

PRESS RELEASE

WRL Named Virginia Library of the Year

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. (Aug. 24, 2023) – Williamsburg Regional Library (WRL) has been named the 2023 Virginia Library of the Year by the Virginia Library Association (VLA). This award is given annually to a Virginia library in recognition of distinguished achievement in service.

Virginia Library of the Year award recipients are selected based on several factors including creativity and innovation in library programming, the development of community partnerships, the implementation of services that other libraries can emulate, and job satisfaction for all employees. There are 94 libraries/library systems in Virginia, many of which have multiple branches.



Mother and child at the Kiwanis Kids Idea Studio. High-res photo available upon request.

“We are honored to receive the prestigious 2023 Library of the Year award based on WRL’s outstanding and robust programs, services, and partnerships,” said Library Director Betsy Fowler. “This recognition is a testament to the collaboration and support of the local jurisdictions who fund this regional library system, the dedication of our wonderful staff and the Library

Board of Trustees, the generous support from the Friends of WRL Foundation, and our tens of thousands of users who make the library a vibrant epicenter of our community.”

Over the last year, WRL built on its successful outreach programs by increasing digital literacy classes, expanding its Saturdays @ Frink programming, adding opportunities for Spanish-speaking English learners, and growing partnerships with other organizations such as Merrimac Juvenile Detention Center and James City County Parks and Recreation.

The popular Kiwanis Kids Idea Studio, WRL’s revolutionary integrated children's museum and library experience, enriches the lives of children in our community by offering accessible and family-friendly learning. With 130,000 visitors in one year, this innovative space has become a hub for families of all backgrounds to come together and explore learning in a fun, interactive way.

Over the past two years, almost 3,000 attendees have participated in Saturdays @ Frink programs, a weekly themed series hosted by WRL’s outreach team at the Abram Frink Jr. Community Center. Cena con Cuentos, a “dinner and stories” early literacy program for Spanish-speaking families, has introduced numerous children and caregivers to library services.

Over 57,000 residents of Williamsburg, James City County, and York County are active library users.

For more information about the awards given by the VLA, visit vla.org/vla-awards. For more information about WRL, visit wrl.org.

*The **Williamsburg Regional Library (WRL)** is an award-winning regional library system that consists of the Williamsburg Library on Scotland St. in Williamsburg, the James City County Library on Croaker Rd. in James City County, the Stryker Center on N. Boundary St. in Williamsburg, and its Mobile Library Services vehicles. The WRL service area includes the City of Williamsburg, James City County, and York County.*

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