

## LIBRARY

# A Green Branch

Library opens groundbreaking “green” branch in South L.A.



The new Exposition Park – Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Regional Branch Library, the “greenest” building in the Eighth Council District.



Dist. 8 Councilman Bernard C. Parks cuts the ribbon Aug. 18 at the grand opening of the new Exposition Park – Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Regional Branch Library, the first eco-friendly “green” library in South Los Angeles. Parks was joined by about 500 community members and (from left) Irma Jenkins, President, National Council of Negro Women-SGV; Rita Walters, Library Commissioner; Bishop Roy Pettit, Miracle Center Apostolic Church; Dr. Julie Mendoza, Library Board President; Fontayne Holmes, then-City Librarian; Gary Lee Moore, City Engineer; Robert A. Chick, Library Commissioner; and James Caldwell, Jr., DWP Vice President of Environmental Affairs.

Story and photos courtesy Charlene Klink, Library

The community joined Mayor Antonio R. Villaraigosa, Councilmember Bernard C. Parks, then-City Librarian Fontayne Holmes, Library Commission Vice President Dr. Julie Mendoza and other dignitaries for the opening of the first “green” library in South Los Angeles—the new Exposition Park – Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Regional Branch Library—at 3900 S. Western Ave., Aug. 18.

The new Exposition Park Regional Branch is the first building in the Eighth Council District to meet the U. S. Green Building Council’s Gold LEED standards for environmentally sustainable design. The “green” features include low-flow plumbing and irrigation to reduce water use by 30 percent and high-efficiency mechanical and lighting systems to reduce energy consumption by 27 percent. In addition, recycled materials comprise at least 10 percent of the building, designed by Tetra Design, Inc.

Also, the new branch library hosts a 44-kilowatt solar photovoltaic “power plant,” one of many owned and operated by the DWP. The system has 480 solar panels and produces more than 57,500 kilowatt-hours per year, enough energy to serve about 10 households annually.

The new 14,500-square-foot facility replaces a branch facility built in 1974 and provides 50 percent more space for books, computers and patrons and includes special areas for children, teens and adults, a multipurpose meeting room, a study room, a storytelling area and a parking lot.

The new branch also houses the Los Angeles Public Library’s 19th Adult Literacy Center, which offers free programs, tutoring and materials to improve the reading, writing, math and other literacy skills of the estimated one million Angelenos suffering from illiteracy.

“This new library will serve as a vital resource for students, families and the entire community,” Villaraigosa said. “Libraries serve as important community centers, where everyone can come together to share great literature, 21st-century technology and the love of learning.”

## Features

The 14,500-square-foot Exposition Park – Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Regional Branch Library used the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) new construction rating system developed by the U.S. Green Building Council. There are four certification levels (Certified, Silver, Gold, Platinum) awarded according to achievement as evaluated by points using the LEED scorecard. The following



The crowd waits to be admitted to the new Exposition Park – Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Regional Branch Library.

system will reduce water consumption by 30 percent.

**3. Optimize Energy Performance:** The building is designed to be 27 percent more energy efficient than a standard building, by utilizing efficient mechanical systems, double glazing with high efficiency glass coatings, and naturally lit reading rooms with automatic light fixture dimming.

**4. Recycled and Environmental Safe Content:** At least 10 percent of the materials and products used in this project were from recycled materials; rapidly renewable materials were also used including bamboo flooring and cotton insulation; and low volatile organic compound content paints and coating.

**5. Regional Materials:** At least 10 percent of the total materials used to construct the library were from sources within 500 miles of the project site, thus reducing the greenhouse gases emitted by transporting materials over greater distances.

**6. Solar power:** The building has a 44-kilowatt solar photovoltaic “power plant” owned and operated by the DWP. The system has 480 solar panels and produces more than 57,500 kilowatt-hours per year, enough energy to serve about 10 households annually.

**7. Transportation Alternative:** The library is located close to community transportation including a bus line and train station.

**8. Additional Commissioning:** An independent commissioning agent has been retained to verify that the building systems are calibrated and performance meets the LEED requirements. The commissioning agent will also provide maintenance personnel with training and will be available for re-commissioning and verification services.



A student checks out a computer station at the new Exposition Park – Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Regional Branch Library.

outlines design measures were employed to attain Gold certification in the construction of the library:

**1. Landscape and Exterior Design to Reduce Heat Island:** Additional shade trees and less thermal-absorbing “white concrete” pavement and “white coating” on the roof were used to reduce the heat absorbed by the site during the day and radiated at night. This helps avoid raising the ambient temperature and disturbing the microclimate of the surrounding park.

**2. Water Use Reduced by 30 percent:** The installation of low-flow plumbing fixtures as well as highly efficient landscaping irrigation



Waiting for the grand opening ceremony at the new Exposition Park – Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Regional Branch Library.



Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa (left) listens to the Foshay Choir at the opening of the new Exposition Park – Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Regional Branch Library.