

A Community Effort

Social innovation
at the heart of
Long Branch
Free PL

By **Tonya Garcia**,
Director, Long Branch
Free Public Library

*"The best way to predict
the future is to invent it."
— Alan Kay*

This year, the Long Branch Free Public Library celebrated 100 years of service to its community. We also celebrated another lesser-known milestone: the library realized a decade of social innovation.

Our library is located in the culturally rich city by the sea known as Long Branch. Long Branch is a tapestry of people of varying colors, financial situations, sexual orientations, and political leanings. It reminds me of a family forging through adversity to celebrate and share personal and collective triumphs. To me, Long Branch reflects the ideals of a public library. What makes the library a unique organization in our city, aside from its prominent location in the center of it, is the responsibility to ensure equal access for all—without deciding who the "all" should include.

I believe that once we start to dissect the "all," we head down a slippery slope of exclusion. I decided long ago that ensuring inclusion would be my North Star; any success



Michael Goff, owner of Heads Up Barbers, with a young client. Heads Up Barbers is one of four barbershops that launched the Fade to Books initiative, which started in partnership with the Long Branch Free PL. [Photo by David Perez]

I've had at staying true to this course depends on the ability to identify the need for social innovation, but more importantly, it depends on our staff, trustees, and city administration sharing a collective vision. In Long Branch, we've achieved just that with programs designed to meet the needs of our community, some of which I will describe.

Back to Work

Before the Great Recession was "officially" identified, most public librarians knew that the employment rate was dropping and that something was happening. In record numbers, community members were coming through our

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Message from the PRESIDENT

Libraries Affecting Change

I'm proud that this issue of the *New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter* focuses on ways our libraries can better reach underserved populations, whether they are disadvantaged persons, new Americans, or groups unfamiliar with library service and considered non-traditional library users. There are some great stories within this edition that showcase "beyond the box" services to New Jersey residents. I hope you find them inspiring and can shape them into opportunities that will be helpful in your community outreach.

In these fractured times it is more important than ever that public libraries provide accessible, open and welcoming services to those that are often marginalized in today's society. We can narrow the margins of our most vulnerable neighbors, students, friends, and residents by widening the pathways to the services we deliver. Pathways to service can be expanded in a number of ways, including bringing library services out into the community where people congregate, work and play, or to those that can't get to the building.

Library service today is not just centered on books, or even the housing of information. The delivery of information through instruction, training and hands-on experience, exploration, or guidance has become an increasingly significant part of what we do. The general public has few alternative options for these services that are accessible or affordable.

The reach and impact of librarians is greatly enhanced through beyond-the-box partnerships. This melding of forces and expertise is more important than ever to offer opportunities and specialized information that is not readily available elsewhere. Fascinating examples include social workers or social work interns stationed in libraries, trained health information experts on staff who can help enhance patrons' understanding of diagnoses and

where they can get more information, and career connection services that assist those looking for work, which often require training on technology and how people find jobs today.

In the following pages, you can read about the wonderful work Tonya Garcia (a 2017 *Library Journal* Mover & Shaker and 2016 NJLA Librarian of the Year!) and her staff at Long Branch PL have been doing to reach underserved populations—and they are not alone! All of our contributors have found innovative ways to reach patrons who are learning a new language, seeking work or a career change, or are non-traditional library users.

It is important that we remember and celebrate the importance of our work and the impact we can and do have on people's lives. Libraries do change lives, and it starts with you—our NJLA members.

Congratulations to all for the work that you do, and for the willingness and effort to constantly develop and improve the services New Jersey libraries are providing. We all know it is not easy with ever-tightening budgets and many other challenges. Together we can strengthen New Jersey libraries and continue this work at ever greater levels.

We will take this message of working for a greater good on the road: as we head to Conference, a reminder that the NJLA Urban Libraries and Diversity and Outreach sections will be collecting ties, belts, umbrellas, shoes, and gently used professional clothing appropriate for job interviews. The collection, in partnership with Covenant House of Atlantic City, will help provide those in need with resources that will help them improve their situation and livelihood. Another great way that libraries can change lives!

