

ADVOCACY TOOLKIT



INTRODUCTION



Davenport Public Library is proud to be supported by our vibrant and diverse community! The resources on this page are intended to make it easy for you to share information about the value of The Library with your friends and family and to advocate for The Library with your elected officials and other community stakeholders.

Why is Advocacy Important?

Advocacy is critical for public libraries! By telling others about The Library's materials, programs, and services, you are:

- Showing how The Library positively impacts Davenport by connecting a diverse community to resources that educate, enrich, and entertain.
- Spreading awareness of free services that many in our community may not otherwise know about or have access to.
- Advocating for funding to meet our community's needs through The Library's resources.



The Library's Mission & Vision

Mission: The Library connects a diverse community to resources that educate, enrich, and entertain.

Vision: The Library aspires to create a community-wide culture of learning where everyone is empowered.

MORE ABOUT THE LIBRARY



FY2023 Statistics

278,922 Library Visits

393,953 Materials Circulated

218,604 Collection Size

36,912 Computer Uses

169,982 Wi-Fi Sessions

1,336 Programs

31,628 Program Attendees

650 Outreach Events

16,922 Outreach Attendees

Did you know?

You can borrow eBooks for FREE! With your Davenport Public Library card you can check out eBooks, digital audiobooks, magazines, movies, and music online 24/7, all free of charge.

You can discover your family history! The Main Library houses the 1,700+ title collection of the Scott County Iowa Genealogical Society, and the Richardson-Sloane Genealogical Library.

You can learn a musical instrument! The Library offers guitars and ukuleles for checkout, plus songbooks and guides to learning how to play!

You can start your very own garden! The Seed Library located at the Main Library provides free seeds to residents to promote lifelong learning and encourage stewardship of natural resources.

Library Stories

“Thanks so much for bringing the library books to the Sisters of Humility @ the Humility of Mary Center each month. Many of the sisters cannot get out of the house anymore, so this is a lifeline and something they look forward to.” -Shelly (Library outreach patron)

“I want to thank the Davenport Library and staff for organizing the back-to-school event at Fairmount. We do not have transportation and most of the back to school events are downtown. So having this event at Fairmount library meant a lot to us as we could easily walk to the library. Our family was able to benefit from much needed school supplies and a shoe gift card. Thank you Davenport Public Library for all you do for our community.” -Carlotta, Library patron



“Several members of the Book-a-Librarian team helped a patron throughout multiple steps of his job search process, from applying online to providing equipment and space for him to do a virtual interview. Today the patron informed me that he has been hired at the new Amazon warehouse just north of Davenport! He is excited to start in a couple of weeks and expressed his gratitude for the employees who helped him.” -Library staff

“During Party in the Park, we were giving away books to children when one stopped. The young person picked up a few books and put them next to her face and said this girl looks like me! Her mom then said ‘This is why representation matters!’” -Library staff

ADVOCACY TIPS



Top Ten Quick Advocacy Tips

When library issues arise in public policy debates, library advocates should be ready to reach out to their public officials and persuade them to protect our libraries and rights!

- 1. Get to know your local elected officials. Do not wait until you need something to connect.**
- 2. Do your homework. Reach out to the The Library, Iowa Library Association, or American Library Association for background on a specific issue and how best to frame the message.**
- 3. Know your audience. Research positions of elected officials in advance. Understand what they care about and consider how your request aligns with these.**
- 4. Contact elected officials personally. A meeting is better than a phone call, a phone call is better than an email, and an email is better than no contact.**
- 5. Always start with a thank you. Find something the elected official has recently supported which has a positive community impact and thank them for that.**
- 6. Keep it brief. Share the most important facts and the few best arguments.**
- 7. Make it personal. Explain how the issue impacts you and your family/friends...and their constituents!**
- 8. Make a clear request. Ask them specifically to SUPPORT the legislation, or OPPOSE the legislation, or help to change the legislation.**
- 9. Be polite, but direct, and try to get a commitment to support the library position.**
- 10. Follow up. Once the issue is resolved, make sure to thank those that supported the library, and know that more work needs to be done with those that did not.**



Content courtesy of Cedar Rapids Public Library <https://www.crlibrary.org/advocacy>

ADVOCACY TIPS (CONTINUED)



How to Talk with People Who Disagree with You

- Focus on the people, not the politics
- Build a relationship before talking politics
- Don't take comments personally
- Share your own relevant experiences
- Give a relatable hypothetical situation
- Find common ground
- Bond over less polarized issues
- Be open to listening and understanding
- Ask questions to understand a different viewpoint
- Focus on shared beliefs
- Stick to the facts and avoid confrontation
- Stick to information that can be verified
- Back up your opinions with evidence
- Limit emotion in discussion
- Avoid confrontational language
- Be an advocate rather than an opponent
- Adapt conversational style to audience
- Avoid words that might upset people
- Pick your battles
- Talk about local politics instead of national politics
- Focus on policy instead of party
- Avoid hot-button issues

