

partners rise up. Librarians are excited about innovative ways to add to the library's programs and services. The "pathway to knowledge" (HCPL, n.d.-a) is a journey, leading this way and that, uphill and down, with no end in sight. Thankfully! Johnson and Lamb explain that "People are what make the library and its services come to life" (2022). The C.A.R.E. and Star values make me, as a patron, feel acknowledged, cared for and heard. By developing teams of empathetic and compassionate employees with hearts to serve, I experience genuine friendliness. Walking into the Barbara Bush Library is like stepping into my cozy, welcoming, comfortable family room filled with family. As an employee, I wouldn't work anywhere else! The community is overwhelmingly grateful for all that we do for and with them.

Unfortunately, the cornerstone to Harris County's plan is missing. With over 4.7 million people in Harris County (US Census, n.d.) and no written Strategic Plan, the "pathway to knowledge" (HCPL, n.d.-a) has some pitfalls. Once a year the director of libraries meets with the branch directors to review the county's goals and discuss how the branches can help achieve those goals. HCPL Admin determines specific programs that all branches must implement. Because the population served spans 26 branches among diverse communities with their own specific needs, which are "always evolving and expanding, how do we know [they are] providing the right services?" (WebJunction, n.d.). When I ask how does Admin determine what programs they want us to implement, librarians, in frustration, loudly blurt, "It's whatever the 'bleep' they want!". Admin's objectives are questioned, with librarians wondering if they "[took] into account: the strengths of the library, the limitations of the organization and how much can be accomplished with the financial and material resources available" (Moran & Morner, 2018, p. 93). Each branch "gathers information directly from those in the community (users AND non-users, as