

CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG

LIBRARY

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2013

ANNUAL
REPORT

2013 Highlights

- Supporting Early Literacy
- Encouraging Educational Success
- Connecting Adults to New Jobs
- Expanding the Electronic Library
- Reaching Out to the Community
- Improving the Library's Potential

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Letter from the Library Leadership

Wow. What a year.

In fiscal 2013 the Library increased hours of service, the number of active cardholders, total circulation, digital activity, fundraising, the number of programs delivered, and our impact on and connections with the community. The resulting momentum would not have been possible without the financial support of Mecklenburg County citizens, the collaboration of partners like Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools, the hours of service by Library volunteers, the leadership of the Library Board of Trustees, the generosity of donors and grantees, and the dedication of Library staff.

The momentum of 2013 provided the perfect groundwork for charting the Library's path forward for the next several years. Armed with input from more than 5,000 Charlotte-Mecklenburg residents, we spent much of 2013 creating a fresh strategic roadmap that will inform our work over the next several years.

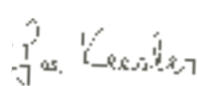
The Library has set its sights on three major goals:

- increasing community engagement and awareness;
- innovating for 21st century access; and
- improving operational excellence, fiscal stability and sustainability.

The plan's success will be measured by the Library's impact in four different dimensions: Library as Community Services Business; Library as Place; Library as Leader; and Library as Community Strategy. Supporting the goals and objectives of the plan is a new Library brand that was rolled out in the fall. We are excited about the road ahead for the Library, and look forward to communicating progress throughout the year.

To all who made 2013 such a success, we express our gratitude for the opportunity to serve this community. We hope you'll come see us at the Library soon, in person or online.

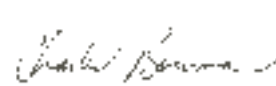
Sincerely,



Lee Keesler
Chief Executive Officer



David Singleton
Director of Libraries



Charles Bowman
Chair, Board of Trustees



Molly Griffin
Vice Chair, Board of Trustees



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Transition and Tributes: 2013 in Review

Whether in government, business, academics or sports, we rarely associate times of change with high praise. Like a car shifting gears, it seems that forward progress is usually limited until the adjustment is complete. Sometimes, however, a person, group or agency can exceed those expectations, and the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library did just that in 2013, producing that rare combination of change and accolades all at once.



Transitions

New Chief Executive Officer Lee Keesler took the reins at the start of the new fiscal year, meeting staff, volunteers and partners; learning about existing resources and programs; and providing his own experience and insight as he worked with Director of Libraries David Singleton to move the Library forward.

To complete the last of the 39 recommendations of the Future of the Library Task Force, the Library established the new Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation to bolster private support for the Library and developed a new strategic plan to guide the Library over the next three years and beyond.

While a few things did not change – like our primary focus on early literacy, our efforts to help school children and teens achieve educational success, and our workforce development programs for adults – Library staff found numerous ways to improve these efforts by identifying and strengthening key partnerships, securing new resources, and developing new programs.

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Meanwhile, the world continued its rapid shift from print to electronic media. The Library has not watched this change passively. In fact, the Library has embraced it by adding significant digital offerings to its collection and launching a new mobile application to provide library users easier access to library resources.

Tributes

We are always pleased when our internal benchmarks show that we are serving our public well and that they are satisfied with our efforts, but sometimes it takes an outsider's perspective to help you appreciate exactly what you have accomplished. Everyone involved in the Library can take pride in the following awards and recognitions earned in 2013:

- The Library's new mobile application earned two accolades:
 - > an A+ rating from ApWords
 - > the 2013 Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties.



- ImaginOn garnered three honors from three very diverse sources:
 - > Charlotte Magazine's Best of the Best Award for Story Time
 - > Inclusion as a reason for Livability.com's rating of Charlotte as #7 on its top list of family destinations
 - > Reading Rainbow's Top 10 list.
- The Teen Fashion Apprentice program at ImaginOn won the Young Adult Library Services Association's Program Award for Excellence in Library Services.

We believe many other Library efforts deserve positive recognition too, and we have highlighted many of these activities and programs in this annual report.

