

Summer 2016

Schools and
Our Libraries
Vol. 14, No. 2



*Paterson Free
Public Library's
Gladys Mirabal
with a young patron*

Libraries as Partners in a Community School Model

By **Cindy Czesak**,
*Director, Paterson
Free Public Library*

Imagine working in a public library that serves a community of 146,000 and has a student population of 29,000 with over 50 school locations. And imagine trying to serve over 2,000 children per grade level with only 10 librarians, four library facilities, and a bookmobile.

In Paterson, we try not to let the sheer magnitude of these numbers overwhelm us and work to bring good library service where we identify an opportunity.

One unique chance arose when, in 2010, the state superintendent of schools decided to implement a Full

Service Community School model. A Full Service Community School (FSCS) is a school in which service agencies and schools team up to meet a whole range of children's social, emotional, and academic needs, using the school building as a hub.

Through outside partnerships, students and families can benefit from the services such as a mental health counselor, a bilingual family caseworker, after-school enrichment, a health center, dental care, nutrition, and counseling to name a few. This is funded through local school district funds, as well as federal and state specialized grants.

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Message from the PRESIDENT

The Importance of Our School Libraries

In her message on the following page, Pat Tumulty says that any time somebody says "library ecosystem," she thinks of polar bears trying to stay afloat on shrinking icebergs. I happen to think that analogy works well for school libraries in New Jersey.

Recently, I worked on the New Jersey School Library Census, Survey, and Report with Maureen Donohue and we found, not unexpectedly, a lack of support for school library programs in many communities. In the report, available at www.njla.org, the numbers show some interesting information:

- There has been a 20% decline of school library media specialists (SLMS) since 2007/2008.
- Currently less than one in two schools in former Abbott Districts have SLMSs.
- Increasingly, SLMSs are covering more responsibilities that have nothing to do with school libraries.
- There is a flat, declining, or zero budget for 89% of school libraries.
- 80% of SLMSs have the opportunity to meet with teachers to promote library resources only one or two times a month, rarely, or never.

The school library iceberg is melting in New Jersey.

Children not learning information literacy in school affects their use of public and academic libraries as well. Reference sources that were standards in the past are going unused. The previous assumption that perhaps students were now using them online cannot be substantiated when considering database usage statistics. An infographic from the New Jersey Association of School Librarians (NJASL) demonstrates the issue of student research skills:

- 75% have no idea how to locate articles and resources they need for their research.

- 60% don't verify the accuracy or reliability of the information they find.
- 44% do not know how to integrate knowledge from different sources.

Academic libraries at colleges and universities are seeing students that may have gone their entire K-12 education in New Jersey without spending any time with a school library media specialist. Students may have the opportunity for remediation in these institutions, but other children who don't pursue higher education face being marooned in society without information literacy skills, in the Information Age. Another polar bear on a shrinking iceberg.

The passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in late 2015 creates some opportunity to address this situation. School libraries are in the legislation, but ESSA leaves much of the implementation to individual states and local districts. The passage of ESSA requires New Jersey to evaluate and rewrite its rules and regulations, bringing forth what John Chastka of Every-library.org calls a "once-in-a-generation opportunity." NJLA is working to make the most of the opportunity with the census, survey, and report; collaboration with NJASL; meetings with officials; and an expansion of our advocacy efforts on behalf of school library programs.

The research about the benefits of highly effective school library programs and school library media specialists is clear. We need to work together now to advocate for school libraries, standards-based information literacy programs, and school library media specialists in all of our New Jersey schools. It will take all of us working together to restore our "library ecosystem" in New Jersey. To answer "when do we start?," I will end with an excellent Chinese proverb shared by Michael Cohan of NJEA at the ESSA program at the NJLA conference: *The best time to plant a tree was twenty years ago. The second best time is now.*

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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

One for All and All for One

When I am asked about the makeup of the New Jersey Library Association, my answer is that our membership works primarily in public and academic libraries. The next question is often, "So you don't have anything to do with schools?"

It would be easy to answer "no, we don't," but that answer would be far from the truth. I think of myself as a follower of the philosophy expressed by Jim Rettig, ALA President 2008-09. He stated, "I think of our school, public, academic, and other types of libraries as parts of an integrated library ecosystem. If one part of the system is threatened or suffers, the entire system is threatened and suffers."

Although I am not fond of the word ecosystem (I keep thinking of melting polar icecaps), I do believe that all libraries are fundamentally interconnected by shared values and principles. We cannot survive in organizational silos that only care about our immediate work environment.

