

# Libraries Bring Us Together

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CENTRAL  
ARKANSAS  
LIBRARY  
SYSTEM

*State of  
the Library*

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2019

The Central Arkansas  
Library System provides  
resources and services to  
help residents reach their  
full potential, and to inspire  
*discovery, learning, and  
cultural expression.*

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## Director's Letter

**P**ublic libraries have always brought people together from all walks of life, creating welcoming spaces in local neighborhoods and offering free resources for the entire community. In the past twenty years, CALS has built state-of-the-art branches across our service area, bringing books, internet access, classes, meeting rooms, story times, and helpful librarians within easy walking or driving distance.

Technology has multiplied our offerings and brought CALS resources even closer, so you can get them on your digital device, anywhere, any time. No matter where you live or what schedule you work, the vast, free resources of the library can appear in your hand, at your convenience.

But even after opening more access with our digital library, we know we can do more to serve the community. In a society often divided into polarized groups, public libraries are constantly working to strengthen community partnerships and bring people with diverse backgrounds and viewpoints into the same conversations. As a trusted hub of the community for over a century, your library system reaches out to the whole community, encouraging everyone to come together to build a better future.

One important cause in which we can unite with our community partners is to help boost reading literacy, especially for our children and youth. Children fall behind in the first three years of elementary school when they don't have access to books or the many benefits of reading regularly at home. Gaps in their language skills can develop that permanently affect their potential in school and at work.

Storybooks and library programs are still highly effective ways to help kids get the extra reading time they need, while making reading fun. We are looking for partners and ways to provide more intensive help with early childhood literacy.

Other key areas of focus for our library system partnerships are entrepreneurship training and support, business skills, and digital literacy of all kinds for adults and youth. As we develop new co-working labs and makerspaces for our communities, we will nurture the initiative that can spark new businesses and empower entrepreneurs.

Many public libraries from Seattle to St. Louis to Durham are offering programs and services that give people a chance to keep up with rapid technological change and acquire the skills they need in a knowledge-based economy. CALS shares this new cultural mission, and with the help of local partners will continue to create programs that address today's most significant workforce needs and keep opportunity open to all.

We embrace our growing, evolving commitment as a 21st century library. This report offers an overview of the many uplifting programs and initiatives now underway at CALS. As we continue to build new bridges to bring our community together, we welcome you to join us.

Nate Coulter, *Executive Director*



# Together, *We Are Vibrant and Diverse*



We *respect*  
diverse  
perspectives

*Trusted* and  
valued  
since **1910**

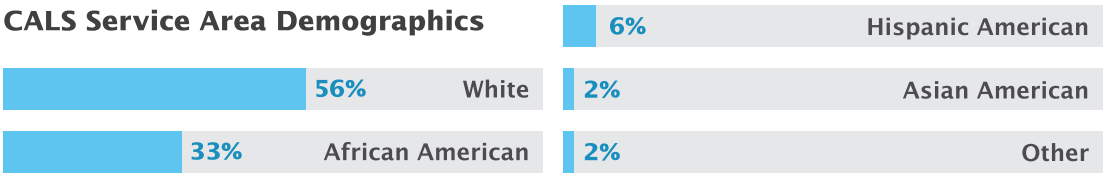
Upholding our  
mission as a  
*multicultural*  
*meeting place* for  
dialogue, learning,  
and fun

Our service  
area is home  
to **336,905**  
people

*1 in every  
10 people* in  
Arkansas lives  
in the CALS  
service area

All are  
*welcome*

**CALS Service Area Demographics**





# Together, *We* *Make a Difference*

## 2018 *at a Glance*

244,968 people  
served in over  
*10,700 programs*

Our digital library is now  
**26% of total** *circulation*

People walked through our doors **1.83 million times**,  
averaging **5000 visits per day**  
or **200 visits per hour**

49,366  
social media *followers*

**298** *staff*  
*members*

More than  
**2.6**  
**million**  
*items*  
*borrowed*  
digital and print

Close-knit  
*rural*  
towns

Energetic  
*urban*  
neighborhoods

Relaxed  
*suburban*  
communities

CALS supports 15 branches in *six cities and towns*.

