

**MARCH 2024**

# DEI NEWSLETTER



Happy March from your new DEI team! We thought a newsletter might be a helpful way to share our actions and goals, as well as to invite feedback.

## What's in this newsletter?



- An explanation of universal design (a concept important to accessibility & disability),
- Staff and patron highlights,
- Resources to check out, and
- A question for you to ponder/respond to!



# What is universal design?

by Kayla

According to the U.S. General Services Administration, the term universal design refers to environments and spaces that are “designed to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.” These spaces should be convenient and available to use by everyone, regardless of ability, disability or age.\* Though universal design is most often thought of in relation to physical spaces, the idea can be applied to other matters such as education and web navigation as well. The University of Waterloo states there are seven principles to keep in mind when implementing universal design in public spaces. They are as follows:

**Equitable use:** Create a space that is safe and accessible for all abilities. This includes providing equal opportunities and means for all abilities, but making adjustments when necessary.

**Flexibility in use:** Focus on creating a design that is flexible to individual abilities and preferences.

**Simple and intuitive use:** Ensure the space is easily understood by all who utilize it.

**Perceptible information:** Provide varying modes of communication to ensure essential information is easily understood.

**Tolerance for error:** Reduce any possible hazards and diminish errors in the space and its uses.

**Low physical effort:** The design of the space is comfortable and for all users and requires low effort in navigating and using the space.

**Size and space for approach and use:** Ensure the design adequately allows space and use for varying sizes and abilities. This includes ensuring items are in reachable distance for all and the space can be easily navigated when using assistive devices.\*\*

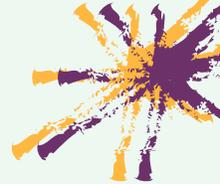
Implementing universal design in public spaces, both within the physical space and otherwise, creates an inclusive and welcoming environment, and is beneficial to all. In designing and reconfiguring spaces with this in mind, public entities create a safe, flexible and multi-use environment where risks are minimized and the space and its resources are used to its best greatest potential.



## Foot-toes (notes!)

\* Universal design | Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Toolkit | University of Waterloo (uwaterloo.ca)

\*\* Universal Design and Accessibility | Section508.gov



## Staff spotlight:

# Kyle Westbrook | Maintenance



Our maintenance team works hard to make sure that our library is accessible for people with disabilities. This month, we asked staff member Kyle about work he does in the Maintenance Department to make sure our library is an inclusive space:

### What are some of the things you do to make sure our library is accessible for people with disabilities?

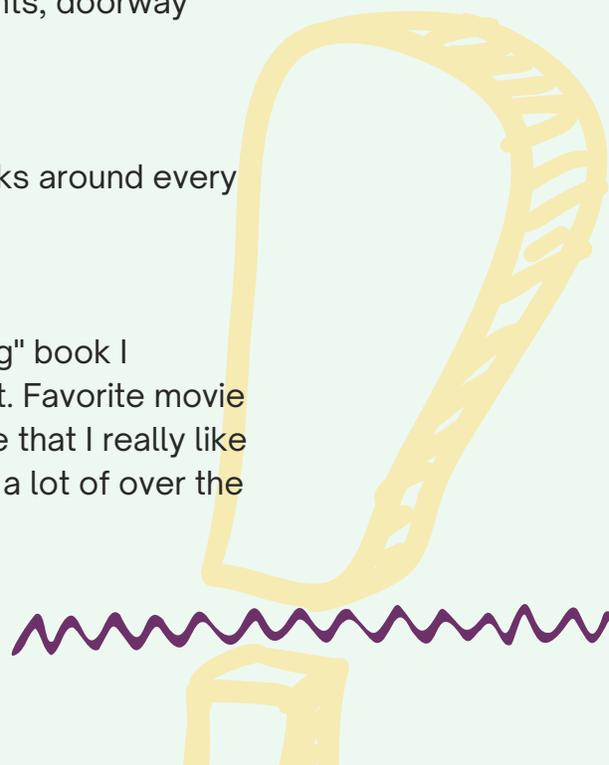
On a day to day basis, we make sure snow is cleared from sidewalks and ramps and that there aren't sticks and things on the sidewalk. If we did a big remodel or anything like that, we would have to make sure things are brought up to current standards for signage (braille, raised letters, where the signs are located), drinking fountain/sink/toilet heights, doorway sizes, how steep ramps are, and things like that.

### What's your favorite thing about working at LPL?

The coworkers are all great and there's treats and snacks around every corner!

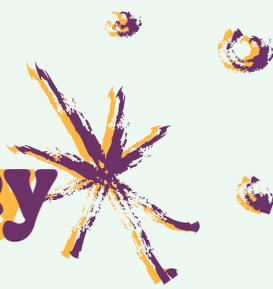
### What's your favorite book or movie?

