

Because of the New Haven Free Public Library...



Never underestimate the power of your library card.

For three weeks in March, we conducted an online survey, asking library patrons to tell us how the library has made a positive impact on their lives. 227 people told us what NHFPL means to them and we love the 173 stories they shared with us.

Denese Bellinger visits all the NHFPL branches and has her library card right on her key chain. As she says, ***"I treat my library card like American Express. 'I don't leave home without it.'"***

**EVERYONE HAS A PLACE HERE —
NHFPL is a community space
where all are welcome.**



The NHFPL is a great convener of people and organizations in New Haven. I always feel more connected to my community after being there.

The library is one of the few spaces in New Haven, where one can find a quiet place to write... The library provides a warm, safe, and noise-free space for creatives to work... The NHFPL nurtures intellectuals and thinkers... Many great books have come from New Haven and many of these authors have the library to thank for providing the resources and space to write.

I love to read but cannot afford to buy new books. The library network makes it so I can always get the book I want, and I always have a quiet place to read. Probably my favorite place in all of New Haven.

I love that the library is a civic hub for New Haven Residents. There is SO much [more] going on there than just borrowing books! They offer so many great activities and spaces for adults, children, and families! The Libraries (& Branch Libraries) are an essential part of our city!

*I love to read. I have always found a library to be part of my life since I was a child... **In my adult life with changing technology- it has been a place of community and resource...** At the library, over time, I have: entered competitions, exhibited writing or artwork, researched, studied, met friends for homework assignments, used community space for social or political gatherings, dances, films, yoga class, stop to read the bulletin board. I will always come to the library as a reader first, but I am thrilled to see the "library" embody new media, ways to communicate, be **a place of learning, art, culture, curiosity and encourage all variety of makers to learn and share.***

*Whenever I feel blue or lonely, I go to the library....no matter where I might be, geographically. **The library is a warm, welcoming, comfortable, safe and friendly place.** Almost like a church: so many others have been there before me, having similar feelings; collective comfort zone. **I like supporting the library.***

Because it helps me succeed in my life.

*From the patient and helpful librarians and staff, to the VITA volunteers, to the many people who devote their time and energy presenting programs -- **I would be lost, truly lost without my library!!** Topics and authors I would never have discovered, volunteer opportunities I wouldn't have had, computer skills that would still elude me, art I couldn't have discovered, support I didn't even know existed, people I wouldn't have met, community resources I couldn't have found on my own... It's all about connections. **If there is any single more important resource available to virtually everyone, I don't know what it is...***

First and foremost, the library is a place I can meet with people without paying to use the space (like in cafes).** I have had countless meetings there -- mostly private tutoring and small group discussions. Because of transport issues, these meetings are impossible to hold in a home... **without the library, there would be nowhere to go.

We cover all the bases with our **COLLECTIONS – PRINT AND DIGITAL** – of books, music, movies, museum and theater passes and more. How do you use our collections? Read on!



*I have been going to the library since I was a child. My childhood library was on Chapel Street. I enjoyed the quiet times that I spent there because I was a shy and quiet little girl. In reading I was able to go to places that little black girls from New Haven would probably never see, and meet historical figures that seem to be real after reading about them. **I hope that this generation knows how lucky they are to have libraries in this city.***

For more than 50 years, the library has provided me with many of the books I wanted to read.** Reading has always been my main occupation and avocation, so the library has been **essential to my life...

