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Kimberly Johnson, Chief Operating Officer Tulsa City County Library

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Kimberly Johnson, Chief Operating Officer Tulsa City County Library. Photo by Lesa Jones/TB&LN



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Kim Johnson's love of libraries began when she was growing up in the Bronx borough of New York City, as she would often visit her local library and dream about places she might never have the opportunity to visit.

"I've been a library user my whole life," Johnson said. "I have always been extremely passionate about all the ways libraries change lives, so it is exciting that technology has not only afforded us the opportunity to reach more people and made the library more accessible."

Now she's bringing that opportunity to dream to young Tulsans.

It's no surprise she is fulfilling her purpose and passion as the chief operating officer for the Tulsa City-County Library System, said her husband, Earl Johnson, vice president for Enrollment Management and Student Services at the University of Tulsa.

"She has a big heart for helping others and the creativity and ingenuity to visualize possibilities and bring them to fruition," he said. "Tulsa is fortunate to have this New York transplant working to bring about change in our community."



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Kimberly Johnson established the first African-American Resource Center for the Tulsa

Library system and created the Sankofa Award for the advancement of literacy and to recognize significant African-American authors.

She also encouraged C-SPAN to broadcast an annual literacy and reading event, putting the Tulsa Library in the national spotlight.

“My biggest accomplishment thus far is being the COO for the library. In this role, I get to lead a fantastic staff and implement new services to meet the diverse need of the library’s 21st century customers.”

She says when she started in her field she wishes she would have known how technology would be a game changer for the library. To help the library make that transition, she spearheaded the creation of a program that allows patrons to access music, movies, books and magazines online using a library card.

Johnson is thrilled to be a part of an innovative organization and encourages other women to embrace change.

“Say yes to professional opportunities big and small. Be authentic and be fearless,” she said.

Lesa Jones

lesa.jones@tulsabusiness.com

Twitter: @LesalJones

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