Massachusetts Libraries were rockin’ and rollin’ along to the 2018 statewide Summer Library Program theme of “Libraries Rock!” A noteworthy high of 492,424 people attended programs composed by 306 participating libraries across the Commonwealth. These public libraries offered nearly 20,500 programs for all ages during the summer months; an increase of approximately 2,300 programs from 2017. This summer also encouraged over 125,000 participants of all ages to participate in their Summer Library Program, 36,338 of those registering online.

The Massachusetts Library System (MLS) continues to provide membership to the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP) for each public library member along with the program manual, posters, and bookmarks. 2018 marks our eighth year as members of CSLP, allowing MA libraries to share the same program, theme, incentives, and artwork with many other states across the nation.

Participating libraries were jazzed by the 2018 theme of “Libraries Rock!” finding it flexible and fun for all age ranges. High notes include everything from geology programs to dance parties to drum circles. Some decorated with classic vinyl records while others focused on promoting local musicians. Many loved the colorful, vibrant artwork and appreciated using one slogan that can be used to engage the whole family. Libraries across Massachusetts were also thankful for the bookmarks, posters, and manuals they received as part of the statewide program. As one librarian shared, “I always love to use the CSLP manual, artwork, and posters. As a small library with limited staff it really helps to have all these resources.”

MLS also continued working with the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) to bring the beloved Boston Bruins Partnership to libraries. Blades the Bear visited 13 libraries for special events and when Blades visits a library, program attendance consistently goes up! Thanks to the Bruins support, poster costs were covered for all programs for all libraries, and participants had the opportunity to win prizes provided by the Boston Bruins. The Western MA Library Advocates (WMLA) once again coordinated the donations of incentives from the Big E, Yankee Candle, The Eric Carle Museum, and Friendly’s Restaurants. Librarians statewide report the high value of these incentives and partnerships.

MLS and Massachusetts libraries are already planning for “A Universe of Stories,” the summer 2019 space theme that coincides with the 50th anniversary of the moon landing. Partnerships include the JFK Museum in Boston, NASA, and the National Network of Libraries of Medicine with programs ranging from space activities to resources about astronaut health.

For more information, contact:
April Mazza, MLS Consultant, april@masslibsystem.org
Christi Showman Farrar, MLS Consultant, christif@masslibsystem.org