

CITY OF  
**Camarillo**  
P U B L I C   L I B R A R Y

# ANNUAL REPORT

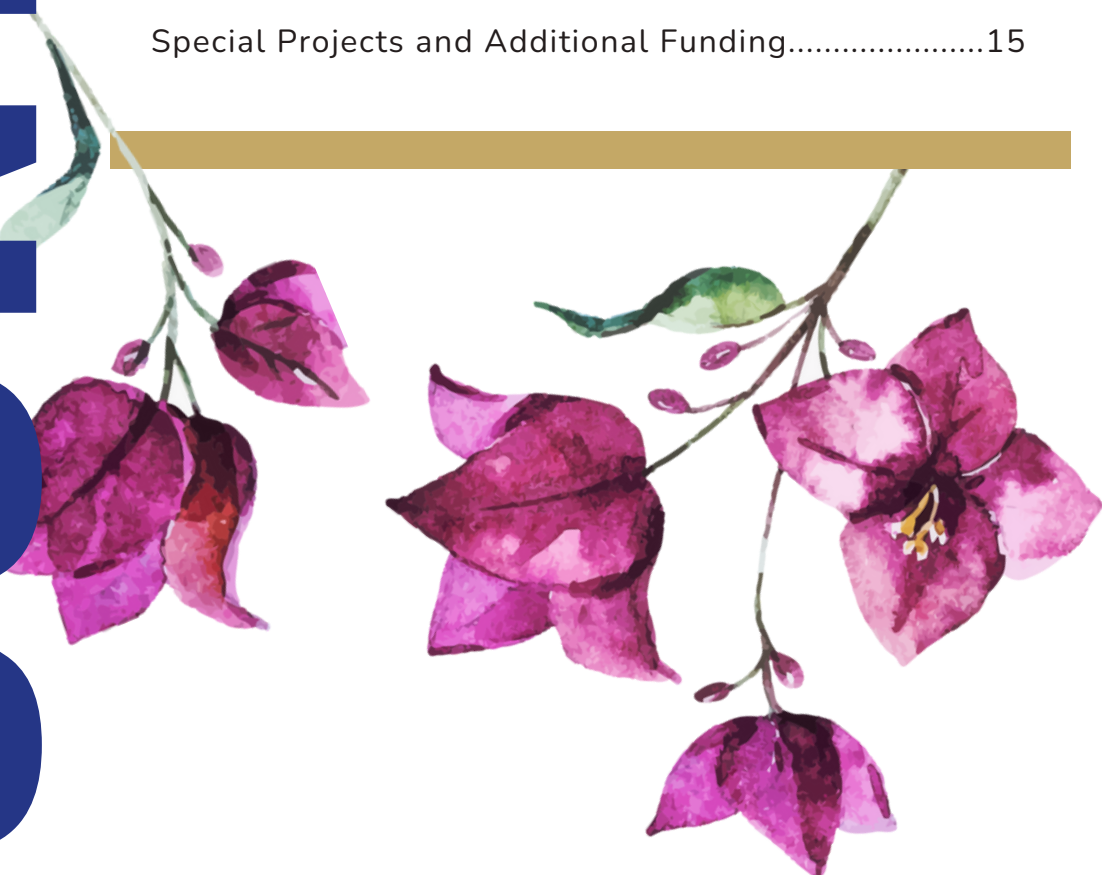
FISCAL YEAR 2022 - 2023



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# Letter from Library Director

It's been another year of service and success for the City of Camarillo Public Library. As we introduce exciting new services along with enhancing the Library you know and love, we look back on the past year with gratitude for the community's support.

In June 2022, the Camarillo Library Board approved expanded hours of operation along with a ten-year renewal agreement with our operating partner Library Systems & Services. Longer hours came just in time for Summer Reading and resulted in even more library visits. Since July 1, 2022, the Library has welcomed the community seven days a week and initiated new programs such as *Tech Help Sundays*.

The Library was one of just 20 applicants to receive a \$17,325 California State Library grant to support the *Cam I Am Sustainable* initiative, which featured community conversations and events as part of a Sustainable Neighborhood Series. From January to June 2023, the Library hosted workshops on composting, vegetarian cooking, upcycling, food waste, water conservation and solar energy in partnership with kidSTREAM and California State University Channel Islands. Fourteen interactive workshops reached 313 participants.

