

Serving the World Language Community

*By Kyungmi "Mimi" Lee and
Julie Senack, Atlantic City
Free Public Library*

Atlantic City is a shore resort and gaming-dominated city that attracts more than 30 million visitors per year from all over the world. It is also a community with a unique blend of residents from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Twenty-six percent of the people living in Atlantic City between 2005 and 2009 were foreign born; 39 percent spoke a language other than English at home. At the Atlantic City Free Public Library (ACFPL), staff work daily with customers who do not speak English and who need various services.



Mikhail Smirnov plays Gar-moshka (Russian folk button accordion) on the boardwalk.

We provide a wide array of programs including the library-based ESL/Civics programs, individual library assistance (Personal Librarian Service) in

English and Spanish, computer training in Spanish, and programs that celebrate cultures from around the world. The ACFPL plays an important role as a resource center by continuously responding to the changing needs of our community. In this article, we'll share details about how we serve these diverse populations.

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Serving the Poor With Respect and Courtesy

*By Cindy Czesak, Director,
Paterson Public Library*

Librarians who pay attention to diversity within their communities consider ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, age, and beliefs, among other demographics. For some communities, poverty is a very real consideration; it can overlap some of these other demographics but it definitely has a direct effect on library use by this population. People living below

the poverty level can be found in rural or urban libraries and, as a general rule, are served primarily by public libraries. We can make a significant difference in the lives of these individuals.

In this article, I'd like to introduce some service challenges that we have encountered in the Paterson Free Public Library and explain how we continue to modify services and resources to

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Message from the PRESIDENT

A commitment to hiring staff who reflect our diverse populations is an important component in serving our constituents. Recruiting and hiring a diverse staff can be a challenging process; however, there are a number of initiatives that support this effort.

One such initiative is ALA's Spectrum Scholarship Program. The ALA report *The State of American Libraries*, published in April 2010, highlights this important diversity initiative on page 33:

"Efforts expanded to make profession's ranks accessible to minority groups"

The library profession continues its active efforts to make its ranks more accessible to members of ethnic and racial minority groups and to strengthen its outreach efforts to these underserved populations. The ALA's Spectrum Scholarship Program, for example, awarded 48 scholarships in 2009 to members of underrepresented groups to help them pursue master's degrees. The Spectrum program also provides access to a network of library professionals, ALA support in finding a position in the field, and free admission to national and local professional development events. Spectrum's professional development and leadership components draw together advocacy efforts across many library organizations, providing a model and mechanisms by which they can diversify their membership and involve proven new leaders with diverse perspectives in their programs and initiatives. Eighty-five percent of Spectrum graduates are working full time in a library or information setting; they include the library director for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the manager of rare books and special collections for the Princeton University Library, the Director of Diversity Programs at the Association of Research Libraries, and the librarian in a Bureau of Indian Affairs school on the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico. The Spectrum program has received significant support in the past several years from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), an independent federal grant-making agency, which has allowed it to double

the number of scholarships since 2006. In addition, an IMLS grant has enabled Spectrum to expand its reach and leverage its impact by partnering with other diversity recruitment initiatives and LIS institutions. Through the Reach 21 Project, an additional 20 library school students or early-career librarians from underrepresented groups are receiving support each year to participate in the Spectrum Leadership Institutes in 2009-2011."

New Jersey is honored to acknowledge Dr. Betty Turock, founder and chair of ALA's Spectrum Initiative and Professor Emerita of the School of Communication and Information at Rutgers University. She served as President of ALA in 1995-1996 and created the Spectrum Initiative in 1997. As part of the 2010 Spectrum Presidential Initiative, Dr. Turock provided a gift of \$100,000 to the Spectrum Scholarship Program.

When asked about this initiative, Dr. Turock said: "The demographic ballasts of our country continue to shift rapidly even as our professional moorings remain comparatively stable. We know that increasing diversity captures unique talents and yields benefits in innovations and creativity that arise from cultural competencies and differing life experiences. But it's hard to believe that emerging majorities will support libraries if libraries are irrelevant to their information and educational needs. At this crossroad, the success of Spectrum is both a moral and professional necessity for the growth and progress of our nation's libraries."

To learn more, to donate, or to get involved, visit <http://spectrum.ala.org> or contact Miguel A. Figueroa, Director, Office for Diversity & Spectrum at mfigueroa@ala.org or Kim Olsen-Clark, Director, Development Office at kolsen-clark@ala.org.

