Annual Meeting
June 5, 2015

The Aspen Institute Dialogue
on
Public Libraries

With support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries working group came together to craft and articulate a shared vision for the future of public libraries.

The working group included:
- **leaders from the library field,**
- **executives from businesses,**
- **officials from various levels of government,**
- **community development organizations,**
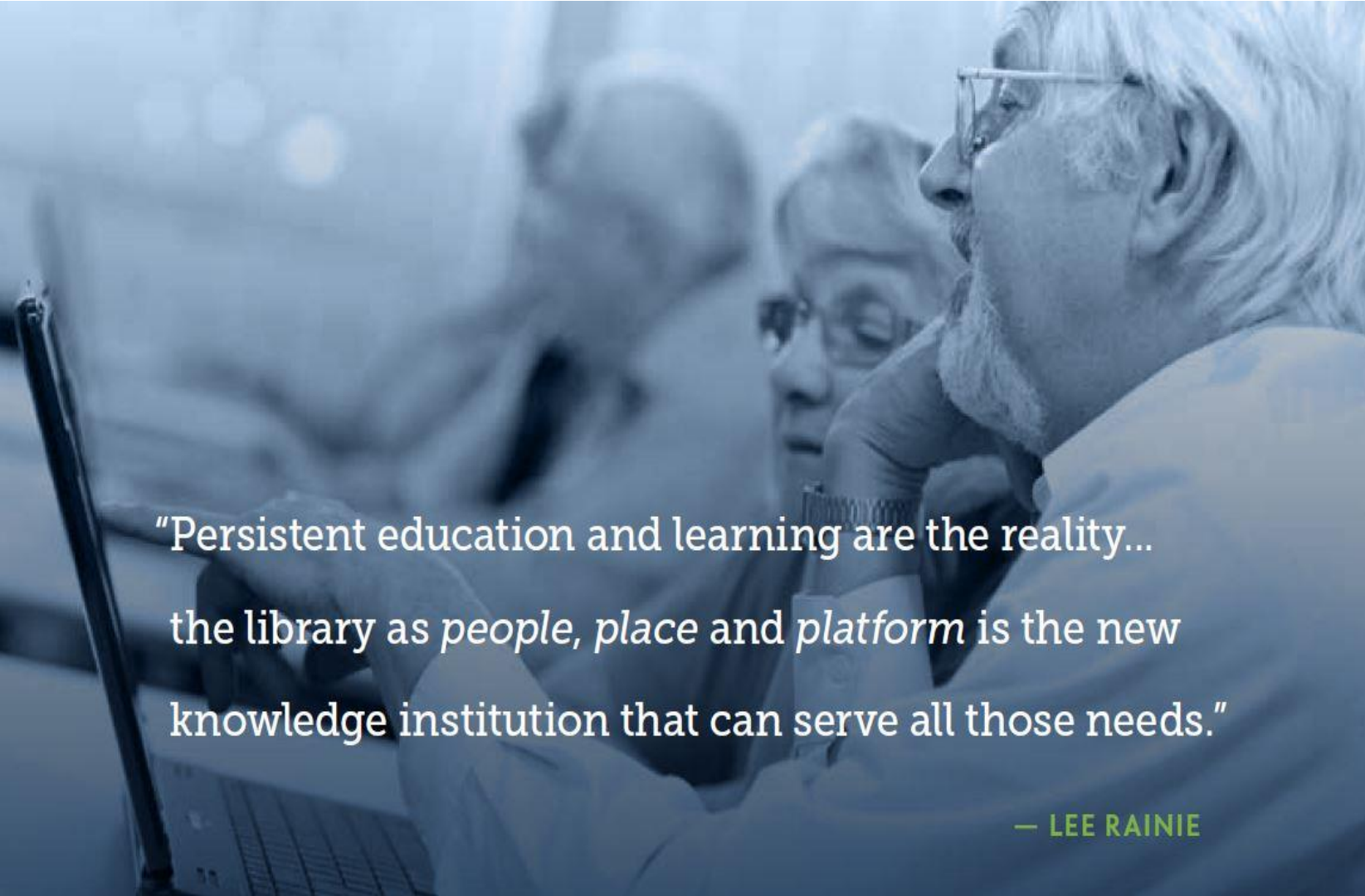- **and education experts.**

A Networked World

Libraries – Critical Partner in the Educational Ecosystem

"Now the half-life of a skill is down to about five years, and genres have a lifetime of four or five years, so most learning in the future won't go on in schools."

