MPL Trustees Editorial

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The Missoula Public Library Board of Trustees is thrilled to report that MPL’s now one year old downtown flagship was designated 2022’s “best new library in the world” at the July 26 World Library and Information Congress in Dublin. The competition was intense, with twenty libraries from around the globe considered, and libraries in Denmark, Latvia, and Saudi Arabia shortlisted along with Missoula. While the award is based on architectural criteria, we’re certain that our building’s thoughtful engagement with community and landscape—under the stellar guidance of MSR Design, and with expert support from A&E Design—gave Missoula a particular edge. In the award’s eight year history, MPL is the first library from the U.S. to win.

In 2016, when advocates promoted a $30M bond to fund the majority of construction, they promised a future-forward, world class facility full of innovation, collaboration, and learning resources. With a full range of community investment, including an additional $6.25M in private support, we’ve delivered on that promise. Your Library is a shining reflection of the values Missoulians place on lifelong learning, social mobility, civic life and public space. This summer’s international award belongs to *you* and is a point of pride for the entire community.

The 2022 Best New Library award is just the first of potentially more recognition Missoula will receive for library excellence. On September 29, the Library will host architects and library experts from across the country as they attend the annual Library Journal Design Institute. In the future, MPL will be considered for Library Journal’s Landmark Libraries designation. Of course such awards, embodying community spirit as they do, are meaningful. We’re just as impressed with the transformations that take place within MPL’s inspiring walls on a daily basis.

This summer, for example, MPL has been humming with learning programs and summer camps; and serves as an important hub for kids’ free lunches and free book prizes for young readers.

The new Library is now the work space of choice for many of our community’s telecommuters, writers, artists, makers, researchers, nonprofit organizations, and university students.

Every day, visitors are moved by an expansive view of Missoula afforded by MPL’s downtown flagship, and remark on what the Library’s place in the community means to them.

As we take a victory lap for winning a prestigious international award, we thank you, Missoula, for the generosity and commitment that makes every big or small transformation fostered by your Public Library possible.

Signed …….