It's been an honor being your NJLA President this year and I hope we all keep spreading the message that Libraries Are Essential.

Mary Romance

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Letter from the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Laura Bush Grant Program: Recruiting Our Own

When I think of libraries recruiting individuals to serve diverse populations, my first thought is of the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Grant Program (www.ims.gov/applicants/grants/21centuryLibrarian.shtm). No other initiative in New Jersey has done more to provide educational opportunities to the staff of our urban libraries than this program. At its core, this grant is about recruitment and serving diverse communities.

This initiative is a rare example of a dream becoming a reality—a reality that changed the lives of numerous individuals who live in our urban communities and work in our urban libraries.

It all began at a meeting of the NJLA Urban Libraries Section where they were discussing the problem of recruiting staff to work in these spaces. A majority of new library school graduates had no experience living or working in an urban environment, and never applied for positions in these libraries. The urban directors needed new staff. At that meeting, I got to witness the "eureka" moment when they decided the only way to get new staff was to "grow our own librarians." The concept was simple: Provide educational opportunities to those already working in urban libraries who hadn't had the financial ability to continue education beyond high school. These staff members were already from the community and many belonged to the same ethnic and racial populations that the library was already serving. These individuals had already demonstrated their commitment to urban libraries; many had been working there for years. They only lacked the opportunity

to get the education to expand their career opportunities so they could give back to their communities. How could we do this?

The answer came through the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program, which has been administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services since 2003.

The library community quickly seized this opportunity, and a cooperative venture was developed in partnership with Thomas Edison State College, Rutgers University, the Central Jersey Regional Library Cooperative, and NJLA, with the NJ State Library as the lead agency. This partnership was awarded one of the first grants in 2003. The success of the first grant resulted in another successful grant application in 2006.

The aim of the New Jersey grant was to increase minority and bilingual staff in our state's urban public libraries by providing scholarships that would allow urban staffers to achieve their next level of higher education.

This grant was unique in the fact that it provided funding for all levels of higher education, not just for the M.L.S. degree. The program was open to those who were seeking to further their education with an associate's degree, a bachelor's degree (via Thomas Edison), or an M.L.I.S. or a Ph.D. program (through Rutgers University).

The results have been tremendous. So far, 14 students have received M.L.I.S. degrees, eight have gotten a B.A., and two have gotten Associate's degrees. Three others are completing their B.A. degrees and two Ph.D. candidates are expected to finish by the end of the year.

Thanks to the Laura Bush Program, we were able to "grow our own" library leaders for our urban communities. These outstanding individuals are now working in their own locales and serving as role models for their communities. New Jersey libraries will feel the impact of this grant for years to come.

Pat Tumulty



Note from the EDITOR

End of a Year, End of an Era

It's hard to believe that another NJLA year is coming to an end already, but attending the recent Annual Conference proved it. President Mary Romance presided over a wonderful event where the theme was Libraries Are Essential, while President-Elect Susan O'Neal gave her Installation Speech and prepared to take the helm. Members crowded the exhibit hall, learned useful things, met new folks, played with technology, and ate with old friends. It's also worth noting that this was the last NJLA Conference that's scheduled for Ocean Place Resort & Spa in Long Branch. Perhaps that means we've seen the last librarian bonfire on the beach. It's certainly the end of an era.

Soon we'll be sharing some conference coverage, pictures, award winners, and more, so watch for another email to hit your in-boxes shortly. These important items just wouldn't fit into this pre-planned issue, because the Editorial Board had found so many great examples of Recruiting and Serving Diverse Populations to share with you.

Mary Romance highlights the effective ALA Spectrum Initiative in her Message from the President. And in the features, your NJ colleagues share stories of how they're serving the less fortunate, those with special needs, people who speak other languages, and former prison inmates who are rebuilding their lives. These stories are not only touching, but also interesting and useful.

I've recently written an article that I wish I could share, but it's not quite published yet. It will appear in the June issue of *Computers in Libraries* magazine and it's on the Airport Library in Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport. It sees visitors from nearly every country in the world, and serves them in over 35 languages. Now that's diversity!

Dealing with diversity can be tough, but it's also part of what makes our country and state what they are. The more we welcome diverse people and ideas, the more we grow.

Kathy Dempsey



Megan McCarthy (L) of the Monroe PL got her M.L.I.S. through this program. (Michele Stricker presented.)

