

The Library is Growing – Drew Brookhart

Is the library a growing organism? Dr. Shiyali Ramamrita Ranganathan, a librarian and mathematician working from the early 1920's to the late 1960's, developed "The Five Laws of Library Science." Ranganathan's Fifth Law states, *The Library is a Growing Organism*. In Columbus the library is without question growing, changing, shifting and adapting. This last spring I read the Director's Report from 1977, the year the library moved to its current location. In 1977 the library circulated 70,000 items. In 2015 the library is poised to crest 200,000 circulations. Nearly every Director's Report written for the Columbus Public Library notes an increase in use from the year before. In addition to people reading more books than ever, the library is growing to support new information needs. This past year the library supported over 40,000 public computer sessions and 160,000 wireless internet sessions, many of those originating from devices provided by the library. The library is also providing more opportunities to learn and interact. Well over 120 people attended a single event in the Children's Library on Friday afternoon. Each year more children, young adults, and adults have participated in library sponsored programming and events than the year before. Managing and providing access to digital content is a relatively new library service and guaranteed to be an area of future growth. The skills and roles of librarians are also growing to meet the diverse needs of the people we serve. The pace of growth is rapid and the stakes for success are high. The library stands at the center of a growing and changing information landscape that affects everyone from birth to death in nearly every aspect of their life. Children are growing up in a more competitive world making early literacy and the ability to quickly learn new skills more important than ever before. It's not just children, people of all ages are challenged as more of the information and resources necessary for civic engagement and financial success are pushed online. There is simply more information for the library to help people access. In the face of drastic change and a shift in skills needed for success we are very lucky to have a growing library. The deep community support for the library in Columbus echoes a belief in the value of education, independence, scholarship, self-improvement, equality, and compassion. We are all lucky to be surrounded by good neighbors. Connect with them at the library! This week is the perfect time to join the library's summer reading program. There are events for people of all ages happening all summer. All of the library's events are on the website calendar, Facebook, and Twitter. You can also sign up for the library's bi-monthly email newsletter. There are always new books and movies hitting the shelves. Thank you to everyone for making the library a vibrant resource. Let's all continue to grow the best library possible.