Elizete says THANK YOU! Our Library is a launchpad for teens like her, thanks to YOU.

Elizete Diaz loves libraries. “I grew up in libraries,” says the Bloomington Kennedy High School senior. “My mom would even take off work to bring me to the library,” she says with warm nostalgia.

A few years ago, a friend from Elizete’s track team suggested she apply for a job as a Teen Public Service Assistant, a job that would provide Elizete the opportunity to gain valuable work experience and engage with members of their community. It seemed like a perfect fit.

Elizete is just one shining example of the positive impact you’re making in the lives of teens. Thanks to donors like you, Friends of HCL is able to provide the necessary funding to ensure workforce development programs for teens.

Friends like you contribute nearly $200,000 to these programs to support wages, adult mentoring, and leadership training for teens at our Library this year.

At three different library locations, the Súper Kinder program employs bilingual teen interns to help lead an interactive kindergarten-readiness program for Latino children.

The Teen Tech Squad employs up to 28 teens in seven libraries who work as teen leaders, delivering hands-on STEM workshops for their peers and serving as role models for other youth.

Additionally, Friends of HCL funds nine paid summer internships and 10-year-round Teen Public Service Assistant positions, employing motivated teens like Elizete.

With ambitions of helping the next generation of young people, Elizete affirms the simple truth that her mentor Amy's given her great advice on college and made it clear that you're making a difference:

"I'm the first person in my family to go to college." - Elizete

Every year this May, the new, Cesar Pelli-designed Minneapolis Central Library opened its doors to an awe-inspired public for the very first time. It’s a light-filled architectural treasure, anchoring our fast-growing Downtown community. It’s a beacon of culture, hope, and learning, enjoying over 1.2 million visits per year. On this exceptional anniversary occasion, we will celebrate Minneapolis Central Library – our filled architectural treasure, anchoring our fast-growing Downtown community. It’s a beacon of culture, hope, and learning, enjoying over 1.2 million visits per year. On this exceptional anniversary occasion, we will celebrate our library with a festive gathering of friends, both old and new. From amazing artworks to beautiful books and special spaces, Minneapolis Central Library is there for everyone.

Please stay on the lookout for this exciting event, and come celebrate our unique library with us.

Save the Date for an Anniversary Party!
Join us on Saturday, November 5th for a celebration of our Hennepin County Library - Minneapolis Central!
It's a rainy October day when we visit Kris at the Hennepin County Adult Corrections Facility (ACF). The meeting room has a linoleum floor, white brick walls, and is devoid of decoration. Wearing a grey sweatshirt and blue pants emblazoned with "ACF," Kris sits at a lone table. Her black hair falls nearly to her waist and her neck is tattooed with "Native." She is 39 years old.

When asked why she's here, Kris admits that one factor is a decade-long substance abuse issue. Until recently, "I was shooting up heroin every day," she says. But now she's receiving chemical dependency treatment. When asked why she's here, Kris admits that one factor is a decade-long substance abuse issue. Until recently, "I was shooting up heroin every day," she says. But now she's receiving chemical dependency treatment.

Kris has never visited a public library or taken her to the Library for family programs, compared to 58% before the program. Similarly, 83% of graduates said they had or would get books from the library, compared to 68% pre-program. "Read to Me" has received multiple national awards. Daniel Marcou, who facilitates the library’s outreach efforts to incarcerated residents, reads daily to his own toddler at home. He brings a photo of himself doing just that when he talks to dads at the ACF. "Reading to children is just as important for dads as for moms," he says.

In November, Kris graduated from chemical dependency treatment and was released from the ACF. "I want to hold on to my [treatment] certificate and sobriety," she told us. "I've missed out on a big part of my kids' lives because of drugs. I don't want them to get a phone call saying that I died from an overdose." And, she adds, "I told my 23-year-old daughter that she needs to get a library card." - Kris

Kris records her own voice reading a book on CD to send home to her children and grandchild.

Hennepin County hopes that Kris becomes part of a national read-aloud trend. In 2003, a landmark study found that, by age three, children from professional-class families had been exposed to 30 million more words than children from less affluent families, giving the children who heard more words a distinct academic advantage. In 2014, a follow-up study from Stanford revealed that vocabulary gaps emerge as early as 18 months. These and other findings prompted the American Academy of Pediatrics to issue a policy in 2014, asking its members to advocate for reading aloud to children from infancy through Kindergarten.

Generously hosted at the private residence of Tom and Mary Racciatti, with beautiful panoramic views of downtown Minneapolis, the evening will include a selection of rare and unique cookbooks, and a special cooking demonstration by Chef Alex Roberts. As the owner and chef of Restaurant Alma and Brasa Rotisserie, Chef Roberts is deeply committed to excellence and sustainable practices. Both restaurants have been featured in wide range of publications and television including: Gourmet, Food & Wine, Bon Appetit and The Today Show.

Tickets
Individual: $100
V.I.P.: $200 - Includes VIP program recognition and a signed copy of The Apprentice: My Life in the Kitchen by Jacques Pépin, personally recommended by Chef Alex Roberts and a private tour of Minneapolis Central Library's cookbook collection.

Purchase Tickets
Call 612-543-8108
Visit supportHCLib.org/events/special-events
Or email us at friends@hclib.org by May 12.

The program is free and open to the public. Seating is first come, first served. Doors open at 6:15 pm, and presentations begin at 7pm. Book sales and signings follow presentations.