I think my favorite book is The Hobbit. It was the first "big" book I remember reading in elementary school and I still love it. Favorite movie of all time is the original Star Wars. A more recent movie that I really like and have watched many times is RRR (from India). It has a lot of over the top action scenes, good story and is paced really well.



## Patron highlight:

# Krystal Presley Jackson



Krystal is a patron who the LPL sees almost every day! She was overjoyed to be asked to be our Patron Highlight for the month of March because not only is it Disability Awareness Month, but it's also Krystal's birthday month!! So, when you see her here on March 13th make sure to wish her a happy happy birthday and maybe even strike up a conversation about Elvis Presley, Michael Jackson, or CHUCKY! Krystal has been a resident of the La Crosse community since 2001. What she loves most about La Crosse is Moontunes, the River, and the Library!

### What is your favorite thing about the LPL?

How they help me feel like a place to belong. I like the free food too, especially the macro bars and oranges!

### Do you have any book or movie recommendations for LPL staff?

Argyle - the movie and book!  
George and Tammy - book and movie!  
TV Show - Yellowjackets

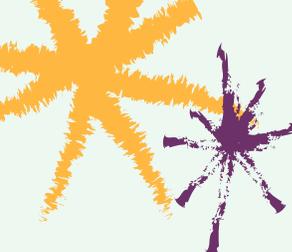
### How does the library meet your needs as a patron?

Help me apply for different resources. Provides me a home and a place where I feel safe. I love the launch pads. Thank you for providing those!!

### What is your favorite memory that involves the LPL or its staff?

I'm friends with a lot of people here but going to Heart and Chicago with Medora is one of my favorite memories!





## QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

**What would you like to see re-designed in our library using the principles of universal design?**

We'd love to know your thoughts and have [a link HERE](#) for you to do so (if you're so inclined).



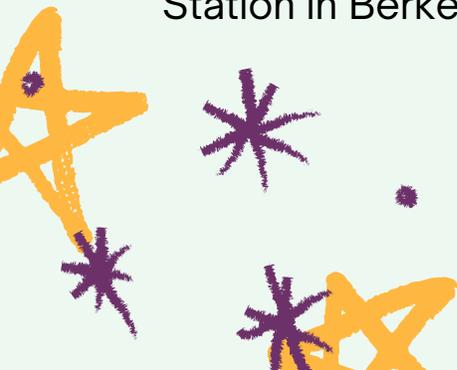
## ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCES & INFORMATION

Take a free [ASL course at Oklahoma School for the Deaf!](#)

Learn ASL with our free online resource [Transparent Language](#).

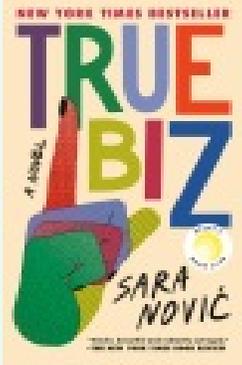
[Read about how universal design](#) can be applied as a framework for improving and optimizing learning for all students.

[Watch a short video](#) that takes you to a universally designed, transit-oriented campus located at the Ashby BART Station in Berkeley, California.



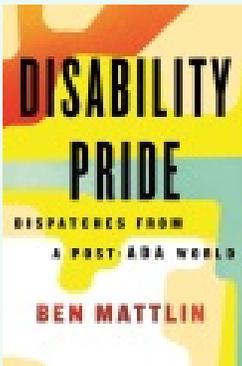
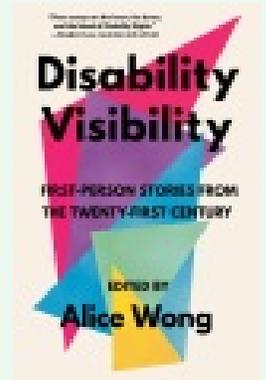
# More Educational Resources

## Books :



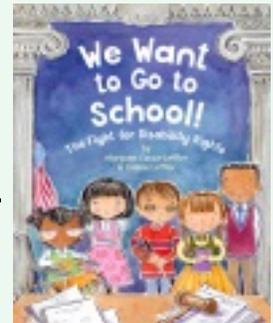
True Biz: A Novel  
by Sara Novic

Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century  
by Alice Wong

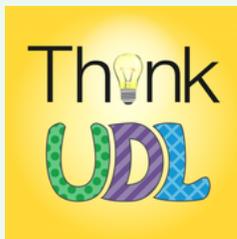


Disability Pride: Dispatches from a Post-ADA World  
by Ben Mattlin

We Want to go to School!: The Fight for Disability Rights  
by Maryann Cocca-Leffler



## Podcasts :



Think UDL



Disability After Dark  
W/ Andrew Gurza



Down to the  
Struts

## Creators :

**Molly Burke**

Instagram: [@mollyburkeofficial](https://www.instagram.com/mollyburkeofficial)

**Shane Burcaw**

Instagram: [@shaneburcaw](https://www.instagram.com/shaneburcaw)