

Library Directors: Goals and Challenges

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Picture from: [PixelsTalk.net](https://www.pixels-talk.net)

Opening statement

Library Directors in the modern day face a variety of different challenges and have a new set of goals that are looking toward the future of libraries. To get a firsthand perspective on what these challenges and goals are I held an interview with Leigh Kapsos the current Director of the Grapevine Public Library. She had a lot of great information and insight into the problems and goals of a library director which include people, money, and outreach.

Methodology

The interview with Leigh Kapsos which this report refers to happened in her office at 2 in the afternoon. It went on for over 45 minutes and covered her and her library's goals, challenges and wishes. Leigh Kapsos is the Newest Director of the Grapevine Public Library and has been in the seat for roughly a year. She has worked at the library for over 20 years and prior to her promotion to Director she was the head of the Children's area for a long time. She works in tandem with Chad H. the library manager and went over the difficulties the two faced together when the previous director suddenly left.

Background

Goals

According to the article "Go for it! Advice from library directors" (Crane, 2019) the main job of the director of the library is to have a "vision" (Crane, 2019) of the future of their library. Mrs. Kapsos is no exception to this. Her vision for the future of the library is one where they have a greater outreach into the community as well as provide people of all ages with many opportunities to learn and many topics as she can. She refers to this vision, which she has had for 23 years, as "something for everyone." For example, she began the baby program in the children's section as well as many teen, adult and senior programs. She as structured this year which is the 100th year the library has been open as yearlong program known as the "Lifetime of learning." She hopes to make the library a place that will help anyone get the learning they want regardless of age. Through this year long program she plans to release many new additions to the library including instruments, a paper crafts room, a sowing room, a podcasting room, a coffee bar and laptops. All these new additions will be either for checkout or free use inside the library. In the future she hopes to make homeward delivery of books and have greater reach to underprivileged parts of the community as well as the community overall.

Challenges

According to Leigh Kapsos the main challenge she faces as a library director is people. She mentioned an ongoing legal battle with a man who was banned from the library for bothering the younger women. She also mentioned a person who was recently caught who was leaving inappropriate messages around the library. The most persistent long term problem being teenagers from near by schools who run around being loud and inappropriate to the point that they received permission from the police to call them whenever they start messing around.

Other possible Improvements

The last question asked in the interview was If you could magically make one big change to improve your Library right now--no limits, anything at all--what would it be? Kapsos comment to this was to expand the library by giving it a second floor and rearranging the layout to make the flow for one section to another better. As well as, provide more space for the smaller sections and have a actually quite space far enough from the children's section to actually be quite.

Conclusions

Overall the main goal of many libraries in the current time is to improve their outreach to their individual communities and increase the variety of their collections to more than just books. These improvements will help libraries to continue helping the people even in this new age of the internet.

As for the challenges all jobs not just libraries deal with people who cause problems all the time. As a public service libraries will obviously have to deal with this a bit more than a private business but hopefully soon there will be more rules and measures in place to deal with more problematic visitors. These must however be decided by the public or the courts not the library as they are a service to the public.

Closing statement

Libraries of the past focused on providing people with free and equal access to information. This is no longer as necessary as it was and libraries of the present are looking for new and more productive ways of using their budget. Soon people will be going to libraries not just for physical books but for free access to current technology and a variety of learning opportunities. All anyone will need to do is visit.

References

Crane, D. (2019). *Go for It! Advice from Library Directors*. Retrieved from Public Libraries Online: <https://publiclibrariesonline.org/2019/06/go-for-it-advice-from-library-directors/>

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