Our facilities have won *architectural awards* for their *beauty* and  
their *environmentally sound design*.

Free *public meeting*  
*spaces* of all sizes, with  
audiovisual equipment,  
conference tables,  
and even kitchens

Executive *conference*  
*rooms* surrounded by  
stunning *art galleries*

*Downtown Library*  
*Square* includes a *state-*  
*of-the-art theater* and  
a *conference center*,  
available for rental  
for private events



# Together, *We Innovate for a 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Library*

As a 21<sup>st</sup>-century library, we remain committed to the historic mission of public libraries to make free resources of all kinds available to residents. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are now maintaining those resources in two complementary libraries: our *physical collection* and our *digital collection*.

## Physical Collection

- Books, CDs, DVDs, magazines
- Tools to work on homes, gardens, cars, & bikes
- Telescopes for gazing at the stars and learning to love science
- Toy library/birdwatching binoculars/fishing poles

Fishing poles, books, telescopes and tools are available in our physical collection.

## Digital Collections

CALS now also offers vast holdings of digital resources to enhance people's lives with maximum accessibility in a digital world. Patrons can read, watch, or listen 24 hours a day from any digital device. Digital circulation is now 26% of total circulation.

- audio books
- e-books
- e-magazines
- movies
- music

*anytime ... anywhere*

Use these apps to access our digital collections:



Our greenhouse at the children's library helps young people to learn about the natural world.



Changes to our culture and economy have created gaps in our social infrastructure, including a rising need for welcoming public meeting places. Public libraries bring diverse people together, create communal bonds and social opportunities, provide recreation and relaxation, and inspire action to address pressing community needs.

## Helping Vulnerable Community Members Find Support

Public libraries across the country understand that our mission of inclusivity welcomes and supports all people, including those who are homeless. CALS hired a full-time licensed social worker in February 2019 to help connect vulnerable and homeless populations with services they need. Our Community Resource Specialist is now serving as an expert resource for at-risk patrons as well as training and assisting library staff to help in compassionate and effective ways.

## Taking Care Of Our Planet With Sustainable Living

The new century's rising human population has also created an immediate need for education about sustainable living and how to care for the natural world. Our greenhouse and programs at the children's library help young people learn wise ways of living. In 2019, we added a 63.4 kilowatt solar panel array near the greenhouse to teach sustainable energy and lower electricity costs. The installation will include a traveling energy curriculum for the entire library system, enabled by a "solar suitcase" built by our energy partners, Entegriety.



Community Resource Specialist Rebecca Beadle (right) serves as an expert resource for at-risk patrons.





# Together, *We Realize Dreams*

## Bridging the Digital Divide

CALS offers free access to computers and the internet for patrons. In the Main Library alone, 37,934 users frequented the computer lab in 2018, logging 41,540 hours of usage. There were 7,752 logins to Lynda.com, offering thousands of courses on digital and business skills. Mobile printing came to all library branches in 2018, to allow patrons to print documents from any location with their digital devices

in order to increase speed of pickup and ease of access.

## Supporting our Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses

In 2018, CALS opened a digital studio at the Williams Library that is free and open to all library users in the CALS service area. The studio is equipped with a green screen, tripods, microphones, a product photography table, computers, and design software

to help entrepreneurs promote their small businesses online.

CALS also created a small business/ entrepreneurship education series (Business Launchpad) in partnership with several local groups and companies to teach skills necessary to entrepreneurship or business management and promotion. Classes such as “Finding the Perfect Franchise” helped our community members gain valuable insights from experts at the Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center.



