



Providing Access to LIFELONG LEARNING in Arizona

Arizona libraries are national leaders in meeting the needs of active older adults. Our libraries are finding innovative ways to reach the untapped resource of Baby Boomer experience while providing Boomers with connections to meaningful work and civic engagement. Model programs for lifelong learning like those listed below are starting or underway in libraries across the state. Because of our innovative library leaders, we have been cited as **“A Statewide Laboratory for Change.”**

<p>Chandler Public Library is part of a coalition bringing all community resources together under the umbrella of one exciting Boomer website, www.myboomerang.com – a Next Chapter project. The site provides links to resources on everything from health and wellness to re-careering and volunteering.</p>	<p>Phoenix Public Library has made assessing community needs and redesigning services for older adults a strategic priority...It is one of the first Lifelong Access Libraries to be named a Center for Excellence and Innovation.</p>
<p>Glendale Public Library began “Directions & Connections: Life Options for Mature Adults” with a grant in 2004...In 2005, Boomers and Seniors continue to benefit from an array of programs including those focused on their top concerns: health and financial information.</p>	<p>Scottsdale LifeVentures sponsored by Scottsdale Community College begins with a physical meeting space on campus – a welcoming space that will be replicated in satellites throughout the community via partners like the Scottsdale Public Library.</p>
<p>Mesa Life Options includes Mesa Community College, the City of Mesa and Mesa Senior Services...Peer Mentors in this Next Chapter project meet with people looking to retire and guide them through self discovery assessments. The, mentors will also guide people to community resources that fit their plans.</p>	<p>Tempe Connections is a citywide initiative to create a comprehensive one-stop resource within the library followed by satellite locations throughout the community – a Next Chapter project.</p>
<p>Parker Public Library earned a Community Development Block Grant for its Lifelong Learning Center. Now Parker is working with Arizona Western College to train and empower adults to research independently.</p>	<p>The Bonus Years: Connecting @ the Carnegie includes a core bibliography of books, articles and websites for people in transition...Managed by The Carnegie Center, a unit of the Arizona State Library, as part of a larger program for Boomers.</p>
<p>Arizona is one of the first states to support the national EqualAccess Libraries initiative in collaboration with Libraries for the Future, a national organization that champions the role of libraries in American life and works to strengthen libraries and library systems. Over 30 libraries across the state have participated in this program to develop libraries as centers for civic engagement. EqualAccess programs foster collaboration, outreach and use of technology to bring innovative services to Arizona communities.</p>	<p>Arizona has four Next Chapter projects underway: Chandler, Mesa, Scottsdale and Tempe. The Next Chapter projects (described above) promote access to meaningful choices for work, service, learning and social connections. The premise is that these activities, and libraries, play a crucial role in the vitality of older adults and can enrich community life. They are led by Civic Ventures, a national non-profit working to expand the contributions of older Americans to society.</p>
<p>Libraries for the Future has worked closely with the Arizona State Library for nearly five years to bring together local leaders, library leaders and legislators as partners in crafting and implementing a vision for library programs including those with a focus on lifelong access.</p>	<p>Arizona is a member of the National Advisory Committee for Lifelong Access Libraries. The 25-member group includes leading gerontologists, social workers, government officials and other specialists on aging. It guides an effort to transform libraries into centers for productive aging.</p>