

Helen Fried
County Librarian
Orange County Public Libraries (California)

Helen Fried was appointed County Librarian by unanimous decision by the Orange County Board of Supervisors in 2008. As County Librarian she oversees thirty-four libraries located throughout Orange County within twenty-four member cities and the unincorporated areas of the County. She has been deeply involved in developing a Branch Tier Staffing Model. The model offers standardized staffing levels at all libraries in the system, thus making it feasible to operate a system highly dependent on property tax dollars as a more financially sustainable prototype.

Since her appointment, Helen has opened three new libraries in three different cities: The Katie Wheeler Library in Irvine, the Tustin Library in Tustin, and the Laguna Niguel Library in Laguna Niguel. She was responsible for refurbishing, remodeling, and/or ADA upgrading ten libraries.

As Assistant County Librarian/Acting County Librarian simultaneously, she directed the operations of thirty-four libraries, which included not only facilities but services and programs to the public. During this period, she introduced several innovative products and services: downloadable audio books, e-books, historical photograph digitization project, interactive card catalog with electronic book review, and online reference service.

Helen was also one of the founders of Literary Orange, a county-wide annual program launched in 2007 in partnership with the University of Irvine which celebrates authors, readers and libraries.

Helen received a Bachelor's Degree in English and a Master's Degree in Library Science and Information Technology from the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.