



Youth Services Librarian Expects Great Results from *Next Chapter Campaign*



Excitement over growing the library's programming and supporting the community through the *Next Chapter Campaign* are fueling Felicia Gill's efforts since joining the North Lake County Public Library District in January 2021 as the Youth Services Librarian.

"The library is so important," Gill said. "It gives families a safe, welcoming place to come to and it gives them access to so many things they need, like early-education programs, books, and internet!"

Gill is in charge of programming and outreach for kids of all ages. Through the *Next Chapter Campaign*, the story-time and Mother Goose programs she currently runs for young children will gain more room for their activities, and give

the library space to add new programs. *The Next Chapter Campaign* goal is \$2 million and has raised over \$1.35 million to date.

"I love doing interactive books for story-time and our outreach Story Shuttle visits," Gill said of her children's programming. "I try to do one each week." A recent favorite of hers and the children during story-time was *High Five* by Adam Rubin. The kids participated in the story by high fiving the book.

The library offers a 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten reading program for newborns through Pre-K, and a very popular summer reading program that has had over 1,000 registrants in years past. Many businesses and organizations in the community support these programs by offering incentive coupons or prizes for participants meeting reading goals.

"I really love interacting with the children and being able to offer these important programs," Gill said. "It's kind of hard to believe that my job is to read stories and sing songs with kids."

Gill uses her bachelor's degree in literature and creative writing and work experience at the Barnes and Noble children's department to enhance her programs. She has seen these programs grow since the library resumed offering in-person programming for children.

Gill looks forward to the expanded children's area. The additional space will allow her desk to be stationed in the kids' area so she can easily help new readers discover a favorite book, and will allow for more play and programming space.



Children's Area Expands with the *Next Chapter Campaign*

Continuing to offer and expand youth programming at the North Lake County Public Library District is vital for readers of all ages to grow their love of literacy and lifelong learning.

"We're excited that two of our programs, Mother Goose for young children and story-time for preschool children, are each meeting once a week after being virtual, and bringing in kids and their families to experience the library," said Connie Brownell, president of the North Lake County Library Foundation.

Because of space constraints, these programs are currently held in the meeting room. The *Next Chapter Campaign* will provide a dedicated space in the children's area which will be larger and open for kids to play, learn and explore.

The renovation project will not only provide more programming space, but will also create equally important play space for kids of all ages. A dedicated space that is safe for infants and toddlers to explore and play will be incorporated into the children's area. Lower shelving for books will help parents and caregivers keep an eye on older kids by providing line of sight throughout the library.

To learn more about the *Next Chapter Campaign*, please contact Connie Brownell at nlclfoundation@gmail.com.