



FY21 ANNUAL REPORT



Be All In

MISSION

Providing opportunities to explore, learn, create and connect.

VISION

Empowered and engaged individuals for a more inclusive and connected Baltimore County community.

WE VALUE

- Our customers and communities
- Equal access and intellectual freedom
- Flexibility and collaboration
- Diversity and inclusion
- Continuous improvement

Message from the Director	4
Recognition	5
Impact	6
Financials	7
Highlights	8
Governance	14



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Greetings,

Thank you for taking the time to view our FY2021 annual report. I am honored to have been selected by the Board of Library Trustees to lead this award-winning library system midway through FY2021. I would be remiss if I didn't thank my predecessor, Paula Miller, who retired in September 2020. During Paula's six-year tenure, she led the system to rethink how Baltimore County Public Library can best serve our communities by identifying new and emerging library needs, often with innovative solutions. I would also be remiss if I didn't share my gratitude and appreciation for our assistant directors, James Cooke and Natalie Edington, who graciously led the organization as interim co-directors from September to February.

Starting as the director amid the pandemic, I was truly impressed to learn how quickly the library pivoted and adjusted to make the necessary changes to stay relevant by providing the community the tools and resources needed to be successful in school, work and life. Offering free meals, Chromebooks, hotspots, expanded digital resources, Be Surprised book bundles, a host of virtual programs and more helped the community stay connected during this time of critical need. The pandemic forced the library to look inward and make rapid changes to our models of operation. As a result, some of the innovative ideas, like curbside services and virtual programs, are here to stay to better serve our customers.

Despite the challenges posed by having to reimagine public library service in the midst of a global pandemic, this year's annual report highlights the strong foundation and momentum for achieving many of the objectives within Strategic Plan XI. While there is much to be proud of and to celebrate, there is still much work to be done as we take the next steps to successfully fulfill the strategic plan goals of improving quality of life, creating equitable access and creating opportunities for education and lifelong learning while building on our own organizational wellness. It is through our invaluable staff and partnerships with Foundation for Baltimore County Public Library, our Friends groups, our sponsorships from community-oriented businesses and our grantors that these goals



Sonia Alcántara-Antoine

become a reality. We thank the State of Maryland and Baltimore County Government for providing a large portion of operating funds and supporting the library in fulfilling our mission, vision and values.

Public libraries are one of the most democratic institutions we have today in our society and are at the forefront of bridging divides and meeting people where they are. I am excited to lead this system, partner with staff, build community relationships and work with other Baltimore County Government agencies to provide innovative resources and services to empower and engage individuals for a more inclusive and connected Baltimore County.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Salcantara".

Sonia

P.S.

Throughout this annual report, sentiments and testimonials are shared from actual Baltimore County Public Library customers. These were collected during a Love My Library campaign and on my desk upon my arrival. As an organization, we are humbled by the customer appreciation for the work being accomplished by our invaluable staff.



RECOGNITION

Throughout FY2021, Baltimore County Public Library and its staff were honored and recognized for innovation and outstanding library service by several organizations:

COMMUNICATOR AWARD

Academy of Interactive and Visual Arts

Be Motivated: One-Year Life Experiments
Create a Nature Journal
Today, I Am a Dragon

TELLY AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Summer Reading Leads to Success
B at Home Commercial
STEAM: Make a Lemon Volcano
The Mystery Vault: Death

