

Chicago Public Library - Scholar in Residence 2003

Dr. Kathleen de la Peña McCook



About Chicago Public Library:

The Chicago Public Library was created directly from the ashes of the great Chicago Fire. After Chicago's Great Fire of October 8, 1871, A.H. Burgess of London proposed an "English Book Donation" which he described, two months later, in the Tribune on December 7, 1871.

On Monday, October 11, 1897, the Central Library, at Michigan Avenue between Washington and Randolph Streets, opened its doors to the public.

Since first opening its doors to the public in 1873, the Chicago Public Library has maintained its status of one of the City's most democratic of institutions – providing all Chicagoans with a free and open place to gather, learn, connect, read and be transformed.

The 79 locations of the Chicago Public Library are at the forefront of providing innovative library services, technologies and tools Chicagoans need to achieve their personal goals and to establish the City's role as a competitive force in the global marketplace.

Since 1989, the City of Chicago and the Chicago Public Library have opened 52 new or renovated neighborhood libraries; unprecedented public library growth. These new libraries are that special third place “beyond home and work” where people come to improve their lives, nourish their intellect or simply to be entertained. The library is where people of all ages and backgrounds gather freely.

The 2003 CPL's Scholar in Residence Program:

As part of the Chicago Public Library's ongoing commitment to share dialogue on important library issues, they invite colleagues from other libraries to participate in the Chicago Public Library's sixth annual Scholar in Residence program. In 2003, the focus was "Libraries and Community Building." The 2003 Scholar in Residence was Kathleen de la Peña McCook, University of South Florida Distinguished University Professor. She was in residence at the Chicago Public Library during the week of May 19-23, 2003. Her participation in this program is funded through the federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant awarded by Jesse White, Secretary of State and State Librarian as well as the Illinois State Library, a division of the Office of the Secretary of State.

In 2003, the Chicago Public Library offered six varied Scholar in Residence events:

"Building the Community of Librarians: Making the Most of Your Library Career" - On May 19, 2003, this program featured Kathleen de la Peña McCook for those interested in becoming a librarian, already pursuing a Master's degree in librarianship, or mentoring new librarians. There was no charge for the event, which featured an informal reception.

"Libraries, Cultural Heritage Institutions, Lifelong Learning, Literacy and Community Building" - On May 20, 2003, this program featured a discussion based on two of Kathleen de la Peña McCook's articles on public library roles and partnerships with other community institutions. There was no charge for this program.

"A Place At the Table: Libraries and Community Building" - On May 21, 2003, this program featured presentations by Kathleen de la Peña McCook, a panel of public library administrators and association leaders, and presentations by Chicago Public Library staff members and suburban public library directors.

"Library Service to Hispanic Communities" - On May 22, 2003, this program shared practical tips on library services, collections, programs and Hispanic communities with Kathleen de la Peña McCook, 2002 Latino Librarian of the Year, and members of the Chicago Public Library Hispanic Services Committee.

"Building the Community of Readers: Reader Advisory Service for Non-Fiction Readers" - On May 22, 2003, the program included a discussion with Kathleen de la Peña McCook on non-fiction reading and models for providing reader advisory services. At the time, she served on the American Library Association's Notable Books Committee and was in the process of writing an article on reader advisory service to non-fiction readers.

"Libraries Build Communities: Library Service to Diverse Communities" - On May 23, 2003, the Chicago Public Library Scholar in Residence Program offered a day-long tour of four Chicago Public Library branches: Chinatown, Legler, Lozano and Near North; information fairs; and presentations on library service to diverse communities. The program was co-sponsored by the LACONI Outreach and Programming Section.

2003 CPL Scholar in Residence - Kathleen de la Peña McCook:

Kathleen de la Peña McCook is Distinguished University Professor at the University of South Florida, School of Library and Information Science. She has also served as a faculty member and administrator at Louisiana State University, the University of Illinois, and Dominican University. Earlier in her career, she worked as a reference librarian and a teacher.

Kathleen teaches courses in Adult Lifelong Learning, Readers' Advisory, and Public Librarianship. Recently, she has started teaching a new course on the role of libraries as cultural heritage institutions. She has also taught courses in the areas of reference and user services.

According to a study published by Library Quarterly, Kathleen de la Peña McCook is ranked among the nation's top researchers in the field of Library Science. She has written hundreds of articles, reviews, technical reports and papers. Recent publications include:

"Public Policy as a Factor Influencing Adult Lifelong Learning, Adult Literacy, and Public Libraries." *Reference and User Services Quarterly* 42 (Fall 2002).

"Rocks in the Whirlpool: Equity and the American Library Association." (May 2002).

"Poverty, Democracy, and Public Libraries." In *Libraries & Democracy: The Cornerstones of Liberty*. Edited by Nancy Kranich, (ALA Editions, 2001).

"Ethnic Diversity in Library and Information Science." *Library Trends* 49 (Summer 2000).

She has also written and edited fourteen books, including *A Place at the Table: Participating in Community Building* (ALA Editions, 2000) and *Women of Color in Librarianship* (ALA Editions, 1998), *Library Services to Youth of Hispanic Heritage* (McFarland Publishers, 2000). She is now working on a book tentatively titled *Community-Based Public Librarianship* for Neal-Schuman Publishers.

Kathleen currently edits the column "Community Building" in the *Reference and User Services Quarterly*. She served as editor of the journal from 1982-1988 and of *Public Libraries*, the *Journal of the Public Library Association* from 1989-1990.

To provide ongoing support for the public library role in community building, she has developed the Web site and mail-list, "A Librarian At Every Table," to demonstrate the value of librarianship in the community building movement. Based on the success of this site, she has developed an active blog in 2005 titled, "A Librarian at the Kitchen Table." To access the blog, please [click here](#). To access the A Librarian At Every Table 2001-2004 archives, please [click here](#).

Kathleen combines a rigorous approach to scholarship and writing with a passionate commitment to social justice and community activism. In her community, Kathleen co-chairs the South County Coalition for Community Concerns, is a member of the Ruskin Community Resource Center Advisory Committee and is active at the local and state level in the Democratic Party. She also serves as the Coordinator of Community Outreach for the University of South Florida College of Arts and Sciences. In this capacity, she works on service-learning, community collaboration, migrant and outreach service with groups such as: the Rural Social Services Partnership, Redlands Christian Migrant Association and South County Coalition for Community Concerns.

Kathleen has a long history of professional service through association activities and advisory and consultant roles. She is active in the American Library Association, currently serving on President-Elect Carla Hayden's advisory committee for "equity of access" and the Reference and User Services Association Notable Books Council. She serves as a member of the Florida Library Association's Public Library Standards Committee. She has served on panels for the National Endowment for the Humanities and served as a consultant to the federal Department of Education and National Commission on Library and Information Science.

Kathleen has been honored with several awards from the American Library Association, including: the Equality Award, Monroe Adult Services Award, Catalyst for Change Award, and Beta Phi Mu Award for contributions to library education. She was named REFORMA's Trejo Librarian of the Year in 2002.

Kathleen received her PhD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, School of Library and Information Studies, and her MA from the University of Chicago, Graduate Library School. She also holds an MA in English from Marquette University. She completed her undergraduate work at the University of Illinois-Chicago.

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Please e-mail all comments to Kathleen de la Peña McCook at kmcccook@tampabay.rr.com.

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