

I am Jorge Cardenas. I work at the Burnaby Public Library in Burnaby, British Columbia. I am a community librarian and a branch manager.

### **So why PLL?**

I started the CULC PLL (Public Libraries Leadership) program in October 2018. I got into the program because that is what my chief librarian suggested. She was a think in the second cohort of the program and she found it very valuable. She sent an expression of interest, a few of us applied, and then I get in, I got selected. I see it as an opportunity to develop my leadership skills in the library world. I know a few people who have been there and I talked to a few of them who were part of the program about their experience. Everyone said really good things about it and that's why I decided it was a good option for me.

Another reason why I got into the PLL Program, leadership programs in general, is I have met people who are part of the library world in North America, both in Canada and the U.S., especially Latina populations, and in conversations with them, they challenged to put myself in a position where, of making decisions and a position of power if you like, not just a position of doing the work. That's what we see of having an opportunity, the opportunity of having people of colour in positions of leadership in the library world. I took the challenge, I am trying to learn and trying to do something about it.

### **How do you see it being transformative in the future?**

What I'm getting out of CULC PLL leaders program so far is I am learning about topics that I knew about but I never thought about, like governance in the library. I am getting refreshers about things I knew about but I don't think too much about, about budgets, so that's a part, the formal part, the educational part, the academic part, I found it interesting and it keeps me up-to-date with things that in everyday work I don't think too much about.

Then, the second best thing is the site visits that I see them as case studies. Having the opportunity to visit libraries and, not just visit libraries because we do that all the time when we travel. But having the opportunity to talk to people who are part of the libraries and they can, can like explain having like not just a tour but an in-depth explanation of why things are the way they are. It is an opportunity to learn from different places and to have different perspective about challenges, problems or just everyday tasks that we have. And it works for coming back to your library and seeing things differently, trying to change in a way or try things in a way that you never thought before. Ah, seeing amazing libraries like Calgary's new public library, central library, or Halifax Central Library is just an amazing experience.

But the best part of this program, what I find the most interesting part and the one I'm getting most out of it, is getting to know colleagues from all over Canada and having the opportunity not just to talk to them but to start developing a relationship. It is people who work in environments that are similar to mine, my workplace, but are completely different in many ways. It is invaluable, it's something that you cannot get in any other way. Having the opportunity to get together and have conversations both formally and informally about everyday things, more importantly about challenges, ideas, explore possibilities of work, it's the best part of this program and I am really looking forward every time I travel to see my colleagues, to sit with them, have conversations, that's it.