

NEWS RELEASE

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National Veterans Memorial and Museum Opens Second Service Nook at Whitehall Public Library

NVMM-CML Collaboration Extends Support for Service in Action Nooks

COLUMBUS, Ohio -- The National Veterans Memorial and Museum (NVMM) will open its second Service in Action Nook at the Columbus Metropolitan Library (CML) Whitehall Branch at 10:30 a.m. on Friday, January 23, 2026.

NVMM and CML have partnered to introduce the Service-in-Action Nook Initiative, a pilot project aimed at fostering community engagement and literacy through storytelling and service. More than 250 students from Holy Spirit Catholic School will create kindness cards using materials provided by The Kids Mental Health Foundation. These cards will be shared with families of individuals working at the Defense Supply Center Columbus. Whitehall Mayor Michael Bivens, a U.S. Marine Corps Veteran, also will be at the event.

Inspired by the lived experiences of U.S. military Veterans, the Service-in-Action Nook bridges storytelling and action, empowering participants to learn from Veterans' stories, reflect on the meaning of service, and take measurable steps that strengthen civic connection and community well-being. The dedicated space celebrates service in all its forms, from military to community action. The Nooks invite visitors of all ages to discover, create, and be inspired to make a difference. Guests can explore stories of Veterans and community changemakers, browse books with themes of service and Veterans, engage in hands-on learning activities, and write heartfelt thank-you letters to Veterans. The Nook will offer storyboards of Veteran narratives, hands-on educational materials from COSI, and guided prompts to lead participants through a service design challenge. ServeOhio's support will ensure that users are not only inspired but also guided toward action that has measurable community impact. For those ready to take the next step, the space features a *Step Up to Service Challenge Tracker*, helping visitors launch their own community service projects and share their impact.

"We are thrilled to expand the Service-in-Action Nook initiative to a new venue and a new audience on the east side of Columbus," said Dr. Frederic Bertley, CEO of the National Veterans Memorial and Museum. "This exciting collaboration between the NVMM and Columbus Metropolitan Library extends our mission even further into the community and will inspire young people to explore how they can serve others – through service to their school, their church, their community, or their country."

“This expanded collaboration between our organizations showcases the synergy of literacy and service,” said CML CEO Lauren Hagan. “With this extension of the Service-in-Action Nooks to the Whitehall Branch, we can provide new opportunities to even more students and community members to embrace the commitment to service.”

The Service-in-Action Nooks are made possible thanks to the generous support of the Nationwide Foundation. The Foundation’s support focuses on two key areas of timely strategic impact: economic empowerment and improving children’s wellbeing.

“The Nationwide Foundation is proud to help create this new Service-in-Action Nook, a space designed to inspire young people to step up and serve,” said Chad Jester, president of the Nationwide Foundation. “This expansion of the initiative honors Veterans’ experiences and gives young readers a greater understanding as to how they can make a difference in their own communities.”

About the National Veterans Memorial and Museum

[The National Veterans Memorial and Museum](#) seeks to honor all Veterans, elevate their stories, and amplify the power of service for everyone, everywhere. The Museum takes visitors on a narrative journey telling individual stories and sharing experiences of Veterans from all military branches throughout history.

The National Veterans Memorial and Museum pays tribute to the sacrifices of men and women in service and their families. History is presented through a dynamic, participatory experience with photos, letters and personal effects, multi-media presentations, and interactive exhibits. Together, these elements link our national story of service to the larger context of the world.

About Columbus Metropolitan Library

[Columbus Metropolitan Library](#) has served the people of Franklin County, Ohio since 1873. With its Main Library and 22 branches, CML is well known for signature services and programs like School Help, Reading Buddies, Summer Reading Challenge and Ready for Kindergarten. The library’s Strategic Plan supports the vision of “a thriving community where wisdom prevails,” which positions CML to respond to areas of urgent need: kids unprepared for kindergarten, third grade reading proficiency, high school graduation, college and career readiness and employment resources.