This issue of the *Newsletter* focuses on our connections with school libraries. Although the vast majority of those reading this column don't work in school libraries, their importance to the work you do can't be underestimated.

In New Jersey, I believe we are extremely fortunate to have the Library-LinkNJ (our New Jersey library network). The network was established in 1984 to join together the resources of all types of libraries in New Jersey. Perhaps we were the precursor of the library ecosystem that Jim Rettig described. Although the network has undergone several transformations since its inception, its basic foundation has remained the same—libraries of all types in our state are dependent upon each other.

Unfortunately, the recent survey by NJLA and NJASL on school libraries in New Jersey has demonstrated that part of our network (OK, ecosystem) is eroding. School library positions are being eliminated at an alarming rate, and the loss will have serious repercussions on all of us.

Effective use of the library resources in our public and academic libraries rely on a strong school library curriculum taught by skilled media specialists. As fellow information professionals, we understand the critical role that school media specialists play in the educational development of a student. We see these results every day. Students who come into our libraries fully prepared to use our resources are those who have a strong foundation from their local school library. We have seen how the elimination of school media positions leaves students unable to handle complex research assignments and the significant impact on a student's future academic career.

I strongly believe we are facing a crisis in New Jersey with the elimination of school media positions in many of our communities. If we are to reverse this devastating trend, the entire library community must react quickly when school library positions are threatened. We must come out of our silos. As public librarians, we must speak out on the impact that the loss of school media positions will have on a local community. As academic librarians, we must document how students from New Jersey schools are coming into our academic institutions ill-prepared to do effective college research.

Yes, Jim Rettig was right—we are an ecosystem. We rely upon each other. The time is now to support our school media colleagues before it is too late.

Patricia Tumulty



Note from the EDITOR

Back to School

As librarians in New Jersey in 2016, we are all familiar with the challenge of doing more with less and working together is a necessity. As this issue illustrates, it is in our best interest to find common ground. We should model playing well together, just as we expect our patrons—of all ages—to do.

Consider what your day-to-day is like and how a stronger bond with your local schools would help you accomplish your goals and provide more effective service. Each one of us has the potential to make something happen to strengthen those relationships.

There are a lot of ideas and great examples in this issue to consider. Morristown's high school and public library team up to run a lunchtime book club. A branch of Gloucester County Library System invited student artists into their space. Burlington County Library System created curriculum support kits with input from educators. Our cover story highlights an ambitious yet mutually beneficial partnership between the city schools and library in Paterson.

Just as our libraries are part of a larger community—municipality, city, campus or corporate—we work in tandem with school libraries. It would be foolish to think we operate in a bubble; we are only as strong as the weakest among us.

We want to hear from you! Please consider sharing your feedback or ideas with us at newsletter_editor@njlamembers.org.

Jill D'Amico

Creating Conversations

Encouraging Students to “Talk It Up!”

By **Amy Behr**, Youth Services Librarian, North Plainfield Memorial Library

There are a lot of great thinkers, a smaller group of good writers, but the smallest subset is good oral communicators—and Somerset County Library System’s North Plainfield Memorial Library branch is encouraging children and teenagers to step outside their comfort zones and speak up.

This effort, part of the library’s “Curiosity Creates—Talk It Up!” grant, is providing children with a skill set that allows them to believe in themselves by building confidence and cultivating creativity.

The Grant

In 2015, ALA’s Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) awarded “Curiosity Creates” grants, made possible by a generous donation from Disney. Much of the grant focused on the Center for Childhood Creativity’s paper “Inspiring a Generation to Create: Critical Components of Creativity in Children.” The paper defines the seven critical components of creativity: 1. imagination and originality, 2. flexibility, 3. decision-making, 4. communication and self-expression, 5. motivation, 6. collaboration, and 7. action and movement. Each component aids in nurturing and developing a child’s creativity, allowing each child to reach his or her full potential. Grantees across the country were awarded \$7,500 each to support and enhance creative programming in libraries for children ages 6–14 years.

Partnership with the Schools

Public speaking, a common fear, is often shrouded in negativity. Children and teens are not falling over themselves to sign up for public speaking programs at the local library (even if their parents are!).

In order to ensure that the grant’s mission reached the largest number of children and teens, partnerships and collaborations were a necessity. In meeting with school librarians, teachers, and school administrators, what began as a series of ideas and conversations manifested into numerous successful collaborative programs to encourage public speaking among children and teens.

