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Georgia Library Spotlight - Fulton County Library System Innovation Stations

Minna Pritchard

Fulton County Library System, Minna.Pritchard@fultoncountyga.gov

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GLA SPOTLIGHT

Fulton County Library System Innovation Stations

Have you heard the word on the street? Fulton County Library System is now serving Fulton citizens on brand new wheels—14 of them. Two 24-foot techmobiles, aptly coined the Innovation Stations, and an electric Word on the Street bike have joined the system to provide innovative STEAM activities and curated book collections to metro Atlanta communities.

Unveiled in November 2019, the Innovation Stations spark creativity at pop-up libraries, such as festivals, schools, farmers markets, recreation centers, senior centers, co-working spaces, and more. STEAM-based learning equipment and book collections stock the built-in bookshelves and counters, including 3D printers, virtual reality, rockets, 3D pens, soldering kits, and more. The vehicles are equipped with state-of-the-art safety driving features, built-in library shelves, an alarm system, a retractable power awning to host additional outreach programs alongside the van, and LED lights lining the bottom.

One Innovation Station serves youth and educates children ages 0–18 at public and private educational institutions and community associations across the city of Atlanta and Fulton County. Recently, the youth Innovation

Station engaged 150 students along with their families at the Roswell Library reopening. Students manipulated basic tactile shapes using Osmos and iPads, to create animals filled with anagrams.

The adult Innovation Station van travels to professional, community, and cultural events around metro Atlanta, many of them existing within book deserts—an area which has limited access to robust educational resources. The library strives to provide unique, hands-on opportunities for adult patrons to interact with the equipment for professional and cultural development.



Significantly smaller than the Innovation Stations, the Word on the Street library bike gives staff access to densely populated areas within metro Atlanta. Free library cards, books, and pop-up programs are always one pedal closer to potential patrons as staff ride through community spaces built for pedestrians. At Atlanta Streets Alive, a day of open streets and community retreats, the library bike always draws a crowd of cheering friends, several of whom apply for library cards on the spot.

"I am so pleased to be able to take our library services on the road and really meet our patrons where they live, work and play. The Innovation Stations and the Word on the Street library bike allow us to show everything the

library has to offer, outside the four walls of our buildings. We look forward to visiting every part of Fulton County, from Palmetto to Alpharetta, with these amazing resources," said Gayle Hunter Holloman, executive director of the Fulton County Library System.

The Innovation Stations and the Word on the Street bike draw from a strong, proud legacy of mobile outreach in metro Atlanta. The vehicles marry resources, including circulation,

technological engagement, and community interaction, to create one teachable experience.

You can follow Fulton County Library System and the outreach team on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram at @fulcolibrary! For more information on the Fulton County Library outreach vehicles please visit the outreach team website at <http://afpls.org/outreach-team> or email Library.Outreach@FultonCountyGA.gov.