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... Serving the World Language Community

A Trio of ESL Programs

One of the goals in serving our world language community is to help its members adjust to life and culture in the United States. The ACFPL provides three adult ESL programs (<http://acfppl.libguides.com/content.php?pid=183740&sid=1544371>): traditional ESL classes, citizenship preparation, and Club ESL (ESL Language Learning Lab). We'll tell you a little about each one:

ESL Classes: Over the past few years, we've offered a traditional beginners' ESL class where students build their language skills in 10-week sessions. While it worked well for those in need of intensive training, we faced several challenges—a low retention rate, a long wait between semesters, and increasing need for multi-level classes. In our recently redesigned ESL program, we offer topic-oriented classes in 4- to 8-week sessions (depending on the topic). Registration takes place weekly, and we offer new topics each month, such as Conversation Club; Pronunciation, Listening and Speaking class; Grammar and Writing Workshop; and Spelling and Vocabulary. Since these classes are offered simultaneously during the week, students can mix and match as many classes as their schedule allows.

Path to U.S. Citizenship: For many immigrants, becoming a citizen is almost as pressing an issue as learning the English language, and we offer free classes to help immigrants



Our 6-week "Path to U.S. Citizenship" class helps students prepare the naturalization process. It's also designed for those who need to build their civic knowledge. Here, Kate Snyder teaches a lesson. (All photos courtesy of ACFPL)

become Americans. In our 6-week Path to U.S. Citizenship program, students learn about becoming a citizen and build their civic knowledge. In preparation for the written exam, students go through 100 civics questions each week and participate in a conversation based on information supplied in the official U.S. naturalization application.

Club ESL (ESL Language Learning Lab): We developed this program with one goal in mind—connecting our world language population to the technology and electronic resources we offer at ACFPL. This is a technology-assisted in-

struction program created and led by our own team of reference librarians. Once a month, students sit down with computers, one-on-one, in a lab setting, and staff members demonstrate our language software—Byki (www.byki.com), Mango (www.mangolanguages.com), and EBSCOhost's English Language Learner Reference Center (www.ebscohost.com/public/english-language-learner-ell-reference-center). Librarians walk around and help everyone individually so there is no embarrassment about feeling left behind. We explain that their own learning comes later, after our demo, with practice. We've added a brief conversation session about activities in their lives and light refreshments; this eases their fear of speaking, because they find themselves speaking with their classmates in a very friendly and informal setting. We also encourage them to make a Personal Librarian Service (PLS) appointment.

Personal Librarian Service

Julie Senack, Head of Reference Services, implemented the Personal Librarian Service in 2008 to provide individual assistance for people who need help accessing e-government services and completing electronic forms, from pension loans to job applications. The primary goal of this service is to enable customers with little or no computer skill to apply for employment and to connect with the services they need. Appointments are made at the reference desk using Google Calendar. One appointment each week is reserved for Spanish speakers, and assistance is provided by a Spanish-speaking librarian. Each hour-long PLS appointment takes place in a small room with a computer so that there is privacy and limited outside noise.

Computer Training

The Atlantic City Free Public Library offers free computer training sessions on topics ranging from computer fundamentals to social networking and sending digital photos. Sessions also include instruction on writing resumes and applying for jobs online, creating email accounts, and using Microsoft Word and Excel. We have recently started to provide some of these training sessions in Spanish.

World Language Collection

We currently collect materials in Bengali, Chinese, French, Gujarati, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Punjabi, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish, Tamil, Urdu, Vietnamese, and have a few things in other languages. Our collection (<http://acfppl.libguides.com/content.php?pid=183740&sid=1614286>) is both practical and recreational, with materials on popular topics such as cooking, parenting, folklore, biographies, romances, children's books, along with DVDs and music CDs. We have an extensive foreign language film collection, which is extremely popular. We also provide citizenship, test prep, and ESL materials.

Multicultural Programming

Throughout the year, we offer a wide range of regularly scheduled programs of music, workshops, storytelling, author talks, and arts and crafts that celebrate the diverse ethnic groups in Atlantic City. Some of the featured programs are for Chinese New Year, Cinco de Mayo, Asian Heritage Celebration, Hispanic Heritage Celebration, etc. We also have an annual event, the International Night Concert Series, that appeals equally to all its local ethnic groups. We initiated this 4 years ago as a way to bring library programs into the community as part of the ACFPL's Library To