John Seely Brown

Libraries:
Gateway to Lifelong Learning

"Persistent education and learning are the reality...

the library as *people, place* and *platform* is the new

knowledge institution that can serve all those needs."

— LEE RAINIE

People   Place   Platform

LIBRARY AS PEOPLE

"Take away my people, but leave my factories, and soon grass will grow on the factory floors. Take away my factories, but leave my people, and soon we will have a new and better factory."

Andrew Carnegie

The library as people reflects the shift away from building collections to building human capital, relationships and knowledge networks in the community. People are at the center of the library's mission.

Grow a Reader

LIBRARY AS PLACE

"The public library is first and foremost a place...that promotes development in society. It is the family room of a community."

Akhtar Badshah

Library = Community Hub

Today's library is both a physical and virtual place, but it continues to be the physical presence of the library that anchors it most firmly in the community.

Ron Robinson Theater, Central Arkansas Library System
Philadelphia Free Library Virtual Branch at Airport

LIBRARY AS PLATFORM

A great library platform is a "third place" —an interactive entity that can facilitate many people operating individually and in groups—and supports the learning and civic needs of the community.

NYPL Building Inspector project

The library as community learning platform is the innovative proposition of the public library in the digital age.

STRATEGIES
FOR
SUCCESS

Aligning with community goals

"The public library has moved from being an institution that primarily services individuals to one that navigates community."