OUTSTANDING MEMBER AWARD

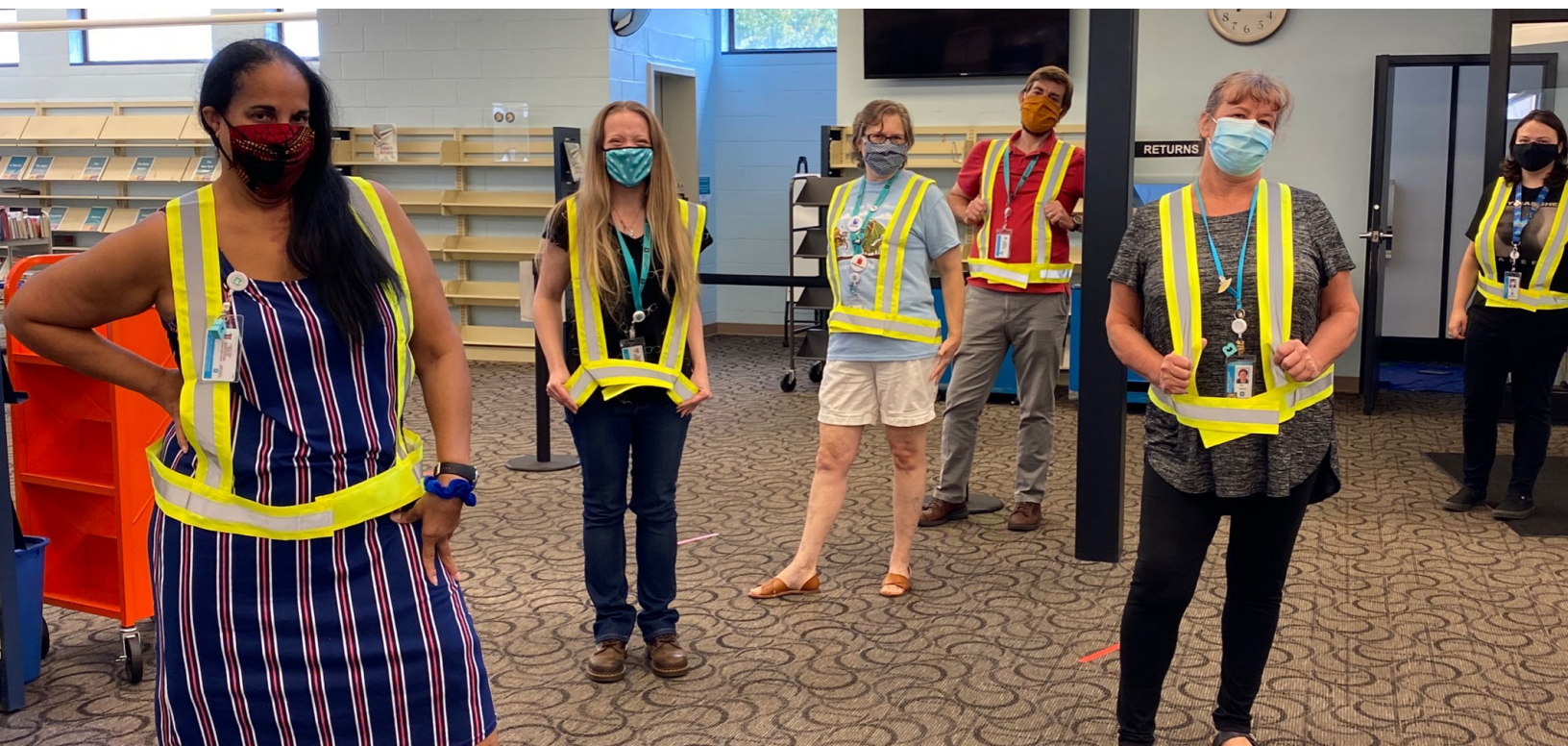
Maryland Library Association

Naomi Keppler,
Staff Member

2021 MOVER AND SHAKER

Library Journal

Brenda Johnson-Perkins,
Staff Member



OUR IMPACT

Year after year, Baltimore County Public Library ranks among the busiest library systems in the state of Maryland. FY2021 was no exception, as we pivoted to provide contactless services during the pandemic.

EXPLORE

COLLECTION

1,203,150 Physical Materials
192,085 Downloadable

CIRCULATION

4,687,268 Items Circulated
1,297,773 Adult Books
1,133,259 Children's Books
1,688,732 Downloads
567,504 Media

INTERLIBRARY LOAN

21,075 Items Received
19,466 Items Lent

LEARN

PROGRAMS

1,471 Programs Offered
28,711 Program Attendance
12,832 Summer Reading Registrations

