

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Edmonton Public Library honoured with Minister's award

Excellence and innovation in services for Aboriginal Peoples recognized

EDMONTON, AB, April 27, 2012 – The Edmonton Public Library was presented with the Alberta Municipal Affairs Minister's Award for Excellence and Innovation in Public Library Service Award for services for Aboriginal peoples at the Alberta Library Conference in Jasper.

Recognizing the highest level of effectiveness and quality in programming and services for Aboriginal peoples, the award is the latest in a series of accolades for the Edmonton Public Library (EPL). Other recent awards honoured EPL's rebranding campaign and early childhood literacy initiative.

"The Minister's award recognizes the hard work of our staff and board to bring to life our shared vision of providing inclusive services and programs to Edmontonians from diverse backgrounds and cultures," said Brent McDonough, Chair of the EPL Board of Trustees.

Guided by EPL's Community-Led Service Philosophy, library staff respond to community-identified needs to reduce barriers to accessing library services. To honour the cultures and contributions of Aboriginal peoples, EPL's Aboriginal Services Team was established in 2007 to connect with local Aboriginal communities and develop library services and programs for Edmontonians of Aboriginal descent.

"In 2007 EPL became the first library in Canada to hire an Aboriginal services librarian. She worked out of our Abbotsfield - Penny McKee branch in northeast Edmonton where some of our city's most vulnerable Aboriginal population is concentrated," said Linda Cook, CEO of the Edmonton Public Library. "Today we have 18 community librarians across our 17 branches who build relationships with Aboriginal peoples and organizations throughout Edmonton."

In collaboration with 15 Aboriginal organizations, EPL offers programs ranging from Aboriginal Family Storytime and an Aboriginal film series to author readings and the popular Aboriginal Family. EPL also offers free Cree language instruction led by the Canadian Native Friendship Centre. As well, the Gallery at Milner features an Aboriginal arts and crafts exhibit once a year and every June EPL celebrates National Aboriginal History Month with Aboriginal stories, films, dance and music.

Spread the words.

EPL unveiled its Aboriginal collection and space on the second floor of the Stanley A. Milner Library in 2009 with a celebration of the arts, literature and culture of Aboriginal communities. The Aboriginal collection is composed of materials written, performed and/or produced by Aboriginal people, including fiction and non-fiction literature, children's materials, music, films, magazines, news sources and language materials. All EPL branches have had Aboriginal collections since 2011.

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About the Edmonton Public Library

The Edmonton Public Library (EPL) carries everything you care about. We are Edmonton's largest lender of all manner of information and entertainment. Our professionally trained staff take you beyond Google with the knowledge, discernment and desire to help you navigate a universe of information. Every year, we host over 14 million in-branch and online visits across our 17 branches and website. We deliver our incredible content to you everywhere - in the library, at home or on your handheld device. Unmatched access and unrivalled value - that is today's EPL. Spread the words.
www.epl.ca.

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