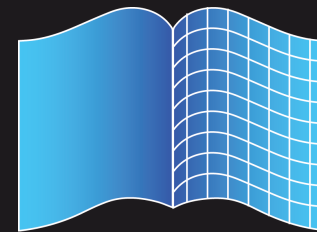




BLACK & SUPER!

**SUPPORTING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES
WITH PROGRAMMING AROUND COMICS**



SUFFOLK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Suffolk Public Library

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Coordinator

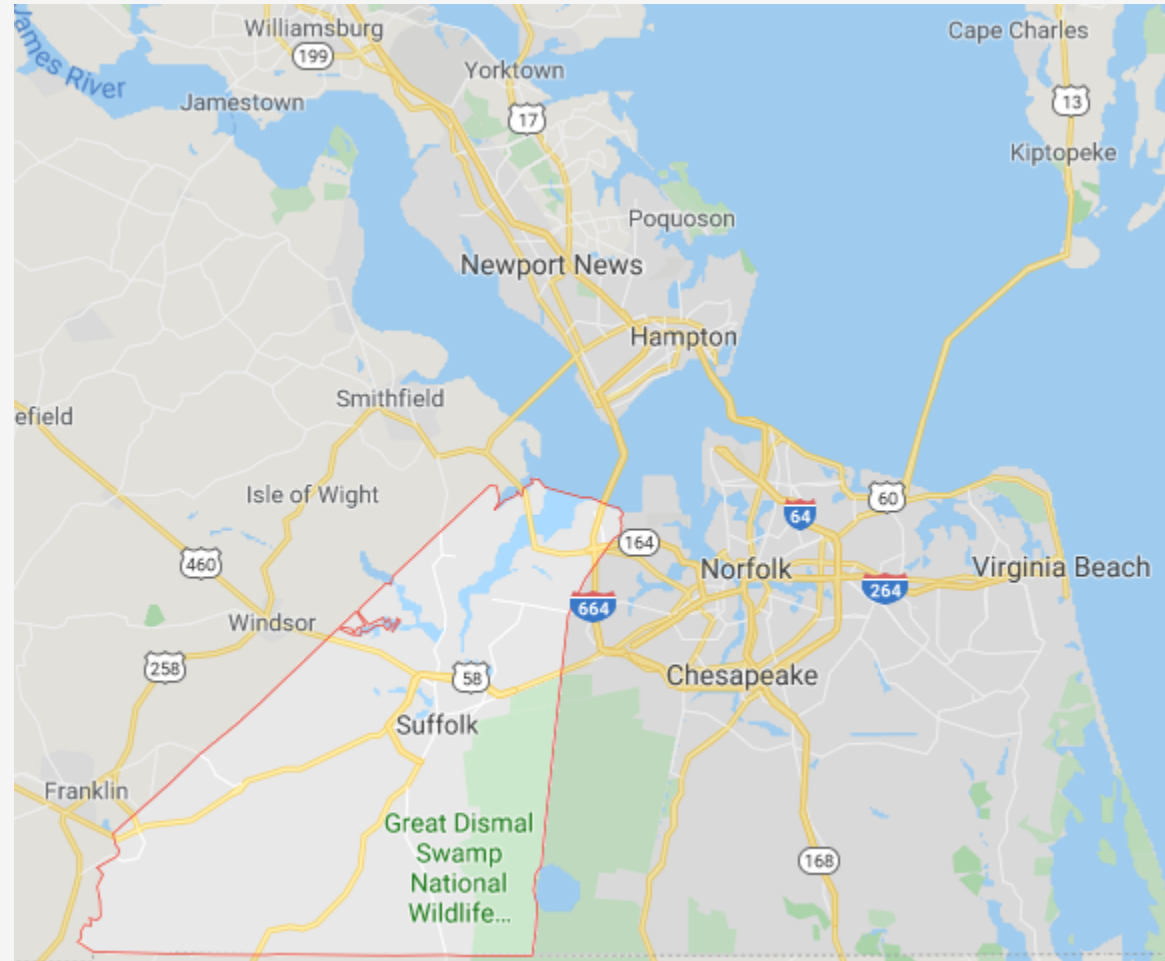


SPL

Suffolk is the largest city in Virginia by land area.