Chris Carbone

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Mission Statement of the New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter

The *New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter* is one of the official publications of the New Jersey Library Association and serves as a vehicle for communication of library issues and activities among the members of NJLA.

Editorial Statement of the New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter

The *New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter* shall provide news of NJLA and information about statewide, regional, and local library activities.

News shall be as current as possible within the constraints of the publication schedule and the publication will serve as an archival record of significant and lasting library issues and topics.

The *New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter* shall provide reports from officers, committees, roundtables, sections, and other units of the NJLA.

It shall also publish reports on trends and practices in the library profession and articles on topics of interest to the New Jersey library community. Ephemeral issues and time-sensitive topics will be covered in the Listserv or the association website.

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Letter from the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Carrying on a Tradition

The theme of this issue of the NJLA newsletter is "Narrowing the Margins," focusing on serving the underserved (disadvantaged populations as well as the non-traditional library user). It is certainly a complex topic but one which I believe the library community has been facing for over 100 years.

John Cotton Dana, director of the Newark Public Library (1902–1929) and president of both the American Library Association (1895–96) and the New Jersey Library Association (serving three terms, 1904–06 and 1910–11), was a pioneer in transforming the public library from a warehouse of books to a vital civic center, offering a wide variety of services to all segments of his community. ALA recognizes excellence in public relations activities with the John Cotton Dana Award, which is given every year at its annual conference. Dana loved promoting the library. I can't image what he would have done with Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube. The library would have been everywhere.

A booklet written by Dr. Timothy Crist, president of the Board of Trustees of the Newark Public Library, called *A John Cotton Dana Library*, to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Dana's birth, is filled with examples of how he transformed library services. What I find astounding is how many of the services that Dana developed are still important in reaching underserved community members today.

For example, Dana championed providing materials in foreign languages for new residents who were unable to read English. Just recently, ALA announced the winners of the American Dream Literacy Initiative, a year-long program funded by the Dollar General Literacy Foundation designed to

deliver services to English language learners in a warm and welcoming environment. Six New Jersey libraries were among the winners.

Business services were also extremely important to Dana. He opened the first business branch of the Newark Public Library. Although that branch is now closed and services to businesses are provided in the main library, Dana established the model for business services in public libraries. I believe that Dana would be pleased to see the new co-working space opened by the Willingboro Public Library to provide small business leaders with computers, printers, and other technology to assist them.

I also believe that Dana would have been one of the first to sign up for New Jersey Makers Day. This program has grown tremendously over the past few years and has positioned libraries as centers for innovation and technology experimentation.

Getting people to read was always Dana's first priority. He would have been the first to apply for the new grant program sponsored by the New Jersey State Library called Fade to Books, which builds partnerships between public libraries and community barbershops.

The public library is the community center for all. These few examples remind us that we are following the legacy of a public library pioneer. New Jersey's public libraries must continue to innovate and expand library services to all residents. Yes, there were challenges 100 years ago and there are challenges today. No one should be underserved or unwelcome in a public library. We have a tremendous amount of creativity in our library community. I am sure Mr. Dana is looking down on us and cheering us on.

Patricia Tumulty



Note from the EDITOR

This issue of the *New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter* is a chance to consider who we serve in our libraries, and how we can build on this good work.

Kristin Cooper Rainey talks about programming that brought in a new audience to her library.

Richard Kearney goes where few of us have dared—Cumberland County, to be exact—and speaks in depth with librarians who are helping displaced workers in their community learn new skills.

Kate Baker has been building a model ESL program at Piscataway PL, and shares some ideas for success.

Recently named *Library Journal* Mover & Shaker Tonya Garcia outlines the various ways in which she's led Long Branch Free PL into the heart of its community.

At the heart of all these ideas is staff. They are taking the initiative to reach out to people who aren't using the library, working to support new services, and using their skills to make their library a better, more responsive institution. I hope you will find ideas and inspiration in these pages.

Please consider writing for the summer issue of our newsletter, themed The Information Situation. There are no shortage of opinions on what constitutes news and fact, but we all know libraries play a role in information literacy. We would love to hear your ideas and stories. Please email us proposals at newsletter_editor@njlamembers.org by May 1!