From One Great Year to the Next

With the Library achieving so many good results and accolades during the transition year of 2013, we look forward to seeing what's possible as we implement the new strategic plan and related efforts in the years ahead. Our team has laid the groundwork for continued growth and success; the future looks very bright and full of possibilities for both the Library and its many users.



Positive Momentum

Many of our year-end facts and figures are detailed elsewhere in this annual report, but a few are worth highlighting here. In Fiscal Year 2013, the Library:

- Grew total circulation by 4% over FY 2012, including +10% in the last quarter
- Increased digital circulation activity by 94%, continuing a trend of doubling annually
- Increased circulation/hour and active cardholders/hour well beyond pre-recession levels
- Recorded a composite customer satisfaction rate of 97%
- Exceeded annual fundraising goals by 35%.

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2013 HIGHLIGHTS



Supporting Early Literacy

While many of the details of our work change from year to year, early literacy is at the top of our priority list. The Library is, after all, the only large public institution that focuses on teaching this crucial skill to our youngest citizens – a skill that enables learning, understanding, and so much more in the years that follow. 2013 was no different in this regard, with our staff, volunteers, and partners working in many different ways to improve literacy for children from birth to pre-K.

- **A Wealth of Programs** – The Library offered 7,786 free programs in 2013 providing young children with tools for foundational reading, and parents with a sense of empowerment to be their children's first and best teachers. These programs positively impacted 125,870 children, parents and caregivers.

GET SET FOR KINDERGARTEN MAKES A REAL DIFFERENCE TO PEYTON

Peyton was a bright, but very shy, five-year-old. He had no problem talking to his mother, but he was extremely reluctant to speak up in a group or in front of other adults. Peyton and his mom attended the Library's Get Set for K programs in June and July at both Matthews and Mint Hill. By the end of this series of storytimes, Peyton was actively participating, raising his hand to answer questions, and speaking to the librarians after the program. Now Peyton is in Kindergarten and thriving, and according to his mother, this is due to his attendance at the Library's Get Set for Kindergarten programs.

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- **New Staff Leadership** – The Library created and filled a new Early Literacy Coordinator position to advance early literacy efforts involving the Library and all agencies and organizations involved in early literacy programs in Mecklenburg County.

- **New Offerings** – The Library added several new programs and initiatives to improve its early literacy efforts:

- > Opened an interactive, early literacy environment at C. W. Williams Health Center
- > Offered early literacy programs for young patients at Carolinas Medical Center

- > Pilot-tested an early literacy program at Montclair Elementary
- > Expanded the Reid Park Academy Initiative, by adding “Wee Read West,” an innovative, year-long reading program to help local pre-school children prepare for school.

- **Engaging Parents** – Parents play a crucial role in early literacy efforts, so the Library supported several programs to help parents encourage early literacy:
 - > For Teen Parents – Through “Care Ring – The Nurse Family Partnership Program,” the Library offered information for teen parents and their young children.

- > For Parents of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder – In collaboration with Smart Start and the Autism Society of Mecklenburg County, the Library provided free autism family resource guides and hosted related workshops.

- > For Parents Interested in Early Literacy Programs – The Library's early literacy resources were included in packets of materials provided to parents whose children were not accepted into the Bright Beginnings program, so that parents can learn and use other options to help build pre-literacy skills in their children.



Encouraging Educational Success

While we focus on early literacy as our top priority, the Library also emphasizes helping young students and teens achieve educational success, which is a strong predictor of career success. Whether providing a place to study, resources for research and learning, or special programming, we are dedicated to helping students succeed.

- **Partnering with Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools** – The Library implemented several efforts in 2013 to enhance its partnership with Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) to help make sure we are doing as much as possible to complement each other's efforts.
 - > Several library locations teamed up with Title I schools, such as Oaklawn and Pineville Elementary, to offer reading buddies programs, in which staff helped children practice reading aloud.
 - > CMS and the Library offered an “Every Child Ready to Read” workshop series at Westerly Hills.

