
Introduction

Somewhere deep within the heart of your community, just beyond the line of trees that surround your neighborhood, a secret lurks. It is a secret that has been there a long time, perhaps as long as you have. Perhaps longer. It waits in silence, patiently. In just a few pages, that secret is going to emerge, never more to hide.

That secret is the library. The secret is the library's story. The library has quietly, yet continuously, been changing lives.

You are about to experience in this book a few of those lives touched by the library. This collection of library stories is part of a nationwide and statewide campaign to see how libraries have transformed the lives of their users. The Indiana Library Federation has compiled these stories so that you will see what a valuable and essential part of our society libraries are. You will be amazed at what you see. In an age when information technology is constantly changing, the library is a vital link. Libraries have managed to provide hundreds of new developments in the information marketplace, including video and computer technology, CD-ROM, fiber-optic networks, and many, many more. But more than that, they have helped people change their lives for the better.

The library stories are important to each of us. Library stories are stories of how the library helped someone learn to read, get a job, escape being homeless, find important research data, learn how to use a computer, find recreation, improve grades in school, save families, and many, many more life changing experiences. The stories are remarkable. The library stories must be told, and they need to be heard.

Libraries are our silent resource. The information marketplace is so crowded with new and improved brilliant technological innovations that libraries have seemed to become invisible; some even fear they are on the verge of obsolescence. These stories and countless others like them, exist because our forgotten resource, the library, has always been there with the energy and vibrance of progress. Libraries can be silent no more. They need resources and support to continue making such extraordinary differences in the lives of people all over the country, and particularly in Indiana.

As you read these stories, I would challenge you to find someplace, any place, that can compete with the library when it comes to valuable, life-changing power. Libraries are easily accessible and progressive, and most importantly, they belong to us. Read these stories of transformation, then decide — isn't the library an institution you would like to visit and support.

Jim Fleck, Fleck Leadership Center



Indiana Public Awareness Committee

Somehow deep within the heart of your community, just beyond the line of eyes that surround your neighborhood, a secret lives. It is a secret that has been there a long time, perhaps as long as you have. Perhaps it waits in silence, patiently in your law books, that secret is going to change never more to hide.

This secret is the library. The secret is the library's story. The library has quietly, yet conspicuously, been changing lives.

You are about to experience in our book a few of those lives that have quietly changed. This collection of library stories is part of a nationwide and unprecedented campaign to see how libraries have maintained the lives of their users. The Indiana Library Federation has compiled these stories so that you will see what a valuable and essential part of our society libraries are. You will be amazed at what you see. In a time when information technology is constantly changing, the library is a vital link. Libraries have managed to provide hundreds of new services, programs in the information marketplace, including video and computer terminals, CD-ROM, fiber-optic networks, and many many more. But only when they have had people who care, their lives for the better.

The library stories are important to each of us. Library stories are important to how the library helped someone learn to read, but also to how the library helped someone learn how to use a computer and research.

improve grades in school, eye health, and many, many more life-changing experiences. The library stories must be told, and they need to be heard and read.

Libraries are essential to our lives. The information marketplace is constantly changing with new and improved technological innovations that continue to improve and become available. Some even fear they are on the verge of obsolescence. These stories and countless others tell us that our libraries are not just buildings, they are the library has always been there with the energy and vibrancy of people. I believe we can be there in the most meaningful way, and support and assistance in making such extraordinary differences in the lives of people all over the country.

As you read these stories, I would challenge you to find someone who can compare with the library when it comes to valuable life-changing stories. Libraries are truly accessible and welcoming, and most important, they are there to be heard these stories of transformation, don't decide—let the library in. I believe you would like to visit and support.

Jim Heck, Vice Leadership Chair