Jill D'Amico

Geared for Guys

Considering programming aimed at this elusive demographic

By **Kristin Cooper Rainey**,
Adult Services Librarian,
Mercer County Library System

I always enjoy learning about unique programs that other libraries have done and trying to come up with interesting ideas that I can try. Libraries face great challenges these days now that so many people think that with so much information available digitally, perhaps libraries aren't that important anymore.

While it may be true that information is more freely available, this gives libraries a great opportunity to re-evaluate how a long-term community institution can serve its local users, and specifically to come up with creative solutions that will attract new and underserved patrons to the library.

A couple of years ago, I was about to restart my career and re-enter the library world. I wanted to come up with some creative ideas that I could pitch when interviewing. Some of the groups commonly served by public libraries include families with young children, senior citizens, and teenagers. In an effort to attract more users to the library, I was going to propose doing a series of programs that would appeal to people who might not regularly think about coming into the library, in this case—men.

Once I settled into my new position at the Hopewell Branch of the Mercer County Library System, I was asked to begin working on scheduling some programs at the library. This was when I got a bee in my bonnet to develop presentations that would appeal to men, specifically, men who aren't already coming into the library, either to bring young children to programs or because they were of retirement age and had the time to spare.

Although I am not a man myself, I am married to one and have had a variety of male friends and relatives over the years, so I began thinking about programs that might be inter-

esting to them and coming up with a list of possible topics. I brainstormed a list of ideas that I thought might be appealing to guys, in addition to doing some research on the Internet to see what other libraries were doing, speaking with co-workers, patrons, and friends, and of course, going straight to the source by speaking to men and asking them what types of programs they might like to see at the library.

One amusing occasion was when we had an outreach table at our local community day celebration event. I felt like a carnival barker trying to wrangle up a conversation with any single man walking by. It felt a bit odd, since I've been a married woman for almost 15 years now, but it was very helpful to talk to members of the community out in the real world and not just those that already patronize the library.

It was during the month of January when I started putting this plan into place, and I was in luck! One of the biggest sports events of the year—the Super Bowl—was taking place at the beginning of February. I decided to use this event as a springboard and came up with the idea to do a program on Super Bowl snacks.

Cooking and food programs have



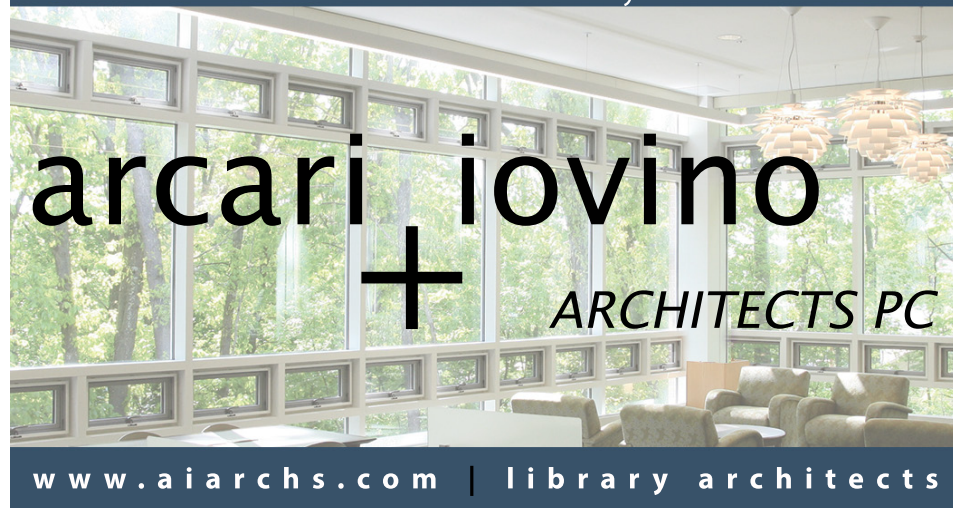
Mike Gray of Sourland Cycles in Hopewell Borough shares some hints and tips on getting your bike ready for the warm weather on Saturday, March 11, 2017.

become quite popular these days, so I decided to see if I could find someone to do a cooking demonstration. I contacted a local market called Pennington Quality Market (or "PQM" to the locals), and asked if they'd be willing to do a presentation. PQM is an amazing local shop that does a great deal for the community, and they were happy to do a program for our library, which is located just down the street. We were able to arrange for them to do the presentation for free—they even brought free wings!

