

NEWS RELEASE

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Despite COVID-19 closures, Louisville Free Public Library finds a way to help in the fight against the coronavirus

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (May 5, 2020) – Despite its buildings being closed and nearly 90% of its employees now on furlough due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Louisville Free Public Library continues to contribute directly to the fight against the coronavirus. Two weeks after closing to the public, library technology staff began re-directing LFPL’s computing power to the COVID-19 fight through an online crowd-sourcing project called **Folding@Home**. The project is focused on disease research, including work on Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, cancer, and now COVID-19, and the problems Folding@Home is working to solve require vast numbers of computer calculations. The Library is helping by running protein folding simulations on more than 500 of its public computers.

“Reallocating unused computer capacity to help with this life-saving research is a unique way the Library is able to help during this difficult time,” said Library Director Lee Burchfield. “I am so proud of our employees who have found innovative ways for the Library to contribute to our community, even while our buildings are closed.”

Since joining the effort on March 31, the Library team, Folding@LFPL, is now ranked in the top 1% for its folding simulation work—currently 950 out of more than 250,000 teams worldwide. At the very top of the list are teams from major technology companies like Hewlett Packard and Google, and most have been participating long before Folding@Home shifted to a COVID-19 focus and LFPL got involved.

Individuals and businesses interested in contributing spare computer processing power to the project can go to foldingathome.org/start-folding and sign up. Participants can even join the LFPL team’s efforts using team number 252716.

While library facilities remain closed, LFPL’s digital resources, including eBooks, downloadable audiobooks, streaming movies and music, are still available at LFPL.org. All late fees on materials borrowed prior to the closure are suspended at this time and all book returns are locked. Please do not return library materials until the buildings reopen. For more information, or to apply for a library card, visit LFPL.org, or call (502) 574-1611, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.