## Digital literacy staff also taught over 40 face-to-face classes per month, including:

- keyboarding
- basic computer skills
- higher-level software such as Excel, Adobe Photoshop and InDesign
- marketing with Canva and MailChimp
- computer programming
- video editing

## Discovering Your True Potential at the Library: *Phillip Turner*

Now a successful young lawyer, Phillip had no idea what his future held when he was 14 years old and lived about a block from Parkview High. Bored after some friends moved away, he started hanging out at McMath Library.

“The McMath library staff was really welcoming and I kept informally helping them with work. So after about a year, when I was 15, they offered me a page job at \$6.55 an hour, I thought I was rich!”

But that was only the beginning of Phillip’s journey, as he was mentored by library staff who saw his tremendous potential.

“I was a first-generation college student, and my family didn’t have that college experience, so they didn’t really know how to direct me. They assumed I would go into the Air Force.”

“The only reason I went to college was that Tracey said, ‘Of course you’re going to school!’ Then other staff members started talking to me about college too. It was like a big family unit supporting me at every turn.”

Phillip worked summers at McMath Library as an undergraduate, then went on to law school at the University of Michigan. “Everybody at CALS still acted like my family,” he said. “They were focused on what would be best for me. They were not like ordinary coworkers.”

Phillip appreciates CALS not only for the lifechanging influence it had on him as a boy, but also for what the library continues to do for others.

“CALS is a group of people and services so integral to the community. The staff goes above and beyond to connect with every group—kids, the homeless, seniors, or working parents—to make their lives easier and help them feel valued.”



Staff who supported Phillip at McMath Library (from left), Laura Hodo, Joe Hudak and Tracey Eatmon.



Phillip Turner believes the staff at CALS McMath Library changed the course of his life.





# Together, *We Build Strong Communities*

Scores of partnerships happen every day at CALS that enrich our neighborhoods and our people's lives.

## CALS Takes a Mighty Step to Reduce Youth Hunger

Over the course of twelve months, Be Mighty Little Rock created an unprecedented partnership of major organizations across the city to help kids, teens, and their families. CALS administered this program through a grant awarded by the National League of Cities, so Be Mighty could connect

kids and teens with nutritious meals throughout the school year and even summer months. Partners in Be Mighty included the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance, the Little Rock School District, the City of Little Rock, Rock Region METRO, the city Parks and Recreation department, and many more.

Be Mighty meal sites serve young people all year round, but summer months

are a special high-risk time for food insecurity. Kids who ordinarily get much of their nutrition through school meals during the school year may face family challenges during the summer that leave them hungry. In summer 2019, our CALS meals sites served an amazing 50 percent more summer meals than the previous year, helping to make sure kids stayed healthy all summer!

Be Mighty kids celebrate the end of summer with a splash party.



CALS staffer Katharine DeRosette kicks off the campaign with our partners.



A major help to many families was the crucial Be Mighty partnership with Rock Region METRO that allowed many families with transportation challenges to get to the meal sites where food was being served. Thanks to a grant from the National Recreation and Park Association, CALS distributed **1,200** Be Mighty METRO passes that provided kids, teens, and caregivers unlimited rides on any Rock Region METRO Route from June 1-July 31 resulting in **16,792** rides.

The strong partnerships forged through Be Mighty Little Rock continue to spark ideas for future collaborations to benefit the people of our community.

*Summer Meals*  
served at CALS  
library meal sites

2018  
**4,483**  
*meals*  
served

2019  
**6,709**  
*meals*  
served





Wendy Maruyama, *The Tag Project*, on loan from the AAC



## Supporting Arts and Culture

A major new partnership beginning in 2019 allows the Arkansas Arts Center to teach many classes in CALS branches, as the center begins a massive two-year remodeling process that will close down its usual facility. By hosting the AAC in our well-equipped public meeting spaces, we assist this vital cultural institution to keep its connection with the people of our region. Art and crafts from the AAC will appear on display in branches across CALS.