To bolster enthusiasm for the program, the library orchestrated a series of motivational speakers at a local school to demonstrate the need for public speaking in a variety of professions and career paths.

The first speaker, Congressman Leonard Lance (NJ-7), spoke with the Somerset Intermediate School’s Student Council. He urged students to retain their interest in public service and took questions regarding public speaking. When asked how he speaks publicly with such confidence, he advised, “Pretend you are speaking to someone in a normal, everyday conversation; pretend you’re talking to your friend. And enunciate!”

The second speaker, Miss New Jersey Lindsey Giannini, spoke to Somerset Intermediate School’s Girls for Engineering, Math, and Science (GEMS) Club about the importance of public speaking in her life as Miss New Jersey, her future career in journalism, and many careers. She shared a breathing technique she uses to



The winner of the Fourth Grade Invention Convention. Her invention – the Absentator – allows students to FaceTime into their classroom so they do not miss lessons.

remain calm before speaking in front of large audiences.

Finally, storyteller Julie Pasqual hosted a storytelling workshop for the English Language Learning (ELL) and Resource Room students of Somerset Intermediate School, in which the students worked on constructing and performing their own unique folk tales.

For the core of the programming, we aimed to reach students of all ages by engaging the community. The library began with Meet the Artist!,

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Creating Conversations

(Continued from page 4)

a student art show held at the local community center in which artists in kindergarten through twelfth grade stood beside their creative pieces to discuss inspiration, medium, and the message behind their work.

Teams of students from East End Elementary School and Stony Brook Elementary School participated in this year's "Waste Wise" theme of the Junior FIRST LEGO League (Jr.FLL). They borrowed LEGO robotics kits from the library and attended a Jr.FLL Expo hosted by the library at the local community center. In addition to using their imaginations and creativity, teams were expected to speak publicly about their model and posters in front of an audience.

The library collaborated with West End Elementary School to support their Fourth Grade Invention Convention, in which students created ideas and prototypes of items that their classrooms needed. A panel of judges at the convention listened to each of the top presentations and chose a winner among the proposals.

For upper elementary and middle school children, the library collaborated on two programs, the Debate Club



Students were encouraged to articulate their ideas during the Invention Convention.

and the Live Museum and Curriculum Fair. The Debate Club was a weekly program held at the library, organized and run by the North Plainfield High School Debate Team. The high school students prepared lessons for each week, including "four corners." This common exercise designates four sides (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree), statements are read aloud and participants choose a side where they must prepare an argument/counter-argument to present alongside their peers.

Finally, the Live Museum and Curriculum Fair, perhaps the largest partnership/collaboration between the North Plainfield Memorial Library and the North Plainfield Middle School, had students choose and study their favorite person in history over the course of four months. On the night of the event, they took on the persona of their favorite figure and were stationed in various locations around the building. The public was invited to take a trip through time and speak to the different historical figures.

Looking to the Future

North Plainfield Memorial Library began this endeavor with an already established and well-grounded relationship with the school system. Librarians conduct school visits, create library cards, discuss summer reading, and drop off books to enhance different classroom curricula throughout the school year. Each spring, when the weather turns

nice, classes walk to North Plainfield Memorial Library to visit.

In addition, the schools are an essential marketing tool for the library, funneling participants into programs such as Toastmasters International Youth Leadership Program, ESL Conversation Group for Kids, and New Jersey Orators. With each "Talk It Up!" program, this partnership was strengthened.

New connections are made with different educators that are continuously leading from one program to an idea for the next program, and so forth. In addition, North Plainfield Memorial Library's connection to the school has not gone unnoticed by the public. More and more, "Talk It Up!" programs result in the library being identified as an outside educational support system, letting parents know that while the library still offers magicians and game days, the building and those in it are also here to reinforce the life skills that lead to success.

Amy Behr is a youth services librarian at Somerset County Library System's North Plainfield Memorial Library branch. She holds an M.L.I.S. from Syracuse University and is the grant lead for "Curiosity Creates—Talk It Up!" For more information about these programs, please visit www.somerset.lib.nj.us/talkitup.html. Her email address is abehr@sclibnj.org.



A participant in the Live Museum, held in collaboration with the North Plainfield Middle School. Eighth graders chose their favorite historical figures to study and community members were invited to "meet" a variety of people from the past!

Food for Thought!