Two other favorite programs we hosted at the library included Hot Sauce—Creating and Tasting and Homebrewing 101. Continuing with a food- and drink-based theme, I worked the owner of a local hot sauce business who came in and demonstrated how

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Strengthening Libraries to Help Job Seekers

A conversation with Cumberland County Library librarians about the New Jersey Libraries Career Connections Grant program



Carol Hutton (left) and Stephanie Rockliss, Career Connections librarians at Cumberland County Library

In December 2015, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development announced a new grant opportunity for libraries. The program, titled "New Jersey Libraries Career Connections Grant for Uniform Career Guidance and Job Search Assistance Services," represents an extension of the services the state has provided for several years through a series of Web-based portals and One-Stop Career Centers, with libraries as partners.

By the end of 2016, 18 libraries throughout the state had been selected as grant recipients, receiving \$50,000 each to provide assistance to job seekers. The libraries also received training and implementation support through the New Jersey State Library.

Providing critical help to the unemployed is nothing new to librarians. The onset of the most recent economic recession found people flocking to libraries for help with job listings, résumé writing, electronic filing of applications, Internet access and computer skills, and other needs.



In upcoming issues, Richard will be profiling new faces and places in New Jersey libraries. Got a tip? Let us know at newsletter_editor@njlamembers.org

With economic recovery and unemployment still a major challenge, the new grant program provides much-needed support to job seekers while affirming the key role libraries have been playing all along.

To find out more about the program, I travelled to the Cumberland County Library and met with Carol Hutton and Stephanie Rockliss, the Career Connections librarians hired through the program.

The recession also put libraries under greater fiscal pressure at a time when their services were especially vital to their communities.

Cumberland County has struggled with high unemployment. For over 25 years, it has usually held the second-highest unemployment rate in the state (behind neighboring Cape May County). The manufacturing and farming sectors that occupied much of its labor force have been in long-term decline, and the nearby casino industry that served as a major source of employment has recently suffered a similar fate. Among New Jersey counties, Cumberland also has the highest poverty rate, the lowest median household income, the lowest high-school graduation rate, and the lowest health ranking.

The Cumberland County Library's application for a Career Connections grant was approved in the summer of 2016. From the outset, its plan was to hire two part-time librarians, enabling it to allocate most of the grant funds directly to program support and provide even more than the required 25 hours per week of career guidance to patrons.

Hutton and Rockliss arrived at Cumberland through different paths, but both are well qualified to assist job seekers. Hutton spent most of her career in educational media and technology and has been offering a career class at the county college for women re-entering the workplace who need to refresh their job search skills. Rockliss is a more recent MLS graduate who taught for two years at an elementary school library in neighboring Gloucester County and is currently working part-time at the Millville Public Library. Both live in Cumberland and have strong community roots.

Hutton notes "we all are aware of the people who are losing their jobs from downsizing and companies closing, and it runs the gamut from professional people to people working in factories. Progresso Soup, which is a very large employer in Vineland, is closing this summer because they're moving their operations south. So they have been systematically laying off groups of people over the time rather than everybody being out of work all at once. That's the type of situation we're seeing here."

At the library, Hutton says, "what happens most often is someone will come in and say, 'I'm being laid off and I need another job, I'm looking for a job in such-and-such field,' and

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Strengthening Libraries to Help Job Seekers

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we also get someone who is fresh out of school and looking for some type of job.”

The library promotes its job assistance services through high-profile signs, a dedicated computer terminal, and extensive staffing coverage, with Hutton and Rockliss splitting the week between them and ensuring help is available on site when the state’s One-Stop Career Center in nearby Vineland is closed. Reference staff members keep their schedules and business cards handy for referrals at any time of day. They’re also preparing to begin visits to the municipal libraries in the county to distribute information packets and cultivate more referral sources.