—TESSIE GUILLERMO

Limitless Libraries, Nashville, TN
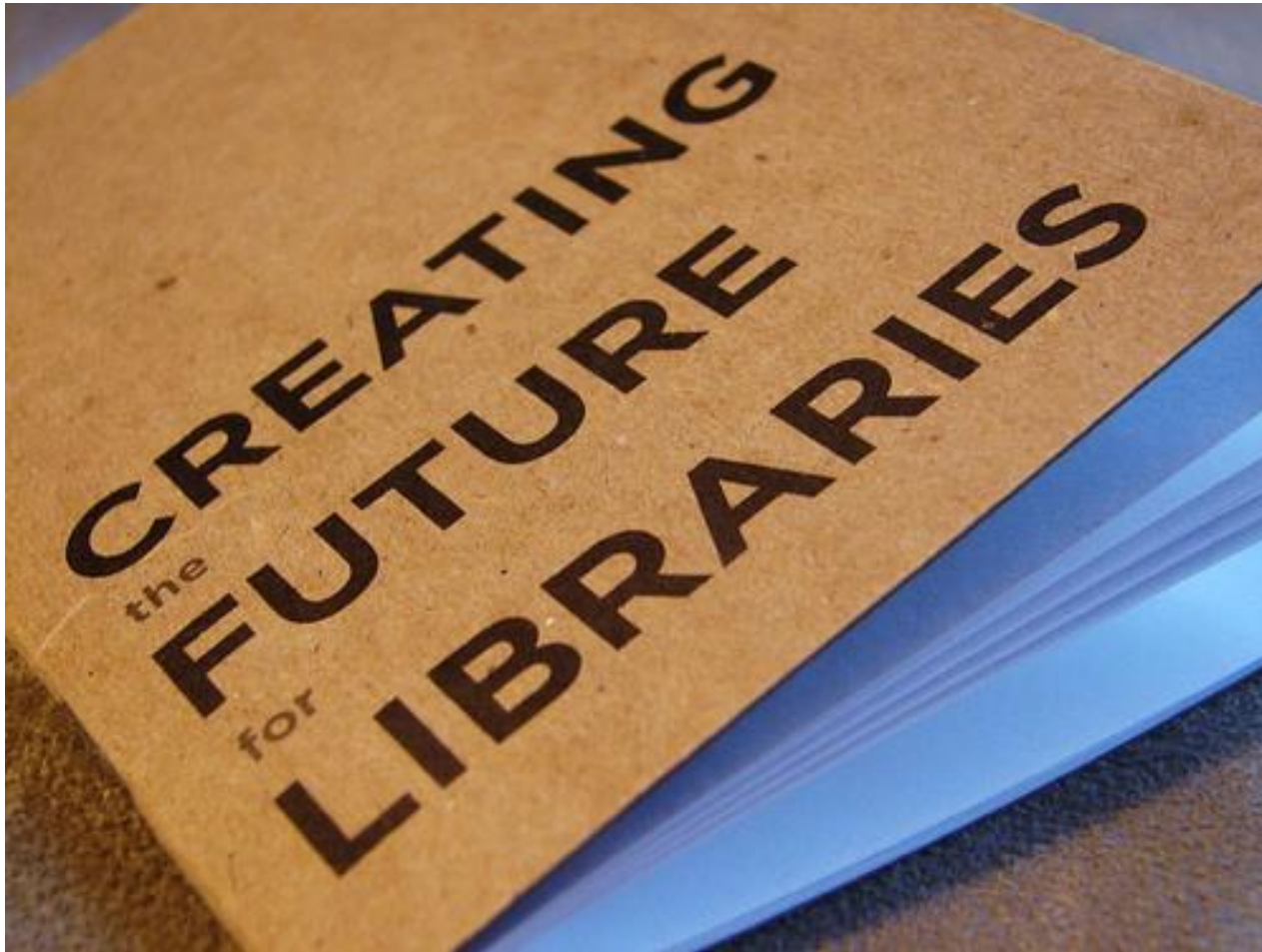
Providing access to content in *all* formats

ACCESS IS NOT ENOUGH!

"We can't just be providing space... we are a learning institution, not just an access institution."

—JOHN SZABO

http://chattlibrary.org/4th-floor

Ensuring long-term sustainability

Toward a National Digital Platform

"With a nationally networked platform, library and other leaders will also have more capacity to think about the work they can do at the national level that so many libraries have been so effective doing at the state and local levels."

—MAUREEN SULLIVAN

BiblioTech – John Palfrey, Basic Books, @2015

BookOps – NYPL and Brooklyn PL

Cultivating leadership

"If you want to reach out and help new Americans and citizenship in your city, there are lots of organizations who want to do the work, but libraries become the connector between the CBO and citizens."

—MAYOR KARL DEAN

ACTION
STEPS
FOR
LIBRARY LEADERS,
POLICYMAKERS &
THE COMMUNITY

Library Leaders

- Define the scope of the library's programs, services and offerings around community priorities
- Develop partnerships and collaborations
- Measure outcomes and impacts to communicate the library's value to the community
- Engage the community in planning and decision making

Policymakers

- Define libraries as part of the community's priority infrastructure
- Develop strategic alliances and partnerships with local library leaders to advance educational, economic and social goals
- Leverage the economic development potential of the public library as a community platform
- Support and accelerate deployment of high-speed broadband & wi-fi to all libraries

Community Partners

- Connect the community's knowledge resources to the library's networks & platform

- Volunteer organizational and technical expertise to mentor and support learning that takes place in library spaces and on its platform

- Develop strategic partnerships and alliances with public libraries

What's Next

- [Connecticut State Library](#) state-wide discussion

- [Topeka and Shawnee County, KS, Public Library](#) strategic planning

- Interested in finding other libraries that would like to work with the report in their communities

To learn more:

http://as.pn/libraries

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QUESTIONS???