***The children's selection is good, especially world languages...** It's so great to be able to take out books and media from all branches too.*

*It gives me **free access to an incredible, diverse array of books** that I otherwise wouldn't have access to and for that I'll be forever grateful!*

*I borrow children's books to read to my grandchildren. I participate in the **Fair Haven Book Group**. I lead an **English conversation group for English learners**. I attend mini-concerts at the Fair Haven branch. I have gotten the **free pass to Long Wharf Theatre**. I have recently discovered **Hoopla** and have borrowed **audio books** and **movies**.*

*The library gives me a place to come to browse many types of books, to enhance my love of reading. **It opens doors for cultural and educational exploration.** I also enjoy spending time reading books in a safe and comfortable environment. **It is a great social outlet to talk with others, who share some of the same interests and ideas.***

*NHFPL has so many book options! ... **It's saving me money as a student who loves to read, but who can't necessarily afford new books for fun.***

*I love the wonderful vast selection of books. If there is a book I would like ordered for my book discussion group, the librarian orders a copy for me. **All the staff are always friendly and smiling;** and, the building inside and outside is always well kept and beautiful. **I love the main***

branch of the New Haven Public Library. It is always warm, inviting and I love going in to rent my books or to use the computer services there.

*I've always enjoyed reading, but until I moved to New Haven, I had not been a member of a public library since I was a kid... I'm in my twenties now, and I have more free time to read now than I've had in recent years. **NHFPL has not only provided me with access to the books on my to-read list but has also helped me discover new books and genres I would have otherwise passed over.** To me, one of the greatest attributes of a library is the ability for one to explore the physical space of the building--to peruse the shelves and discover something outside of one's usual areas of interest. As a side note, **I want to say I also really like the remote access to audiobooks (i.e., Overdrive)...***

*There are a lot of books in the world. Much as I'd like to I can't buy them all. **I may be old fashioned but that's what I use the NHFPL for: to get lost in the stacks, and find treasures.***

I love the Overdrive app available through NHFPL!** This has allowed me to explore new books, and to read more books than I normally would have, because reading (listening) is now so much more accessible! **This increase in accessibility to good books has improved my happiness and quality of life.

The New Haven Free Public Library is an integral part of my life.** While I would love to own all of the books in the world, it's simply not financially feasible... **Books enrich my life. Therefore the NHFPL enriches my life, and I am very grateful for that.

*I am an avid reader, going through three or four books a month. The information desk has been extremely helpful, providing help in finding books, getting information about books, and ordering books through inter-library loan... Being able to get them from a free public library makes a world of difference to me. Same with the New York Times, DVDs, and magazines like the New Yorker. **Being on fixed income, mainly social security, it means a lot to me to borrow such things so I can keep up with the news and make informed decisions as a voter and a citizen.** Finally, I really enjoy the writer's group, and discussion groups that the library offers from time to time. Nice to share experiences, and meet like-minded people this way.*

*It has been an excellent resource for books and CDs I need in my everyday life--money management, learning a foreign language. **As part of a group of volunteer ESL teachers, I appreciated using the space in the lower level of the main library; the Syrians in our ESL conversation group were thrilled to get library cards and see the Arabic books.***

Recorded books kept me company as I cleaned, cooked, and ate after being widowed.

*I have been getting **ebooks using Hoopla.** I've discovered new authors. It is very easy to use.*

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES are at the heart of how we strive to serve New Haven residents, often in collaboration with our stellar community partners.



*The Libraries in New Haven continue to surprise me with how many **valuable programs** there are for residents. **I've met new people, developed new skills and have learned about other programs in New Haven where I have connected.** Thank you for all you do!*

*I love the library for a quiet place to read, look at magazines, and attend community events... I've taken "library app" courses at the Mitchell library and the staff was friendly, patient, and competent... I was recently involved with a planning group that brought a replica of a solitary confinement cell to New Haven. Working with library staff was a positive experience. Staff were professional and enthusiastic and always helpful. I'm proud of the fact that our libraries are heating and cooling centers for men and women without homes. **All guests are treated with respect and dignity... Our libraries have evolved into full-fledged community centers. The computer will never replace the library. This is public tax dollars well spent. There's something for everybody at the library.***

*The library is a great place for **community events**. I have both hosted (via my role in a non-profit) and attended numerous **thought provoking events**: films, book talks, discussions, cooking presentation, etc.*