## Encouraging Civic Engagement

In 2018, CALS partnered with KUAR, the League of Women Voters of Pulaski County and the American Association of University Women of Little Rock to host five forums with all candidates for mayor of Little Rock, bringing the democratic process into neighborhoods across the city and fostering community dialogue. The partnership continues in

2019 with branch library-based “Issues that Matter” forums on topics such as education and the environment.

## Educating Our Students

Partnering with schools across our region brought digital-access Tech Cards to over 40,000 students in 2018. Tech Cards allow students free access to our vast digital resources from any digital device, so all students can read,

research, or study wherever they are, whether or not they or their parents have a standard library card. Partner schools that have received student Tech Cards include the Little Rock School District, Pulaski County Special School District, Jacksonville North Pulaski School District, Perryville School District, East End School District, Pulaski Academy, Episcopal Collegiate, Christ the King Catholic School, Quest Academy, eStem Public Charter Schools, and more.

All candidates for mayor of Little Rock spoke in forums at our branch libraries in 2018 (left). “Issues that Matter” public forums continue in 2019 (right).



# Showing the Heart of the Library

Branch Manager *Latina Sheard* Gives Hugs and School Help



Latina Sheard receives hugs from kids at Williams Library.

**L**atina Sheard has been with CALS for 23 years, and for the last twelve, she has been the manager of the Williams Library, which runs a thriving after-school program mostly attended by 11 to 14-year-olds.

Having grown up in a low-income neighborhood herself, Latina knows how important these nurturing and educational programs can be for young teens. “I know how much those programs meant to me when I was

their age, so I try to serve our library kids the same way,” she said.

“Some kids who come here after school just come because they love books or want to be with their friends. But others come for more serious reasons. I don’t have to know why a kid comes into the library instead of wanting to go home. I don’t have to know the specific reason, because I know what we do is saving lives, and boosting self-esteem for some kids.

We give a lot of hugs, and the way we interact with the kids is very motherly. Sometimes people will ask, ‘Is that your kid?’ ”

“Sometimes you just know, when you see the kids who want a hug every single day, that no one’s hugging them at home. I don’t need every kid to tell me how much it means to them, because I know, deep down inside, that it’s making a difference.”



# Together, We Care for Our Youth

**Summer Reading Club**  
In 2019, registrations for Summer Reading Club rose an astonishing 27%.

Kids and adults all over the city had a blast with “A Universe of Stories,” including our space-themed programming and online reading log that allowed patrons to earn fun rewards for reading, watching movies, or attending summer events. Science fiction met science fact when popular astronomer Phil Plait brought his nationally renowned humor to a fascinating presentation for all ages about the possibility of life on other planets. Our library branches hosted events such as live reptile visits from Arkansas State Parks, puppet shows from talented local entertainers, and galaxy painting classes for all ages.



Kids across our service area learned to build circuits with STEM kits and our dedicated staff.



Community volunteers from the 501<sup>st</sup> Legion appeared in Star Wars garb to thrill moviegoers of all ages.



Nationally known *speakers* and *authors* and *beloved local entertainers* came together to encourage literacy and science.

Parents have access to an *always-fresh supply of classics* and *new books* to read to their children.



**Storytimes/Literacy**  
In 2018, CALS branches hosted over *1400 storytimes* to encourage the love of books for our littlest patrons with interactive fun.



**Toy Library**  
The Wilson family of Jacksonville, Arkansas donated a toy library of top-quality educational toys to our Nixon Library branch to *stimulate active play* and *healthy development* for all children.



**Teens**  
Teens attended our teen programs over *53,000 times* in 2018. CALS offered an average of *200 teen programs per month*.



# Together, *We Embrace Learning*

Our local history and genealogy collections offer people of all ages a window into community and family history. Professional archivists and our resident genealogist assist the public every day to find needed information.

The CALS Encyclopedia of Arkansas is the major online resource for up-to-date information on all Arkansas-related topics from history and culture to sports, cities and towns, art, civil rights, land, law, wildlife, or local festivals. The online encyclopedia receives over 1.5 million visitors annually and includes over 5800 entries in 2019, with approximately 30 to 40 new entries added each month.



