

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Photos, Interviews, and B-Roll from today's celebration: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjAVqPn>

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library in Downtown San Jose Celebrates its 20th Anniversary

San José Public Library and San José State University recognize the impact of its jointly operated library dedicated to serving both the public and SJSU campus community

San José, Calif. – Today, City of San José leaders and San José State University (SJSU) dignitaries, among others, were joined by more than a hundred community members, library staff, donors, and supporters to recognize the tremendous impact the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library has had serving both the public and SJSU community in the heart of San José. The ceremony marked the 20th anniversary of the nation's first jointly operated library, which serves as the main library for San José Public Library (SJPL) and SJSU.

“For 20 years, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library has facilitated learning and empowerment for countless San José residents. As the largest joint municipal-university library in the country, the King Library also represents an enduring partnership between City Hall and San José State, a partnership that will only expand in the years ahead as we jointly labor to create greater opportunity for all,” said **San José Mayor Matt Mahan**.

Since 2003, when the King Library first opened, the library has increased access to its local history collections, hosted joint exhibits that collaboratively recognize the city's rich cultures, and has added innovative spaces dedicated to supporting workforce development, small business, and encourage interdisciplinary collaboration and research to the campus community. Last year, the King Library attracted nearly a million visitors and is the largest public building in San Jose that truly welcomes everyone.

“The King Library is a beacon of hope, opportunity, connectivity, and learning,” said **Jill Bourne, City Librarian**. “Today was a day of appreciation and recognition as we reunited with former San Jose leaders and supporters who dared to think differently and believed in the bold idea of integrating two major libraries into one building. As we celebrate this significant milestone, we are committed to keeping this library's legacy alive for future generations by continuing to maximize our efforts in building impactful programs and services for all.”

The 475,000 square-foot library has nine-levels that house over 350,000 public items in its collection, which includes over 90 languages. The academic collection includes 1.3 million physical items and 3.2 million digital items. The library features public art by visual artist Mel Chin, provides 35 reservable study rooms and large meeting spaces for community organizations to gather for free. People can also access tech device lending, Wi-Fi connectivity, wireless printing, and public computers.

"San José State is at the epicenter of the future, and nowhere is that more evident than the King Library. From historical elements like art and archive collections, to current-day records like books and periodicals, to forward-looking offerings like its VR/AR and Rapid Prototyping labs, King Library seamlessly bridges the past, present and future, and is truly a place for everyone in our campus and surrounding communities. I am proud of this jewel in our university crown, and can't wait to see what the next 20 years have in store," said **Cynthia Teniente-Matson, SJSU President**.

The King Library's 20th anniversary community celebration featured remarks by Senator Dave Cortese, Mayor Matt Mahan, Councilmember Omar Torres, City Librarian Jill Bourne, San José State University President Cynthia Teniente-Matson, and SJSU King Library Dean Michael Meth. The celebration boasted Spartan Pride with performances by the Spartan Marching Band, SJSU Spirit Team, and SJSU Choraliers, plus a Mexican folkloric dance performance by Los Lupeños de San José.

"King Library is a treasure for the city of San José that has been serving the SJSU and public community since 2003 through our partnership with the San José Public Library. Our library is a hub for innovation, discovery and an invaluable partner for research and cultural activities due to our extraordinary collections, exhibits, and programming" said **Michael Meth, SJSU King Library dean**.

The celebration will continue over the next 20 days with a King Library awareness campaign highlighting current exhibits, programs, and unique collections anyone can explore. SJPL also unveiled and released ten commemorative library card designs in honor of the 20th anniversary, which features the library's public art and unique installations and are now available for new and current library cardholders.

For more information about the King Library's 20th anniversary celebration, please visit www.sjlibrary.org

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Since August 16, 2003, when the King Library first held its opening celebration, the library has increased [access to its local history collection](#), hosted joint [SJPL](#) and [SJSU King Library](#) exhibits that collaboratively recognize the city’s rich cultures and has added innovative public spaces dedicated to supporting workforce development and entrepreneurship through its SJPL Works Business and Career Center, created San Jose’s teen headquarters, the TeenHQ center, and added the Wee Explore PlaySpace in the Children’s Room to ignite a child’s imagination and exploration. As well, [SJSU King Library](#) has added multiple innovative spaces to encourage interdisciplinary collaboration and research to the campus community through its [Prototyping Lab](#), [Incubator Space](#), [Presentation Practice Room](#), [KLEVR \(VR/AR\) Lab](#), [Sound Studio](#), [Materials Library](#) and the [Student Computer Services Center](#) that provides tech equipment to the campus community. SJSU King Library remains invaluable for research and cultural activities because of its one of a kind collections, exhibits, and programming at the [University Special Collections & Archives](#), [Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies](#), [Center for Steinbeck Studies](#), [Sourisseau Academy](#), and the [Africana, Asian American, Chicano, & Native American Studies Center](#).

[Jill Quote]

The **475,000** square-foot library has nine-levels that house over **300,000** public items in its collection, including materials in over **90** languages and the academic collection includes over **1.3 million physical items**, **3.2 million digital items**, **600,000 journals** and more than **465 databases**. The library features **34** [works of public art by conceptual visual artist Mel Chin](#). King Library provides **35** [reservable study rooms](#) and [large meeting spaces](#) for community organizations to gather for free. Visitors to the library can also [access Wi-Fi connectivity](#), [printing](#), and [technology such as public computers and iPads](#) for program use.

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The King Library is currently staffed by nearly 200 SJPL staff members, 80 SJSU Library employees, and 50 SJSU student assistants.

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