*I am from Mexico. We came to live on November 2015. My wife and I take care of our grandson every day. **One of the most valuable things we found in the library was the diversity of activities for us and for our grandson:** reading for kids, music during the summer, classes of English, museum tickets, etc.*

*The **NHFPL at Ives** has been a source of pleasure and entertainment; enabling me to indulge in my love of books, movies and music. **Ives has been a resource for information on social programs that have improved and enriched my life.** NHFPL at Ives has served as a quiet place where I can read, study or just relax.*

*My boys look forward to the library activities. Their monthly calendar provides us with **awesome opportunities to engage**. My children meet friends at the Lego center and love to rent movies and books. The staff is great and very helpful. **Thank you so much for allowing access for my kid's knowledge.***

READING across the ages happens at all NHFPL locations, whether you are in your early childhood years, learning a new language or embracing being a lifelong student!



The New Haven Free Public Library was a very helpful resource when I was taking college courses as their selection of material is enormous. For personal pleasure their selection of books, books on CD, movies (DVD & VHS) and music crosses a wide spectrum of my tastes... [There are] helpful staff who are always more than happy to be of assistance. Thank You!!

The local library has been a long time source of both intellectual and social enrichment for my entire family. From introducing my children to the joy of reading to connecting with neighbors, to being an abundant source of audiobooks for my commute. Be it a rainy day suitable for curling up in a quiet library corner with the latest best seller or a bright spring day where walking to Mitchell is a fun seasonal alternative, library trips continue to be a family favorite!

I don't have the money to buy all of the books I would like in order to grow my own literacy and the literacy of my daughter... by going to the library, I have been able to read more than 20 great works of literature this year already (and it's only March!) as well as borrow books to share with my daughter in our now-daily story-time!

As a senior, I am still studying at SCSU, I use the library resources for writing my papers for my classes.

I started coming to the library in 1957 at the age of 6 years old. My class from Sacred Heart School walked to the Davenport library on Port Sea Street. We sat while a librarian did story time. This instilled in me a great love for books that has stayed with me all my life! I love the New Haven Free Public Library system!

We have taken our grandchildren to the Mitchell Library and taken out books for them... We also attend interesting programs or lectures which are given in the community room. I have been visiting the Mitchell Library since I was a small child, beginning in 1948.

The library is an incredible partner is ensuring that all of our students have access to the resources they need to be successful as learners and informed residents.

*My son loves to read. He has spent upwards of 6 hours in a day reading. He receives special services at school for learning disabilities... **On home days, one of his favorite places is Ives branch. On vacation, he asks to go to the library wherever we happen to go.***

*I am so grateful of the opportunity of the library for my child. **I have a little girl of 9 years who is becoming an outstanding reader. I registered her 6 months ago, but I can't even count the number of books she has already read.** With this exercise, she has improved her reading skills, telling stories... I am so proud of her and the love of reading she has. I can now count on her to help me guide her siblings. Well done, great team of the New Haven Free Public Library.*

***Our daughters (7 and 10 years old) really fall in love with reading!** We take them to the library very often, they like to participate in children's programs and always take a lot of books to read! **My husband takes English twice a week! I can see how his English already improved! I am sure it will continue improving and will help him to find a better job in the future!** Thanks for your service! Our family really appreciate what you do!*

***The library is the place I go with my child to instill the pleasure of reading in him...** they hold a group reading class where parents and children take part in reading, singing and playing... essential for our **child development, social exposure and expression and reading and learning abilities.** We are very grateful to the staff for being actively involved in our development... Moreover I have been shown several computer programs and **I have been able to access critical computer knowledge.** We are very lucky to have the library close to our home and it's such a valuable time-pass in me and my child's life.*

***Materials from the library have helped me prepare lessons for teaching at the middle school level... especially the Fair Haven and Stetson branches. I am indebted to the librarians there!** My daughter and I would go to the Ives branch when she was young, and we would pick out books together. It was often the highlight of our week. We also participated in some of the innovated programs for children that the library offered.*

My baby is 13 months old, and we have really enjoyed borrowing board books at the New Haven Free Public Library during his first year of life...** he LOVES books... It's really remarkable for such a young baby, and **I hope it leads to a lifelong love affair with the written word.

