

LIFESTYLE

Stark Library Communications Director shares job details, favorite books



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The Repository

Published 5:40 a.m. ET May 5, 2022

Stephanie Cargill is the Communications Director of Stark Library. Here she shares what her job entails, her favorite thing about Stark Library and what she has been reading lately.

Q. As Communications Director at Stark Library, can you tell me what your job entails?

A. My job is to tell the story of the library to the people who live in Stark County. We do this through a combination of printed and digital (online) materials, including our website, YouTube, social media, flyers, posters, eNewsletters, our Explore Guide and many other ways. Thankfully, I have a team of talented individuals to help me in this endeavor.

When I was interviewing for this job, I was shocked to learn that there were many services the library provided that I didn't know about, even though I am a lifelong library patron. And that is my biggest challenge: Making sure the people in our community understand the full story of the library so they can access the resources the library has to offer. There is something for everyone. The library truly is one of the greatest assets of our community.

More: Stark Library IT Director Brad Sayre shares favorite thing about library, current reads

Q. How did you come to work at the library?

A. I've spent the majority of my career in private business—marketing products for people to purchase. Although I've lived in Canton most of my life, I commuted to a job in Cleveland for more than a decade. Between the commute and work commitments, I had very little time left to invest in our community; I made the decision to look for a job that would allow me to work and serve in our community. So when I saw the position of Communications Director, I knew it was for me.

An interesting life fact: I was born at Mercy Hospital, which (at the time) was on the property where the Main Library now resides. I feel like I have come full circle in my life.

Q. If you could tell About readers one thing about Stark Library, what would you want them to know?

A. Our mission is, “We spark curiosity and foster knowledge by connecting everyone to resources, services and opportunities.” Our library is made up of individuals whose chosen career is to connect people—to each other, to services they need and to opportunities that help them live their lives. Our staff genuinely cares about the people that they serve.

More: Kendal Rautzhan: Funny tales will entertain young readers

Q. What’s your favorite thing about the library?

A. As a child then as a parent, the library was one of my favorite places to be—a magical place that sparked my curiosity. I could explore the world and go on grand adventures just by opening the cover of a book. My favorite thing is that I now have the privilege of coming to this magical place every day—for my job! What could be better?

Another thing I love is walking through the library and seeing individuals interacting with staff, just sitting and reading a book, talking or using a computer. On Fridays during tax season, people are always lined up waiting for the library to open so they can take advantage of the free tax services provided by AARP and VITA, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance from United Way.

Stephanie Cargill shares what she's reading

What are you currently reading?

I usually have several books that I am reading at any given time. One on my nightstand, another on my phone (using the Libby app from the library), at my desk, on the coffee table. One of the titles I’m currently reading is “*Back to Earth—What Life In Space Taught Me About Our Home Planet—And Our Mission To Protect It*” by NASA Astronaut Nicole Stott. By the time this article is published, I will have met Nicole at our Dr. Audrey Lavin Speaking of Books series. This is another of my favorite things about the library: I get to meet some really cool people!

Have you ever read a book that changed your life or your views on a specific topic?

I am reading the book *“My Grandmother’s Hands”* by *Resmaa Menakem*. The author explores generational trauma and the damage that racial trauma has continued to cause in our society. Menakem suggests that this trauma manifests itself not just in our heads and hearts but also in our bodies, often unknowingly impacting generations of people. But Menakem doesn’t stop there. He proposes ways that we can personally and collectively heal the cycle of generational racial trauma in our nation.

What is your guilty pleasure book?

I love the genre *historical fiction*. Reading stories based on historical facts brings history to life for me. Sometimes, I choose a specific period and try to read several authors who have written about that era. Other times, I read an entire author’s series chronologically. During the pandemic, I discovered *Philippa Gregory* and read her *Tudor series*. That brings me to my guilty pleasure. I’ve been listening to the *Outlander series* by *Diana Gabaldon*. *Jamie Fraser*. Need I say more?

What book have you read more than once because you love it so much?

I often escape into the world of fantasy. I’ve read the complete *“Harry Potter” series* by *J.K. Rowling*, *“The Lord of the Rings” series* by *J.R.R. Tolkien* and *“Watership Down”* by *Richard Adams* many, many times.

What is the last book that made you cry?

“Before We Were Yours” by *Lisa Wingate*. Although this is a fictional work, it is based on the real-life tragedies of poor children in the mid-twentieth century who were stolen from their families, thrown into the Tennessee Children’s Home Society orphanage and “sold” for adoption to wealthy families. If you read this book, I also recommend reading *“The Baby Thief”* (by *Barbara Bisantz Raymond*), the true story of Georgia Tann, the woman who ran the orphanage referred to in *“Before We Were Yours.”*

What book have you read that you think the movie is better?

I don’t think I’ve ever watched a movie and found it to be better than the book. I was hesitant to see *The Lord of the Rings* movies because I enjoyed Tolkien’s books so much and thought a movie could never tell the story. Peter Jackson, who directed the films, painted a beautiful picture of Middle-earth, bringing the adventures of Bilbo Baggins to life. However, I still prefer the books.

What is the book you always come back to?

“The World of Pooh” by A. A. Milne, illustrated by E. H. Shepard, the delightful story of Christopher Robin, Winnie the Pooh, and their friends in an enchanted forest. My well-worn copy, given to me on my 10th birthday, sits in a place of honor on my desk.