Middle school students discover the excitement of city planning using our century-old maps and neighborhood records.



A Korean American teen makes contact with veterans of the Korean war to thank them for their service.



Our free annual genealogy workshop draws an audience of hundreds.

**27,595**  
*genealogy questions*  
answered in 2018

We offer a wide variety of *adult programs* that are always evolving to answer the needs of the community.

The Arkansas Chapter of AARP taught *classes to help caregivers* identify the signs of dementia and find support.

Workforce development teaches skills such as *resume building* or *how to find work* to rebuild a meaningful life after a criminal conviction.



Programs in *yoga* and *meditation* assist participants to ease stress in body and mind.



Branches across the system led *fitness classes*, *walking clubs*, and interactive programs in *cooking healthy food* and buying nutritious groceries on a budget.



*Art, craft*, and *sewing classes* kindle creative impulses. *Book clubs* encourage conversation and friendships.



# Together, *We Are Inspired*

In 2018, we rebranded our downtown campus as **Library Square**.

The rebranding emphasizes pedestrian accessibility and the variety of free or low-priced educational, cultural, and recreational offerings at Library Square. The high visibility of the CALS downtown campus from the highway offers the downtown Little Rock area a crucial showcase for walkability and urban appeal, inviting travelers to stop not only for Library Square but for downtown museums, historical attractions, nightclubs, shops, and restaurants.