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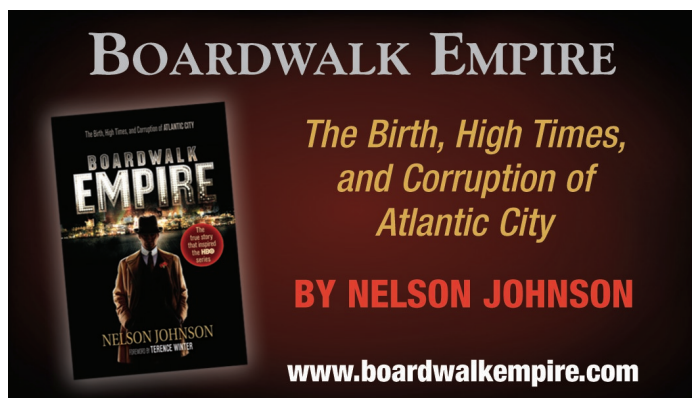


The Habiba Dance Ensemble performs folkloric dances of Egypt, North Africa, and the Middle East. ACFPL presents its weekly International Night Series on Wednesdays in July and August at Kennedy Plaza, located on the famous Atlantic City boardwalk.

Go Outreach Initiative. This educational entertainment series has played a major role in fostering cross-cultural interaction in the community by bringing in musicians, artists, and performers who represent cultures from around the globe on the famous Atlantic City boardwalk each summer. Some of the cultures that have been featured are Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Polynesian, African, and Latin American. Entering its fourth season this year, this program is very popular, with several hundred people attending each week.

Public libraries in the U.S. have a long history of providing resources and education to immigrants. This tradition can be traced to Andrew Carnegie's support for public libraries as a place for immigrant self-education, enlightenment, and the study of democracy and English. This role is especially relevant today for the ACFPL since Atlantic City has become a multi-lingual and multi-cultural community. We plan to continue our efforts to provide library services that reflect the needs of the world language population we serve.

Kyungmi "Mimi" Lee is Outreach and Events Coordinator at the Atlantic City Free Public Library. She holds an M.L.S. from Florida State University in Tallahassee. Previously, she worked at Queens (NY) Library's New Americans program, Bergen County Cooperative Library System, and Stony Brook University in New York. Her email address is klee@acfpl.org. **Julie Senack** is Head of Reference Services at Atlantic City Free Public Library. She holds an M.L.S. from Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ. Her email address is jsenac@acfpl.org.



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... Serving the Poor With Respect and Courtesy

meet the needs of our community. Paterson is a city of just under 150,000 people in 8 square miles. Over 60% of the population reports speaking Spanish at home. There are about 25,000 African-Americans and a significant segment who identify themselves as Middle Eastern. The population is young, with around 35,000 children in the school system, but 40% of students never receive their high school diplomas. However, one statistic that unites much of this diverse population is poverty. A public library is a critical resource in a community where 24% of the population lives below the poverty line.

In a city like Paterson, many barriers to full library access and usage may exist. First is the fact that, to receive a library card in almost all communities, people must present identification with a current address. We have a significant transient population and there are numerous shelters in the city; some of these are emergency shelters and others are longer-term. The first accommodation we made was to develop a procedure where a shelter can provide a letter to a resident to confirm their tenure there, which is usually 3 months. Upon the presentation of that letter, we give the individual a temporary library card with a 3-month expiration date.

Do we see losses and theft of these materials? Absolutely. We make every accommodation possible to try to work out onerous fees, including reducing fines, encouraging people to make payments over time, etc. And we do lose some borrowers who either cannot or will not make payment. However, I remember an occasion when a temporary cardholder came in with the new lease from his own apartment: He had used the library to do research, and was able to get a permanent job and an apartment. I happened to walk by the circulation desk as he changed his address to his own new home, and saw the staff members congratulating him as he smiled proudly.

Even the issue of identification can be a major hurdle. Many people in Paterson do not have cars or driver's licenses. Even though we have a long list of acceptable forms of ID, it can still be an obstacle. I have been at the desk when a young woman brought in what seemed to be the history of her life—birth certificate, baptismal certificate, and social security card. Yet, because none of them had an address, the staffer was rightfully hesitant to give her a card, despite the fact that she obviously wanted one so much that she had brought in all these valuable documents! For cases like this, we have a form that a patron may address to him- or herself, then we will mail it. When they bring it back (proving they can get mail at that address), then they can obtain a card. Still, we have no way to verify residence at this address, but I believe it's more important to open a library's doors to individuals than to find ways to keep them out.