INFORMATION QUERIES

280,414 Queries Answered
201,676 General Reference
78,738 Reference



LIBRARY VISITS

541,950 Physical Branches
3,407,310 Virtual Branch

ACCOUNTS

403,087 Total Cardholders
24,203 New Cardholders
115,456 Student Accounts

STAFF

433 Full-Time Equivalent Positions

CREATE

SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

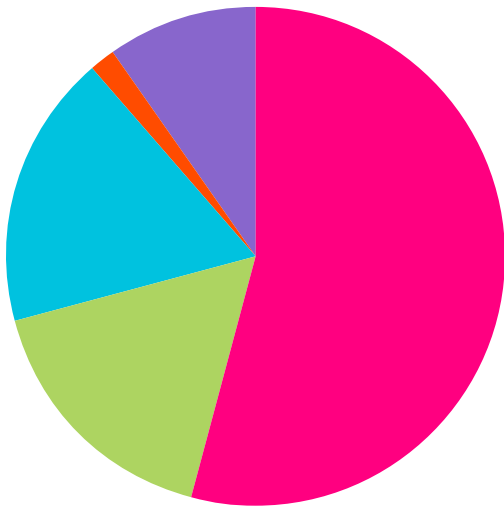
21,237 Facebook
2,661 Instagram
285 TikTok
3,932 Twitter
1,470 YouTube

INTERNET ACCESS

291,959 WiFi Sessions
38,003 Public Computer Use (Appointment and Walk-ins)

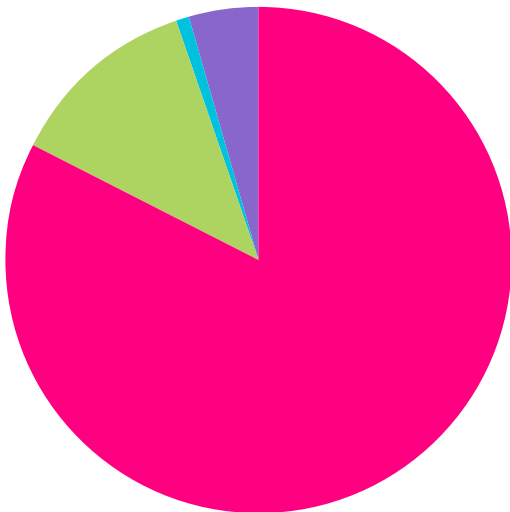
CONNECT

FINANCIALS



EXPENDITURES

Salaries and Wages	\$21,932,617
Employment Taxes and Benefits	\$6,736,818
Circulation Materials	\$7,086,466
Rent and Utilities	\$730,854
Other Expenses	\$3,863,172
TOTAL	\$40,349,927



REVENUE

General Fund	\$35,252,268
State Aid	\$5,233,080
Fees for Services	\$333,316
Grants, Foundation and Gifts	\$1,873,836
TOTAL	\$42,692,500

“

The library has done an awesome job of evolving with the times and is a terrific asset to the community.

Jeff C.

”

QUALITY OF LIFE

FOSTER A LOVE OF READING AND DISCOVERY

Virtual Book Displays, Virtual Author Appearances, Book Lovers Bash and Book Buzz

Readers' advisory has always been an important and valued service to our customers. Sharing and programs, which typically took place in branches, moved to a virtual setting, allowing customers and staff to still make those connections to recommend materials and authors to ultimately enrich the lives of our customers. Blogs with virtual book displays were shared through our website and email newsletters, and virtual programs were held throughout the year. Authors made virtual appearances to discuss their latest book and lead discussions with their audience. Authors included Debbie Macomber, Kimberla Lawson Roby and Sonia Manzano.



ENHANCE ECONOMIC VITALITY

Entrepreneur Academy and Small Business Consultant

A \$145,000 Libraries Build Business grant through American Library Association and Google allowed for enhanced programming for small businesses and entrepreneurs. With grant funds, a small business consultant was hired to build partnerships in the community with local business leaders, create more robust programming and build our library of small business resources.



“

The library is a staple in our society, no matter the resources provided, lives can be better.

Angela B.

”



Adventurous



BUILD COMMUNITY

Anti-Racism Book Discussions and Programs

A partnership with the Maryland Lynching Memorial Project brought adult customers together virtually for monthly book discussions around the theme of racial justice. Each month's program featured a moderated discussion around a particular title. Knowing race can be an uncomfortable and confusing topic to discuss with children, a group of staff formed the Anti-Racism Story Time team to lead virtual programs to provide a space for parents and children to learn about racism together through books, songs and lessons.

Dialogs on Race

Presented in conjunction with Baltimore County Human Relations Commission and Baltimore County Office of Equity and Diversity, this series featured moderated race and equity panel discussions on topics including community and police relations, voting rights, health equity and education. Programs were recorded for posting on library social media channels and YouTube to keep the conversations open for discussion and sharing.