The Library launched *Camarillo's Great Outdoors*, a service that lends backpacks and beach coolers to support exploration and visits to local hiking and beach spots. Sixteen kids' backpacks include a compass, binoculars and children's books about wildflowers, birds, mammals and trees. Two beach coolers are also available for check-out and include a kite, volleyball, beach mat, reusable ice packs and sunscreen.

Starting a book club has never been so easy for Camarillo residents. The Library launched *Book Club in a Bag*, which contains a wide selection of new titles along with eight copies of a book, information for the book club leader and a list of discussion questions. Patrons can request a title through the Library website, and *Book Club in a Bag* kits can be checked out for up to six weeks.



City of Camarillo Public Library Staff



In March, a month-long Sweet 16 birthday celebration for the Library included a selfie-ready balloon arch. Councilmembers and Friends of the Library Board Members shared cake and enjoyed the fun. Programs brought us back to 2007 with movies like *Little Miss Sunshine* and trivia contests. 39 participants joined our Youth Services Department's "Build Your Own Time Capsule" craft and a weekly *Did You Know* series on social media highlighted Library history.

The Friends of the Camarillo Library generously donated \$145,000, helping fund materials, programs and services.

Thank you for your support. I am truly grateful for City leadership, Library staff and our own Camarillo community for your steadfast dedication.

**Mandy Nasr | Library Director**



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“As a City that’s safe, financially strong and with few outsized issues, we have greater opportunity than most to strive to be best in class amongst our region and state - to be an example of how government can be efficient, effective, responsive and sustainable.”

- Shawn Mulchay, Mayor (October 20, 2022)



# City of Camarillo Library Use At A Glance



**469,333**

PHYSICAL ITEMS  
CIRCULATED



**5,756**

LIBRARY CARDS  
ISSUED



**112,928**

ELECTRONIC ITEMS  
CHECKED OUT



**196,879**

VISITS



**72,891**

REFERENCE  
QUESTIONS ASKED



**139,383**

WI-FI SESSIONS



**116,544**

LIBRARY  
WEBSITE VISITS



**16,820**

PROGRAM  
ATTENDANCE



**539**

TOTAL PROGRAMS

FISCAL YEAR 2022 - 2023

[camarillolibrary.org](http://camarillolibrary.org)

# Children Services

The Library supports student success - even during the summer. As a recipient of the California State Library's Summer Lunch Pop-Up Library Grant, the Library provided over 800 tote bags filled with books to students from University Prep Charter School Elementary, Dos Caminos Elementary and Camarillo Boys and Girls Club during summer lunch events. The Summer Lunch grant provides free books to help build home libraries and creates an opportunity for children to discover Library resources. The Fiscal Year started with a "Find Your Voice" summer reading program with 626 children registering by June 2023.



In September, the Library opened up its Homework Center to support students Monday - Thursday from 3 - 6 p.m. Library staff and homework volunteers assisted students from Kindergarten to 8th grade on various subjects including reading, math and writing. Students were also able to access Brainfuse, an online resource that assists in tutoring, skill building and test preparation for all ages and levels.

Camarillo Public Library champions reading throughout the year. In May, the Library partnered with First 5 Ventura to support their annual early literacy event. Two "celebrity" storytimes featured Leticia Alvarez from the Governor's Office of Planning and Research and Superintendent Dr. Cesar Morales from Ventura County Schools. More than 150 children's books were given out to participants.

Camarillo Public Library continues to prioritize enrichment and enjoyment. In December, the Library hosted a special guest from the North Pole. Santa Claus greeted 182 attendees and sang holiday classics like "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer." Children were able to meet Santa afterwards and take photos. The Library also added Toddler Storytime on Tuesday mornings and Preschool Storytime on Thursday mornings, with over 100 kids attending each week.



Homework Center - September 2022







Santa Storytime - December 2022



kidSTREAM upcycling workshop - January 2023



kidSTREAM upcycling workshop - April 2023



Youth Services Staff, "Find Your Voice"  
Summer Reading Kick-Off Event - June 2023

The Library partnered with kidSTREAM to provide two sustainable workshops under our *Cam I Am Sustainable* initiative. 50 people participated in the workshops, which involved upcycling household materials into beautiful creations.



# Teen Services

Camarillo Public Library empowers high school students with workshops on finances, managing stress, mindfulness and team building. Guided by the Teen Advisory Board (TAB), the Library hosted popular events for teens including a Book Convention with local authors attended by 26 people.