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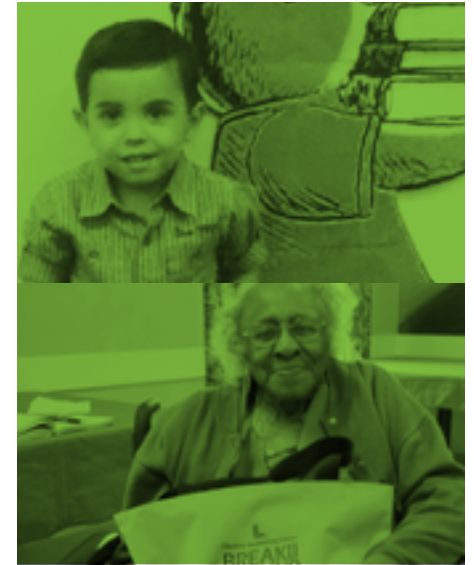
> The Library worked with CMS to identify and communicate to Library users a list of locations providing free hot meals to children and teens over the summer.

> The Library created a toolkit for hosting library card drives at schools (now available on cmlibrary.org) to help with the requests that branches receive during Library Card Sign-up Month (September).

- **Enhancing Summer Reading** – The Library conducts a robust Summer Reading program to help students sustain their academic gains from one school year to the next. In summer 2012, more than 22,000 individuals signed up for the Library's Summer Reading program – a 26% increase over 2011; participants documented more than 230,000 hours read. In 2013, the Library expanded its outreach to promote the Summer Reading program in local schools, on the web, in utility bill inserts, and elsewhere; early sign-ups indicated a large increase in participants for summer 2013.
- **Teen Tutors** – The Teen Tutoring Program offers teens an opportunity

to help younger students, while gaining service hours for school and job applications. The program appeals to both parents and youth because it provides free tutoring. In 2013 the program expanded to 901 tutoring sessions at four additional library locations.

- **Studio i Internship** – Developing 21st-century technology skills for teens is the focus of the "Studio i internship" at ImaginOn. Teen interns learn how to teach skills such as creating live action videos, digital animation and music creation.
- **Turn It Up: Teen Radio** – This collaborative program with Carolina School of Broadcasting and WFAE 90.7 FM incorporates literacy and public speaking into a curriculum that exposes teens to the journalism and radio broadcast industry.
- **Operation College Launch** – Operation College Launch (OCL) served 546 teens with 36 classes across the system in 2013, helping both teens and their parents navigate the challenging task of applying to and paying for college. 96% of evaluation respondents stated that they felt OCL classes helped them better prepare for college.



Congratulations to our Summer Reading winners Omar and Thelma Ivy

"WOW, I CAN READ ALL OF THIS FOR FREE?"

Alexa is a 9 year old girl who loves to read. The problem was she could only check out one book at a time from her school library, and she easily read that book in one night. Unable to get to the library every day, she often had to wait several days before she could check out a new book.

One day, Alexa's dad decided to take her to South County Regional Library. There she was told she could check out many books at the same time. She looked around at all the shelves of books in awe and said, "Wow, I can read all of these for free?"

Alexa now goes to the library regularly to check out lots of books, and she reads every day.

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Connecting Adults to New Jobs

Workforce development serves as an important cornerstone of the Library's service to adults in the Charlotte Mecklenburg community, helping more than 4,000 people each year develop skills and find jobs. Below we have highlighted a few of these diverse activities from the past year:

- **Jobs for the Homeless** – The Library focused on helping the homeless find jobs through a one-year Library Services and Technology Grant collaboration with the Urban Ministry Center. This joint effort connected 31 individuals with long-term employment; connected nearly 70 individuals with employment of some kind (i.e. temporary, part-time, full-time, contract, day-labor); and helped more than 200 clients update or edit their résumés.
- **Jobs for Non-Custodial Parents** – The Library supported two efforts to help non-custodial, unemployed parents gain employment. The Library served as the workforce development provider in the Tri-Metro Workforce Collaborative Project, which provides re-employment opportunities to non-custodial parents who are not paying their full child support obligations. Meanwhile, the Outreach department provided on-site workforce development sessions at the Child Support Enforcement office, with funding through Crossroads Charlotte.



SINGLE DAD GETS HIS LIFE BACK ON TRACK

John brought his kindergarten-aged son to the library every afternoon. His child used the children's computers while John used the Internet. One day, a library staff member named Cindy struck up a conversation with John and found out that he's a single dad and has been unemployed for several months. He had been coming every afternoon to use the Internet to job search.