Library Partnership Fuels Lunchtime Book Club

By **Anne Piascik**, School Media Specialist, Morristown High School

For the past five years, a thriving book club has met every month in the Morristown High School library. A big part of its success is the established partnership with our local public library, the Morristown & Morris Township Library (M&MTL).

When looking to start the club, my colleague, Debra Gottsleben, and I reached out to Sandy Hall, M&MTL's then teen librarian, to see how we could collaborate. Hall had a committed group of students who worked at her library and were looking to do more at school. We worked to recruit new students to meet at our school's library and design the book club. M&MTL's current teen librarian, Kristie Revicki, continues to collaborate with us and grow the program.

One important aspect of the club is keeping the group "student centered." We asked the students what format they would like to hold the club and everyone agreed that reading the same "one book" did not interest them. Instead, they believed it would be more appealing to hold a discussion where they shared thoughts, ideas, and inspirations from the books they are currently reading. That model continues today, and students enjoy expressing themselves in this format.

Another draw to our book club is how we use advanced reader copies (ARCs). Each month the librarians collect any free ARCs that they receive and give them to book club members to read and provide honest feedback. We also ask that they recommend the books that they feel we should add to our collection. This is a win-win situation,

as the students love reading newly released

books, and we receive collection development feedback from

their perspective. One example of this occurred when a student read the advanced reader copy of *Dump-lin'* by Julie Murphy. The student raved about how much she enjoyed the book and insisted that we also read it as soon as possible—we made sure to order a copy for our school community to enjoy.

Public/school library book clubs are a great way to engage young readers in your communities. If you didn't know already, teenagers love to eat—so if you provide food, they will come! At each book



Members of the Morristown High School Lunchtime Book Club

club meeting, we serve homemade snacks. Students eat their lunches and our "mystery snack" while we have the discussion. At the end of the year, we also hold a special pizza lunch and students bring their own special treats to share with the group. Food rules!

The book club is also a way to provide a voice for students in their libraries. As issues arise and when we need feedback, it is helpful to have a group of students to refer to. For example, when we were contemplating re-organizing our fiction section, we asked the club for their opinion, and they overwhelmingly agreed that the section should remain organized by author. This is just one of many ways the students have given us a practical view-point of our library.

The club also supports the public library by encouraging students to become involved in activities outside of school. When Revicki took over as M&MTL's teen librarian, she wanted to find new patrons and encourage them to visit. Our book club had an established and willing group of participants ready to support her.

It is wonderful collaborating with our public library colleague because we each provide a different perspective to help our students enjoy reading. As a high school librarian, I spend much of my time creating and instructing lessons. The local teen librarian provides us with exciting new book collection ideas and insight from the community. Most importantly, the partnership between school and public libraries keeps these two vital institutions connected. While we may not work in the same building, we both bring something unique to the table to nurture local students.

Anne Piascik is a school media specialist at Morristown High School. She holds an M.A. in Educational Media from Seton Hall University. She has been working with children, inspiring them to love literature, for 11 years. Her email address is anne.piascik@msdk12.net.



It's in the Bag

BCLS Reaches into Schools to Supplement Learning and Literacy

By **Caitlin Hawe-Ndrio**,
Youth Services Librarian,
Burlington County Library System

A strong partnership between local schools and the public library is essential to the growth of a community. It builds a rapport between educators, students, and library staff, while exposing schools to a vast amount of resources. Additionally, school and library partnerships enrich the academic and personal interests of both students and educators. Developing a strong relationship with county schools is a principal focus of the Burlington County Library System (BCLS).

For the past three years, the library developed its school outreach services to better serve the educational community. This includes creating new services, increasing visits to local schools, and providing resources to homeschool families. Two of the most successful initiatives are the Classroom Assistant and Classroom Kit.

BCLS established the Classroom Assistant service in 2013. Available to teachers, school librarians, and homeschool families, this on-demand resource is designed to supplement the classroom curriculum. Focusing on non-fiction, the Classroom Assistant is ideal for projects and homework assignments. Educators may

request a package for a specific topic and grade level, as well as the type of materials desired. Packages may contain books and audiovisuals from our expansive collection, plus a list of recommended online subscription services.

To date, BCLS created approximately 40 Classroom Assistant packages for students in grades Pre-K through 12. For more information on the Classroom Assistant, visit www.bcls.lib.nj.us/classroom-assistant.