This year, Teen Services partnered with Russell Fischer Business Collection to offer career support. Before the holidays, RFBC led a “’Tis the Season to Get Hired” program to assist teens in starter resumes and finding jobs. For Financial Literacy Month in April, teens participated in a three-part “Money Basics for Teens” series of workshops that included banking and credit basics and budgeting 101.

The Library featured a “Women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)” series led by women in health sciences to discuss their careers and how they got there. Guests included:

- Dr. Sonsoles de Lacalle, Department Chair of Health Sciences at California State University Channel Islands
- Devi Nallamala, Engineering Manager at Ventura County Public Works Agency Engineering Services
- Kristin Ciciel, Research Fisheries Biologist for NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) at the Auke Bay Laboratories in Juneau, Alaska

Weekly after school programs help teens de-stress, including the popular crafternoons, Dungeons & Dragons, board games and book club. During finals week, the Library offered mindfulness and meditation workshops to support wellbeing and healthy habits.



‘Tis the Season to Get Hired - October 2022



Teen Halloween Costume Contest - October 2022



Women in STEM - Fall 2022

# Adult Services



The return of Camarillo Reads: One City, One Book featuring best-selling author Héctor Tobar was a highlight this year. Tobar discussed his latest book, *The Barbarian Nurseries*, to an audience of 68 participants. Camarillo Vice Mayor Susan Santangelo welcomed an enthusiastic crowd who received signed copies of the book. Younger readers enjoyed their own Camarillo Reads with a children's companion book, *Separate is Never Equal* by Duncan Tonatui and young adult companion book, *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* by Erika L. Sanchez.



Libraries have long served as locations for expanding and developing skills and knowledge; Camarillo Public Library engages in skill building via popular events for adults, from pickleball, digital photography, cyber security and introductory coding to meditation and upcycling. In celebration of our diverse community heritage, the Library hosted many cultural events throughout the year. For Hispanic Heritage Month in September and October, Flamenco 805 showcased the history of flamenco, dancing to an audience of 95. In January, 46 patrons attended a concert by Sean Gaskell, who played the kora, a West African harp. During Black History Month, Michael Stradford discussed his book, *MilesStyle: The Fashion of Miles Davis*. Women's History Month in April featured a look into being a museum curator with Taylor Bythewood-Porter, Assistant Curator at the California African American Museum, focusing on the importance of representation for women of color. For Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month in May, Library patrons participated in an origami workshop.



Camarillo Reads - October 2023

Library Director Mandy Nasr,  
Author Héctor Tobar, Vice-Mayor  
Susan Santangelo



As information access in digital forms continues to grow in popularity, the Library has acquired new databases to enhance patrons' experience. Highlights include:

- Consumer Reports, which provides patrons access to product reviews and buying guides to help save time and money
- Chilton Library, an authoritative database to assist car owners with DIY step-by-step repairs
- NewspaperArchive, the best stop to review newspapers from California. With over 19 million pages, patrons can review information as far back as 1774

Partnership expansion was another major focus this year. With the needs of Camarillo seniors in mind, the Library began development of its new Senior Resources webpage in collaboration with the Camarillo Council on Aging. The Council presented a series of senior resources, covering wellness and caregiving, public benefits and legal issues for the elderly. The Camarillo Health Care District complemented these efforts with their own series on the legal needs of seniors, discussing fraud protection, elder abuse, caregiving and estate planning.



Silent Book Club - 2023



Sweet 16 Library Birthday -  
March 31, 2023



# Adult Literacy Center

The Adult Literacy Center works with adult learners to build and develop English reading, writing and speaking skills. Learners are paired with volunteer tutors to meet regularly and create goals; together these one-on-one pairs work towards completing high school diploma equivalency tests, citizenship applications and vocational training. During FY2022-2023, 46 pairs of learners and tutors dedicated a total of 2,858 hours to improving adult literacy and English as Second Language (ESL) skills.

In March 2022, the Adult Literacy Center applied for a grant to start providing ESL tutoring and English conversation groups. The Library was awarded \$29,016 for an ESL grant in July 2022. Seven Literacy tutors have attended Laubach Literacy's ESL tutoring workshop, with five tutor and learner pairs matched since November of 2022. A tutor and her learner host a very popular conversation group on Zoom, and more in-person conversation groups are being added.