Patron needs are as varied as the population itself, but there are some frequently recurring requests, particularly for résumé and cover letter help. As Hutton indicated, “the number one service requested by job-seekers is help with resumes. We’ve found that jobs that did not previously require a résumé—retail work, factory jobs—now do. I have had patrons who never had to write a résumé and spent 15 or 20 years working in manufacturing or working with machinery, or in warehouses, now required to email a résumé along with their application, and that’s a significant change.”

Rockliss emphasized how the technological medium for present-day job seeking presents its own challenges for many unemployed workers: “Many people don’t have a lot of computer skills when they come in for help, so we have to start with the very basics. Many of them may not have an email address, so we help get them set up with that, especially if they’re working on a resume or need to submit an application online.”

Similarly, just finding accurate, current, and local job listings can be challenging as both newspapers and the classified ads, people once relied on to identify potential jobs have disappeared. According to Hutton, “when people search the web for ‘classified ads’ they discover there are a million websites with job ads, not all of them legitimate, and not all of them recent,” so library as-



The Cumberland County Library in Bridgeton

sistance in that area also saves time and frustration.

Both Hutton and Rockliss commented on the challenge of working with job seekers who sometimes struggle to take their own interests and talents into account when beginning their search for employment. Some unemployed people start out by expressing few aspirations beyond finding “a job that pays” or look no further than their previous experience, even if it doesn’t match their interests. To provide the best help, Hutton and Rockliss try to get pa-

We’ve found that jobs that did not previously require a résumé—retail work, factory jobs—now do ... that’s a significant change.

trons to reflect more on their skills, interests, and sense of vocation in a hybrid reference interview and employment counseling discussion. This puts the librarians in a better position to provide high-quality help while orienting their clients to focus on goals that can benefit them in the long term.

To assist patrons, Hutton says, “sometimes we do a skills inventory or assessment to match people’s skills with jobs that are available. One thing I try to explain is the difference between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ skills. People often think of ‘hard’ skills as most important, things like computer skills, speaking another

language, using a certain type or piece of equipment etc., and not about ‘soft’ skills, like being motivated, or the ability to work in or lead a team, aptitude, or reliability, and those are things employers are really pushing now. But it’s important to know which way people lean.”

Since starting work last fall, Hutton and Rockliss have seen appointments increase from two per week to about 15 per week as word about the program has spread, with some appointments running a few hours, depending on how much help a job seeker needs. But this speaks to the distinctive qualities libraries bring to the Career Connections program: flexibility, a strong responsiveness to individual needs regardless of where a person is in the process, and local access to trusted service professionals who treat all comers with respect and dignity.

The current program cycle will run through at least June, and Hutton and Rockliss are confident the number of appointments will continue to increase. There is a good chance of program renewal after a formal assessment.

In the meantime, there are success stories to share. Hutton and Rockliss described one patron who submitted almost 40 applications over a five-week period in December—often a challenging time to find full-time work—and returned to the library to tell them she’d gotten a full-time job. Some good news in tough times.

doors to search for jobs, create résumés, learn computer skills, or file unemployment claims. After triaging the situation, I realized we needed an initiative specifically designed to get people back to work. In 2009, the Long Branch Public Library Board of Trustees approved the Back to Work Initiative. We forged partnerships with dozens of local organizations and worked to train staff, purchase state-of-the-art technology, host job search courses, and enrich the content of our Virtual Career Center to include webcasts of classes and diverse content for job seekers with special challenges, such as working parents, teens, seniors, and ex-offenders. The New Jersey State Library later made our Virtual Career Center a model for other libraries in the state to adapt to their communities.

Fresh Start

While assisting visitors in our Technology and Career Center, we noticed that many of our job seekers were unfortunately checking “yes” when asked if they had ever been arrested or convicted of a crime. In addition, many of our previously incarcerated visitors had trouble with not only the advanced computer skills needed to job search but with basic computer skills like email and internet searching. This was especially true of ex-offenders who had spent years in prison and were re-entering society with limited computer use. It was at this time that the Fresh Start Re-Entry Program was created. Starting with an informal conversation that includes details of the individual’s prior arrest history, expectations, and current computer skills, a job-seeking plan is tailored to best meet the needs of the client.