Due to the success of the Classroom Assistant, BCLS launched the Classroom Kit initiative in the fall of 2015. The library developed kits based on educator feedback and popular Classroom Assistant requests. This service

is designed to make research and reading accessible to students by providing pre-made resource packets for teachers. Currently, BCLS offers 10 pre-made, ready-to-use kits created for specific grade levels. Half of the kits contain 30 copies of the same title. We offer multi-copy kits for the popular titles *Wonder*, *Shiloh*, *Tuck Everlasting*, *Frindle*, and *The Homework Machine*. Alternatively, we offer five theme kits that contain books, audiovisuals, recommended databases, and supplemental teaching aids to help students explore the American Civil Rights Movement, Holocaust and genocide, weather, space, and countries and cultures.

BCLS is creating three additional kits for the 2016–2017 school year, focusing on women's history, Hispanic heritage, and Native American heritage. Teachers may check out a kit for four weeks, providing sufficient time in the classroom. For more information on the Classroom Kit, visit www.bcls.lib.nj.us/classroom-kits.

We believe these initiatives fulfill the library's mission to enrich lives by providing opportunities for learning, growth, and personal development. BCLS has been able to supply schools with materials that may otherwise be unavailable, promoting academic and personal development within our community. We hope to build upon our outreach services in order to continue our strong partnership with the schools in Burlington County.

Caitlin Hawe-Ndrio is a youth services librarian and school liaison coordinator at the Burlington County Library System in Westampton. She holds an M.L.I.S. from Drexel University. She has developed the school outreach initiative and worked closely with the county's school librarians and teachers. She meets regularly with the Burlington County Association of School Librarians and participates in outreach events. Her email address is chawe@bcls.lib.nj.us.



As the director of Paterson Free Public Library (PFPL), I volunteered to work on the Planning Team, including interviewing the administrators and faculty of schools that applied for designation as the first FSCS. I feel this is a natural extension of the work of the library; we all want the children of the community to achieve productive and satisfying lives and we are convinced that providing library support can enhance literacy and lifelong learning. The need in Paterson is clear, with only about 1/3 of third graders able to read at grade level.

For an FSCS to work effectively, the entire school team must be committed, from administration to the custodians. A non-profit partner is designated to provide the supplemental services and this organization actually occupies space in the school, to serve as the contact for parents, to coordinate services, to intervene in classrooms on behalf of students. The administration and faculty must be willing to embrace this presence and this model.

I represent the library on the FSCS Steering Committee, along with St. Joseph's Healthcare System, Catholic Charities, the Paterson Education Fund, the Children's Aid Society, Outreach Clinical Services, William Paterson University's School of Adult and Continuing Education, and the non-profit partners that are contracted to provide the services at the five FSCSs in the city.

Library's Role

PFPL agrees to provide services to the FSCS through a contract with the school district, and we receive \$15,000 annually to provide programs in the school locations, host visits to the library sites, and conduct parent workshops.

Beginning in 2013, the library purchased a used bookmobile and started using it to visit schools, making sure to focus on the Community Schools. As a result, the outreach librarian is frequently the staff member who has the most interaction with these schools; in addition to registering children for library cards and checking out books, she usually

conducts storytimes and talks about library resources, as well as conducting workshops for parents about the importance of reading to and with their children.

The first Community School that was designated was School 5, which has a student population of around 800; fortuitously, it is only three blocks from the Totowa Branch Library that is part of the Paterson Public Library system. There are currently five FSCSs and another one to be designated in late 2016, so not all are as close to one of the library's four locations.

Relationship Building

To build the initial relationship with the children of School 5, a team from the library hosted visits at the Totowa Branch Library for all first- through fourth-grade classes over the course of one week in spring.

When the classes visited, they were introduced to the library collections,

For a FSCS to work effectively, the entire school team must be committed, from administration to the custodians

both print and digital; participated in a "treasure hunt" to test their ability to locate items on the shelf that they found in the library online catalog; enjoyed a storytime and discussion; made a simple craft, and had lunch!

The two floors and mezzanine of the library were utilized, with the branch staff, outreach librarian, and myself all handling the flow of children. It was exhausting and awesome, and we have repeated this periodically over the years.

While we cannot replicate this for all Community Schools because of transportation logistics, we have either responded to requests or suggested projects for all of the schools. The schools each develop somewhat unique programs in response to requests from children and their parents.

Here is a sampling of some of the ways we supported, and continue to support, the FSCSs:

- ESL classes were hosted for

parents for four days a week extending for several months in the branch library meeting room; library orientation, including obtaining library cards, was included in class and the library collection was used for supplemental class material.

