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Mid-Continent Public Library Debuts Summer of Learning

Greater Kansas City, MO – Mid-Continent Public Library is pleased to announce the launch of its redesigned Summer Learning Program, which takes a new STEAM-focused approach toward the Library’s traditional Summer Reading Program for children ages birth to 19, which last year had more than 33,500 active participants.

This year, kids who participate in MCPL’s Summer Learning Program will learn how to “Build a Better World” and can earn points in three different ways: reading, completing educational activities at home, and attending selected programs at the Library. Points can then be applied toward free books and the chance to win prizes.

“Our new Summer Learning Program takes a more holistic approach to combatting the ‘summer slide,’” said MCPL Youth Services Manager Shari Ellison. “Maintaining intellectual engagement by reading and partaking in educational activities is critical to ensuring that kids go back to school prepared and ready to move forward in their studies. We hope that this redesigned program is as fun for the children as it is beneficial for their growth and development.”

From May 22 through July 31, 2017, kids can sign up and track their progress in the Summer Learning Program through a new, easy-to-use online software called Beanstack. Upon signing up, participants are automatically divided into one of three categories:

- Explorers – ages birth - 5
- Challengers – ages 6 - 12
- Voyagers – ages 13 - 19

All participants earn points for reading as well as for completing “learning tracks” at home. A full list of learning track activities is provided online and includes STEAM-related (science and sports, technology and teamwork,
engineering and environment, arts and architecture, and math and me—self-development) exercises like building with LEGO® bricks or sorting items to recycle.

In addition to reading and independent skill building through the learning tracks, participants can earn points for attending free programs at the Library such as Theatre of the Imagination’s Build a Better World and WildHeart Presents: Build a Better World (a program about nature’s very own architects), both courtesy of the Missouri Association of Community Arts Agencies (MACAA).

Many of these programs have been made possible by generous donations from organizations like MACAA. In addition, the Kansas City Royals have donated several Scholastic Victory Programs for kids and teens, and LEGOLAND Discovery Center has donated programs in which participants will learn from a LEGOLAND Master Model Builder. SEA LIFE Kansas City has also contributed programs, which will offer kids the chance to come face to face with sea creatures during a Mobile Touch Tank Q&A.

Based on points earned, children are also eligible to win tickets and special experiences from the Library’s 2017 Summer Learning Program partners, which include:

- Kansas City Royals
- LEGOLAND Discovery Center and SEA LIFE Kansas City
- Science City
- Worlds of Fun/Oceans of Fun
- CoCo Key Water Resort

In addition, Summer Learning Program t-shirts have been provided by Big Frog Custom T-Shirts, and weekly surprise prizes have been provided by the Kansas City Chiefs, Powell Gardens, the Kansas City T-Bones, The College Basketball Experience, Paradise Park, Main Event Entertainment, the Kansas City Symphony, and iFLY Kansas City. In addition to prizes from partner organizations, participants can earn the chance to win branch grand prizes including Kindle Fire Kids Editions for Explorers, Kindle Fire HDs for Challengers, and Beats by Dre wireless headphones for Voyagers.

To find out more about Mid-Continent Public Library’s 2017 Summer Learning Program, including instructions on how to enroll and participate, visit mymcl.org/fun.

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Access Your World

Mid-Continent Public Library is the largest library system in the Kansas City metropolitan area, operating 31 branches and four Library-To-Go locations and serving over 792,000 people in Jackson, Clay, and Platte Counties. The Library strives to enrich our citizens and communities through expanding access to innovation, information, ideas, and inspiration. MCPL is a 2014 National Medal for Museum and Library Service winner. Connect with the Library on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.