We are served by two major library branches and one small, rural branch.

Our goal:
To make decisions for our community based on actual authentic relationships.





*BLACK & SUPER
TRIVIA*

QUESTION #1

*In what year did
Black Panther
make his debut?*



1961

Prior to Black Panther there were black heroes in comics including soldiers, cowboys, and Tarzan-like jungle men.

But with his magically enhanced abilities and high tech gear, Black Panther can claim the mantle of the first black superhero.



RECOGNIZING A NEED

Diverse communities need diverse library collections and programs.

Need for positive representation

The earliest black superheroes were created by white writers and artists. Typically they played the role of side-kick.



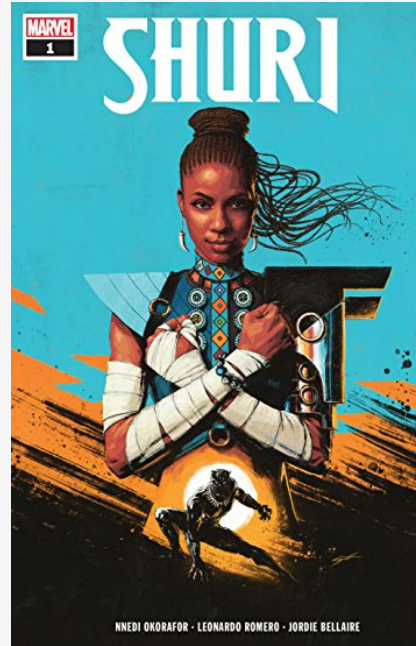
1979



1971

A new generation of non-white superheroes

Although the comics industry still has work to do, genuine progress has been made in the quality of diverse characters.



Black Panther

The purposeful blackness of *Black Panther* made the movie a cultural phenomenon.

The movie inspired us to create a Black History Month program that would serve youth at Morgan Memorial Library.



Just imagine the libraries in Wakanda...

Afro-futurism is a genre of speculative fiction that imagines blackness in the future.

Wakanda is a space for autonomy and self-determination for black people. Wakanda has sovereignty.



*“I can be super
too!”*

Superheroes empower us to
imagine a world where there is
a force for good.

Library graphic novel
collections need titles with
diverse superheroes and
produced by diverse creators.



