



BUDA PUBLIC
LIBRARY
CONNECT WITH THE WORLD

For Immediate Release

Contact: David Marino, Communications Director

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BUDA PUBLIC LIBRARY RECEIVES GRANT TO ENHANCE LIBRARY'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Background: The Texas State Library and Archives Commission's CARES grant program funds library initiatives that support prevention, preparation, and response to the COVID-19 emergency.

Grant Information

Buda Public Library is excited to announce a grant award of \$17,500 to be used to enhance the library's response to COVID-19. In addition to creating online programs, the Buda Public Library will add "Science in a bag" and "Storytime in a bag" bundles available for check out so patrons can bring library programs home. Curated book bundles will be added to make selecting books quickly or through curbside service easier. Program and book bundles are expected to be available later this fall.

Buda Public Library's Programs: Response to COVID-19

On March 12, Buda Public Library staff were preparing to host a Family Science Night when word came that the event was temporarily canceled. This was the first of many programs to be canceled due to COVID-19. Library staff immediately began developing a digital program plan that would continue through the following months, including a video series called Watercolor Wednesday and Cards with Ms. Martha. When book publishers opened access to reading books online, staff added Toddler and Preschool Storytime to the video line-up.

The library closed its doors to the public at the end of March and while the library was able to re-open in June with limited hours, library staff made plans for virtual summer reading programs. Summer at Buda Public Library usually consists of fun reading clubs for all age groups that encourage reading for pleasure, weekly classes full of children and teens, multiple storytimes, and large events that bring enthusiastic and excited youth to the library.

Recognizing the need for quality summer programs, library staff created a virtual summer program that mimicked a typical summer schedule. "It was important for us to create a sense of comfort and consistency with what we have provided in the past, even if the medium was different," says Youth Librarian Caitlin Foley. Summer always starts with a large Kick Off Party that brings in hundreds of families. This year, the library provided a digital Kick off Variety Show featuring skits from library staff, magician Julian Franklin, and videos created by library teens. "Making the variety show was a huge learning curve. We went from no video programming experience to posting 4 videos a week and creating a 90 minute variety show in the span of 2 months," says Caitlin Foley.



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Weekly summer classes were held over Zoom, large events were moved online, and weekly videos were scheduled to go up onto Facebook and later added to the library's website. The library also provided journals and weekly prompts to children and teens along with crafting supplies.

In addition to offering classes and special events, the Buda Public Library made sure to offer Summer Reading Clubs to all age groups. "Summer provides students an opportunity to read totally for pleasure and it is so important for libraries to make it easy to find materials and encourage reading," says Assistant Director/Children's Librarian Martha Sanders. Reading club participants track time read on logs provided by the library and then return them for prizes via curbside service. Reading logs can be picked up and turned in until September 5, a date that was extended to coordinate with Hays CISD start date.

Buda Public Library strives to bring a sense of normalcy to the community by providing online programs but are aware that not everyone in the community has internet access. In fact, according to the census, 10.18% of households in Hays County have no internet access. During the COVID-19 crisis, this population is left out of all virtual programming and unable to connect with our digital materials. Several components of the summer reading program were designed to accommodate participants with a non-digital option including the journal program: craft kits and paper reading logs. The CARES grant will make it possible to further our reach by adding program bundles including "Science in a Bag" and "Storytime in a Bag" to the library collection. Program bundles will be open to all library card holders. Program bundles can be expected to be ready for check out later this fall.

This project is made possible by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services to TSLAC under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act. "Our community will have the opportunity to take home quality programs in a bag that will promote literacy and enrichment to inspire a love of lifelong learning," says Martha Sanders.

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