*For 3 reasons: First helped me to improve my English reading thanks to their wide selection of books and magazines. Second because of their **professional volunteers and ESL teacher and programs my English improve a lot that it made easier my integration to the American Society.** Third it gave me the opportunity to volunteer teaching Spanish and give back a little bit of all what I have been given by the NHFPL.*

While so much is moving into the DIGITAL REALM, not everyone has all the tools at their disposal, and even if they do, libraries offer a place for access to computers, the internet, collaborative working and our supportive staff to help you find your way.



I depend on the internet to survive [on] what little I make, can't afford a computer right now, the branches (esp. in New Haven) do a great job.

*Recently while visiting the Elm Street Branch I was able to **print documents that I have saved on my flash drive and scan them to where they needed to be received on that day.***

*The Library has allowed me to **use the computers to access information** that was necessary in completing reports for my workman's compensation case.*

Help with downloading and print taxes. I got great help with doing it

*I use the **library computers to connect to the internet.***

*The **computer access** is wonderful and the staff are very helpful and provides assistances.*

*My grandsons have gotten so many books they enjoy. I am blessed to have the library within walking distance so I can have **internet access for all types of things and use the ability to print important papers.** Found SO many books from godly men and women, autobiographies. Wonderfully helpful library staff.*

Libraries are where we turn for so many things – **WORKING** life resources included, whether for building a **RESUME**, searching for **JOB**s or growing a **BUSINESS** plan.



Thanks to the NHFPL system I was able to update my resume and find a job. I also tutor youth and was able to help many children with their homework. This is an important service that I am happy to provide... The NHFPL enriches my life in many ways.

I was helped with my job searching skills, I appreciate forever, the personal attention I was given with the computer and having my resume put on my phone, I am thankful!

The New Haven Free Public Library had made a huge impact in my life because I couldn't afford to buy a laptop or computer in order for me to do my grad school course work. It has also made a huge impact in my life because this is where I produced a resume that has landed me the job of my dreams. I couldn't have done this without the help of the New Haven Free Public Library! THANK YOU!!

It helped me grow my business by the convenience of availability, open great hours, and being able to connect on the World Wide Web away from home is a plus in growing my business.

The library has helped me apply for jobs and find different opportunities for me to participate in around the city. It is just a positive space to be especially the teen center at the main library because I am in a space with people that are my age.

Everyone finds something at the library!



*Through the New Haven Free Public Library, I have: **used a computer to apply for jobs...** **received pro bono legal advice** from Ask an Attorney days; **seen mind-expanding talks and cultural performances**; **appreciated artworks created by our city's talented public school students...** taken advantage of an opportunity to **volunteer and give back to my community**; enjoyed a welcoming space to **research, hold meetings, and read**; made new friends and connected with old ones at Mardi Gras and other events; **and above all, read an ongoing stream of books at no cost. The public library keeps me actively learning!***

***We moved to New Haven a year ago.** We have used and enjoyed the offerings of the New Haven Public Library immensely. For starters, it **helped us gain an immediate sense of community.** My son took **teen classes**, and I took **computer classes**. In addition, I took **SCORE classes that helped provide useful information for starting my business...** A bonus perk of the library that has delighted us, is the **museum and theatre pass program...** Wow! Last, but not least, we make a weekly trip to one of the library branches for books and movies...*

*I love to read and the library has always been a great place for me to discover new fantasy and young adult novels. I also am using the **computer lab for homework, the internet, printing term papers, doing research in a quiet setting** and sometimes just to kill time. **Finally the library has been a great resource as a warming center when my boyfriend was homeless**, as well as a convenient location to have my taxes done.*