*BLACK & SUPER
TRIVIA*

QUESTION #2

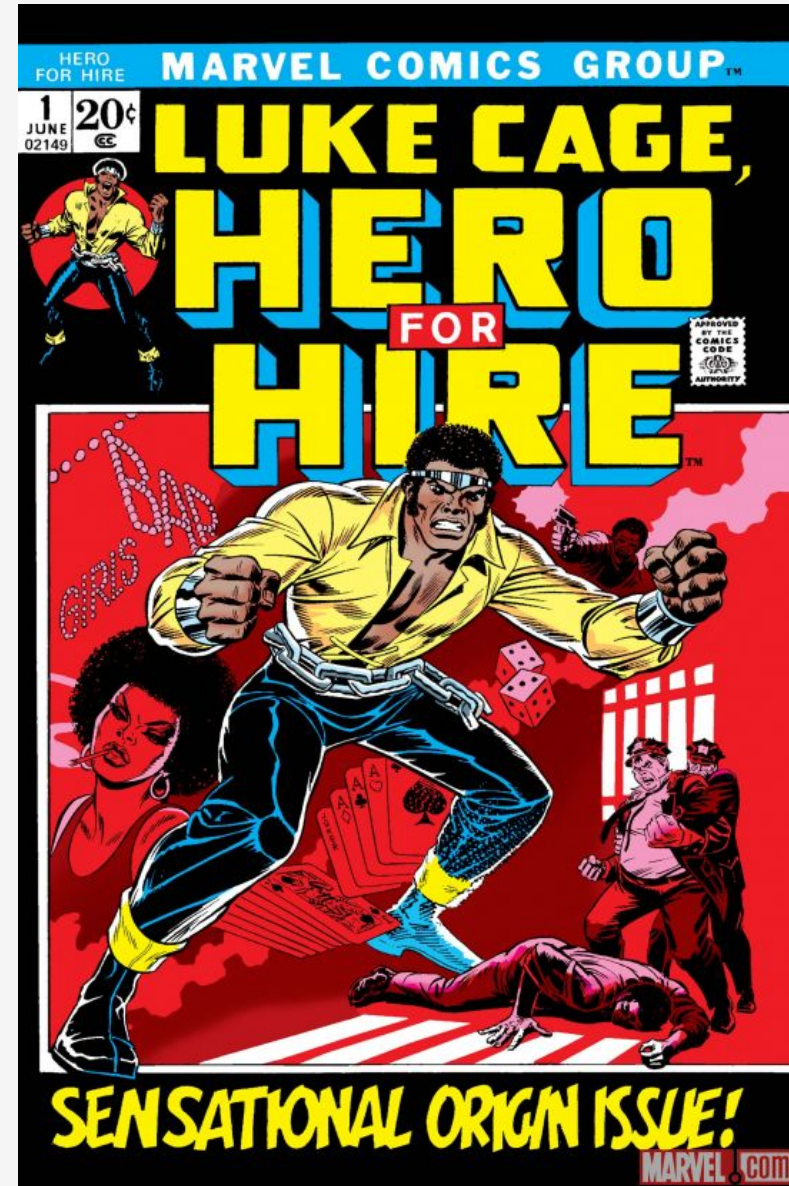
Name the first African American superhero to have his own series.



Luke Cage (1972)

Convicted of a crime he didn't commit, Luke Cage submits to scientific experiments to have his prison sentence cut short.

With bulletproof skin and super strength, Cage works the streets of Harlem as a bodyguard, private detective, and vigilante.



