

Cheryl Heywood

Dear Staff and Community Residents:

It is with great interest that I am applying for the position of Director. I believe my extensive and varied experience working in public libraries and in library-support services makes me a highly qualified candidate for the position.

The Board of Trustees requires a proven track record of highly effective leadership and management experience, communication and relationship building skills, and innovation and vision in library operations, activities, programs and services for Timberland Regional Library. For the past 24 years, I have amply demonstrated these attributes in five public library positions.

For the past five months, I have been Interim Manager of Public Services at Timberland Regional Library. I supervise the work performance of 27 Library Managers and three Coordinators who in turn supervise approximately 200 staff. I participate on the Director's Council where we identified, based on community and staff input, our 2013 Service Priorities and have begun work on our 2013 Action Plan. I facilitated the creation of Standards of Performance for staff that will become part of a new online performance appraisal system and advocacy initiatives that are aligned with 2013 service priorities. I am currently participating in Timberland's first leadership program as well as creating the curriculum for the Public Services Day with the Public Services Team. I am working with leaders in business, nonprofits and government as a member of an "Income Hub" group to help identify and improve access to employment information.

As Senior Library Manager at the Olympia Timberland Library from 2000-2012, I led a very strong and highly productive, customer service focused 34-member team who welcomed, on average, 1,500 patrons per day. During this time, we strengthened our community relationships by partnering with more than 250 organizations in a variety of highly original ways. I worked with the Board of the Friends of the Olympia Library and helped them create a logo, mission statement, goals, job descriptions, and plans for succession. My community activities included participating on the Board of the West Olympia Business Association for four years and on the Board of the Community Visioning Group for three years; attending Chamber of Commerce programs and Thurston County Housing Task Force meetings; and for more than five years, teaching adult students from Enterprise for Equity (a local nonprofit) about market research using library services and resources. I have presented more than 100 varied library service presentations in many Timberland communities.

Under my leadership, Olympia staff morale thrived. Our unique and varied programs continue to meet our community's needs, and our outreach activities are numerous. We created a community center that Olympians love – they refer to the library as their "community living room," and they seek us out for new and creative partnerships. We reached a level of synergy and joy in our work that is palpable. With staff help, I coordinated two major remodels creating an aesthetic in the library that is as vibrant as the staff. This library is now a great place to work and a great place to visit.

I began my career with Timberland Regional Library in 1996 as a Selector, which was a newly created position. My responsibilities included selecting adult fiction and

audio-visual materials for the 27 libraries, including opening day collections, with an approximate budget of \$700,000. I created the adult book discussion group, PageTurners, and the annual Adult Winter Reading Club, both of which continue to be great successes. I also coordinated Inquiring Minds programs as well as several national programs such as StoryLines America and the Favorite Poem Project. Between 1999-2000 I was the acting Communications Manager for Timberland Regional Library.

During the past 16 years, I participated on many District-wide library committees to help improve the organization of Timberland Regional Library such as the Advocacy Committee, the Workplace Emergency and Evacuation Committee, the Annual Appraisal Task Force, Behavioral Guidelines Task Force, and the TRL 40th Anniversary Task Force. I co-created and co-facilitated the original Readers' Advisory training and Supervisor 101 training.

I have participated in a variety of leadership programs such as the Public Library Association's "Boot Camp 2012: Intensive Library Management Training," which included strategic planning; and Leadership Thurston County 2002-2004. I have also served as Vice-President of the Washington State Council of County and City Employees, AFSCME, AFL-CIO Local 3758S.

For eight years prior to employment at Timberland Regional Library, I worked at La Bibliotheque Publique de Pointe-Claire, Quebec, Canada. I was a bilingual reference librarian, adult book and audio-visual selector (with a \$165,000 budget), and a bilingual adult program coordinator (with a \$12,000 budget).

Until the age of nine I lived in a rural area of the Province of Quebec, in Canada, in the small town of Joliette. We then moved to a suburb of Montreal, and later I moved into Montreal and attended Concordia University where I received a Bachelor's degree in History. Subsequently, I attended McGill University and I hold a Master of Library and Information Studies degree from there. As soon as I was legally able to, I became a United States citizen in 2008. I have been happily married for 28 years and have two wonderful daughters.

Just as I was able to successfully apply my skill set and experience from a three-library system in Pointe-Claire to Timberland Regional Library's 27 libraries, I will be able to apply my skills, experience and knowledge gleaned from my 12 years as Senior Library Manager and several months as Interim Manager of Public Services to the position of the Director. Throughout my career, I have demonstrated high professionalism and ethical standards, a congenial, frank and pragmatic working style, an ability to learn quickly, and the ability to think outside the box. My resilient optimism, infectious energy, and forward-thinking personality, as well as my extensive and varied work experience in the public library field handling increasing levels of responsibility, have given me the experience, knowledge and critical thinking skills I will need to succeed in this position - and to help lead Timberland Regional Library to new levels of excellence in teamwork, in customer service, and in strengthening our ties to our communities.

It would be a great honor and privilege to serve the Timberland Regional Library community as your Director.

Sincerely,
Cheryl Heywood