

## APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 3, 2019.** Please include this application form with electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

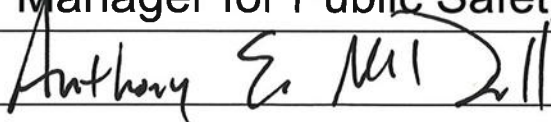
### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico  
Program Title: Building Book Nooks, Building Community Literacy  
Program Category: Community and Economic Development

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Victoria Davis  
Title: Public Relations Specialist  
Department: Public Relations & Media Services  
Telephone: 804-501-4933 Website: www.henrico.us  
Email: dav127@henrico.us

### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Anthony McDowell  
Title: Deputy County Manager for Public Safety  
Signature: 

## **Program Overview**

Literacy development is a critical part of students' success in school and in becoming productive members of society. Public libraries and neighborhood schools do an amazing job in literacy development, but can leave gaps in providing reading material to citizens: Henrico has nine public library facilities, but not everyone lives near a branch. Public school libraries are only open during the school day, and are limited to the students who attend. In an effort to make reading material more readily available to our communities, Henrico County Public Schools' departments of Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Library Services teamed up to install small "book nooks" – tiny lending libraries with hinged doors – on posts outside of many of the schools in Henrico County, Virginia.

Since 2017, technology education teachers, as part of the county's summer furniture construction program, have constructed and installed more than 30 book nooks at many of the school division's 72 schools and program centers. The program will continue through the summer of 2019, when book nooks will be installed at all schools and program centers. Reading material is provided through donations, and maintained through the efforts of the librarians and staff at each school and program center.

## **Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality**

Research by the Literacy Foundation linked higher literacy with higher rates of income, employment, self-esteem and financial security. For society, higher literacy is linked to higher gross domestic product and higher civic involvement. Clearly literacy is crucial for individuals and the larger society.

The "Little Free Library" national program is a similar program to Henrico's book nooks and its inspiration. Little Free Libraries locations provide wonderful literacy opportunities for citizens.

However, a map search of libraries at the Little Free Libraries site reveals the boxes are more prevalent in some parts of our area than others. By constructing book nooks outside all 72 Henrico County schools, these resources are available to all Henrico citizens in all parts of the county.

There is an advantage to having as many outlets as possible for easily accessible reading material. Public libraries and schools make reading material available, and the book nook program adds to that widespread availability.

### **How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria**

This program deserves consideration for an award based on its innovation, collaborative departmental nature and replicable nature. There is no disputing the importance of literacy for students. On an educational level, it helps them comprehend all instruction on a deeper level through improved reading levels. Making sure this opportunity is available for school communities is critical to the overall progress of community enrichment.

### **How Program Was Carried Out**

The head of Henrico Schools' Library Services Department coordinated with the Career and Technical Education Department to identify locations across the division that could be ideal locations for book nooks. During the summer months, the CTE department operates a Summer Furniture Construction program where Technology Education teachers work to construct furniture to support various programs across the county. After determining the design, the teachers construct these book nooks during the summer. They are then installed with coordination of school administrators to determine the best location on school grounds.

The reading materials in the book nooks are free for anyone to take and do not have to be returned. Throughout the year, librarians and library assistants, working with school staff, keep the book nooks well-stocked with a variety of titles through donations they receive. Library staff members monitor the book nooks and stock them as needed. Books selected for each school's nook are age-appropriate and have been screened by library staff members. Donations come from community members, and often is supported through efforts of the PTA groups at the schools. The initiative provides free reading material to those who need it, some of whom may not be able to afford it.

### **Financing and Staffing**

The materials to construct each book nook costs around \$105. Every few years, the school-based custodial and maintenance teams will coordinate repairs and painting as needed.

To date, any repairs have been completed through CTE students and staff members. As time goes on, painting will be the primary maintenance cost and will be done by the school maintenance staff. Stocking that needs to be done is done by HCPS Library Services staff members a part of their regular duties.

### **Program Results**

Students, parents and other members of the community now have another way to access reading materials to support literacy. The program has rolled out more than 30 book nooks, and the schools have been able to keep each of the book nooks well-stocked with a steady stream of donated materials.

From the initial rollout of just over 10 units, the interest has expanded, and the rollout will continue until all 72 schools and program centers are outfitted with these literacy-supporting structures.

### **Brief Summary**

Literacy development is a critical part of students' success in school and in becoming productive members of society. Public libraries and neighborhood schools do an amazing job in literacy development, but can leave gaps in providing reading material to citizens: Henrico has nine public library facilities, but not everyone lives near a branch. Public school libraries are only open during the school day, and are limited to the students who attend. In an effort to make reading material more readily available to our communities, Henrico County Public Schools' departments of Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Library Services teamed up to install small "book nooks" – tiny lending libraries with hinged doors – on posts outside of many of the schools in Henrico County, Virginia.

Since 2017, technology education teachers, as part of the county's summer furniture construction program, have constructed and installed more than 30 book nooks at many of the school division's 72 schools and program centers. The program will continue through the summer of 2019, when book nooks will be installed at all schools and program centers. Reading material is provided through donations, and maintained through the efforts of the librarians and staff at each school and program center. Students, parents and other members of the community now have another way to access reading materials to support literacy.