A few weeks later, he saw Cindy again and informed her that he was offered a job at the airport. He was grateful for being able to bring his son to a place where he and his child could sit safely and quietly while he worked to get a job. He was so appreciative to be able to use the library to help get his life back on track.

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Expanding the Electronic Library

In 2013, we launched several initiatives to make it easier than ever for library users to connect with the Library electronically.

- **Going Mobile** – We launched a new mobile application to give citizens a new way to access the Library remotely. By May 2013, this award-winning app had been downloaded more than 11,000 times and was getting more than 280,000 queries per month.



- **New E-Services** – The Library added new digital content options to provide even more titles and better access for our library card holders, resulting in a 94% increase in circulation of digital content over the previous year:

> Online learning: Universal Class offers over 500 on-demand digital classes on a wide range of topics, from computer skills to career development.

> eBooks: Freeding delivers unlimited access to over 5,000 titles for reading and downloading.

> Digital magazines: Zinio makes hundreds of online magazines available to download and read.

> Digital music: Freegal provides access to several million songs from the Sony catalog of labels.

> Video: We began testing a service called Hoopla that offers cardholders access to thousands of movies, television programs, music albums and audio books.

> Improving E-Literacy – The Library also participated in the national "EveryoneOn" campaign to help more people expand digital technology skills.



Reaching Out to the Community

The Library connected with the local community in countless ways to expand its reach and impact in 2013 – securing volunteer and monetary support, engaging new partners and audiences, strengthening existing relationships, and offering new programs.

- **Benefiting from Volunteers** – During the year, 1,075 volunteers donated more than 62,000 hours of their time to support library services.

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- **Working with Donors** – Individuals, businesses, and foundations donated more than \$650,000 to support the Library's operations, enhance programs, and purchase new materials:
 - > Over 1,500 individuals and families provided contributions to help ensure access to Library services throughout Mecklenburg County.
 - > The Institute of Museums and Library Services awarded a two-year, \$244,452 grant to improve school readiness for children living near Reid Park Academy.
 - > Bank of America provided a \$50,000 grant to support access to Library services, programs, and books and materials.
 - > Sponsoring businesses donated over \$25,000 in prizes to help encourage participants in our summer reading program.
 - > The American Library Association provided a \$15,000 American Dream at Your Library grant to expand Spanish Language computer classes.
- **Celebrating Cultural Diversity** – In addition to our annual Dia celebration, the Library made several special efforts to reach out to a few of Charlotte Mecklenburg's many diverse cultures:
 - > The Library celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with a forum featuring Latin American professionals, designed to give teens and their families information on career choices and career paths. The Library offered a similar forum

for African-American History Month.

- > The Library secured a North Carolina Humanities Center grant to present "The African-American Experience—Looking Back, Looking Forward," in collaboration with the Harvey Gantt Center for African American Arts and Culture.
- > The Library created Diversity Kits to help staff strengthen pre-teen and children's services throughout the year. Similar baby kits were created in 2012 and used in over 270 programs in 2013.
- **Preserving Local History** – The Library advanced several efforts to help preserve our community's rich history:
 - > The Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room was selected to receive the entire print and photographic archives collection from the Charlotte Museum of History, including more than 6,000 manuscripts, photographs, maps, deeds, and other items.
 - > With support from the NC Humanities Council, we offered a series of well-attended programs on "Making Sense of the American Civil War," hosted at our Mint Hill and Matthews libraries.
 - > Working with the NC Digital Heritage Center, we digitized and made available the records of the Charlotte Chapter of the Negro and Professional Women's Association.
- **Helping Nonprofits** – As part of a three-year, \$60,000 grant from The Duke Endowment, the Library increased access to The Foundation

Center's premium databases of grant information and added new resource materials on non-profit development. Library visitors utilized these materials for more than 7,000 searches. The Library also provided monthly classes in grant seeking that served more than 300 people.

- **Supporting Seniors** – Through partnerships with Charlotte Mecklenburg Senior Centers, Senior Nutrition Program Sites, YMCA and Senior Care facilities, the Library provided literacy and workforce development programs in Spanish and English to hundreds of senior adults throughout our community.
- **Star Power** – We were honored to host several events that brought statewide and national attention to the Library – hosting NC State Treasurer Janet Cowell for story time during National Library Week and Financial Literacy Month; offering a tour of ImaginOn to NC Secretary of Cultural Resources Susan Kluttz; and hosting "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart" during the Democratic National Convention.

