Manya Shorr

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Summary

Public library executive with more than 15 years of senior leadership, currently Library Director for the City of Dallas. Leads a $43 million system with 400+ employees and 29 locations. Known for restructuring services around community need, closing complex real estate deals, growing private fundraising, and leading through public scrutiny. Certified executive coach and former adjunct professor.

Professional Experience

City of Dallas | Dallas, Texas

Library Director | 2025 - Present

- Lead the Dallas Public Library: $43 million budget, 400+ employees, and 29 locations serving the ninth-largest city in the country.
- Restructuring the department to match staffing and programming to community need across a geographically diverse service area.
- Leading two development projects that pair library branches with affordable housing, negotiating with private developers and coordinating across city departments.
- Serve as the department's primary public spokesperson through contested policy changes, sustained media coverage, and regular City Council presentations.

Manya Shorr Coaching | Remote

Executive Coach | 2023 - Present

- Coach library directors, deputy directors, and senior government leaders on leading through conflict, fixing workplace culture, and handling political dynamics.
- Teach courses for library professionals nationwide on public speaking, staff management, and leading through adversity.

City of Fort Worth | Fort Worth, Texas

Acting Assistant City Manager | 2022 - 2023

- Member of the City Manager's executive team with direct authority over six departments: Communications, Public Engagement, Call Center Operations, Government Relations, Fort Worth Public Library, and Education Strategies.
- Staff liaison to the Government Relations Council Committee, working directly with elected officials and the media on policy and intergovernmental issues.

Library Director | 2017 - 2022

- Managed 18 locations, 250 staff, and a $26 million budget while Fort Worth grew from the 16th to the 10th largest U.S. city.
- Eliminated overdue fines system-wide, restoring access for about 18,000 blocked cardholders and increasing usage by 27%. Forwent $250,000 in annual revenue and wrote off $11.5 million in uncollectable debt.
- Negotiated the $18 million sale of the Central Library building to a private developer and reallocated resources to neighborhood branches without additional budget.
- Added 200 hours of weekly operating time across the system without additional staff or budget, based on a comprehensive service and staffing study.
- Opened the city's first retail library through a $2/year shopping mall lease, a model later used to open a second location in an underserved area.
- Created Amplify 817, a live music program for local artists that became the Fort Worth Public Library Foundation's signature event. As an ex-officio board member, helped grow the Foundation's annual fundraising more than 500% in three years, to $350,000.

D.C. Public Library | Washington, D.C.

Director of Public Services | 2014 - 2017

- Ran public services across 26 locations and 450+ staff in a union environment.
- Kept services running during the $208 million renovation of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library, relocating services to branches while the central library was closed.
- Co-led the 2017 DCPL strategic plan; 90% of its initiatives were completed on or ahead of schedule.
- Managed a $1 million annual LSTA federal grant, including financial reporting and a five-year plan for the District's state library responsibilities.
- Oversaw the People's Archive, a community digital archive built on ArchivesSpace.
- Contributed to the design and renovation of multiple branches.

Omaha Public Library | Omaha, Nebraska

Assistant Library Director / Senior Manager, Branch Services | 2012 - 2014

- Supervised twelve branches and 150+ staff on a $2 million departmental budget.
- Served on the Entity Board governing a joint-use facility shared with a community college and an elementary school.

Sacramento Public Library | Sacramento, California

Outreach, Community Services & Special Projects Manager | 2010 - 2012

- Ran community outreach for a 28-location system serving 1.4 million residents, in a union environment.
- Managed a $250,000 LSTA grant to launch I Street: A Community Press & Writing Center, a self-publishing initiative covering equipment, staffing, marketing, and programming.
- Led a $100,000 grant partnership with Barnes & Noble for one of the first eReader lending programs in U.S. public libraries.

Assistant Manager, Central Library | 2008 - 2010

Earlier career: Branch Manager and Librarian, Omaha Public Library (2004 - 2008). Library Assistant, Multnomah County Library, Portland, Oregon (1998 - 2004).

Education

- Master of Public Administration, University of Texas at Arlington, 2022
- Certified Professional Coach, Coach Training Alliance, 2024
- Certification in Executive Leadership, George Washington University, 2016
- Master of Library Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2004
- Bachelor of Arts, English, University of Oregon, 1997

Teaching

- Adjunct Professor, University of Alabama School of Library and Information Science, 2016 - 2017
- Adjunct Professor, Catholic University School of Library and Information Science, 2016

Honors & Recognition

- Engaging Local Government Leaders (ELGL) Top 100 Local Government Influencers, 2022

- Texas Library Association Librarian of the Year, 2020
- Library Journal Movers & Shakers, 2010
- American Library Association Emerging Leader, 2009

Professional Leadership

- Friends of the Dallas Public Library, Ex-Officio Board Member, 2025 - Present
- Texas Library Association Legislative Committee, Chair, 2019 - 2023
- Fort Worth Public Library Foundation, Ex-Officio Board Member, 2017 - 2023
- Leadership Fort Worth, Class of 2019
- Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), Grant Reviewer, 2016
- Mentor: TLA Tall Texans (2019), Nebraska Library Leadership Institute (2013), ALA Emerging Leaders (2012)