare Books that can be found in the Grosvenor Room collection at the Central Library.