Learners continue to achieve life-changing successes. These include reading their first book in English, communicating effectively with medical personnel in a family emergency, obtaining promotions at work, volunteering at a hospital to work on English speaking skills, becoming certified in a career and obtaining U.S. citizenship. These goals were realized with the help and support of a tutor. We are grateful for the volunteer tutors that inspire our learners.





In May 2023, Adult Literacy Coordinator Mara Neuron co-hosted Literacy Coordinators from Santa Paula, Ventura County and Santa Barbara along with 26 tutors from these areas for a Tutor Forum at the Camarillo Public Library. California State Library Programs Consultant Beverly Schwartzberg spoke about the history of Adult Literacy in California and the value of its volunteer tutors. One of Camarillo's tutors made a connection with Santa Barbara's Literacy Coordinators and invited them to come and observe the conversation group that she hosts.

The Library was awarded a grant to begin offering Career Online High School scholarships in FY2023-2024. Career Online High School is an educational service powered by Smart Horizons Career Online Education that allows adults to earn an accredited high school diploma and credentialed career certificate at the same time.

**46**

PAIRS OF LEARNERS  
AND TUTORS

**2,858**

HOURS SPENT  
IMPROVING LITERACY



# Russell Fischer Business Collection



Operating within the Camarillo Public Library, the Russell Fischer Business Collection (RFBC) is embedded in the Camarillo business community and greater entrepreneur ecosystem. The RFBC provides professional and business development opportunities through special events and a curated collection of top business resources.



August 1, 2022 marked the first day as Business Services Coordinator for Maegan Profeta. Along with the traditional content of services in the RFBC, she brought the following themes into focus: RFBC's social media presence and engagement, women in the workplace and career help and financial literacy for teens and young adults.

"Dear Cammie" is an example of social media engagement that increased RFBC's reach and interaction with patrons and the community; the episodes have been viewed by a total of 4,240 Instagram users. Dear Cammie involves a Workplace Advice Specialist delivering sound workplace advice in an accessible manner to a younger generation of workers via Reels (short video clips on Instagram). Cammie answers patrons' questions about the workplace and introduces timely topics.

The "Women at Work" discussion panel focused on sharing perspectives about being a working woman in Ventura County. The discussion touched on unpaid labor, career strategies and resources and hopes for the future of working women. Panelists included:

- Mayor Susan Santangelo, City of Camarillo
- Councilmember Martita Martinez-Bravo, City of Camarillo
- Alice Foy, the Owner of The Digital Jane
- Rachael Laenen, Director of Farming and Operations for Kimball Avocados
- Alondra Gaytan, Director of Strategic Relations from the Economic Development Collaborative, moderated the panel

"Summer Job Ready" and "Quick Résumé Review Sessions" were a series of programs that helped teens and young adults prepare for summer work. The series covered summer job hunting, résumé and application guidelines and interview tips. Résumé reviews were offered after the initial program to help further support job seekers.



## Other Notable Programs:

- “Cybersecurity and Your Small Business”
- “’Tis the Season to Get Hired”
- “Digital Headshots”
- “Holiday Workplace Etiquette”
- “Holido’s and Holidon’ts: Workplace Advice for Everyone”
- “RFBC Recommends”
- Outreach at Camarillo Farmers Market
- “Diversity at Work”
- “California Inclusive Innovation Hub (iHub2)”
- “The Business of Conservation”
- “Money Basics for Teens”

Partnerships and collaborations were rekindled with the changing of the Business Services Coordinator. The Library formed a collaboration with *Economic Development Collaborative*, reignited budding partnerships with *Women’s Economic Ventures* and *SCORE Ventura* and forged a new connection with *Libraries Build Better Business* from the American Library Association.

Over the past year, the RFBC has reviewed and added *Gale Business: Entrepreneurship* and *Gale LegalForms* databases to better assist the small local business community with research and practical resources. Traditional offerings such as *Data Axel* and *Value Line* have also been kept.