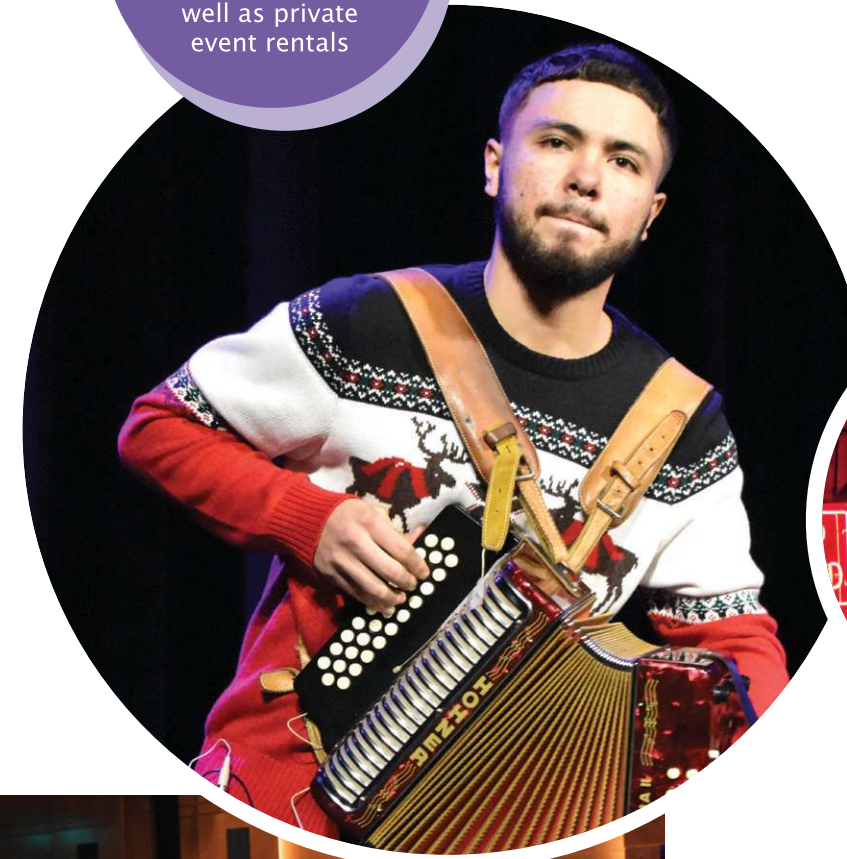


Used bookstore with thousands of discounted books and literary gifts

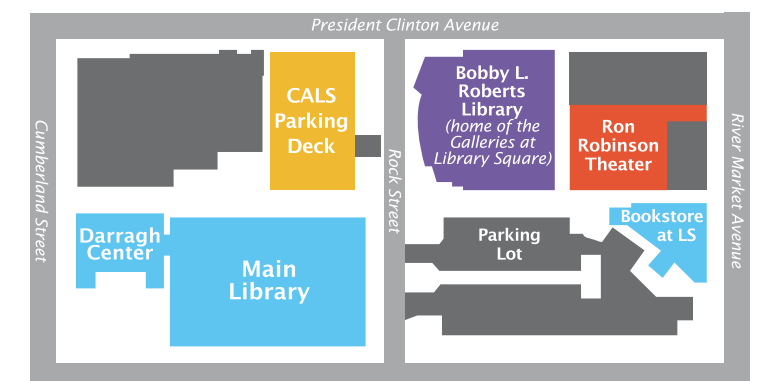
Free and low-cost executive meeting rooms for groups of 5 to 100

State-of-the-art CALS Ron Robinson Theater features films, musical concerts, and speakers, as well as private event rentals

Five art galleries host lively exhibitions of Arkansan arts and crafts



## CALS Library Square Map





# Together, *We Share Stories*



## The Six Bridges Book Festival in April celebrates reading, literacy, stories and wordsmithing.

Scores of nationally known authors converge on the city to offer panels on a wide variety of topics, from cooking demonstrations to award-winning comedy to personal stories of tornado-chasing.

Children and teens enjoy drama and music, animal visits, poetry contests, and more.

Authors reach out with “Writers in the Schools” (WITS), bringing the joy of writing to hundreds of students in the Little Rock area.

Concerts, films, readings, and author parties enhance the festive atmosphere

across 18 venues in the metropolitan area, where events are held in museums, restaurants, the Clinton Presidential Library, and the CALS Ron Robinson Theater as well as in many library buildings.

A new vision for even greater community involvement begins with our planning process for the 2020 Festival.



“We will involve many people from our community in the selection of presenters and activities, so they know their reading interests and the stories that fascinate them are central to the festival.”

- Executive Director Nate Coulter



Book Fest hosts live performances at local clubs



**CALS welcomes acclaimed authors, journalists, thought leaders, and public figures.**

- Delia Owens, #1 bestselling author of *Where the Crawdads Sing* (above right)
- James Fallows, correspondent for the *Atlantic Monthly*, on revitalizing American towns
- Walter E. Hussman, Jr., publisher of the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*
- Susan Orlean, critically acclaimed author of *The Library Book* and *The Orchid Thief*
- Susan N. Herman, President of the ACLU
- James Moses on the legacy of Rabbi Ira Sanders, a pillar of Little Rock social justice for years (above left)



# Together, *We Serve and Give*



## Volunteers

Our community volunteers are a central part of our work. Service-minded adults and teens worked individually or in teams from schools or businesses, contributing over 11,000 hours of service in 2018 and saving our library system more than \$273,000. Whether they are ushering events, re-shelving books, supporting our Book Festival, helping kids with crafts, or presenting public programs, our volunteers are indispensable.

**Friends of Central Arkansas Libraries** are volunteers who manage and organize hundreds of thousands

of books and other items donated to the library into a tri-annual series of public book sales. The Friends' long hours in the library basement and the support of thousands of sale-goers raised over \$50,000 for library programs and branches.

## Philanthropy

Generous individuals, families, and local businesses sponsor events and donate funds that help us keep our collections up-to-date and allow us to provide the many free resources that supply our programs. Endowing the

library with an estate gift leaves our community a legacy of education and opportunity that changes lives.