Duchovnay, Marley, Moore, Casey, and Masullo, Gina M. (2020, July). How to Talk to People Who Disagree with You Politically. Center for Media Engagement. <https://mediaengagement.org/research/divided-communities>



ELECTED OFFICIALS



US Senate

Charles Grassley
(202) 224-3744
(563) 322-4331
www.grassley.senate.gov

Joni Ernst
(202) 224-3254
(563) 322-0677
www.ernst.senate.gov

US House of Representatives

Mariannette Miller-Meeks
(202) 225-6576
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www.millermeeks.house.gov

State Senators

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Scott Webster,
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State House Representatives

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Scott County Board of Supervisors

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Davenport City Council

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1st Ward: Rick Dunn
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3rd Ward: Marion Meginnis
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4th Ward: Jade Burkholder
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5th Ward: Tim Kelly
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6th Ward: Ben Jobgen
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7th Ward: Mhisho Lynch
(563) 370-2457
mhisho.lynch@davenportiowa.com

8th Ward: Paul Reinartz
(563) 888-2066
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At Large: Jazmin Newton
(563) 949-6032
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At Large: Kyle Gripp
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HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS



From humble beginnings as a reading room in the LeClaire Hotel in 1839, to three locations strategically placed around Davenport today, The Library has evolved over time to meet the needs of the community. Here are some of the ways The Library adapted throughout the years to serve the community in new and exciting ways!

- **1900:** The citizens of Davenport voted in favor of a public library tax to support Davenport Public Library - the first election held in Iowa in which women were allowed to vote!
- **1904:** Needing more space to house the many items of interest in our community, The Library moved out of the reading room and Davenport became home to the first Carnegie library west of the Mississippi River.

- **1969:** Ready to expand yet again, the historic Main Library was designed by world-famous architect Edward Durell Stone; over 50 years later it was listed as a contributing property to the National Register of Historic Places for the Downtown Davenport Historic District.
- **2005-2010:** To better serve people living on the west and east sides of Davenport to whom the Main Library was not accessible, the Branching Out campaign culminated with the opening of two branch libraries, Fairmount Branch and Eastern Branch.
- **2010:** Due to The Library's commitment to building a sustainable and efficient building, the Eastern Branch was designated a LEED-silver certified building.
- **2011:** In order to meet the needs of small business owners and entrepreneurs,

the Main Library became the first Patent and Trademark Resource Centers (PTRC) in Iowa, and the first all-electronic PTRC in the United States.

- **2021:** To provide better connection to critical local resources to underserved community members, Davenport Public Library became the first public library in Iowa to hire a social worker.
- **2021:** A substantial renovation of the Main Library added several new amenities for the community, including private study rooms, ADA-accessible restrooms, an enclosed children's area perfect for educational play, and Studio 321 Makerspace complete with a 3D printer and additional technology.
- **2023:** To promote early literacy, The Library partnered with Burgeon Group to enhance the children's areas at Fairmount Branch and Eastern Branch by adding new interactive art installations with lots of hands-on opportunities for children to talk, sing, read, write, and play.

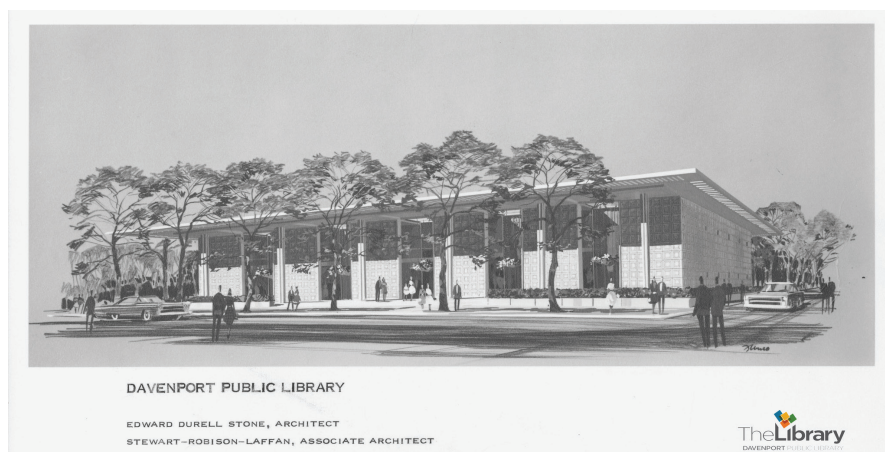


Photo Courtesy of Richardson-Sloane Special Collections Center

LIBRARY INFORMATION



Davenport Public Library Locations



Main Library

321 Main Street
Davenport, IA 52801
*featuring the Richardson-Sloane Special
Collections Center*



Fairmount Branch

3000 N. Fairmount Street
Davenport, IA 52804

EST. 2006



Eastern Branch

6000 Eastern Avenue
Davenport, IA 52807

EST. 2010

Contact The Library:

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