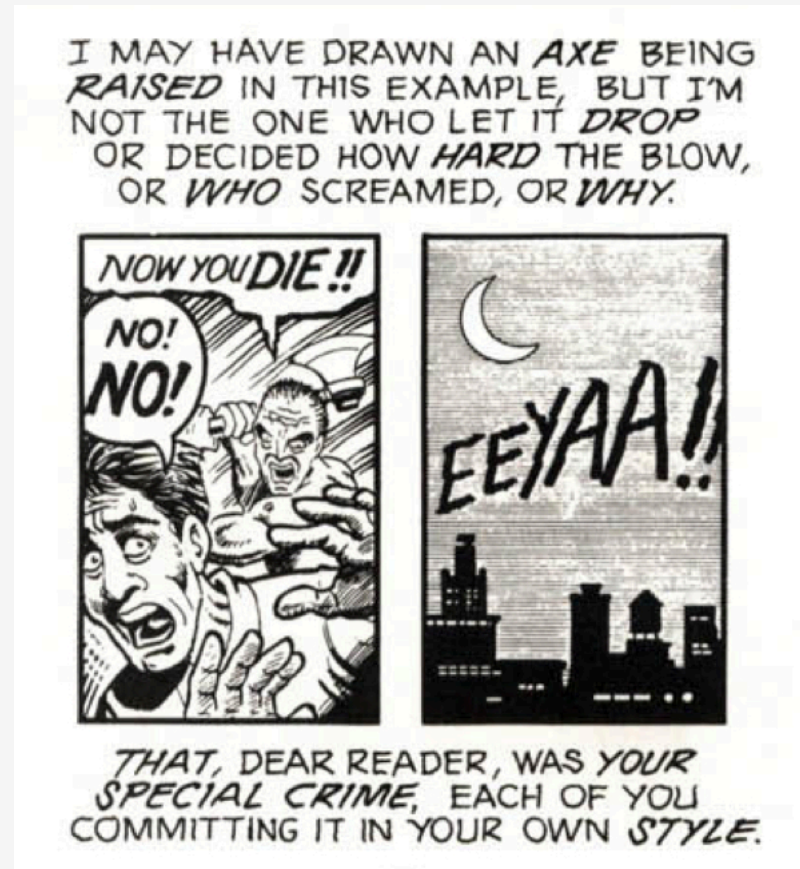


THE VALUE OF COMICS

*COMICS AS A PLATFORM FOR ENGAGING WITH DIVERSE
COMMUNITIES*

Comics teach comprehension strategies

Comic panels break up the narrative into discrete chunks and teach readers to make inferences.



From *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* by Scott McCloud

*Comic characters
are popular and
hold readers' interest*

Reluctant readers may be more interested in familiar characters that have appeared in movies and TV shows.



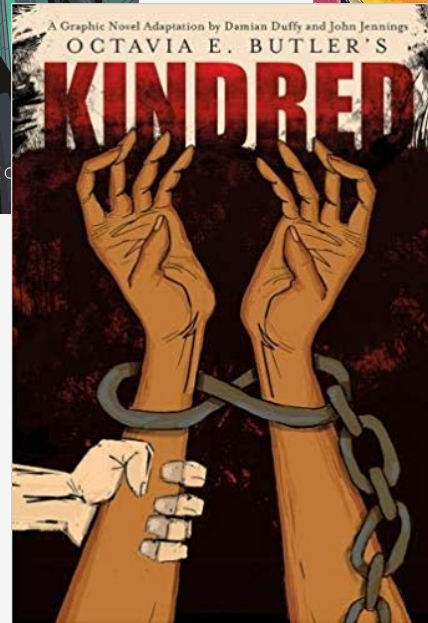
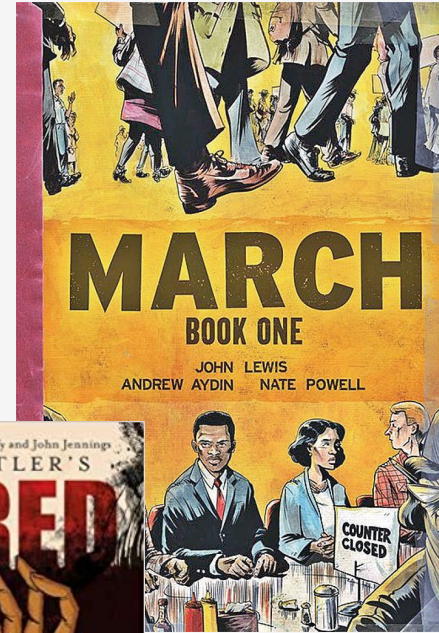
Comics can help readers with dyslexia

The combination of visual cues with separate speech and thought bubbles can help struggling readers.



*We have
handouts!!*

Check our readers advisory list for
recommended titles to add to your
collection



Fandom means being part of a community



<https://tallynnkel.com/blog/2018/11/5/decolonizing-your-comic-con-redefining-spaces-in-geek-fandoms>



<https://blerdcon.com/>



https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/avykp8/w-hat-black-anime-fans-can-teach-us-about-race-in-america-805

*BLACK & SUPER
TRIVIA*

QUESTION #3

In 1993, Dwayne McDuffie and several other African American comic creators founded Milestone Media to bring more diversity to comics.

Who was their most popular character?



Static

Trapped between warring gangs, nerdy teen Virgil Hawkins becomes a masked crime fighter after an experimental chemical gives him electromagnetic powers.

His comic debuted in 1993 and an animated series ran from 2000-2004.



