

# Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE March 20, 2023

TO Honorable Members of the Quality of Life, Arts, and Culture Committee

SUBJECT **City of Dallas Youth and Senior Programming**

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform and update the Members of the Quality of Life, Arts, and Culture Committee on the variety of programs and services the City of Dallas makes available to youth and seniors. Specifically, the citywide youth and senior programming provided by the Dallas Public Library, the Office of Arts and Culture, and the Dallas Police Department.

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## **Dallas Public Library**

### Senior Programming

The Library's senior services target city residents 60 and older and include wellness, safety, and engagement. They are offered at all locations based upon the needs and demographics of each library location. The goal is to provide opportunities for socialization to help decrease/prevent isolation and enhance connections to resources for maintaining independence. Current programs include:

- Medicare Assistance – workshops and one-on-one informational sessions
  - Healthcare Navigators - Parkland/Texas Health resource sessions; offered in English and Spanish
- Wellness – including chair yoga and DRUMBA
- Social programs – Coffee Club, knitting & crochet, Inspired Aging (arts-based residency program)
- Curbside service – available for seniors and disabled patrons upon request
- Library materials – large print materials and digital audiobooks

In March we will be launching Memory Care Kits at three branch locations (Highland Hills, North Oak Cliff, and Park Forest branches). The target audience is seniors (and their caregivers) experiencing memory loss or cognitive decline. The kits are designed to facilitate conversation, invite sharing, and ignite reminiscing about the past with themes such as sensory sounds, remembering the seasons, farm reminiscence, and remembering the 1960s. The kits are made possible by a grant from the Texas State Library & Archives Commission. In addition, the Library will begin checking out a limited number of CD players to help facilitate listening to audiobooks and music.

### Youth Programming

Early childhood services are offered at all 30 Dallas Public Library locations. These services target children ages 0 to 5 and are focused on pre-reading skills, social emotional learning and brain development. To help promote and emphasize these services they are branded as #ReadingReady. The purpose of these programs is to:

- Build early literacy skills through practice - talk, sing, write, play, read
- Promote school readiness – letter knowledge and self-regulation
- Model for parents and caregivers as their child’s first teacher

Current services include weekly storytime / *hora de cuentos* at library and community locations. Bookmarks at NorthPark Center and Youth Discovery Center at the J. Erik Jonsson Central Library are two spaces just for children with lots of programs and services. “Books for Dallas Babies” provides books and early literacy information to new parents at Parkland Hospital System. Through *First Readers*, the Library offers “Once Upon a Month” allowing parents to register to receive an age-appropriate book once a month via mail.

In late 2022 and early 2023, “Ready Reading Place Spaces” were installed at all library locations. These spaces encourage dramatic play, talking and vocabulary which are essential pre-reading skills. The spaces were privately funded through a very generous grant from the David M. Munson and Mona Campbell Munson Fund of The Dallas Foundation. The Library has received positive feedback from parents and staff regarding these spaces.

The Library is launching several new programs and services that support early childhood literacy efforts. They include:

- **Early Literacy Kits** - in cooperation with WIC clinics, the library will be distributing 10,000 early literacy kits at five clinics in equity priority neighborhoods. The kits encourage and support the parental role as a child’s first teacher
- **1000 Books Before Kindergarten** - promotes reading to newborns, infants and toddlers; improves vocabulary and school-readiness
- **Here Comes Kindergarten** - improves vocabulary and school-readiness; includes knowledge lessons like letters, numbers and shapes, as well as social-emotional skills

The Library shares space with nearby City facilities and schools. Library staff work together with Park and Recreation staff to plan joint programs.

- Playgrounds on site
  - Audelia Road Branch
  - Vickery Park Branch
- Co-located with DISD school
  - Hampton-Illinois Branch and Jimmie Tyler Brashear Elementary School
  - Arcadia Park Branch and Arcadia Park Elementary School
- Recreation Centers/Parks
  - Timberglen Branch
  - Fretz Park Branch
  - Grauwyler Park Branch
  - Kleberg-Rylie Branch
  - Mountain Creek Branch and Emerald Lake Park

- Community Centers
  - Martin Luther King, Jr. Branch and Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center
  - Dallas West Branch and West Dallas Multipurpose Center

### New Programming

The Library has several new programs and services planned for seniors and early childhood services.