- An intensive summer reading program was offered at an FSCS that held a summer program, with library staff visiting on a daily basis to encourage both reading aloud and independently.
- Bookmobile visits to the FSCS are a regular part of the outreach schedule. The library, with the approval of the board, has approved the implementation of a special library borrower card for children. This card allows children to borrow books and utilize digital resources remotely without a parent's approval. It was implemented knowing there would be a significant loss, but, to the credit of the board, it was decided that having a child obtain his or her own library card was more important.

- For one school in which the children had the lowest test scores, the library used part of the funding to purchase classroom sets of readers to make sure these students had access to quality print materials at all times.

- The library has purchased a collection of books to give away at events at the schools; in some cases, these are the first books that these children own.

We in the library continue to look for opportunities to work closely with the schools, particularly these FSCSs. My recommendation is to keep the value of what the library can offer students in mind at all times and find ways to connect with children and their families so all can benefit.

Cindy Czesak is director of the Paterson Free Public Library. She holds an M.L.S. from Rutgers University. Her email address is czesak@patersonpl.org.

Shine a Light

Collaboration with Student Artists Enhances GCLS

By **Judith Pissano**, Public Services Librarian,
Gloucester County Library, Mullica Hill

Partnerships are vital to any organization, and the library is no different. In the age of the internet, we are being called upon to move libraries beyond their role as centers of books to become centers of the community.

I have been working at the Gloucester County Library System (GCLS) for about a year now. The library serves a diverse population with a mission to provide welcoming community spaces where people gather to learn, create, and have fun. Challenge accepted!

When you walk into the Mullica Hill branch of the GCLS the first thing you will notice is the floor-to-ceiling glass windows and doors that lead out into a small sitting garden. During my first few weeks at GCLS, I constantly thought about the wall of glass. Since I am passionate about art, the glass became a blank canvas.

I am inspired by the murals that are displayed in neighborhoods throughout Philadelphia, as well as the art created in public buildings for the Public Works Administration, part of the New Deal of 1933. It was a natural choice for me to look to partner with the arts community, and my first stop was the high school.

I emailed the Visual and Performing Arts Department Supervisor at Clearview Regional High School and was put in contact with Dennis Weaver, a teacher in the department. I called him and shared a few ideas for bringing art into the library. In particular, I was hoping the students could draw holiday-themed images on the glass windows and doors with special markers for the season that lay ahead. We agreed to meet at the library and discuss the possibilities.

My meeting with Dennis was inspiring, and he was thrilled to be able to make a connection with the Gloucester



Students at work transforming the entrance to GCLS's garden

County Library. We discussed a few projects, one of which included painting the glass windows and doors using tempera paint that can be easily cleaned with soap and water. Dennis put me in contact with the students from the National Art Honor Society, two of whom I met the next day. The students took pictures and measurements of the glass windows and doors to share with other students and we discussed some ideas for the space.

The students were very engaging, thoughtful, and creative. They suggested using the windows as panels that tell a story reading from left to right, and instead of painting the glass with holiday images, to use a winter wonderland display that we could then keep up through the end of February. Their suggestion was perfect.

After the sketches were presented and approved, the students came back armed with paintbrushes, paint, and talent. The work was completed very quickly and the space instantly became warm and welcoming. Patrons and staff alike commented on the artwork and the conversations were non-stop, many asking what the students would work on next.

The confidence that Dennis Weaver conveyed about his students was infectious, and I, too, began to brag about the students to anyone that would listen. Soon a library assistant asked me if the students would be interested in painting the windows in the Children's Department for the spring. I once again reached out to Dennis and the students agreed without hesitation.

GCLS has a vegetable and flower garden right outside its Children's area. As a result, we wanted the artwork to incorporate the garden. The students suggested painting the windows with butterflies, bees, and flowers, and once

(Continued on page 11)



Student artwork on display at GCLS

PEOPLE & PLACES

Around the State

Honors, Awards, and Recognition

Barbara Ayes, Bellmawr Branch of the Camden County Library, received the 2016 Amy Job Award.

Delanco Library, Burlington County, celebrated its 150th anniversary in April.

Doug Baldwin, Piscataway PL, was awarded NJLA's 2016 Library Service Award for an Individual.

The Rising Star Award was awarded to **Deena Caswell**, Cherry Hill PL; **Maureen Donohue**, Piscataway PL; **Alanna Graves**, Cape May County Library; and **Emily Witkowski**, Maplewood Memorial Library.

