Meet Jason Reynolds!
Author of All American Boys, Miles Morales: Spider Man, and more!
Why do you read? To discover a new world? To learn a skill? To explore another culture? Or just to lose yourself in a story?

I have always loved to read. When I was a child, I longed to read a book with a character who looked like me. Unfortunately, it just wasn’t common then. Today, I’m delighted to say it’s an ordinary occurrence for my daughter to find a variety of books on the shelf with an Asian American main character.

Don’t we all want to see ourselves reflected in the world around us? Each community that we serve is made up of individuals with their own hopes, dreams, and ideas. When you walk into your neighborhood library, we hope that you see yourself in the collection and materials that are available to you.

Wouldn’t our world be boring if everyone was exactly the same? It’s through our differences that we can learn and grow. It’s the spark inside of you that makes you unique—maybe it’s a spark of creativity. Or passion. Or genius. Or inspiration.

Do you feel a spark when you visit your Library? We certainly hope so! When you walk through our doors, visit us online, or open the pages of this Explore Guide, we hope that you see your life reflected in the reading recommendations you receive; that you’re inspired by visiting authors; that you discover a love for learning, fixing, teaching, or something entirely new.

Stark Library is here to help you along the way—by being a door to a brighter future, a mirror reflecting your experiences, a window to offer you other perspectives, and your trusted guide as you navigate your way through it all.

Books are sometimes windows, offering views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange...however, a window can also be a mirror [in which] we can see our own lives.

— Rudine Sims Bishop

Doors, Windows, and MIRRORS

OUR MISSION
To spark curiosity and foster knowledge by connecting everyone to resources, services, and opportunities.

Learn more about how the materials in your library reflect your community in our latest blog post. StarkLibrary.org/Diversity
Meet Him!
Feb 24 | 6:30–7:30 pm
Canton Palace Theatre
Be advised that his event may be held virtually, if necessary.

Bestselling author

Jason Reynolds

Jason Reynolds knows that it just takes the right book to discover reading as a portal to a world of adventure. Cue your friendly neighborhood Spider-Man! When Miles Morales, a gifted biracial teen from Brooklyn, picked up the mantle of Spider-Man, many young men suddenly saw themselves as the web-slinging hero in their own story and became book lovers.

Beyond the Spider-verse, Reynolds uses his real-life experiences to connect with his readers. He uses poetry and prose to capture the teen experience—from the joys of youth and friendship to other issues they face every day: divorce, loss, poverty, injustice, or just finding a place in the world. He’s inspired a new generation of readers and even created a few unlikely poetry fans.

His work includes Look Both Ways, All American Boys, As Brave As You, Long Way Down, and the Track series just to name a few. For some readers, reading Reynolds’ books may be the first time they’ve seen their stories told.

Jason’s ability to connect his own experiences with those of his readers has made him a superstar in the world of children’s literature. He’s been a Newbery Award Honoree, a Printz Award Honoree, National Book Award Honoree, a Kirkus Award winner, a two-time Walter Dean Myers Award winner, an NAACP Image Award Winner, and the recipient of multiple Coretta Scott King honors.

We are thrilled to welcome Jason to the Dr. Audrey Lavin Speaking of Books lineup. Reserve your FREE seats at StarkLibrary.org/SpeakingofBooks.

Teens don’t hate to read. They hate to be bored.
Researching your family history is like gazing through a window to the past. Every family has a story to tell. What’s yours?

If you’re ready to dip your toes into family research, start by talking to one of our friendly genealogists. Stephanie Houck leads our Genealogy Department and loves helping visitors dig up their roots to discover their family trees. From everyday discoveries like obituaries, cemetery inscriptions, and marriage records, to tracking down biological family members and long-lost high school flames—she’s done it all!

Stephanie says, “Working in Genealogy is like solving a puzzle with 1,000 pieces, and you still may never get the whole picture. But it’s sure fun to try!”

Last year, she helped a young woman make her grandfather (Don Stock, pictured above) a book from a collection of Canton Repository front pages from his birthday for the past 80 odd years. Thanks to our news archives (which have local papers dating to way back when) and our love of cool projects, we could help out! (He was thrilled, by the way!)

Stephanie loves being called in to help find an untraceable relative, uncover information for a TV show (yes, really), or help with a unique birthday gift.

Why do Family Research?

People get into genealogy for a variety of reasons—to track down estranged or separated family, learn more about a specific relative, or see if there’s anyone famous in the family. Other researchers don’t have a known family history due to adoption or loss of records and really want to know where they came from. The popularity of DNA kits has generated some interest, too. For some, knowing their family history can be transformational.