Fines and fees can also be tremendous barriers to the poor. As with most libraries, if fines reach a certain level here, we block the patron, thereby ending all loans. This is a consortium-wide policy and we do follow it; however, we are masters of negotiation. While we want materials back, it is even more important to allow patrons to continue using our resources. We have had children "read off" their fines. We have played "let's make a deal" to reduce fines. Many libraries do an "amnesty week," but I did an informal poll of patrons in this community and

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... Serving the Poor With Respect and Courtesy

It's not just Tax Week, it's also:
National Library Week
April 10th through the 16th



- Have late fines from materials you've returned?
Bring in your library card & **we'll forgive the fines!**
- Still have the books?
Bring them back with your library card, & **we'll forgive all the fines!**
- Lost the book or have a Transworld fee?
Talk to a supervisor. **We'll make a deal!**

But wait that's not all!

Anyone who takes out an item this week can enter the raffle for a **Blu-ray player!**

This incredible offer only applies to items checked out from Paterson.

Paterson Free Public Library
973-321-1223
www.patersonpl.org

If it was your lucky day, you only paid half! (Needless to say, there was only one of those in the jar.) Over the winter holiday in 2009, we did a "Half Off Sale" to help reduce fines and encourage people to come back.

Heavy Computer Usage

The digital divide clearly still exists in Paterson. Since satellite television is less expensive than cable access, a proliferation of satellite dishes dots the apartment buildings. One estimate put the number of households that have cable access at about one-third, and if they don't have cable access, then they don't have broadband access. Mobile phones are widely owned, even if they are pre-paid versions, and landlines are rapidly decreasing in number; this also affects access to the internet through phone companies.

As a result of this, the computers in our main library and all three branches are used *constantly*. As of 2010, there were 70 computers throughout the system, an increase from 45. After the computers that we're getting through the State Library's Broadband Technology Opportunity Program grant are received, there will be 118. We have no doubt that there will still be people waiting for their turn on the public computers, even with this increase.

In Paterson, we use a product for internet management. A patron logs in using a library card or adults may be logged in as guests. There is no requirement for guest access, as is sometimes the case in other public libraries; in fact, even if a person has a library card, they may still use a guest pass. We realize that some of our visitors may not have identification and some may just want anonymity, and we respect that. Children are not included in this practice since, as part of our implementation of CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act), there are different procedures that include requiring a parent to sign their card. Therefore, all children *must* use their own cards to access the internet. However, the computers are very much in demand, both from those who have

regular addresses and those in shelters. Many folks will come to use our computers or our wi-fi for their laptops, and they spend many hours in the library.

Kindness Makes a Difference

We have a clear Policy for Public Behavior and we do require that all individuals follow it, because everyone in the library should have a positive experience. But we have found that, by personalizing their experience and by using some humor, it's possible to achieve a comfortable environment for all.

However, some of the most important aspects of service to a population that lives below the poverty level are courtesy, acceptance, and a lack of negative judgments. I am pleased to say that the Paterson staff treats patrons with respect and good humor. There are many reasons why people cannot return things on time: They don't have transportation, they are working two jobs, or they can't log on and renew the item from home because they don't have internet access. We encourage them to call because we want the whole borrowing experience to be welcoming and not painful.

The poor have very little control over many things in their lives. If they make minimum wage, they earn around \$1,160 on a monthly basis—before taxes. Finding a decent place to live within that limit is a challenge; add costs of food, clothing, and transportation and you will see why someone might be distressed at a \$5.00 fine. Yet, the riches that the library provides enhance their lives. Our DVDs are free when a subscription to Netflix is out of the question. Our free programs for kids and cultural and informational programs for all ages are available when live performances are not an option in the city. Free high-speed internet access is available for all,



Several members of this group visit the library nearly every day to use the free wi-fi. We've even moved furniture to accommodate them, and their use of the internet has become a collaborative venture.

to allow residents to contact family members in other countries, to access e-government, to search for jobs, and, sometimes, to just have some fun. And sometimes, people simply come to gather in a public place, to see others, to read, to share ideas, and to dream.

Cindy Czesak is the Director of Paterson Public Library. She has an M.L.S. from Rutgers University, and has worked in libraries for nearly 40 years. Czesak is a Past President of NJLA and was named New Jersey Librarian of the Year in 2003. Her email address is Czesak@patersonpl.org.