Edgewater Free PL celebrated its 100th anniversary in February.

Tonya Garcia, director of Long Branch PL, was named NJLA's 2016 Librarian of the Year.



Tonya Garcia

Nate and Spencer Hoffman, volunteers at the Mullica Hill Branch of the Gloucester County Library System, were awarded NJLA's 2016 Library Service Award for an Individual.

Richard Kearney, electronic resources librarian of the David and Lorraine Cheng Library at William Paterson University, was granted the 2016 NJLA CUS/ACRL-NJ Distinguished Service Award.

Samina Majeed, Saddle Brook Free PL, and **Zara Wilkinson**, Rutgers-Camden, were awarded IFLA fellowships to attend the IFLA Conference this summer in Ohio.



Rachel Paulus

Rachel Paulus, Internet Archive and NJLA Committee Internship participant, was selected to participate in the Student-to-Staff Program at the ALA Annual Conference this summer in Florida.

Several NJ libraries have been selected to receive training and support to host book club programs with at-risk youth as part of the Great Stories Club program: **Ocean County Library–Toms River** and Ocean County Juvenile

Detention Center; **Elizabeth PL** and Prevention Links–Bayway Family Success Center; **Garfield PL** and Garfield Auxiliary Middle and High School and U.S. Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst in Burlington County.

Margaret E. Heggan Free PL in Washington Township, Gloucester County, celebrated its 50th anniversary in March.

Libraries of Union County were provided \$150,000 in funding to be used for children's services by the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

Lisa O'Shaughnessy, East Orange PL, was winner of the 2016 NJ Center for the Book–Miss Rumphius Award.

Tracy Robinson, Elizabeth PL, was the recipient of NJLA's 2016 Student Award.

Lynn Schott, Bergen Community College Library, was the recipient of the 2016 NJLA President's Award.

Robert Stewart, Asbury Park PL, received the 2016 Susan G. Swartzburg Preservation Award.

Hilda Weisburg, retired NJ school media specialist and library advocate, was the recipient of the 2016 American Association of School Librarians Distinguished Service Award. The \$3,000 award from Baker and Taylor recognizes an individual who has contributed to the profession of school librarianship over a significant period of time.

Appointments and Elections

Lyn Begraft is the new director at Long Hill Township PL.

Linda Beninghove, was named director of the Samuel C. Williams Library at Stevens Institute of Technology.

Trevor Dawes was appointed the May Morris librarian and vice provost of libraries and museums at the University of Delaware.

Susan Calantone has been named director of the Morris County Library. She was most recently director of Roselle Park Veterans Memorial Library.

Catherine Dileo is the new director of Midland Park PL. She previously worked at Dixon Homestead Library in Dumont.

Siobhan Koch was named director of the Denville PL.

Andrea Levandowski is the new program manager for small business and development and technology at the NJ State Library.

Luca Manna was appointed executive director of PALS Plus. He was formerly cataloging and training librarian at BCCLS.

Audra Osorio joined the team at Dunellen PL as its new director.

Christine Yurgelonis is now director at Fort Lee PL. She was formerly the assistant director at Ridgewood PL.

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People & Places Around the State

(Continued from page 10)

Resignations/Retirements

Andrea Cahoon, director of Ringwood PL, retired on June 1, 2016.

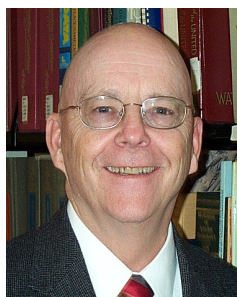
Colleen Diaz, deputy director of the NJ State Library Information Center, retired in June.

Dr. Gary Golden, director of Rutgers' Paul Robeson Library, is retiring this summer.

Elizabeth Kanouse retired as director of Denville PL.

Deaths

Susan Gulick, former director of the Morristown-Morris Township Library, died February 26, 2016.



Richard Sweeney, university librarian at NJIT, died on May 19, 2016.

Anais Scott, children's librarian at Dixon Homestead Library in Dumont, passed away in January 2016.

If you would like to see your staff member's name highlighted in this newsletter, please submit your request to newsletter_editor@njlamembers.org.

Richard Sweeney

Compiled by **Richetta Wilson Lobban**,
Reference Librarian, East Orange Public Library

Shine a Light (Continued from page 9)

again, they exceeded my expectations.