Social Work Initiative

In October 2016, we reached out to the School of Social Work at Monmouth University to launch a brand new social work initiative in the library, Community Connects. The library now serves as a point of service for many social service agencies and also has four social work interns in the building three days a week to answer questions and offer resources. The interns also have all had a part in expanding our social work initiatives. Miles Logan is currently working on the Fresh Start Re-Entry Program. David Perez is the library’s liaison to the Barbershop Literacy Project. Our other two interns primarily meet privately at the library with library patrons who need help navigating the system of social services.

Barbershop Literacy Project

In 2016, master barber and friend, Schidell “Born” Riley of Shaav Barbershop sent me a video expressing the dynamic culture of barbering and the importance of literacy. This video inspired me to create a service that would promote youth literacy utilizing the powerful influence of barbers. With the assistance of Kate Angelo, community engagement librarian, and David Perez, Monmouth University MSW Social Work, we reached out to five iconic Long Branch barbershops. Dave’s Barbershop, Elite Barbers, Heads Up Barbers, Montalvo’s Barbershop, and Shaav Barbershop enthusiastically accepted our invitation to participate in the program and together named the initiative Fade to Books. The Bridge of Books Foundation generously donated over 1,000 children’s books. Barbers offer various incentives for young children to



Long Branch Free PL staffers (from left) Janet Birkhead, Nekesha Marshall, Tara Sullivan, Tonya Garcia, Thalia Sweet, and Kate Angelo with Long Branch Councilman John Pallone (right) at the 2016 NJLA Conference – Honors and Awards Reception

read and some even shut off the TV at 3 p.m. to encourage reading and studying. Unlike our pop-up library programs, the children are encouraged to take the books home to keep.

Some people measure success by statistics. We are proud that our visits, program attendance, and public computer usage continue to increase. Some base success on the profile of the library in the community. We are thrilled that the number of invitations we receive to collaborate with area organizations and city departments has tripled. However, I believe the real measure of success is reflected by the impact programs have on the people that utilize them.

I recall one of our first Fresh Start participants expressing feelings of hopelessness. He was a middle-aged man torn between finding a second job or following his life-long dream of obtaining a high-school diploma. He was dejected and stated that he did not feel worthy of a degree. He went on to not only obtain a GED but graduate from community college. He is now working in the career of his choice and is months away from launching his own trucking company.

Based on the aforementioned measures of success, it is clear that our devotion to social innovation resulted in one of our busiest years to date. It also reaffirms my decision to follow a North Star of inclusion. As we enter another decade of innovation, our work is far from over. Library staff must continue the legacy of balancing innovative technologies and trends with time-honored traditional services. Social innovation may be a daunting prospect, but if we are to stay relevant, it is a necessary one.

Tonya Garcia is Director of the Long Branch Free Public Library in Long Branch. She holds an MLIS from Rutgers University and was honored to be named 2016–2017 NJLA Librarian of the Year. Her email address is tgarcia.lbpl@gmail.com.



Building Opportunities for Adult Literacy

Piscataway PL's ESL program aims to help with a variety of skills

By **Kate Baker**, *Special Populations Librarian, Piscataway Public Library*

Thanks to the Literacy Bootcamp training from the New Jersey State Library, several librarians across the state learned how to set up an adult literacy program in a public library. A year later, Piscataway Public Library's program is going strong.

Serving our immigrant population with ESL classes six days per week, our literacy program includes English classes for beginners, intermediate conversation groups, basic writing, and citizenship.

Students come from all over the world, including China, Turkey, Central and South America, and many other areas. They learn the vocabulary necessary for everyday life such as how to talk to their child's teacher, how to ask their doctor questions, and so on.

Our volunteer ESL teachers are from all walks of life, ranging from millennials to retired teachers and clergy. Their enthusiasm and commitment to helping others is remarkable.

In our citizenship classes, students learn about American history and government, and prepare to take the citizenship exam. We work closely with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) officers to ensure that our students receive the information they need. An officer visits the citizenship class each semester to answer questions about the naturalization process.