Offering Ex-Offenders a Fresh Start

By Tonya Garcia Badillo,
Diversity and Literacy Services, Long Branch PL

Before the Great Recession was officially identified, most public librarians knew that the unemployment rate was rising and, perhaps even worse, that our economy was destabilizing. In record numbers, community members were coming through our doors to do job searches, to create resumes, to learn computer skills, or to file unemployment claims. Within months, we were overwhelmed and knew something was happening; within the year we discovered that this trend was "officially" a recession.

After triaging the situation, I realized that in order to help our unemployed get back to work, we were going to have to go above and beyond what we were already doing and develop an initiative that included the staff, Board of Trustees, and the community. In 2009, the Long Branch Public Library Board of Trustees and Library Director Ingrid Bruck approved the design and implementation of a Back to Work Initiative. We identified our goals for the project and the specific action steps necessary to accomplish them.

We knew we needed to take these actions:

- Build and sustain a vital economic stimulus partnership between our library and community.
- Gather and share resources with other libraries.
- Design a Virtual Career Center to offer local services around the clock.
- Update the computer equipment in the Technology and Career Center.
- Provide job search training and opportunities.
- Meet the needs of specifically challenged populations such as seniors, working parents, and ex-offenders.

Next, we discussed community needs with area organizations and partnered with many of them to pool resources. From these partnerships, we secured grants from the State Library, Central Jersey Regional Library Cooperative, and the NJ Natural Gas Company. Funding afforded us the opportunity to train in online webinar software, to purchase state-of-the-art technology, to host job search courses, and to enrich the content of our Virtual Career Center to include webcasts of classes and diverse content for especially challenged job seekers such as working parents, teens, seniors, and ex-offenders.

Filling a Need for Specialized Job Programs

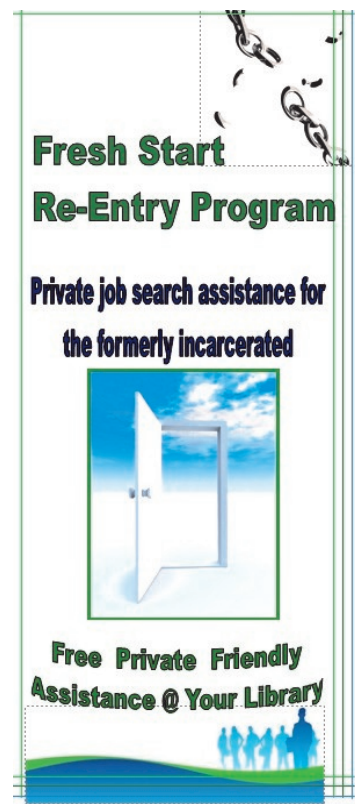
While assisting visitors in our Technology and Career Center, we noticed that many of our job seekers were unfortunately checking "yes" when asked if they'd ever been arrested or convicted of a crime. In addition, many of our previously incarcerated visitors had trouble with not only the advanced computer skills needed to job search, but also with basic computer skills like email and internet searching. This was especially true of ex-offenders who had spent years in prison. In many scenarios, technology had advanced by light years while time had virtually stopped for many offenders who lived behind bars.

In May 2010, we connected with Steven Worsley of Kingdom Fighters to host "Gear Up, Get Ready to Work," a weekly job

search support group for ex-offenders. Attendance at this re-entry program was spotty and we wanted to know why. After the program, we talked to some of the participants. They were candid and explained that the group atmosphere was intimidating and even embarrassing since most didn't want to discuss their prior arrests (which was necessary to determine their likely job prospects) with others present.

Going back to basics, I designed a new program that took the best of the back-to-work services we were currently providing to general job seekers and tailored them to ensure that that the process was now confidential and private. In January of this year, we launched the Fresh Start Program. It provides 11 one-on-one computer training and job search sessions to the previously incarcerated. Job seekers schedule an appointment with our staff based on mutual availability. The introductory meeting is designed to provide an opportunity to build a trusting relationship between the job seeker and staff member. It is vital that the participants "own" their plans by choosing the services that best meet their needs. We start this by having an informal conversation that includes details of their prior arrest history, their expectations, and current computer skill level. After completing all of the 30-minute sessions, participants transition into our open lab sessions held during regular hours.

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People & Places Around the State

Honors and Awards

Burlington County Library received a grant of \$95,942 from the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority Investor Education Foundation and ALA as part of a \$1.4 million grant for the program "Smart Investing @ Your Library."