We offer research tools for some of our harder to trace lineages. African American Heritage does a great job addressing the unique challenges of African American family history research. It includes freedman and slave records, census records, vital records, church records, and more.
Getting Started

Family research can seem daunting, but it’s not difficult to get started. Stephanie always advises, “Begin with yourself and work back from there. Talk to your relatives to get as much information as you can and then document, document, document! We’re here to help if you need to track down a resource, decode information, or just get stuck.”

First, identify your goals. What do you hope to discover? How far back do you want to search? Setting clear goals will help you stay on track and focus your research.

Then, fill out your pedigree chart. This tracks your individual family history back through time. Every person listed on the chart is directly related to you—going back six or seven generations.

And write everything, and we mean EVERYTHING, down. It’ll save you a lot of trouble if you have to backtrack.

FREE Research Resources

In addition to tools like historical news articles, military service, court, immigration, and census records, the Library also offers FREE access to:

- **ANCESTRY.COM**
  Search records, ship manifests, digitized films, and millions of records from around the world—FREE. You can even explore by location and discover something unexpected!

- **AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE**
  Includes freedman and slave records, census records, vital records, church records, and more to address the unique challenges of African American family history research.

- **NEWSPAPER ARCHIVE (OHIO COLLECTION)**
  This unique archive spans more than 400 years of family history, small-town events, world news, and more—you can even read TODAY’S issue of The Canton Repository!

Visit StarkLibrary.org/Genealogy to start your family research.

Listen to Your Nana’s Voice

The best way to start your research is to talk to your living family—parents, grandparents, and great aunts and uncles are a wealth of information. Not only will you get the names you need to dig into your research, but you may discover personal family stories that would otherwise be lost to time. Be sure to record these conversations, you’ll be glad you have them later!

We have a lot of resources to help bring history to life here at the Library, but in 2022, thanks to a generous donation from the late Mary Tomic, we will add another to the list—Stark Memory. This online database will share oral histories, photos, documents, videos, and more. Stephanie is excited about this project because it’s such a unique way to bring it to life.

“Imagine being able to reach across time and hear your family history in your ancestor’s own words. Listening to their voice, and even seeing their mannerisms as they talk about their lives, or living through historical events—it’s amazing. Stark Memory is going to add a whole new dimension to family research. I can’t wait for people to start using it.”
Can you imagine not being able to walk into the Library and pick up your items? Unfortunately, for many people in Stark County, this is a reality—due to lack of transportation, circumstance, or illness. Our Mobile Services fleet helps fill in the gaps to bring the Library to people in areas of the county without easy access to a Library branch!

Our Bookmobiles—or Library-on-wheels—travel across the county and are greeted like celebrities wherever they go. When the Bookmobile arrives, visitors begin to trickle in, on foot, bike—even buggy—eager to find out what’s new at the Library.

On the Bookmobile, you’ll find many of the services you love: Browsing for books and movies, picking up holds, FREE WiFi, and friendly conversation. Some of our community buses have document services—so you can print, copy, and fax right from the Bookmobile! This past summer, we even delivered meals to kids and families in need.

Another way Mobile Services helps is by bringing books to you—literally. For example, Katherine, one of our patrons who is 101 years old, can’t get to the Library—so we deliver books to her mailbox with our Books by Mail program. Those books offer her a window to the world and a chance for endless adventures. Each month Katherine receives a stack of books handpicked especially for her. She shared that she genuinely appreciates the personal care that goes into these selections and says that her days would be long and lonely without this service.

As your County Library system, we are here to help the people in our communities enjoy all the wonderful perks and conveniences that come along with owning a library card.

If you see the Bookmobile out in your neighborhood, make sure you give us a friendly wave!

Check out the Bookmobile Schedule
StarkLibrary.org/YourBookmobile

You’ve Got (Books by) Mail!
Stuck at home? Get library materials sent right to your door—FREE!
Call 330.452.0665 to learn more.
The Maker Studio is back! Giving a gift from the heart doesn’t have to break the bank. Here are a few personalized gift ideas that are sure to impress:

- **Digitize your cherished memories, stories, photos, and recipes with the digital conversion station.**
- **Monograms. Embroider everything! Need we say more?**
- **Design and print a cute bookend with the 3D printer.**
- **Matching pajamas! You bring the shirts; we have the heat press!**

You can make your own holiday special by making something for yourself, too!

The Maker Studio is available by appointment during open hours. All you need is a library card! Call 330.452.0665 to schedule your appointment!

---

When we started our Re|imagine project at the beginning of 2021, we could only imagine the sense of pride and accomplishment we would feel standing in a completed branch. Now, here we are at the end of the year with not one, but THREE transformed locations—North Branch, East Canton, and Madge Youtz (opening soon). They look amazing! If you haven’t stopped by to see one of our upgraded locations, what’s stopping you?