

For Immediate Release

Contact: Mackenzie Manley

Oct. 2, 2023

859-781-6166, ext. 171

Campbell County Public Library Director JC Morgan Announces Retirement

Campbell County Public Library Director JC Morgan will retire on Wednesday, Nov. 22, 2023. Following his retirement from CCPL, Morgan will assume the role of the first state director of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library in Kentucky. His first day is Nov. 27, 2023.

Chantelle Phillips, CCPL's current assistant director, will take over as interim director during the library's search.

Morgan became the Campbell County Public Library's director on Jan. 2, 2003, effectively ushering CCPL through the rapid technology changes of the 2000s, the 2008 financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. Under Morgan's leadership, the library system has undergone several expansions and changes, including the construction of the Newport Branch.

Along with the Newport Branch, Morgan also oversaw renovations at the Carrico/Fort Thomas and Cold Spring branches as well as the addition of the Alexandria Branch in 2018.

"One of the first complaints I heard was about the lack of Sunday hours," says Morgan. "So, that was one of the first changes I made. Later on, we expanded our Friday hours as well. Making the library more available to people is important to me."

The system began circulating e-books in December of 2006. Since that first year, Morgan says annual e-book circulation increased from 461 to around 260,000.

"I don't see e-reading as a threat to libraries," says Morgan. "I'm an e-reader, but I still love reading and I still get my e-books from the library."

Morgan also emphasizes the growth and value of the system's Outreach Department. Library staff visit every early childcare center in Campbell County. The Outreach Department provides other valuable services, including maintaining the Book Bus and delivering materials to residents who can't leave their homes due to permanent or temporary illness/disability.

"One of the first times I addressed the staff as a whole, I told them that I wanted to work in a place that made a difference in the community," says Morgan. "We do that every day. I'm very

proud of the staff. Some people have worked here for decades and others are brand new, but one thing they have in common is passion for what they do. It's that passion that drives us."

Morgan was born in Albany, Georgia, but he mostly grew up in Camden, South Carolina, where he worked in the library as a shelver. After high school, Morgan served in the United States Air Force during the Persian Gulf War. He later attended the University of Georgia, working in the public library in Athens, Georgia. While studying for his Master's in Library Science at the University of Kentucky, he continued to work at the library.

"I've always been drawn to the library," says Morgan. "Even in the military, I was constantly in the base library."

Morgan's roots have long been planted in Northern Kentucky, where he lives with his wife, Alison, and twin daughters. "Campbell County has been a wonderful place for my family to grow," says Morgan. "I'm so happy my new job will not require me to move."

Other highlights of Morgan's career include the 2015 launch of CCPL's successful annual Drop Your Drawers campaign; the initiative returns every November and December with the goal of collecting clean pairs of underwear and socks for public school children in Campbell County. Since launching, library patrons have donated over 65,000 items. The program has spread to other counties and to other states.

Morgan also helped found the Campbell County Imagination Library in 2019 via a partnership with local schools. The Imagination Library mails a free book to enrolled children, ages newborn to 5, every month at no cost or obligation to families.

The program reaches 56 percent of children ages newborn to 5 in Campbell County. Since launching, Morgan says they've graduated 2,700 kids from the program. Post-retirement, Morgan looks forward to continuing this work statewide with the Imagination Library.

"I love Kentucky and love to travel in it," says Morgan. "The opportunity to help facilitate the expansion of the Imagination Library while seeing more of the commonwealth is a double win for me."

ABOUT CAMPBELL COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Campbell County Public Library operates four branches. The Cold Spring Branch is located at 3920 Alexandria Pike in Cold Spring, phone 859-781-6166. The Carrico/Fort Thomas Branch

is located at 1000 Highland Ave. in Fort Thomas, phone 859-572-5033. The Newport Branch is located at 901 E. Sixth St. in Newport, phone 859-572- 5035. The Alexandria Branch is located at 8333 Alexandria Pike in Alexandria, phone 859-572-7463. Express locations for pickups and returns are located in Silver Grove, Newport and Melbourne. The website address is www.cc-pl.org.