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## OUTSIDE THE LINES INSPIRES LIBRARIES WORLDWIDE

*Initiative empowers libraries to reach communities in bold, meaningful ways*

DENVER – Aug. 4, 2015 – More than 160 libraries and organizations from around the world have already signed up to participate in [Outside the Lines](#), a weeklong initiative celebrating the creativity and innovation happening in libraries. Started by a group of Colorado library marketers and directors, this campaign is inspiring libraries from Alaska to Guantanamo Bay, Puerto Rico to Australia, to reintroduce themselves to their communities through bold events and campaigns. Participating libraries cover a diverse sector of the industry, including military, academic, urban, rural and state libraries.

Building upon [the success of the initiative's inaugural year](#), libraries around the world are already planning new strategies to help reintroduce themselves to their communities and get people thinking – and talking – about these organizations in a whole new way. Below are stories from three different library systems on how they plan to do just that.

### **Taking it to the streets Oakland Public Library, Oakland, Calif.**

With 16 branches, the [Oakland Public Library](#) (OPL) serves a large, diverse population through innovative services, including a tool-lending program and mobile bike library. Additionally, OPL's African-American Museum & Library, Asian Branch and Cesar E. Chavez Branch specialize in historical and multi-lingual archival collections.

During Outside the Lines, Oakland Public Library will take to the streets – with bicycles, parades and pop-up parklets.

On Sept. 13, OPL's locally designed Bike Library will make an appearance at the annual Oakland Pride parade, providing materials for check-out, online library

card registration and demonstrations of online services such as access to ebooks and databases to parade participants and onlookers. On Sept. 18, the district's main branch in downtown Oakland will participate in Park(ing) Day, an international initiative to temporarily transform parking spots into public parks. Individuals walking past the library's two transformed parking spots are invited to relax, read or discuss favorite books with staff in these renovated public spaces.

"Getting outside of our library facilities into our community is something OPL does regularly, and being part of an initiative like Outside the Lines really helps us contextualize our work in a national effort," says Mana Tominaga, supervising librarian at Oakland Public Library. "Our OPL Bike Library makes it easy for us to get out to events and attract attention to the library. We're also excited to participate in Park(ing) Day for the third year in a row, raising awareness about the library's resources and our role as a public space."

### **Curiosity around the corner High Plains Library District, Weld County, Colo.**

The [High Plains Library District](#), which serves more than 246,000 residents and covers a geographic area of almost 4,000 square miles in northern Colorado, is working to create curiosity corners throughout the community for this year's Outside the Lines celebration. These spaces will introduce adults to the benefits of two forms of meditative art: coloring books for adults and zentangle. Both of these creative outlets are a major source of joy and relaxation that most adults can only vaguely recall doing as a child, but have been scientifically proven to help reduce stress and stimulate the senses.

"This year, High Plains Library District wanted to create an Outside the Lines experience that provided an unexpected experience for adults to just relax and breathe," says Kelli Johnson, public information manager for High Plains Library District. "Too often, adults go about life's daily activities – working, taking care of kids, cooking, cleaning, paying bills – and rarely taking a break for some much-needed and deserved 'me time.' We hope that by popping up in unexpected places we can give adults a break from life's daily pressures with this simple activity. This is every grown-up's chance to self-express and de-stress, if even just for a few minutes."

### **What you need to know – on the go Cedar Rapids Public Library, Cedar Rapids, Iowa**

"We know everyone needs to know something," says Amber Mussman, community relations manager at [Cedar Rapids Public Library](#). "Everyone has Googled something in the last week – whether it's a simple thing like a recipe or something more complicated, like how to find a family member's death certificate. Everyone is looking for some kind of knowledge, and the library has the expertise and the tools to help you find what you need to know."

During the week of Sept. 13-19, Cedar Rapids Public Library in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, will launch Pop-Up Reference, a series of stations throughout the city's busy cultural district, farmer's market and other unexpected places. Staff will be on hand to provide one-on-one assistance to community members, helping them learn whatever it is they need to know. In addition to direct, personal engagement with individuals, Pop-Up Reference booths will help to highlight one of the library's greatest resources – its staff.

“Positioning our Pop-Up Reference booth at high-traffic locations will act to both surprise the community and to demonstrate the various resources the library offers beyond the book and materials collection,” says Mussman. “The reference librarian will be able to both show off their tremendous reference skills as well as the many useful tools available to anyone via the library. This will demonstrate the extent of our resources as well as the significance of having well-trained, highly educated staff.”

In addition, CRPL will be expanding upon their participation in last year's Outside the Lines by distributing coasters throughout local restaurants, coffee shops and bars, encouraging community members to color or add their own artwork. Coasters will then be collected and transformed into a collaborative community art piece within the library.

### **Outside the Lines at a glance**

- Outside the Lines takes place Sept 13-19, 2015
- At least 160 participating libraries and organizations
- This year, Outside the Lines gains its first participating military library, the [Morale, Welfare and Recreation \(MWR\) Community Library](#) at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba
- [Endorsements](#) from best-selling author Clive Cussler and [EveryLibrary](#), America's first political action committee (PAC) dedicated to fundraising for library initiatives
- Participating academic libraries include University of Texas, Rutgers University, University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus, University of North Florida, State Fair Community College in Missouri
- Libraries, media and public encouraged to interact online using [#getOTL](#)

### **ABOUT OUTSIDE THE LINES**

Outside the Lines is an R-Squared initiative designed by Colorado library marketers and directors that gets libraries “walking the walk” – taking action to show our communities how important libraries are and how they've changed. This celebration takes many of the concepts discussed at R-Squared – The Risk & Reward Conference, such as creativity, customer curiosity, culture, community and creative spaces, and puts them into action where they count – in our local communities. Learn more at [getoutsidethelines.org](http://getoutsidethelines.org).

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