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URBAN LIBRARIES COUNCIL RECOGNIZES NASHVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY WITH 2021 INNOVATION AWARD

Digital Inclusion Initiatives Has Transformative Impact on Community

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The Urban Libraries Council announced Nashville Public Library as one of 10 Top Innovators during the 2021 Innovations Celebration held virtually on Jan. 21. The annual Innovations awards recognizes transformative programs that bridge digital divides, provide lifelong education opportunities, meet the needs of under-resourced populations and improve essential library service delivery from ULC's member library systems across the U.S. and Canada.

NPL's Telehealth for Older Adults, part of the library's Digital Inclusion Initiatives, was selected by a panel of expert judges from more than 250 submissions in 10 categories that showcase creative thinking and imaginative applications of library resources. Digital Inclusion Initiatives, under the leadership of manager Marian Christmon, won in the category of Digital Equity and Citizenship, with award winners being recognized for their level of inventiveness, the outcomes achieved and the ability for other libraries to adapt and implement their work.

"We're deeply honored to be recognized as a Top Innovator by the ULC. The work that Marian and her team are doing is not only crucial to bridging the digital divide in Nashville — it's actively keeping our city's most vulnerable population safer," said Kent Oliver, director of NPL. "There's this assumption that because online resources have become so prominent and widespread that everyone can readily access them. That's not always the case, and ensuring equity in access, regardless of financial ability or social class, is a core tenant of our library that I'm very proud to offer to Nashville."

"Creativity and inventive approaches continue to thrive at ULC member libraries, and this year's winners are no exception," said Urban Libraries Council President and CEO Susan Benton. "This year's submissions highlight our libraries' remarkable capacity for leadership, commitment and determination during a time of continued change and

stress. We celebrate Nashville Public Library for developing a leading-edge program that will transform their library and community, serving as a model for all public libraries in North America.”

The Telehealth for Older Adults program equips Nashville's senior population with the education, access and devices they need to receive healthcare, when possible, from the safety of their homes. During the pandemic, Telehealth use began to grow exponentially as people were seeking safer ways to access healthcare. Recognizing that older adults were the least prepared to do so, and the most vulnerable to social isolation, the staff of Digital Inclusion Initiatives focused services on those who do not have the financial means to acquire computer devices, in-home internet or training on their own, allowing them to be cared for and connected.

Nearly 250 Nashvillians benefited from Telehealth for Older Adults in 2021.

All 2021 ULC Innovations entries can be viewed at <https://urbanlibraries.org>.

About Nashville Public Library

With more than 2 million books, movies and music items to choose from, plus great programming and resources to improve early and adult literacy, STEAM, ESL and other key skills, NPL is Nashville's gateway to the best our city has to offer. Every year, across our 21-location system, thousands of visitors discover how our library lives up to our motto: at NPL, books are only half the story. To see how NPL can serve you, visit <https://library.nashville.org>

About Urban Libraries Council

The Urban Libraries Council is an innovation and impact tank of North America's leading public library systems. ULC drives cutting-edge research and strategic partnerships to elevate the power of libraries as essential, transformative institutions for the 21st century. More than 160 urban member libraries in the U.S. and Canada rely on ULC to identify significant challenges facing today's communities and provide new tools and techniques to help libraries achieve stronger outcomes in education, digital equity, workforce and economic development, and race and social equity.



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