

Chapter 6

A New Evolution in Science Collaboration

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ABSTRACT

The Mamie Doud Eisenhower Public Library is a single site, medium sized, municipal library in Broomfield, CO. After receiving an initial matched grant of \$50,000 from the Sandoz US Foundation ten years ago to build the Sandoz Science and Education Center located on the first floor of the library, the continued partnership with Sandoz Pharmaceuticals, Inc. has evolved into the development of a Science Task Force composed of scientists in the community willing to volunteer their time to bring science programming to the library. This chapter details the initial development and subsequent growth of these partnerships as well as how the evolution of this collaboration has impacted the Young Adult Department science programming and education services. The chapter also focuses on developing collaborations with local companies as well as finding volunteers in the community. Procedural information regarding the recruiting and retaining of volunteers as well as key points in program planning, executing, and evaluating are also shared.

INTRODUCTION

The Mamie Doud Eisenhower Public Library is a single site, medium-sized, municipal library in Broomfield, CO, a northern suburb in the Denver-Boulder metro area with a population of about 55,000. Given its amazing view of the mountains and a strong support system for the library's Young Adult department, I was immediately drawn to working there and accepted a position as a new graduate holding a Master's of Librar-

ian and Information Science (with a certification in information management). Prior to becoming a librarian at Mamie Doud, I had worked as a project manager for a technology in education non-profit organization and was therefore used to managing and communicating with a team of 12 people in an organization that had 60 employees. When assigned the task of devoting part of my 28-hour work week to being the library liaison to our Science Task Force, I felt thrilled about the opportunity to possibly expand the program.

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A New Evolution in Science Collaboration

What has now become one of our most popular programming series has gone through quite an evolution that began with one 400 square feet of space and ended with nine monthly programs that are not only full but often have waitlist of more than ten participants.

After the initial grant award and the creation of the Sandoz Science and Education Center, a Science Task Force was established to help the library staff solidify the role of science programming in the library. The Mamie Doud Eisenhower Public Library Science Task Force is a community-based group of citizens formed to share information and combine resources to promote science and technology knowledge and literacy. This includes activities and events aimed at expanding knowledge, investigating technology, practicing modern science, and informing community members of the well of technology and resource in Colorado. The group accomplishes these goals through development, presentation, and sponsorship of programs and events for young people ages 9-14 years of age and for general audiences in the communities of the Denver-Boulder corridor of Colorado. The Science Task Force continues to reach out to the surrounding communities and businesses and find partnership opportunities that help us achieve our goals of providing free, quality science programming to our community's youth. We currently have three types of collaboration: programming in collaboration with Sandoz, programming in collaboration with the Mamie Doud Eisenhower Science Task Force, and programming in collaboration with community expert volunteers.

EVOLUTION OF COLLABORATION

History of Sandoz Partnership

In 2000, the Broomfield Library Friends sent a grant application to the Sandoz US Foundation to request funding for a Sandoz Science and Education Center to be built inside the new library build-

ing. The Library Friends stated that the Mamie Doud Eisenhower Public Library must address the needs of the children and youth in the community to have life science education materials, basic education resources, access to databases, software, and online information to support scientific education and development of competency in basic skills to become productive adults. Print materials, hands-on educational games and toys, scientific equipment and audiovisual learning materials were also needed to provide the resources for youth to develop marketable skills in a safe environment during non-school hours. At that time the Library Friends also asked Sandoz to provide support for additional evening and weekend storyhours to address the needs of working parents unable to attend during the work week and in addition to provide storyhours for daycare centers and homeschool children at off-site locations.

There were four objectives and tactics of the grant.

- First, to increase educational skills and knowledge of science in children and youth from 18 months to 18 years by purchasing and making available scientific and educational materials to the public.
- Second, to increase reading skills in children and youth by purchasing and providing computers with software and circulating print materials specifically designed to increase reading proficiency.
- Third, to help youth develop marketable skills in a structured learning environment by purchasing materials and software to assist in preparing for a high school diploma or taking the GED test as well as preparing for college entrance or employment examinations.
- Fourth, provide storyhours one evening a week and Saturdays as well as special storyhours for daycare and homeschool children by hiring a qualified person to prepare for and conduct these special storyhours.

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