Extended Reality
In a year-long pilot, emerging technology takes center stage in 11 Nevada libraries

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With support from the 2017 Nevada Legislature, the State Council on Libraries and Literacy is leading the way for Nevada's libraries to adopt vital 21st century technology.

(Fallon, NV) – With the help of subject matter experts from *XR Libraries,* nine public libraries will launch a pilot program installing virtual, augmented and mixed reality experiences on Monday August 6. Two school libraries will start up after Labor Day. The three types of experiences are collectively known as *extended reality* or *XR*.

Since April, *Nevada's XR Libraries* have been focused on familiarizing librarians with the technical aspects of using XR and creating educational programs. General community access and focused education and workforce training partnerships are now rolling out. Project coordination from the Nevada State Library, Archives and Public Records (NSLAPR) is provided as a part of an emerging technology program funded by the 2017 Nevada Legislature through Senate Bill 549.

XR Libraries provides patrons at-large and community education partners one stop access to virtual reality, mixed reality and augmented reality (collectively XR) equipment, materials and resources. Each pilot library has been provided with one HTC Vive headset; an XR system-ready computer capable of running virtual reality educational and STEAM content software; and robust training and tech support for the 11 selected libraries. Since 2016 *XR Libraries* has deployed systems in more than 100 California public libraries. Nevada is the second state to join – truly a leader in the nation!

Churchill County Library staff is currently training on this new service. The public can sign up now for an introduction to XR beginning the week of August 13. XR will be incorporated into Friday STEAM programming soon. "We are pleased to be offering this new service at the library," says Carol Lloyd, Churchill County Library Director. "And are excited to see how it can be utilized into future offerings."

Patrick 'Tod' Colegrove, PhD, MSLIS, has been an active voice in driving the *Nevada XR Libraries* program. Drawing on more than fourteen years of experience as a senior manager in high-tech private industry and twelve years as the head of the DeLaMare Science Library at the University of Nevada, Reno, the State Council on Libraries and Literacy member is clear about its importance.

"A set-up that might run many thousands of dollars is going to be too much for most of the community to buy just to dabble and experiment. But if we don't get the chance to dabble and experiment, well then, a terrible thing happens—we don't do anything new. We don't learn anything new. We don't develop these new skills, these new literacies. And without that we won't be able to operate in tomorrow's world," says Colegrove.

Meaningful links provide learning opportunities between the formal classroom, home and 'third places' of learning (like libraries and museums.) This leads to skilled workers.

In collaboration with area schools, afterschool providers, workforce training partners and more, library staff facilitate programming through leveraging onsite technology space and programs. Curiosity sessions, science story times, discussion clubs, contests, peer tutoring and more will make up the activities of the coming year. Furthermore, educational synergies and curriculum enhancement from the technology alone focuses attention on the wonder of science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics.

"Bottom line: libraries equal education," says Tammy Westergard, NSLAPR assistant administrator overseeing library services and library development. "The pace of change is forcing everyone to stay current and to keep learning. The library is the last, best free place where we all can go to level up our skills, no matter our age. The days of choosing a single career path and working 50 years to retirement in the same field are over. The library is the on ramp to education – formal and informal."

Nevada XR Libraries and Leading Librarians:
- Elko/Lander/Eureka County Library System – Kassie Antonucci, XR library leader
- Humboldt County Library – Kyle Ebert, XR library leader
- Pershing County High School Library, Shelly Nee, XR library leader
- Washoe County Library System, Jeff Scott, XR library leader
- Carson City Library, Ermal Reinhart, XR library leader
- Douglas County Library, Larry Wilson, XR library leader
- Churchill County High School Library, Holly McPherson, XR library leader
- Churchill County Library, Joe Salsman, XR library leader
- Mineral County Library, Courtney Oberhansli, XR library leader
- Boulder City Library, Samantha Bigger, XR library leader
- Henderson Library System, Stephen Platt, XR library leader

FMI: Visit https://nsla.libguides.com/XR/home

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