One unforgettable memorial gift of 2018 was the new birdwatching area donated to Fletcher Library in memory of Alan Ross Kumpe. In addition to the birdbath and bird feeders outside the library and the related artwork and books inside, the entire library system received two sets of bird binoculars and field guides for each branch library, and a program kit to be circulated around the system for field expeditions with as many as 20 participants at a time.



# 2019 *Board Members*

## CALS Foundation Board of Directors

Gayle Corley  
*President*

Del Boyette  
John Bush

Molly McNulty  
Cathy Spivey

Wilson Jones  
*Vice President*

Annette Herrington

Fred Ursery

## Central Arkansas Library System Board of Trustees

### Little Rock Appointees

John Bush

Marian Berry  
*President*

Annette Herrington  
*Treasurer*

Marilynn Porter

Nancy Rousseau  
*Vice-President*

Sophia Said

Sheila Wright

### Pulaski County Appointees

Robert Brown

Andre Guerrero

### Perry County Appointee

Sarah French

### Jacksonville Appointee

Kelly Moss

### Sherwood Appointee

Brandon Grice

### Maumelle Appointee

Stephanie Gibson Branton





# Together, *We Share Resources Wisely*

## What’s Your CALS Card Worth?

The price of resources and services in today’s marketplace can add up quickly. The table below depicts how much money our community is saving as a result of the many free offerings available with our CALS library cards.

The amount of money saved by each patron or family can considerably ease a household budget and allow much more frequent enjoyment of resources such as digital audio books, e-books, videos, or educational programs that would otherwise have to be limited by affordability.

	2018 Average Cost	2018 CALS Usage	2018 Total Value
Books	\$14.20	1,814,845	\$25,770,799
E-books	\$15.00	326,986	\$4,904,790
Digital Audio Books	\$9.50	222,537	\$2,114,102
Digital Music	\$1.00	118,654	\$118,654
Interlibrary Loan	\$25.00	3,084	\$77,100
Digital Magazines	\$6.99	6,076	\$42,471
Magazines Borrowed	\$5.00	15,463	\$77,315
Digital Videos	\$6.00	5,296	\$31,776
DVDs	\$1.75	604,569	\$1,057,996
Newspaper (in-library use)	\$2.00	22,518	\$45,036
Meeting Room Use Per Hour	\$25.00	6,786	\$169,650
Adult Programs/ Classes	\$15.00	2,543	\$38,145
Children’s Programs/Classes	\$10.00	8,167	\$81,670
Computer Use Per Hour	\$21.00	245,794	\$5,161,674
Reference Questions Asked	\$7.00	546,228	\$3,823,596
Database Search	\$19.95	130,439	\$2,602,258
Total Value Of CALS Services In 2018			\$46,117,032

Massachusetts Library Association created a calculator which assigns a dollar value to a typical service such as reference questions asked. Other costs are calculated as follows: Books and e-books - Amazon.com average price; audio books/estimated Audible.com purchase price; music /iTunes average price; interlibrary loan/Amazon.com price plus shipping; DVDs/average RedBox rental; newspaper use/ Arkansas Democrat-Gazette online day pass; digital magazines/Zinio average digital one-time fee; magazines/estimated newsstand purchase price; computer use per hour/FedEx-Kinko’s price per hour.

