



## News from the Office of ERIE COUNTY EXECUTIVE MARK POLONCARZ

### NEWS RELEASE

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### **POLONCARZ, SPEARS JOIN LIBRARY STAFF TO CUT RIBBON ON NEW TEEN SPACE @ CENTRAL LIBRARY**

*Erie County invests \$465,000 for designated teen space and interior enhancements for children and families at the Central Library*

**ERIE COUNTY, NY**— Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz today joined Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Director John Spears, Assistant Deputy Director of Buffalo Libraries Samantha Purpora, and Teen Services Librarian Taylor Harding along with library staff at the Central Library in downtown Buffalo to cut a ribbon to open the new *Teen Space @ Central Library*, located on the library's first floor. The new space, formerly used as the Children's Space, has been refurbished with new carpeting, new public PCs, new teen-friendly, comfy and contemporary furniture, a new service desk, wall paint, recharging stations, allocated space for teen programming such as beading, board games, and crafting, and new shelving. There are also movable walls for video-making backdrops and use as whiteboards.

"This new space gives teens a place to relax, study, be creative and make use of the library's extensive resources in a setting that is comfortable and inviting," **said Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz.** "I thank Director Spears and his team for the work they did to conceive and create this space. The library is a place to learn and grow and, in many ways, this Teen Space will foster that growth."

"If you haven't visited the downtown Central Library in a while, now is the time," **said Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Director John Spears.** "We have heard our patrons and the local community express what they want to see in this building, and we have embarked on a series of improvements that will help to address those needs. From a completely new Teen Space to a more comfortable and inviting Children's Room, these enhancements will offer a variety of welcoming spaces for those who visit us. Users of all ages deserve a library that reflects their unique desires and needs. With the financial assistance offered by the County Executive and Legislature, we are proud to say that we are well on our way to achieving that goal."

The Central Library has not had a designated "teen space" in over a decade. Decisions about furniture, colors, new features, and programming in Teen Space were made with direct input from teens through conversations and surveys conducted over the last year. Improvements still scheduled for the Teen Space, a \$465,000 investment, include:

- A glass wall to run along one side of the room separating it from other parts of the library;
- A new entrance directly from the library's main Washington St. entryway;
- Interior wall hangings, including murals made by teens who use the space; and
- Installation of a monitor and console for gaming and messaging.

**For more information:**

On the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, visit <https://www.buffalolib.org/>

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