- Senior Services
  - Continue developing relationships with partners to offer more programming
  - Continue adding more bilingual/Spanish language senior programming
- Early Childhood Services
  - Continue reaching out to areas where parents, caregivers and children gather
  - Continue installing MiniDPLs – bookshelves/browsing bins stocked with books for children to take home in areas where families gather
  - Begin implementing StoryWalks - movement and literacy boosting project that places an illustrated children's book, taken apart and displayed page by page, along a walking route in your community
    - Permanent and mobile StoryWalks will be located throughout the City; exploring partnership with Park & Recreation
- Target metrics
  - Early Childhood Alignment with Racial Equity Plan
    - Increase early childhood literacy initiatives, i.e., Storytime, kindergarten readiness programs, early literacy outreach, from 12 to 48 at libraries serving equity priority areas by September 30, 2024. (from Racial Equity Plan)
    - Distribute 10,000 early literacy kits at WIC clinics with survey that measures usefulness of kit
  - Senior Services
    - Increase senior programming by 20%

The Library would like to acknowledge the support of the Friends of Dallas Public Library, Inc. For making many of these programs possible by securing both private and corporate funding and ongoing advocacy work.

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## **Office of Arts and Culture**

### Senior Programming

The Community Arts Division's FY 21-22 Summer Residency Program provided specialized programming for senior citizens via B. Moore Dance who provided one 8-week residency in District 2 and a second 8-week session in District 6. These workshops were focused on choreography created by Artistic Director, Bridget L. Moore, based on a series of collage paintings created by artist-painter, Romare Bearden. Attendance for the

residency in District 2 was 40 seniors and for District 6 was 180 seniors. The residency program also included a senior-focused 8-week session hosted by the Ollimpaxqui Ballet Company in which seniors were able to learn dances focused on Latin American rhythms such as Merengue, Salsa, and Cumbia. The Ollimpaxqui Ballet Company Residency for seniors was held in District 11 at the Juniper Village at Preston Hollow. Attendance for this residency was 170. These residencies continued the priorities of the Dallas Cultural Plan to reach communities without direct access to arts and cultural programming, continuing to eliminate the barriers to quality of life for all Dallas residents.

The Latino Cultural Center's (LCC) current programs for seniors include its hallmark *Cine de Oro*, *Loteria*, and *LCC Line Dancing*. *Cine de Oro* takes place every third Wednesday of every month, from 10am - 1pm. This program provides a space for our community elders to socialize over coffee and pan dulce, following a screening of classic Spanish films. At the end of each season, the LCC hosts a *Loteria*, where seniors can win prizes, and invite their loved ones to join. In addition, the center partners with nonprofit organizations that focus on senior social services, such as AARP, empowering senior citizens with programs available through local nonprofits. Regular attendees include residents from nearby senior community centers and participants of PKR's Activate Senior Adult Programs. *LCC Line Dancing* takes place quarterly and provides much-needed socialization for the center's senior constituency. Most Latino/a seniors served through these programs came from historically underserved neighborhoods. These programs continue to advance the goals and priorities of the Dallas Cultural Plan and enhance BIPOC arts and cultural programming.

The Bath House Cultural Center (BHCC) will launch a monthly performing arts series this spring for senior citizens that will be hosted on Wednesday mornings. This program will be an extension of the Saturday matinees that the center's performing arts rental groups produce to better serve the senior citizen community in East Dallas and surrounding neighborhoods. For this new initiative, BHCC will target marketing efforts through grassroots communications, such as flyers and posters, in historically underserved neighborhoods in East and Northeast Dallas closest to the center.

### Youth Programming

*The School of Yes!* Summer Camp is a signature program between the Oak Cliff Cultural Center (OC3) and Cara Mia Theatre. The camp offers classes in theater, dance, music, and visual arts. Additionally, high school students take leadership, film and photography classes. The camp is open to a total of 75 students from ages 6—18; classes are split into three different age groups. As of FY 2021-22, 91.5% of youth who participate in this program are from historically disadvantaged communities, with 65% living in Oak Cliff and a total of 26 zip codes being served.

In summer 2022, the BHCC produced 2 summer camp programs that served different youth age groups. The first summer camp program was a collaboration with Out Loud Dallas to produce a 3-week summer-arts intensive in theater, visual art, dance, and music for students ages 11-14, with a culminating performance for the public at the end of camp.

