



701 Cocoa Avenue
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To our Library Community:

I'm always surprised by people's reactions when I tell them I'm a librarian. I sometimes receive an uncomfortable laugh with a joke about cardigans and hair buns but other times I get my favorite question, "do people still use libraries?"

"Why YES!" I reply, "Let me tell you all about it."

It is no secret that library use has changed. What once was a building for the storage and access of materials is now simultaneously used as a home office, classroom, study area, computer lab, civic center, early learning center and maker space. While people may not be using libraries in exactly the way they once were, they are in demand. Hershey Public Library currently has 34,000 library card holders, we welcome an average of 15,000 visitors per month and so far this year we've conducted 950 programs attracting 9,687 attendees. I'm happy to say, people use libraries.

Since library use has changed, it's imperative that we allow our spaces to accommodate these new functions. For this reason, I've been intentionally attending workshops, webinars and holding meetings with those who help plan library spaces. My favorite analogy is: *libraries used to be grocery stores, and now we need to be kitchens.*

How do we become a kitchen while maintaining the best things about being a grocery store? I'm excited to help answer that question with the help of our top-notch staff and devoted community.

Until next time,

Laura O'Grady