The students did both mural paintings on their own time and were polite, friendly, and full of enthusiasm. As a thank you to the students for their hard work and talent, I invited them to display their own work in the library. During the month of April, I created a display of student artwork in our lobby and on the bulletin board in the entrance. We are planning a larger, more formal display next year.

As librarians, our first instinct is to reach out to other librarians for partnerships, support, and ideas. This may be true, but it isn't the only avenue.

In the words of art teacher Dennis Weaver, "Our partnership with GCLS highlights the opportunities that exist outside of a school. Not only are our Visual Arts students creative and talented, they are also eager to contribute in some way, and the library gives us a unique opportunity to get beyond the walls of the school and into the community. The opportunity to create and display art in the library for hundreds of people to see every day is special."

Judith Pissano is the public services librarian at Gloucester County Library, Mullica Hill. She holds a B.A. in English Literature from the University of Pennsylvania and an M.L.I.S. from the University of Pittsburgh. Her email address is jpissano@gcls.org.

Start with Hello

By **Joan Taub**, Library Director,
Belleville Public Library and Information Center

For me, it was one of those horrible, life-changing events like the Kennedy assassination, the mid-air explosion of Challenger, and, most recently, September 11, 2001.

We were headed into a doctor consultation appointment for my husband's shoulder when I looked at my phone and saw the first news bulletin about a shooting at an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut. We watched as terrified parents showed up at Sandy Hook Elementary School. My heart started to ache. The shooting at Sandy Hook in 2012 took the lives of 20 children and six adults. Since that time there have been more shootings, more discussions on gun control, and more exasperation when the discussions often end up with very little action taken.

That is why an email from Sandy Hook Promise, a national non-profit organization based in Newtown, Connecticut, caught my eye.

They were promoting a program called "Start with Hello." Led by several family members whose loved ones were killed in the shooting, their promise is "to listen and to learn, to promote dialogue, and to pursue 'common sense solutions' in the areas of mental health, school safety, and gun responsibility."

"Start with Hello" is a no-cost, easy-to-implement, and potentially life-saving program that can be delivered in classes, assemblies, or via student ambassadors. It teaches students in grades 2-12 the skills they need to reach out to and include those who may be dealing with chronic social isolation and create a culture of inclusion and connectedness within their school.

Social isolation, as described in the "Start with Hello" brochure, is "the overwhelming feeling of being left out, lonely and treated like you are invisible." It is a growing epidemic in the United States, and many of those who feel isolated can become victims of bullying, violence, and/or depression in a situation and mindset that can result in hurting themselves or others.

This program, I thought, approaches the problem from a different, and what could be a very effective, perspective. That is where the longtime cooperation between the Belleville Public Library and Information Center and the Belleville Public Schools came into play. I contacted the very "make it happen" superintendent of schools representative to our board, Diana Kelleher, to talk to the superintendent about the "Start with Hello" program and see if he would be interested in making a district-wide commitment.

It turns out he was. He assigned the director of Student Personnel Services to lead the charge, and within a day, the Belleville School System was signed up along with a growing number of school communities nationwide, making a commitment to integrate "Start with Hello" into its school culture.

(Continued on page 12)

Start with Hello (Continued from page 11)

With very little prep time because of short notice, the high school and middle schools hung the "Start with Hello" signs throughout the schools. Start with Hello Week was also advertised on the district website and in the public library. In addition, at the Belleville Middle School, students participated in matching pictures of the teachers' smiles to their names, and tables in the cafeteria during lunch were color coordinated; students picked a color as they entered the cafeteria and sat at the table which matched their color, where they were encouraged to engage someone new in conversation.

Barbara Correnti, director of Student Personnel Services said, "I would like to continue this, as I feel it promotes a positive culture." The public library also plans to play a greater role as the project moves forward in Belleville. Being there at the beginning to make connections highlights the role of the library in a community and ensures we have a seat at the table.

Those interested in participating in the "Start with Hello" program are encouraged to visit sandyhookpromise.org.

Joan Taub has been the library director at the Belleville Public Library and Information Center for 17 years. She holds an M.L.S. from Rutgers University and a master's in English Education from Columbia University. Her email address is joantaub@gmail.com.

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Write for the next issue of the *NJLA NEWSletter*

Fall 2016 - *Beyond the Box*

We often operate within our own comfort zones—literally and figuratively. What are some ways we can go beyond them to provide excellent library service?

Submit your proposal by July 8.
Members: To contribute, email
newsletter_editor@njlamembers.org



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