Your Vote 2020

This virtual series examined the election process from both historical and current perspectives. Partnerships with local community organizations, such as Maryland League of Women Voters, Towson University, Common Cause Maryland and NPR, gave participants the opportunity to learn more about democracy, how to make votes count, gerrymandering, the economy based on government policy and voting rights. The series culminated with Sheilah Kast from WYPR-FM moderating a conversation with Donna Brazile.

Discord Server

Knowing remote learning, lockdowns and the pandemic uncertainty created anxiety and depression among many of our teen customers, staff explored and created a virtual hangout space for teens on Discord. This curated hangout space, moderated by staff, created a social media hangout to discuss topics like anime, books, movies, trivia, video games and crafts. Anyone from the ages of 11 to 17 can participate by completing an online form.



“

I love the library because it is an open, diverse, inclusive, creative and curious place. Thank you for keeping us sane and feeling connected through COVID.

”

Annukka A.

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

ENHANCE SCHOOL READINESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

1,000 Books Before Kindergarten

Reading out loud to children helps develop early literacy skills, such as speaking, listening and communicating. Starting from birth, the more words children hear, the better it is to understand the world around them. This reading program, for children birth to 5, uses an interactive online reading log or a game board to track books read. There are sticker incentives for every 100 books read and an Olympic-type medal and certificate for completion.

Craft Kits and Teen Make and Take Kits

With the pandemic and visits to branches limited to curbside and computer appointments, the library knew it was important to keep elementary-aged children and teens engaged. Through sponsorship funding and partnerships, art and activity kits were distributed via curbside to families on a bi-weekly basis through the summer months. Staff-led tutorial videos were posted on the library's YouTube channel to aid children in completing the projects.



“

Everything I need I can find at the library. And if it's not there, staff can help me find it — a window to the world!

Winnie D.

”



Constructive



“

It's a place that values education in all its forms.

Leah P.

”

EQUITABLE ACCESS

CONNECT CUSTOMERS TO SERVICES

Curbside Services

With the continuation of the pandemic, our service model was reimagined to include curbside pickup via vehicle or walk up. Customers can place items on hold via the catalog and get notified when items are ready for pickup. Printing and fax services were also provided. All branches re-opened for browsing in May, but curbside remains as part of our ongoing service model.

Be Surprised Bundles

With browsing not an option at the height of the pandemic, this fun and convenient way for customers to obtain materials was created. Customers are encouraged to complete an online form to answer a few questions and state preferences to receive a bundle of materials curated by library staff and available via curbside pickup.

Library of Things

Additional Chromebooks and hotspots were added to the collection to aid in digital equity. Board games and outdoor activities rounded out the collection.



IMPROVE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES

Chat Service

Reference service got a boost with the expansion of an online chat service via the library website. Customers have the option to phone, email or chat online to get answers to reference questions during operating hours. Our one-on-one My Librarian appointments went virtual via video chat or phone. For our customers, help is never far away and readily available.

Digital Collection

Downloadable materials are monitored with titles and resources added as needed to satisfy customer demand. PressReader, a collection of over 7,000 newspapers and magazines from around the world, was added to the collection. OverDrive reached 1 million circulations in April 2021.

Lobby Delivery Service

To serve senior communities to mitigate social isolation and continue lifelong learning, this new service model was created to provide contactless delivery while providing access to library materials through holds and a deposit collection on a rotating monthly schedule.



“

I appreciate the creative ways you opened the library during COVID, while keeping library staff and the community safe.

Kathleen M.

”





**Baltimore County Public Library
Board of Trustees**

Maureen Walsh David, President

Paul Schwab, Vice President

Jane Eickhoff, Secretary

Aaron Slater, Treasurer

Yara Cheikh

Mike Netzer

Anne West

Baltimore County Executive

John A. Olszewski, Jr.