The second program was a partnership with the Creative Arts Center of Dallas to produce a 2-week mural arts camp for students ages 14 to 18 years with a final mural unveiling at the end of camp. Over the course of the two programs, the center served 25 students with 160 hours of arts instruction by local working artists. Ninety-five percent of the students served through these camps came from historically underserved communities.

Additionally in FY 22-23, BHCC has expanded its youth programs to include a monthly family arts event, *Family Arts Bash!* with a targeted audience of 2-12-year-olds and their parents, a theater/dance Spring Break camp, and an after-school program for the fall. *Family Arts Bash!* has been a great success with an average attendance of 200 individuals per event and 63% of audiences identifying as BIPOC. As the additional programs begin this spring, staff will continue to collect demographic data and pivot as necessary to continue to prioritize BIPOC arts and cultural programming needs at the center.

In FY 22-23, South Dallas Cultural Center (SDCC) continues to have intergenerational and age-specific programming. From movement classes to theater performances to photography, SDCC's youth programs include: *The Smart Project* for teenage girls interested in art and technology; *First Step Ballet* classes (ages 4-10); and guitar lessons for youth conducted by Swan Strings. The SDCC's hallmark summer program *The Living Art Camp* in June with a projected total enrollment of approximately 50 students ages 8-14 is managed by SDCC's partner *Raise Your Voice*. Historically, a majority of SDCC's programming has reached historically underserved communities in South Dallas.

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### **Dallas Police Department**

On February 13, 2023, the Public Safety was briefed on DPD's Youth and Senior programs. For your quick reference, you can access the briefing presentation by copy and pasting the following link into your browser:

<https://cityofdallas.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6023998&GUID=9224AEB2-10D1-449D-A827-30B4DC884D5A&Options=&Search=>

The Dallas Police Department Violent Crime Plan includes the term Weeding and Seeding, weeding the criminal element off the street while planting positive seeds in our Dallas communities. Over the years, the Dallas Police Department has made significant effort to enhance relationships with the community and provide youth and seniors with activities and programs.

The Dallas Police Explorer program, which was established in 1973, allows youth between the ages of 14 through 21 to enter the program to engage with DPD personnel to enhance leadership, teamwork, and friendship. This program also helps youth develop positive character traits and provide service to the community.

The Junior Police Academy allows students from the 4<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade to enter a modified police academy setting to learn from various specialized units in the Department. This includes instruction from SWAT, Investigations, and the Motorcycle Unit.

Blue in the School was established in 2013. In partnership with DISD, DPD teaches 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, once a month. The children are taught life skills such as decision-making, self-confidence, peer pressure, and conflict management.

Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools (PTECH) partners with DISD and the Texas Education Agency. Certified uniformed Dallas Police Officers teach a criminal justice curriculum and provide further life-skills, development training, and education on the nature and complexity of law enforcement. Specifically, DPD is involved in the PTECH program at Bryan Adams High School, David. W Carter High School and Sunset High School.

The Dallas Police Athletic League became a charter member of the National Police Athletic League in 2007. PALS offers activities to Dallas residents from ages 8 to 18. One of the PALS programs is boxing. There are two gym locations, one at 6424 Elam Rd and the other at 9759 Forest Lane. These boxing gyms are open between 4:00 pm-8:00pm, Monday through Friday. In this boxing program, there are two categories, one for boxing basics and the other for competition boxing.

Lastly, the Dallas Police Department offers Disc Golf, Horsemanship, and Music classes. These programs are made possible with partnerships with other City of Dallas Departments and as well as other entities.

The Dallas Police Department's Neighborhood Police Officer Unit at each patrol division develop and maintain relationships with the established senior groups in their community. The NPOs host events that are tailored to the specific community need. These include Senior Health and Safety Fairs, Crime Watch Groups, and Volunteers in Patrol. The NPOs also provide educational presentations important for the safety and welfare of the city's senior population such as crime prevention and safety awareness, fraud and financial crimes prevention, and robbery prevention and identity theft prevention.

The Dallas Police Department stays committed to planting seeds throughout all the communities in the City of Dallas. The Dallas Police Department will continue to provide current programming while exploring new opportunities to expand youth and senior programming.

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These diverse programs are free to Dallas residents and enhance the quality of life throughout the city. Should you have any questions or would like to provide input, please do not hesitate to contact me or Jo Giudice, Director of the Dallas Public Library ([maryjo.giudice@dallas.gov](mailto:maryjo.giudice@dallas.gov)), Martine Philippe, Director of the Office of Arts and Culture

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