Diane Campbell, Assistant Professor, Rider University Library, and **Ronald Cook**, Professor of Entrepreneurial Studies, Rider University, were co-recipients of one of the 2011 ALA RUSA BRASS Emerald Research Grants. They received \$5,000 from the Emerald Group Publishing, Inc. to interview entrepreneurs about their environmental scanning practices and to provide information on how they work with librarians and what information they consider most important.

Joe Da Rold, Director of Plainfield PL, was selected as the recipient of this year's Gail Stern Award by the Advocates for New Jersey History. This prestigious award is presented annually for outstanding achievement in service to NJ community history, with an emphasis on cultural diversity.

Greenwich Branch of the Gloucester County Library System in Gibbstown was awarded a \$500 grant from the American Indian Library Association (AILA) and the Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA) to host a "Talk Story," which is a literacy program that reaches out to Asian Pacific American and American Indian/Alaska Native children and their families.

Newark PL was awarded a \$300,000 grant from the PNC Foundation for a program that will teach city children lessons in spending, saving, and sharing, and will equip parents to reinforce the lessons at home. The award is part of a PNC initiative to improve early childhood education.

The NJLA CUS/ACRL-NJ Distinguished Service Award winner for 2011 is **Robert J. Lackie**, Professor-Librarian at Rider University. The honor is given annually to an individual who has directly enriched the profession of librarianship in NJ.

The NJLA CUS/ACRL-NJ Research Award winner for 2011 is **Eleonora Dubicki**, Associate Librarian, Monmouth University, for her article "Research Behavior Patterns of Business Students."

The NJLA CUS/ACRL-NJ Technology Innovation Award winners for 2011 are the NJVid Commercial Video Collection Team, a multi-institutional statewide effort led by **Grace Agnew** (Rutgers University), **Sujay Daniel** (NJEDge), **Jane Hutchinson** (William Paterson University), and **Sandra Miller** (William Paterson University).

Dee Venuto, School Librarian at Rancocas Valley Regional High School in Mt. Holly, is the 2011 recipient of the American Association of School Librarians Intellectual Freedom Award. She researched the motivations behind the challenges of three books on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues and upheld the principles of intellectual freedom in a presentation made before the district's reconsideration committee.

Appointments and Elections

Amy Babcock-Landry was appointed Director of the Alfred H. Baumann Free PL of Woodland Park.

Judah Hamer was appointed Director of the Rutherford PL.

Sara Hansen was named Director of the Old Bridge PL.

Barb Hauck-Mah is the new Director of Lodi Memorial Library.



Hauck-Mah

Julie Maginn was appointed Director of the Field Library at Raritan Valley Community College. She was previously a Public Services Librarian at RVCC.

Betsy Wald was named Director of the Glen Rock PL. She was previously a branch manager of the Maplewood PL.

Celebrations

Camden County Library System held an opening for its Ferry Ave. branch in April 2011.

Mahwah PL celebrated the opening of its new lower level in April 2011.

Ramsey PL celebrated the completion of its renovation with a grand opening in April 2011.

In the Media

Jersey City PL was featured on the TV show "Who Do You Think You Are?" The staff in the NJ Room had been researching genealogical information for Rosie O'Donnell. The episode aired on Friday, Feb. 18 on NBC.

Kathy Dempsey of Information Today, Inc., was a guest on This Week In Libraries, the world's first global library "TV" show. TWIL (www.ThisWeekInLibraries.com) is produced by Dutch librarians Erik Boekesteijn and Jaap van de Geer. Kathy was on episode #36, filmed on March 31.

Resignations and Retirements

Lisa Coats, Reference/Instruction Librarian at Monmouth University, will soon begin her new position at University of NC in Wilmington as the First Year Engagement Librarian.

Timur Davis, Young Adult Librarian, resigned from the Maplewood PL to become a library director on Long Island.

Karen Kleppe Lembo resigned her position as Director of the Caldwell PL. She will return to the NJ State Division of Law, where she worked before she became a librarian, as a Deputy Attorney General.

Frances O'Brien retired from Trenton PL in February 2011.

Barbara Rose, Director of the Washington Borough PL (Warren County), retired in March 2011.

Compiled by **Mary Marks**, Associate University Librarian, Fairleigh Dickinson University Library in Madison.