Outreach Event - 2022



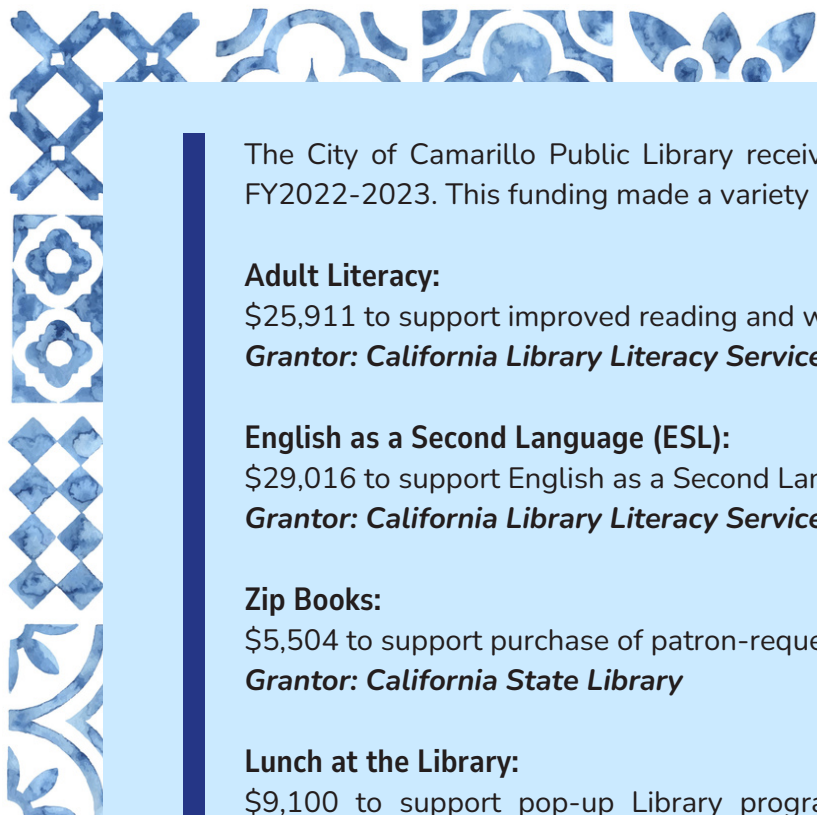
RFBC Women at Work Panel - March 2023

## Friends of the Camarillo Library



The Friends of the Camarillo Library generously donated \$145,000 in FY2022-2023, supporting book and material purchases, programs and services. The Friends raise funds through the Friends Bookstore, Community Giving Programs and Friends Tours, which include local trips to theater performances, museums, wineries and gardens. The Friends, who are always looking for new members, believe that when the Library thrives, the community thrives. If you are interested in joining, please email [membership@friendshipcamarillolibrary.org](mailto:membership@friendshipcamarillolibrary.org). The commitment and service of countless Friends’ members is truly astonishing and deeply appreciated.

# Special Projects and Additional Funding



The City of Camarillo Public Library received more than \$198,000 in grants during FY2022-2023. This funding made a variety of special projects and purchases possible.

## **Adult Literacy:**

\$25,911 to support improved reading and writing skills for adults.

**Grantor: California Library Literacy Services**

## **English as a Second Language (ESL):**

\$29,016 to support English as a Second Language conversation.

**Grantor: California Library Literacy Services**

## **Zip Books:**

\$5,504 to support purchase of patron-requested books.

**Grantor: California State Library**

## **Lunch at the Library:**

\$9,100 to support pop-up Library programming. Youth Services staff distributed books and promoted library resources to students attending summer lunch programs in the Pleasant Valley School District and at the Boys & Girls Club in Camarillo.

**Grantor: California State Library**

## **Camarillo's Great Outdoors:**

\$4,375 to support outdoor programming and exploration kits to take to local parks and beaches.

**Grantor: California State Library**

## **Cam I Am Sustainable:**

\$17,325 to provide sustainability programming and workshops.

**Grantor: California State Library**

## **Workforce Development Platforms: Coursera, GetSetUp, LinkedIn Learning, Northstar & Skillshare:**

Digital platforms designed to help Californians and their communities recover from the pandemic. These digital platforms offer resources for workforce development and recovery, test prep, career change, small business startup, digital skill building, soft skills, certifications and more.

Estimated value: \$125,000

**Grantor: California State Library**

**PressReader:**

Two-year subscription that allows patrons to read national and international newspapers (*USA Today*, *Daily Mail*) and magazines (*Forbes*, *Newsweek*, *Vogue*) without a paywall.

**Grantor:** *Southern California Library Cooperative (SCLC)*

**Parks Pass:**

Circulating park passes allow the holder's vehicle and all occupants to enter any of California's 200+ State Parks free of charge.

**Grantor:** *California State Library in partnership with California State Parks*