One of our favorite classes was a field trip to an art museum. The ESL writing class celebrated its final day of class by meeting at Zimmerli Art Museum in New Brunswick instead of the library. We viewed the works of art, then ate lunch and discussed what we saw. For their final writing assignment, students wrote about their favorite work of art. It was a fun and inspiring way to wrap up the 10-week course.

Kate Baker is special populations librarian at Piscataway Public Library. She has also published an article, "Public Libraries Collaborating with USCIS to Help Immigrants," in Public Libraries magazine. Her email address is kbaker@piscatawaylibrary.org.



The ESL writing class on their field trip to the Zimmerli Art Museum



Piscataway PL's beginner ESL class

PEOPLE & PLACES

Around the State

Honors, Awards, and Recognition

Erica Saito, an SC&I student at Rutgers University, was one of 40 students selected by ALA to participate in the Student-to-Staff Program at the 2017 ALA Annual Conference in Chicago, IL.

Six NJ libraries were announced by ALA as the latest recipients of the American Dream Literacy Initiative grant. They are **Cresskill PL**, **Keyport PL**, **Maplewood Memorial Library**, **North Bergen Free PL**, **South Brunswick PL**, and **West Orange PL**.



Eleana Cordova

Eleana Cordova of Wayne PL is the recipient of the national STARS-Atlas Systems Mentoring Award, which provides travel and attendance to the 2017 ALA Annual Conference in Chicago, IL.

Elizabeth PL was selected to receive training and support to take part in the "Great Stories Club" program sponsored by ALA.

Otto Bruyns PL is a recipient of a 2017 Teen Tech Week grant from YALSA, a division of ALA. Grant recipients will receive funding for activities aimed at helping teens build their digital literacy skills.

Congratulations to **Doug Baldwin** of Piscataway PL and **Tonya Garcia** of Long Branch PL, who were selected as *Library Journal's* 2017 Movers and Shakers.

Christina Estlow of the Burlington County Library's Pemberton Branch was awarded the Summer Learning Resource Grant from YALSA (a division of ALA). The grant aims to provide libraries with funds to purchase literacy resources that will strengthen the impact of the library's summer learning program toward teens most vulnerable to summer learning loss.

Nutley PL and **Bergenfield PL** are among the recipients of NJSL's 2017 Multicultural Program Awards.

The Libraries of Essex County were awarded NEH's Big Read grant. This year's title is *Silver Sparrow* by Tayari Jones.

The following ten libraries were chosen to host the Math and Science Story Times (MASST) series: **Elizabeth PL**, **Fairview Free PL**, **Palisades Park PL**, **Summit Free PL**, the **Twin Rivers branch of the Mercer County Library System**, **Union PL**, the **Van Buren branch of**



Doug Baldwin

Newark PL, the **Nilsa Cruz-Perez branch of Camden County Library System**, **North Plainfield Memorial Library**, and **Sadie Pope Dowdell Library**. The award is sponsored by NJSL and the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) at Rutgers.

Celebrations

Bradley Beach PL celebrated the completion of ADA renovations to the library on Sunday, March 26, 2017.

Caldwell PL will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2017.

Appointments and Elections

Courtenay Reece is the new director of Millville PL. She was previously director at Bridgeton PL.

Jeff Trzeciak is now director of Newark PL. He was previously university librarian at Washington University in St. Louis, MO.

Peter Coyle is the new director at Montclair PL. He was previously senior librarian with the Dallas PL in TX.

Trevor Dawes, vice provost for libraries and museums and May Morris University Librarian at the University of Delaware in Newark and longtime NJLA member, has been elected to the ALA Executive Board.

Kimberly Franone is the new director of Kinnelon PL.

Audra Osorio was named director of Roselle Park PL.

Lore Reinhart is the new director at Randolph PL.

Lynn Favreau was announced as director of the Madison PL. She is currently director of Mountainside PL.

Gair Helfrich was appointed director of the Atlantic County Library System. She was previously the system's assistant director.

Ellen O'Keefe is the new director of Glen Rock PL. She was previously director of Northvale PL.

