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Jefferson County Public Library Reports Record Attendance

During tough economic times, more and more patrons are using Jefferson County Public Library to search for employment, improve computer skills and access free materials

(LAKEWOOD, Colo.—February 3, 2010) Jefferson County Public Library (JCPL) achieved record service levels in 2009, with significant year-over-year increases in patron visits, item check-outs, computer access and the use of electronic resources:

- the number of items checked out grew to 7.1 million, up 10.6 percent;
- patron visits grew to nearly 2.9 million, up 6.4 percent;
- the number of computers available for public use grew to nearly 300, with more than 355,000 hours of use recorded;
- access to online databases grew to 218,869, up 12.2 percent; and
- page views of the JCPL website increased to 3.9 million, up 8.2 percent.

"Research suggests that as unemployment grows and household incomes drop Americans turn to the Library for help, and we're definitely seeing that at JCPL," said Marcellus Turner, JCPL executive director. "More and more people are turning to us to access books, magazines, movies, CDs and online databases; upgrade their computer skills; search and apply for new job opportunities; and meet their daily informational and recreational needs."

In 2009, JCPL registered nearly 34,000 new borrowers, bringing the total number of library cardholders to 311,408 -- or nearly 60 percent of the Jefferson County population. During the year, JCPL also fielded more than 110,000 patron inquiries through its call center. In addition, JCPL offered 6191 programs and classes, which were attended by more than 136,800 participants, a year-over-year increase of 18 percent and 9 percent, respectively. These programs were designed to address a broad range of community needs, including but not limited to:

- *For pre-schoolers:* JCPL's Traveling Children's Library, which brought 658 interactive, bilingual story times to preschoolers in more than 70 classroom locations;
- *For kids:* Summer Reading Club, which enabled more than 25,000 children, teens and adults keep up their reading skills during the summer months;
- *For adults:* Book Clubs, workshops on home buying, caregiver survival skills, Spanish/English language skills; assistance with income tax preparation, and more;

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- *For job seekers:* free training on computer systems, software and the Internet; online resources to assist with job searches and applications; and the eTrain Mobile Training Lab, a joint project with Jefferson County Work Force which provides free computer access and training to participants throughout Jefferson County; and
- *For non-profits, entrepreneurs and small business owners:* Free access to online databases, including The Colorado Grants Guide, Demographics Now and Business Source Complete, among others. These resources help patrons with demographic trends, market and competitive analysis, business planning, funding resources and more.

"Despite significant budget challenges, we hope to continue to meet the increasing need for services in Jefferson County," Turner continued. "For example, in 2010, we plan to increase outreach to homebound patrons, enhance wireless Internet access across all of our libraries, and promote childhood literacy by expanding the State of Colorado's Every Child Ready to Read Program."

"We're also evaluating how best to provide library programs and services in underserved areas of the County," Turner added. "As always, we remain committed to addressing the needs of all of our citizens."

For more information about JCPL's programs and services, visit your local library, or visit <http://jeffcolibrary.org>.

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About the Jefferson County Public Library

Jefferson County Public Library (JCPL) works to enrich the quality of life for all people in the county by providing resources for information, education and recreation. JCPL is the second largest public library in the state of Colorado and in the Rocky Mountain region. A JCPL library card is the key to a network of 10 libraries and a Bookmobile offering books, periodicals, CDs and DVDs, as well as computer and Internet resources. For more information contact your local library or visit <http://jeffcolibrary.org>.