

Elmhurst Library: Five-star success story

Elmhurst Public Library

Elmhurst Public Library proudly announced its designation as a five-star library in 2018 for the second year in a row.

The rating is the highest honor bestowed by Library Journal and Elmhurst's library has the distinction of being one of only three libraries in Illinois to receive it.

The honor concluded an eventful year for the library, which has a mission to be the center of the community and help it connect, create and explore.

Here's a look at some of the ways in which the library is approaching that mission:

- **Kids Library:** The newly renovated Kids' Department rethinks existing space to reflect the current needs and uses of cardholders. New features include a computer lab, a larger storytime room with improved lighting, a spacious early literacy area dubbed "The Learning Garden" and a new designated space for middle school students.

- **Social service interns and community needs assessment:** "Having someone with a social services background at the library is helpful not only for the public, but for staff," Director Mary Beth Harper says. "We are testing the waters to determine if this could be



COURTESY ELMHURST PUBLIC LIBRARY

Elmhurst Public Library's mission is to be the center of the community and help it connect, create and explore. It is one of only three in Illinois to receive a five-star rating last year from Library Journal.

a positive evolution of our services to promote a welcoming environment for all."

In tandem with bringing on two social service interns, the library conducted a community needs assessment to determine issues that were most prevalent in the population served by the library.

Because it is a public building, individuals walking through the door may be dealing with a variety of difficulties in varying degree: mental health

issues, job instability, domestic abuse, homelessness, dementia or stresses related to caregiving. Having a social service specialist available on-site to both staff and patrons adds another facet to the resources available to the community.

- **Common Connection Series launch:** Elmhurst Public Library consistently offers a wide variety of programs offered to all ages of visitors.

Each Common Connection theme, such as "Success" or "Health and

Wellness," strives to identify topics that influence our world and communities. Ideas are explored with a variety of programming using film, presentations and discussion to encourage critical thinking. Each quarter brings new ideas, fresh perspectives and deeper understanding.

- **Looking ahead:** In 2019, the library will continue to listen to the needs of its community to create a welcoming place for all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

The lobby will undergo a floor replacement, in addition to a staff area reconfiguration.

More innovative services are up for exploration, including but not limited to: after-hour outside locker pickup, expanded delivery services and a digital directory near the entrance to help visitors navigate areas of interest.

- **Adventure backpacks:** A new circulating collection, Adventure Backpacks, will launch in the spring. This exciting new project is a partnership with a local Eagle Scout candidate who assembled the backpacks for the library as part of a service project.

The backpacks, available for check-out, contain items geared toward learning while outdoors: binoculars, a compass and identification guides for birds, insects, or trees and more. For details, visit elmplib.org/adventure.

Elmhurst Art Museum looks to inspire community

Elmhurst Art Museum

The Elmhurst Art Museum has inspired its community through art, architecture and education since 1997.

The organization is dedicated to rotating contemporary art exhibitions, the celebration and preservation of a rare single-family home designed by Mies van der Rohe and ongoing educational programs that are available at no cost to interested groups, schools and individuals.

Here's a look at some current and upcoming exhibits at the museum at 150 S. Cottage Hill Ave.

- **The Whole World a Bauhaus runs through April 20.**

Touring the globe (Buenos Aires, Mexico City, Elmhurst and Karlsruhe), this exhibition celebrates the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Bauhaus, the legendary German school that



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revolutionized modern thinking and artistic approaches to industrialization. Photographs and documents combine with art and design pieces by Bauhaus masters and students — such as Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius, Wassily Kandinsky, Josef and Anni Albers, László Moholy-Nagy, Marcel Breuer and more.

- **Assaf Evron & Claudia Weber runs through April 14.**

Mies van der Rohe's McCormick House is the site of a two-person show by Chicago-based artists Assaf Evron and Claudia Weber.

- **Elmhurst Unit District 205 Student Art Exhibition runs May 4 and 5.**

This pop-up exhibition, featuring artwork by local students from District 205, will take place during Art in Wilder Park. Enjoy the exhibition and

a hands-on art activity. Free admission.

- **Education Center.**

The Education Center is the museum's learning hub providing relevant and vibrant programming that explores art interpretation and develops new hands-on artistic creations. Instructors work with both children and adults to deepen their knowledge of art and design with free school and public programs, year-round classes, summer camps and engaging community events.

Register now for instructional classes that are available for all ages. Offerings include subjects ranging from Drawing and Cartooning to Beginning Pottery to hands-on classes for 2- and 3-year-olds. Summer Break Art Camps are offered from June 10 to Aug. 9.

The museum's Teen Art Council is recruiting new members. With weekly

meetings, the group works with museum staff to amplify its own creative and curious voices.

Members of the council learn about the art of their time while planning their own events and organizing group projects related to the museum's exhibitions.

Here's a list of public programs coming to the museum:

- **Family Day: Bauhaus Workshop** from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday, April 6.

- **Lecture: Bauhaus Translated: Transcultural Encounters** with the Avant-garde School at 1:30 p.m. Sunday, April 7.

- **Teen Design Competition** from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, April 13.

- **McCormick House Tour** with Claudia Weber at 1:30 p.m. Sunday, April 14.

For details on the museum and its exhibits and programs, visit elmhurstartmuseum.org.