*BLACK & SUPER:
THE IDEA*

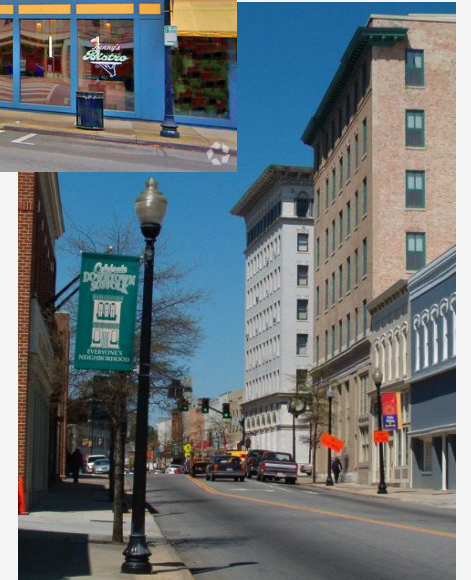
Downtown Suffolk

Typical patrons at Morgan Memorial Library include bored kids and teens.

Fewer large programs at Morgan Library due to space constraints.

Limited public transportation options to the North Suffolk Library.

U.S. Census data
Downtown Suffolk is 79% African American.



IconiCon

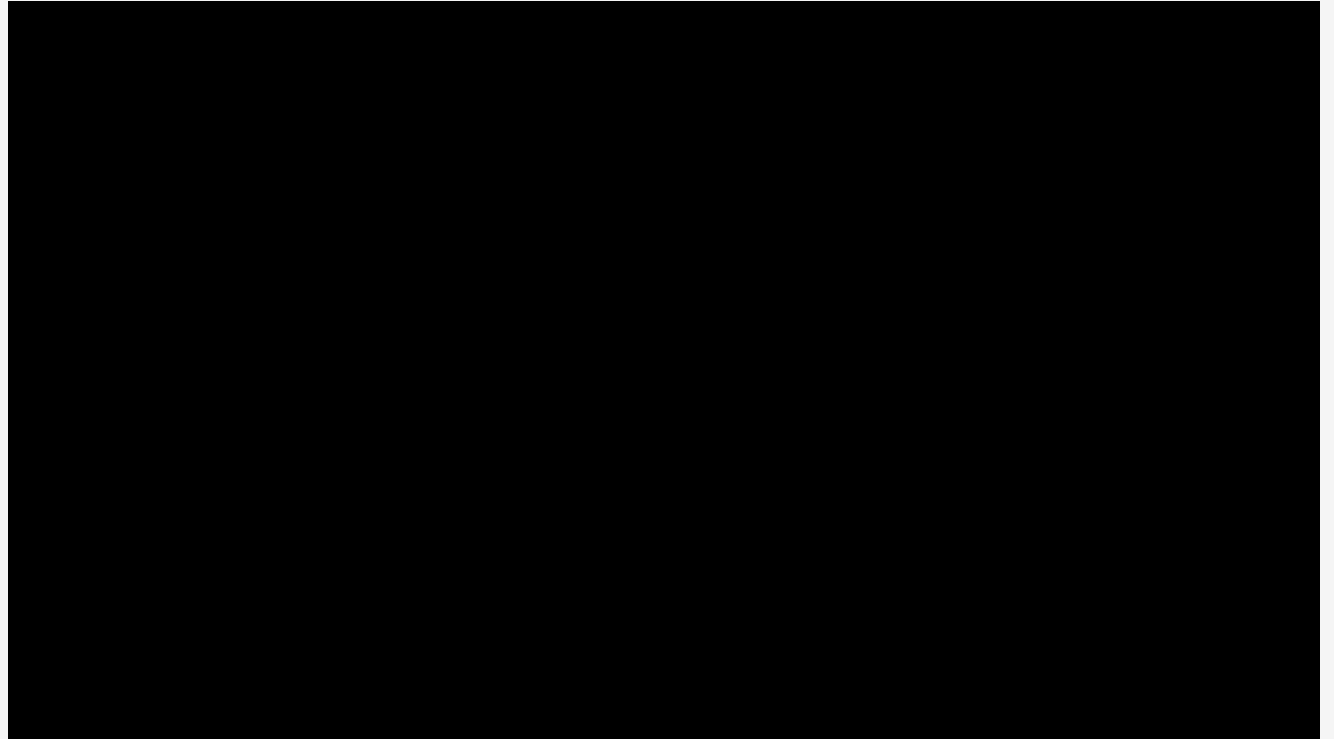
Annual celebration of fandom
at North Suffolk Library:
Harry Potter, Star Wars, anime, and superheroes

