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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Stark County District Library Introduces The Smart Store, Where Everything is Free™

(Canton, Ohio)- August 29, 2014-The Stark County District Library believes in smart communities. After all, it has been supporting the communities of Stark County for 130 years. Regardless of the changes along the way, one thing has remained the same: the Stark County District Library has always been a free library. Now, beginning on September 2, 2014, it is declaring this defining value by calling the Library *The Smart Store, where everything is free.*™

The Smart Store, where everything is free.™ Concept

The Stark County District Library is *The Smart Store*™ because as soon as customers pass through its doors, they begin feeling smarter. *Everything is free* because the library already belongs to the public. The Smart Store™ is a whole new way to experience the library. The dedicated Smart Store™ staff members are committed to three community priorities: start smart, an early childhood learning initiative; stay smart, promoting lifelong learning; and share smart, creating community connections.

New and Improved Website

The Stark County District Library serves 240,000 people, so at any given moment somebody in the service area is awake. That's why the new 24/7 online library, www.thesmartstore.org, is so important. Patrons may visit any time of the day or night to reserve or renew material, to sign up for a free program or class, or to see what exciting events are coming up at all Stark County District Library locations, or to access a wealth of free digital content, from streaming popular movies to scholarly articles.

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Changes for the Better

With the Stark County District Library's enhanced commitment to a community that is smarter than ever, ways to make The Smart Store™ a destination to attract new patrons and increase usage for returning customers were implemented. Express service for check-outs and holds allows busy customers get in and out faster. Friendly, knowledgeable customer service is a top priority. The Smart Spot at Main Library features a team specializing in assisting the public with technology. Services such as free online borrowing of electronic media, free faxing, free notary service at select locations, and free Wi-Fi are available.

Joining the Stark County District Library and receiving a free library card is easy. Applications are available at any location or online at www.thesmartstore.org. Card holders immediately get smart benefits, such as access to over a million items to borrow; services like computer training, technology classes; reading challenges for teens and kids; educator resources; fun family events; and outreach services for senior citizens and homebound customers. Perhaps best of all, the Stark County District Library has eliminated fines on overdue materials. Borrowers are encouraged to return and renew materials, and will be invoiced for items not returned by 30 days past the due date, but will no longer be penalized for late returns.

Smart Tour 2014

To encourage community leaders to stop in and learn more about the Stark County District Library's commitment to being *The Smart Store, where everything is free.*™, each Library location will participate in the Smart Tour 2014, September 2-17. Stark County District Library Executive Director Tena Wilson will be on hand at each location to speak more about the Library's new direction and *The Smart Store, where everything is free.*™ and bright, colorful Smart Store™ graphics will enhance each Stark County District Library building.

About the Library:

The [Stark County District Library](http://www.thesmartstore.org) is a winner of the [National Medal](#) for library service, is one of the best 100 libraries in the U.S. according to the [HAPLR](#) rating, and is a [Library Journal 5 Star library](#). Its Main Library, nine Branch Libraries, and two Bookmobiles and two Kidmobiles serve 150,000 library card holders. More than 1.4 million people visit the Stark County District Library each year, holdings number 884,000 items, and annual circulation is 3.6 million items. The collection includes books, audio visual materials, and periodicals for all ages. In addition, the Library provides programs and classes for adults, teens, and children, computer and Internet access, a downloadable collection of books and music, genealogy services, traveling collections on Bookmobiles and Kidmobiles, as well as outreach services to shut-ins, nursing homes, and housing units. It is one of the nine largest library systems in the state of Ohio, serving 12 local school districts. For more information, call 330-452-0665 or visit www.thesmartstore.org.

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Stark County District Library: Inspire Ideas. Enriching lives. Creating Community.