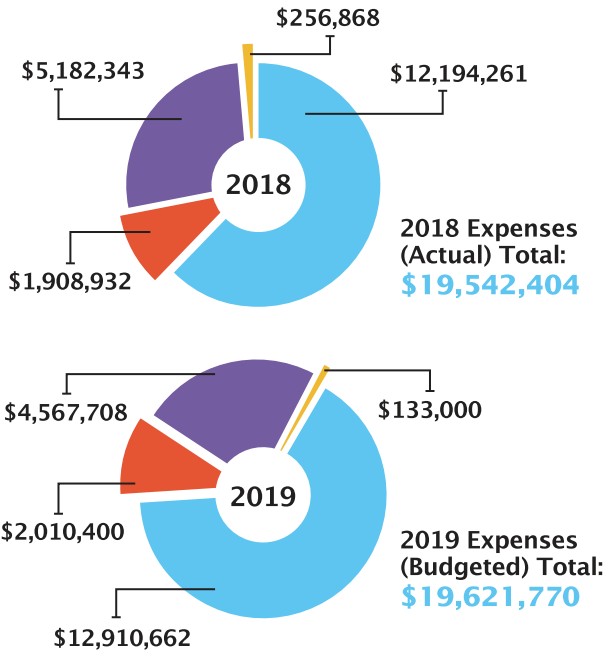
## CALS Revenue And Expenses

### Revenue

	2018 Actual	2019 Budget
Property Tax	\$17,029,466.00	\$17,280,368.00
State of Arkansas	\$570,595.00	\$510,651.00
Fines, Fees, Parking & Rental Income	\$678,941.00	\$714,934.00
Friends, CALS Foundation & other Grant Income	\$216,766.00	\$147,985.00
2015 Bond Revenue	\$1,364,450.00	\$614,808.00
Other Revenue	\$181,717.00	\$257,500.00
Total	\$20,041,935.00	\$19,526,246.00

NOTE - Numbers are unaudited and include receipts and expenditures from 2015 Bond issue.

### Expenses



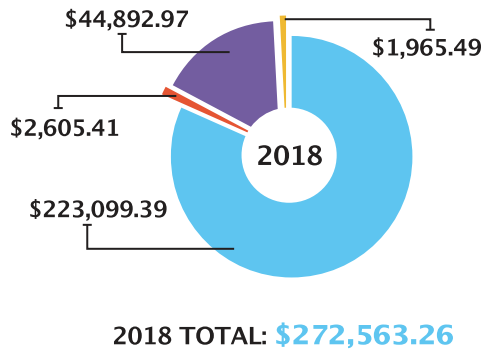
## Central Arkansas Library System Foundation

Founded in 2010, the CALS Foundation exists to provide educational and cultural programming for the patrons, communities, and neighborhoods served by CALS. The CALS Foundation supports children’s programming such as Summer Reading Club, adult programming, the Six Bridges Book Festival, special programming at branches, the Bobby L. Roberts Library, and the Coalition for Neighborhood Libraries.

### 2018 Revenue

	Unrestricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
Contributions	\$190,273.81	\$252,826.55	\$443,100.36
Grant Income		\$22,620.00	\$22,620.00
Miscellaneous Income			\$503.12
Unrealized Investment Gain/Loss			\$(86,865.92)
Total	\$190,273.81	\$275,446.55	\$379,357.56

### 2018 Distributions





## Locations Across Central Arkansas

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### **Millie M. Brooks Library**

13024 Highway 365 South · Wrightsville

### **Dee Brown Library**

6425 Baseline Road · Little Rock

### **Hillary Rodham Clinton Children's Library & Learning Center**

4800 West 10th Street · Little Rock

### **John Gould Fletcher Library**

823 N. Buchanan Street · Little Rock

### **Maumelle Library**

10 Lake Pointe Drive · Maumelle

### **Sidney S. McMath Library**

2100 John Barrow Road · Little Rock

### **Max Milam Library**

609 Alpine Avenue · Perryville

### **Esther DeWitt Nixon Library**

703 W. Main Street · Jacksonville

### **Oley E. Rooker Library**

11 Otter Creek · Little Rock

### **Amy Sanders Library**

10200 Johnson Drive · Sherwood

### **Adolphine Fletcher Terry Library**

2015 Napa Valley Drive · Little Rock

### **Roosevelt Thompson Library**

38 Rahling Circle · Little Rock

### **Sue Cowan Williams Library**

1800 Chester · Little Rock

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### **Library Square**

100 Rock Street Little Rock

### **Main Library**

### **Bobby L. Roberts Library of Arkansas History & Art**

### **Ron Robinson Theater**

### **The Bookstore at Library Square**

### **The Galleries At Library Square**