LIBRARY VOLUNTEER LULU MOLLER

In her own words, Lulu expresses what it means to volunteer at the library:

"Volunteering at Matthews Library is a great way to spend an afternoon. I enjoy meeting other volunteers, helping clients, shelving books, finding out about authors I'm not familiar with, and being there when new books arrive. I've also learned new computer skills thanks to volunteering here."

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Improving the Library's Potential

We are constantly striving to find new ways to work better and smarter, and the results show in the awards listed earlier and the many activities highlighted above. Our great staff and volunteers again provided their energy and many talents to help the Library succeed in 2013. They took on countless efforts every day to find better ways to deliver services, train new employees and volunteers, share best practices with their colleagues at other library systems, and serve library users more effectively. We sincerely

appreciate their efforts to deliver the best possible library experience to every person who walks into one of our twenty locations or is touched by Outreach Services or connects with us electronically.

- **Strategic Planning** – Strategic planning took center stage this year, as we worked to develop a comprehensive plan to guide the Library in its service to the Charlotte Mecklenburg community from 2013 to 2016 – and beyond. This effort has been led by

a steering committee of community leaders. Extensive feedback included public and staff focus groups, public and staff forums, and online surveys reaching over 5,000 people.

- **Encouraging Private Support** – We established the new Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation to work with individuals, civic groups, foundations and businesses to increase financial donations for library operations, programs, books and materials, and to build an unrestricted endowment.

- **Expanded Hours** – In addition to the electronic access improvements detailed above, the Library expanded access at many of its physical locations by adding a seventh day of service at the regional libraries during the school year and by adding hours at community and town libraries to expand to five full days of service. In an age of reduced government spending and services, we feel fortunate that the County provided additional funds so we could expand these hours and help the widest range of library users, from parents looking for new books to read to their toddlers, to school children doing their homework, to adults looking for jobs. The Library provides these services everyday to people throughout our community.

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Executive Leadership Team

The Library's Executive Leadership Team manages the Library and its 20 branches, ensuring residents of all ages across the county have access to information resources and skills development.

Lenoir C. "Lee" Keesler, Jr.
Chief Executive Officer

David Singleton
Director of Libraries

Cordelia Anderson, APR
Director of Marketing & Communications

Jenni Gaisbauer, CRFE
Executive Director, Library Foundation

Karen Beach, CRFE
Director of Resource Development

Frank Blair
Director of Technology & Operations

Angie Myers
Director of Finance

Rick Ricker
Director of Human Resources

Michele Gorman
Associate Director of Lifelong Learning

Lois Kilkka
Associate Director for Library Experiences

Leonora Kaufmann
Associate Director for Library Experiences

Linda Raymond
Associate Director for Access and Organizational Initiatives

Board of Trustees

The Charlotte Mecklenburg Library operates under the guidance of a volunteer Board of Trustees who give generously of their time, talent and support to further the Library's mission.

Charles Bowman, Chair

Molly Griffin, Vice Chair

Jennifer Appleby

Robin Branstrom

E. Reneé Casali

Robert E. Harrington

Gloria Kelley

Joan Martin

Leland Park

Robert Sink

Ed Williams

As established by the State of North Carolina, the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Board is composed of eleven members, ten of whom are appointed by the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners and one by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education. Appointees are selected from public applicants.

Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners

The nine-member Board of County Commissioners is the governing body of Mecklenburg County.

Trevor Fuller (Chair, At Large)

Kim M. Ratliff (Vice Chair, At Large)

Pat Cotham (At Large)

Karen Bentley (District 1)

Vilma Leake (District 2)

George Dunlap (District 3)

Dumont Clarke (District 4)

Matthew Ridenhour (District 5)

Bill James (District 6)

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The delivery of Library service is the result of a partnership between the Library and Mecklenburg County. The Library is the managing partner that delivers services, and the County is the funding partner that provides much of the funding for those services.

