

# A Teen Space at Z.J. Loussac Public Library

## Creating a place of their own

### Teen Spaces



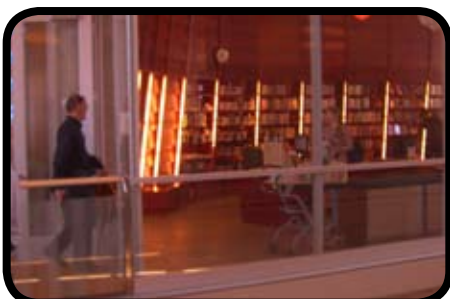
Mixing it up in the sound lab at the *YOUmedia* teen center at the Harold Washington Library in Chicago.



Teens participate in group instruction at the *YOUmedia* teen center at the Harold Washington Library in Chicago.



Teens hanging out in the *Teen Zone* at the Farmington Public Library in New Mexico.



*Teen Central* at the Minneapolis PL is modeled after a modern bookstore.

### The Project

The Anchorage Public Library (APL), Anchorage Rotary Club and the Anchorage Library Foundation have teamed up to create a teen space at the Loussac Library to draw young people into the library and provide them with the positive, enriching experiences that they need in order to grow into successful, well adjusted adults.

A small space for teens currently exists at the Loussac, but its location in the children's area is a big deterrent for most teens. Teens typically visit the current space to pick up young adult books and magazines and then disperse to other parts of the library to read or study.

This project will convert an underutilized section of the library into the interim teen space with fun furniture for group study, laptops and software for workshops, and a gaming station. The equipment and furnishings will serve as the starting point for a permanent teen space that will be developed in the next five to ten years as part of a Loussac Library renovation.

Teens are not the only population who will benefit from this space; an active teen user group is critical to creating a vibrant library that can improve the quality of life, educational opportunities and public safety of the entire community.

*"Teen-oriented space provides a way to create a positive, safe environment for studying, socializing, and leisure activities...which encourages emotional, social, and intellectual development, and building a sense of teen belonging, community involvement, and library appreciation."*

--Kimberly Bolan, *The Need for Teen Spaces in the Library.*

### Fundraising Goals and Project Partners

The creation of a teen space at Loussac Library is a major goal of the Anchorage Library Renewal Initiative and the Library Community Plan, which have both received wide community input and support. The project cost is under \$70,000. Lead supporters include the Anchorage Rotary Club and the Rasmuson Foundation. The project will launch in Fall 2010 and be completed by June 2011. Monetary, in-kind and volunteer donations are needed to successfully create the teen space.



Teens share a laugh at a trivia night at Loussac Library.

## The Need

Unfortunately, a growing number of Anchorage youth spend the time between school closing and parents returning from work unproductively — watching television, surfing the net, hanging out with friends, and sometimes getting into trouble. Nationally<sup>1</sup>:

- Juvenile crime triples from 3-8 pm and peaks from 3-4 pm during the hours after school.
- Between 5 and 7 million, possibly as many as 15 million, “latchkey children” are home alone after school.
- The most common activity for children after school is watching TV - on average 23 hours a week.

The Library is in an ideal position to address this serious community problem. By developing a teen space and providing more programs, the library can turn the after-school hours into a time when local teens take on new challenges, improve their literacy skills, and productively connect with their peers. Students who regularly attend quality after school programs have<sup>1</sup>:

- Better grades and conduct in school.
- Better peer relations and emotional adjustment.
- More academic and enrichment opportunities.
- Students who spend 1-4 hours per week in extracurricular activities are 49% less likely to use drugs and 37% less likely to become teen parents.

<sup>1</sup>From Anchorage School District’s 21st Century Community Learning Center website. [www.asdk12.org/depts/community/learning/](http://www.asdk12.org/depts/community/learning/)

## Donor Benefits

The project’s major donors will be recognized for their leadership and commitment to the community in many ways:

- Inscription on a commemorative plaque displayed in the teen space.
- Recognition of your donation in the Anchorage Public Library and Anchorage Library Foundation newsletters and promotional materials.
- Option to do a press release announcing your gift.
- Recognition at ceremonial ground breaking and grand opening events.
- Full donor benefits are listed at: [www.anchoragelibraryfoundation.org](http://www.anchoragelibraryfoundation.org)

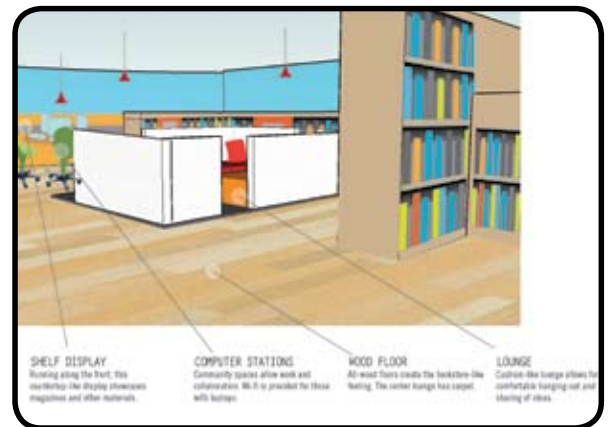
## Project Contacts

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For more information, go to: [www.anchoragelibraryfoundation.org](http://www.anchoragelibraryfoundation.org)

Please direct mail to: Anchorage Library Foundation, P.O. Box 244714, Anchorage AK 99524



Conceptual drawings for a future teen space at Loussac Library.