Trevor Diamond was named Systems/User Experience Librarian at MAIN.

Results of the 2017 NJLA election are in: first vice president (NJLA president 2018-2019): **Leah Wagner**, Monroe



Jeff Trzeciak



Ellen O'Keefe

(Continued on page 11)

to make hot sauce from scratch. I also purchased a bunch of bottles of hot sauce and we did a hot sauce tasting. This was a great program, which I hope to hold again this year, and the only drawback was that the smell left one of our librarians in tears.

Our Homebrewing 101 program was presented by a local resident who was happy to “pay it forward” by doing a free presentation teaching people how to brew beer at home. This was a very popular program that generated a lot of interest and conversation.

Arranging Presentations

I highly recommend working with local groups, patrons, and businesses when scheduling presentations at the library. My favorite benefit is that locals will often do programs for free. Our library does not have a substantial programming budget, so I am always on the lookout for inexpensive or free programs. I am shameless and willing to beg, especially if it results in getting a program for no cost. Working with local groups also allows for positive outreach to the community and often offers access to an extended group of attendees who may not be regular library patrons.

When arranging a presentation, I often call or email possible presenters and put the ball in their court concerning what type of presentation they would like to do. I truly appreciate it when they are willing to do a program for us, so I like to give them as much flexibility as possible within the proposed topic.

Looking Ahead

By now, we’ve tried many programs that have been designed to encourage male attendees. Fishing in NJ, Finding Your Roots (a genealogy program), For the Birds, and a newly formed Board Gaming group all have had considerable participation by men. We ran a library Fantasy Football league, which we hope will become an annual occurrence, and have a Getting Your Bike Ready for the Season program we held this spring. Other possible programs I hope to hold in the future include BBQing Hints and Tips, Designing Your Own Comic, Sports Legends of NJ, and a presentation by the new local distillery that has recently opened in our area. I am hoping all of these programs will be free or low-cost.

The Down and Dirty Truth

I wanted this article to be as honest as possible, and I hope it provides some take-away ideas that might work at your library. But in the interest of truth, there was one fantastic idea that I tried so hard to make a reality, but, in the end, had to give up on due to safety reasons: How to Deep Fry a Turkey. I am fairly certain this would have been the most spectacular program ever, but based on the difficulty of finding someone professional to do the demo, coupled with the fear of a giant fire (as well as rumors that this process may become illegal), I finally had to give up on my dream. Perhaps some day...

Kristin Cooper Rainey is an adult services librarian in the Mercer County System. She holds an MLIS degree from Simmons College in Boston, MA. Her email address is krainey@mcl.org.

People & Places Around the State

(Continued from page 10)

PL; second vice president: **Nancy Weiner**, William Paterson University; secretary: **Kate Russo**, South River PL; members-at-large: **Jen Schureman**, Gloucester County Library System; **Darby Malvey**, Clayton Middle & High School; **Emily Moore**, Camden County Library System; and **Phil Berg**, MAIN.

Deaths

Miriam Greenhouse, formerly assistant director of Paterson PL, has died.

Resignations/Retirements

Cindy Czesak, director of Paterson PL, announced she will retire on November 1.



Cindy Czesak

Sam Pharo stepped down from his position as director of Kinnelon PL to become a full-time dad.

Beth Roll Smith has retired from her position as director of the West Bridgewater PL (MA). She had previously worked in New Jersey and is a longtime NJLA member.



Arlene Sahraie
CA.

Arlene Sahraie, library services director at BCCLS, announced she will retire on June 30.

Karen George retired as director of the Atlantic County Library System.

Cassidy Charles left her position at Madison PL to take a position as digital services librarian at the Santa Barbara PL in Santa Barbara, CA.

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WRITE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

of the

New Jersey Libraries NEWSletter

Summer 2017 - The Information Situation

Information is our stock and trade - but what does that mean today? Collections, services, and programming are all ways in which we guide people toward information. What are libraries doing to help people develop and use information literacy skills, and what are some of the challenges we face? Share your stories and ideas!

Submit a brief proposal by May 1.

Members: To contribute, email
newsletter_editor@njlamembers.org