More than 1,500 attended in 2019.

Room for improvement:

Some patrons provided feedback about lack of
diversity of characters.

North Suffolk branch is more than 14 miles from
downtown community.



*BLACK & SUPER
TRIVIA*

QUESTION #4

How does Miles Morales exhibit a multicultural blackness?



He is Afro-Latino.

According to the U.S. Census,
2.5% of black people also
identify as Hispanic.

Miles Morales has an
African American father
and a Puerto Rican
mother.



*BLACK & SUPER:
THE PROGRAM*



Black & Super

All ages programming:

“White Scripts and Black Supermen”

Black superhero trivia

Panel of local artists

Character bio posters



Black & Super

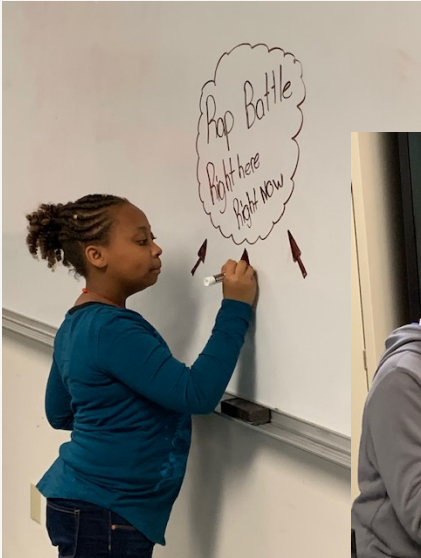
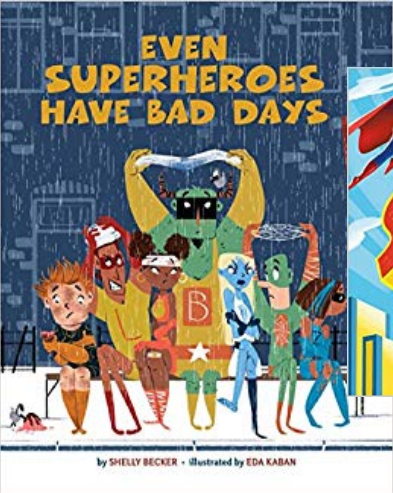
Family programming

Storytime

Crafts and games

Everyone is Super! : writing contest

Rap battle



Black & Super

Vendor spaces





*BLACK & SUPER
TRIVIA*

QUESTION #5

Storm, the first black female superhero, was introduced with the second generation of X-men in 1975.

How did she rise to become leader of the X-men?



Storm defeated Cyclops to become leader of the X-men in 1986.

Born into a long line of Kenyan shamans with a European father and African mother, Ororo Munroe spent her early childhood on the streets of Cairo.

Storm wields control of the weather giving her the ability to create tornadoes, lightening, and hail. She is able to fly by having the wind carry her and is immune to extreme temperatures.



*BEYOND
BLACK & SUPER*



*Black &
Super II:
Heroes off the Page*



Summary

Diverse communities are ready for heroes that look like them.

Successful diversity programs grow from knowledge about the communities they serve.



Any questions?



Thanks to locations services staff Lakecha Green and Marisha Jackson, and librarian Deborah Ward for their hard work on Black & Super 2019.



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