Baltimore County Council

District 1- Councilman Tom Quirk

District 2- Councilman Izzy Patoka

District 3- Councilman Wade Kach

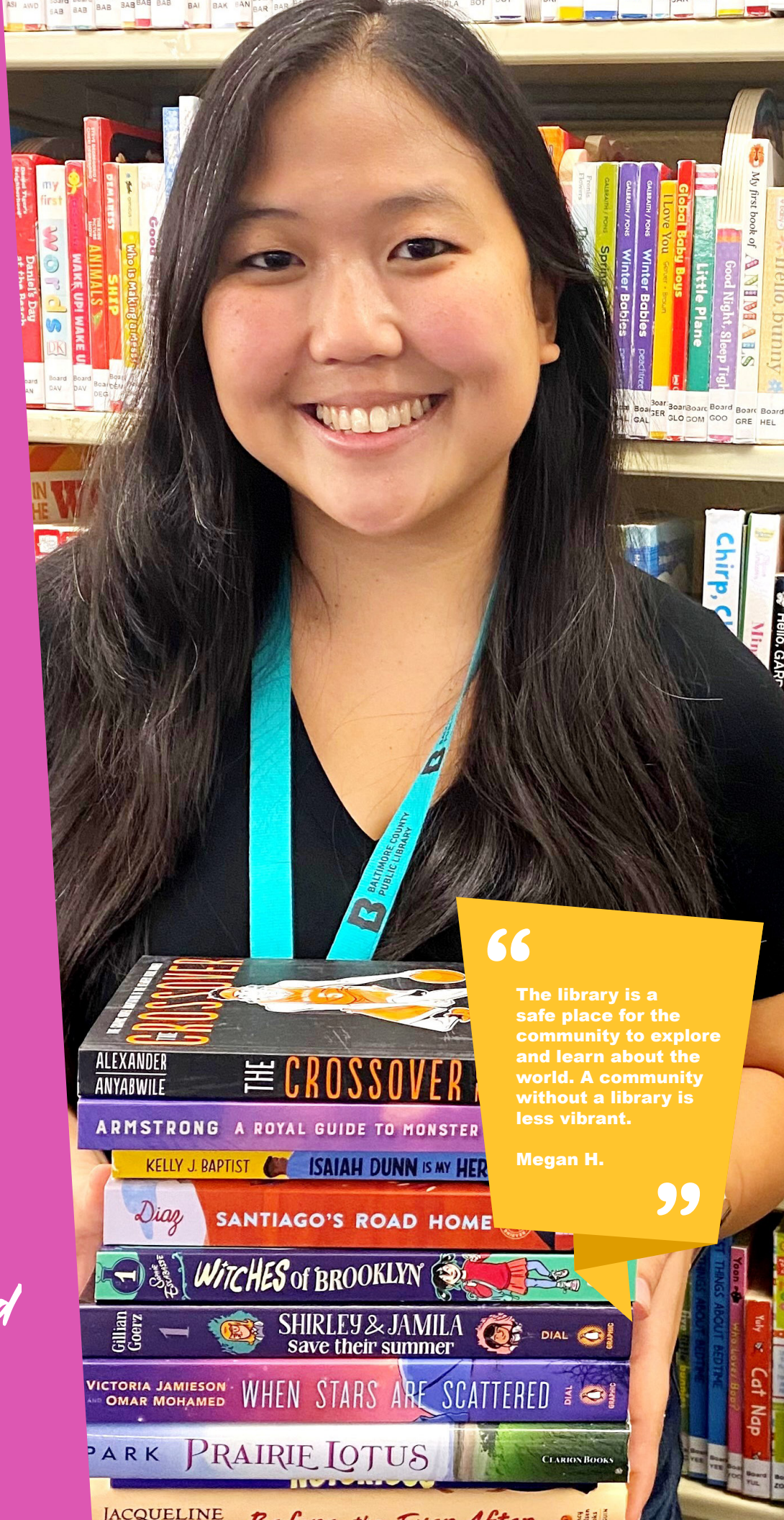
District 4- Councilman Julian Jones, Jr.

District 5- Councilman David Marks

District 6- Councilwoman Cathy Bevins

District 7- Councilman Todd K. Crandell





“

The library is a safe place for the community to explore and learn about the world. A community without a library is less vibrant.

Megan H.

”

- ALEXANDER ANYABWILE THE CROSSOVER
- ARMSTRONG A ROYAL GUIDE TO MONSTER
- KELLY J. BAPTIST ISAIAH DUNN IS MY HERO
- Diary SANTIAGO'S ROAD HOME
- 1 WITCHES OF BROOKLYN
- Gillian Goerz 1 SHIRLEY & JAMILA save their summer
- VICTORIA JAMIESON AND OMAR MOHAMED WHEN STARS ARE SCATTERED
- PARK PRAIRIE LOTUS
- JACQUELINE



Well-Read



READ.
RETURN.
REPEAT.

 BALTIMORE COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY

 BALTIMORE COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY



bcpl.info