NEW JERSEY STATE LIBRARY UPDATE
May 2022

State Librarian

Developing and implementing Fresh Start on a statewide basis has been a privilege and an opportunity that doesn’t come along very often. Building from the successful model developed by Long Branch Public Library, the statewide implementation faced many challenges, largely driven by library closures due to the pandemic. Yet the program succeeded in raising the awareness of the needs of formerly incarcerated citizens and the ways in which libraries can contribute to re-entry. However, the New Jersey State Library has reached the end of its ability to support the program as it currently exists. We’ll be closing the doors, so to speak, on June 24. I’d like to thank Peggy Cadigan, Jondhi Harrell, Nicole Warren, Sarah Swiderski and Betsy Beavers for their commitment to service over the last three years. And, of course, our colleagues at Long Branch for leading the way in this important work.

While it is end to this phase, it is also a new beginning. As we move forward into next year, please be on the lookout for new initiatives that further develop the social workers in libraries movement and digital literacy services to those with the greatest barriers to digital equity, including the formerly incarcerated. Moving forward, Mimi Lee will be leading our work in this area, and I invite you to contact her if you have thoughts, observations, ideas or feedback for us.

We’ve just posted a new competitive grant opportunity with our Library Services and Technology Act funds. Grants range in size from $2,000 to $20,000. You can find more information on our website: https://www.njstatelib.org/services_for_libraries/resources/lsta-2022-grant-opportunity/

Finally, I’d like to give a shout out to the many, many people who have worked with us this year in our various evaluation, strategy and resource selection conversations. I won’t name names, at the risk of leaving someone out, but suffice it to say that your participation in our E-resources Review Committee, the LSTA Advisory Council, the Library Network Review Board and our many surveys and focus groups, has contributed to NJSL’s understanding of the needs of the New Jersey library community. My hope is that our services will be stronger as a result. Thank you!

Jen Nelson, State Librarian
Stay Informed:

TBBC is currently recruiting a Spanish speaking individual to join its Reader Advisor staff focusing not only on serving our Hispanic patrons, but also beginning outreach efforts into the Hispanic communities across New Jersey.

Over 3,200 documents were uploaded to the New Jersey State Publications Digital Library in April, with 5,299 users accessing documents. You can check out the digital library, organized by topic, here: https://dspace.njstatelib.org/handle/10929/9

Genealogy librarian Regina Fitzpatrick created a video on “How the Genealogy Librarian can Assist You,” which may be viewed on YouTube at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i22PASG6Pk4&t=297s

TBBC’s total April circulation exceeded 30,000 books, with 23,919 produced in-house and 6,636 downloaded by patrons and staff at BARD public libraries. Among the BARD downloads, 918 volumes were in Braille for reading on the new electronic Braille reader. TBBC’s patrons by years of service: 20 years, 1,418; 25 years, 869; 30 years, 336; 40 years, 146; 50 years, 57.

Adam Szczepaniak will be a panelist at the national conference by the National Library for the Blind and Print Disabled on network services to the Dyslexia community. Joining New Jersey will be representatives from New York, Texas and Massachusetts. The network libraries have the highest number of Dyslexic patrons in the program. Program access is very important to this population with the highest number of patrons beginning reading in audio between 6 and 8 years old at TBBC.

Leigh Clark, NJSL’s Funding Information Collection librarian, will be part of a panel including Theresa Jacks, Acting President & CEO of Council of NJ Grantmakers; Linda Czipo, President & CEO of The NJ Center for Nonprofits; and Annmarie Puleio, Executive Director of The Fred C. Rummel Foundation. The group will be presenting “Successful Grant-Seeking – A Workshop for Non-Profits,” at the Union County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs on June 7, 2022. The intended audience is nonprofits, mostly based in Union County, including: arts organizations currently funded by the Local Arts grant funds from NJ; history organizations; and other nonprofits interested in seeking grant funds.

You’re Invited

The monthly Directors Check-in will be held on May 24 at 2:00 pm, and the Trustees Check-in will be held on May 26 at 7:00 pm. Registration information has been sent to the NJPubLibs listserv. The check-ins are designed to answer any and all questions Directors and Trustees may have.

The State Library will have a booth at the upcoming NJLA conference. Stop by to say hello, ask a question or just pick up a copy of Palaces for the People by Eric Klinenberg until they are all gone! Also join us for the State Librarian’s Program, with guest speaker R. David Lankes, on June 2 at 11am, and come enjoy the State Librarian’s Breakfast on June 3 at 8am. The breakfast will be a casual meet and greet this year. Check out the
full list of presentations, workshops, and poster sessions that will be led by NJSL staff here: https://www.njstatelib.org/news/njsl-sessions-at-the-2022-njla-conference/

Registration for the State Library’s upcoming classes and programs is available through our website at https://www.njstatelib.org/events. Upcoming author talk: “Wreckers! Land Pirates of Monmouth County,” June 9, from 12-1 pm.

Virtual classes, also on our events page include: “Financial Side of College Graduation” on May 17, 12-1 pm; “What is a Stroke?” on May 18, 12-1 pm; “Environmental Protection: What You Can Do … More or Less!” on May 31, 12-1 pm; and “Negotiating in the Workplace” on June 2, 12-1 pm.

The next NJLibsGrowBiz Virtual Discussion will be held on Wednesday, May 25 from 11am to 12:30 pm. NJLibsGrowBiz is a group of library staff members who meet to discuss resources, services, and programs for business owners, entrepreneurs, and jobseekers in their communities. Our speaker will be Shoumo Ganguly, who is a solopreneur and an Alignable Ambassador Mentor. He has worked with Woodbridge Public Library as well as offered training at other NJ libraries in the past, and he brings a great perspective on business needs and areas of opportunity. He will be discussing Alignable, a platform where small business owners gather to build trusted relationships. The platform also facilitates inter-library collaboration through the Public Libraries Group.” Register at: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAscemqrTIqEtO7IGs9Cr_BUWuUOCCEW0rr

The NJ Center for the Book has commissioned a third e-book in the Jersey Trackers children’s online series comprised of chapters written by notable NJ authors and illustrators. All youth services library staff are invited to attend a virtual meeting of the NJ Center for the Book’s Executive Board as it announces the launch of the third online e-book serial The Jersey Trackers and the Missin’ Mathematician on Wednesday, May 18, 2022 from 3:30 - 4:30 pm via Zoom. NJ authors/illustrators Wil Mara, Trinka Hakes Hoble, and Wendy Mass, who wrote chapters for this e-serial, will be there to read from this newest e-serial. To obtain the Zoom link, please email Sharon Rawlins, Youth Services Specialist, NJ State Library, srawlins@njstatelib.org.

Get Involved:
NJSL, LLNJ and NJLA are joining to confront issues of injustice through our Equity Diversity and Inclusion Framework. We’re creating a set of workgroups (likely to launch after the NJLA Conference) to tackle specific areas of EDI in libraries. If you’d like to get involved, please email me (jnelson@njstatelib.org), Juliet Machie (jmachie@njla.org) or Ralph Bingham (ralph@librarylinknj.org).

We are starting to plan the next E-Content conversation for New Jersey Libraries and compiling a list of people interested in the conversation about statewide e-content opportunities. If you’d like to be part of the on-going conversation, which we will pick up again in July, please let me or Ralph Bingham know.