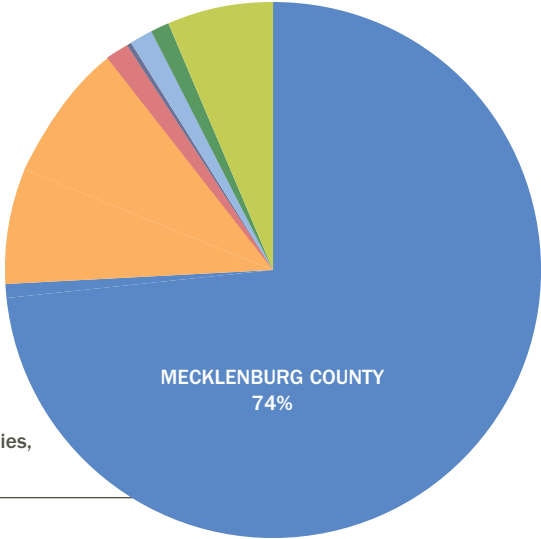
The Library receives most of its operational funding and services provision from Mecklenburg County. The State of North Carolina, City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg ABC Board provide additional funds to support operational expenses. Revenue from fines and fees is re-invested in the Library to provide additional support for facilities, materials, programs and operations. Additionally, numerous individuals, companies, and foundations provide gifts, grants, and sponsorships to support library services and to provide resource enhancements.

In 2012, the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation, a blended component unit of the Library, was established as a supporting organization in partnership with Foundation For The Carolinas. The Library has been designated as the beneficiary of the income of several endowments. The endowments are presented in the Library’s Non-Spendable Fund Balance as recorded through the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Foundation. This represents the principal portion of gifts that can’t be spent because they must be maintained intact.

FY13 REVENUE SOURCES

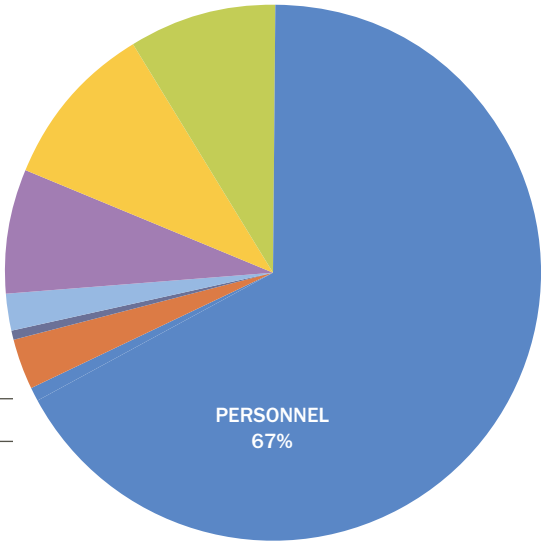
- MECKLENBURG COUNTY 74%
\$24,720,000
- PAID ON BEHALF OF MECK. CO.
(Services Provision) 6%
\$2,152,941
- ABC BOARD 1% / \$320,662
- STATE OF NC 2% / \$549,223
- FEDERAL <1% / \$70,680
- EARNINGS ON INVESTMENT 2%
(Foundation Fund) \$502,829
- LIBRARY FUNDS 15%
(Contributions, fines/fees, photocopies,
book sales, etc.) \$5,109,964

TOTAL REVENUE \$33,428,799



FY13 EXPENDITURES

- PERSONNEL 67%
\$20,359,273
 - FACILITY MAINTENANCE 9%
\$2,696,551
 - BOOKS AND MATERIALS 10%
\$3,035,331
 - OTHER 8% / \$2,263,727
 - FIXED CHARGES 2% / \$675,235
 - DEBT SERVICE 1% / \$214,165
 - CAPITAL OUTLAY 3% / \$922,805
- TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$30,372,814
- EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES \$3,261,711



*For details, see the FY2013 independent audit report available on cmlibrary.org/budget.



Library Locations

Beatties Ford Road Regional

Cornelius

Davidson

Hickory Grove

ImaginOn

Independence Regional

Main Library

Matthews

Mint Hill

Morrison Regional

Mountain Island

Myers Park

North County Regional

Plaza Midwood

Scaleybark

South County Regional

Steele Creek

Sugar Creek

University City Regional

West Boulevard

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