

## Joint Position Paper on MCPL's FY 2023 Budget

We library lovers have been grateful for the strong support that the County Executive and County Council have given our libraries. With this support our libraries responded magnificently to the COVID crisis, finding many innovative ways to make their resources, delights and reassurances available to all of us even though their doors were closed.

More specifically, MCPL found ways to continue and expand its pre-pandemic efforts to offer new online resources, including a new online catalog interface. Thanks to these initiatives our library offerings today are richer than ever. This good news needs to go out to all our county residents. Thus, we urge the County Executive and Council to support the MCPL's efforts to make these new resources known to all our county residents.

With continued support our libraries can also restore their hours, continue to strengthen and expand their collections and programs, restart Storytime and other programs that help get our children ready for kindergarten, make their facilities available for literacy programs, help people find jobs and serve again as treasured community hubs across our various neighborhoods.

The pandemic showed us how farsighted the Executive and Council were when they emphasized the need to care for racial and social equity in all that our government does. The pandemic only underlined how important this is. It also demonstrated how important our libraries are in this effort. Our libraries and their enhanced programs and resources are a daily, living manifestation of equity; they are available to everyone. With continued, robust support from our county government, we can see this universal availability translated into universal use.