Special Reads for Special Needs

By Lisa Taylor, Senior Librarian, Youth Services,
Ocean County Library

Although I am a children's librarian, I often fill in at the adult reference desk. It was there that I first noticed several groups of special needs adults. Particularly when the weather is foul, caregivers often bring their adult "daycare" clients to the public library, knowing it to be a safe and welcoming place. I noticed, however, that some of these special needs customers were often bored, and they occasionally distracted other patrons. I had an instinctive feeling that they would appreciate some additional attention, but worried that offering a "story time" might be insulting. I thought about it for several weeks before deciding to offer my services. I was careful to stress to the caregivers that I would be mindful and respectful of their clients' ages and abilities. The leaders gratefully accepted my offer and we made plans for a story time session within a few weeks.

Next came the difficult part. What type of program would be interesting, informative, and entertaining? What would be the best way to reach everyone? I don't remember exactly what my first program was back in 2008, but over the years I've settled in to a format that works well. I choose primarily non-fiction picture books, often featuring timely themes. I choose short books with engaging artwork, and if the group is particularly interested in a topic, I often read the Author's Notes as well. Sometimes I show related video clips such as the one of travelling librarian Luis Soriano, (<http://tinyurl.com/yab9jtd>), the man who's the subject of the children's book, *Biblioburro: A True Story from Columbia*, by Jeanette Winter. In April (National Poetry Month), I shared *Emma's Poem: The Voice of the Statue of Liberty* by Linda Glaser; *Casey at the Bat: A Ballad of the Republic Sung in the Year 1888* by Ernest L. Thayer, illustrated by C.F. Payne; and *The Jazz Fly* by Matthew Gollub. We shared poems from Marilyn Singer's book *Mirror Mirror*. We also chat.

Currently, our library hosts groups from Easter Seals Adult Day Services (www.easterseals.com) and The Arc (www.thearc.org). Each group has between eight and 12 individuals. Library policy permits outside groups to use the

meeting room up to six times per year. This works out perfectly, as the groups take advantage of spring and summer weather to engage in outdoor activities, and prefer the library during colder months. When the room is available, the group often stays and enjoys lunch and a movie that we choose based on their preferences (animal and humorous films are most popular) and our movie licensing agreement.

To have successful programs, the caretakers and I agree on the following principles:

- Empathy—This is a program that you have to feel in your heart. If your heart is not in it, you will not be successful.
- Flexibility—Not all days will be perfect. There may be disruptions. Someone may not be happy. Do the best you can.
- Enthusiasm—If you want to hold your group's attention, perform! Don't just read. Act it out, be loud, get involved!
- Humor—Everyone loves to laugh! While nonfiction is my mainstay, I'll always make a departure for a good laugh. Many children's books have sophisticated humor that can be appreciated by adults. *The Book that Eats People* by John Perry (Tricycle 2009) was a big hit.
- Respect—I treat everyone with kindness and respect and have received nothing but the same.

As I write this, I just finished hosting a wonderful Easter Seals group. I asked the group leaders: "Is there anything I can do better? Is there anything else the library can do to be a welcoming place for your clients?" I'm pleased to say that they are very happy with the program we have, likening it to a one-room-schoolhouse environment. If you follow these simple strategies, you can be rewarded with more than a successful program—you can be rewarded with the friendship of some wonderful people.

Lisa Taylor is Senior Librarian, Youth Services at Ocean County Library in Barnegat. She holds an M.L.S. from Texas Woman's University in Denton, Texas. She serves on the Editorial Advisory Committee of *Children & Libraries: The Journal of the Association for Library Service to Children*, and has written for its "Last Word" feature. Her email address is ltaylor@theoceancountylibrary.org.

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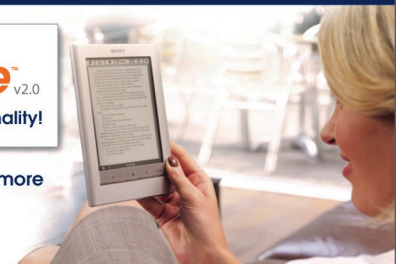
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Looking Further

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Compiled by **James Smolens**, Adjunct Reference Librarian at Gloucester County College in Sewell.

Editor's Note: The NJLA NEWSletter Editorial Board would like to thank James Smolens for his service. Jim has compiled this "Looking Further" section for many years, and has finally decided to turn it over to someone new. (Volunteers welcome!) Thanks for giving of your time, Jim!

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"With the recent changes in our demographic make up, libraries have the opportunity to play a vital role in creating a climate of trust and respect."

From the Lincoln Trail Libraries System (Illinois), which created a grant-funded website on library diversity.

www.librarydiversity.info



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... Ex-Offenders ... Fresh Start

Since we launched the program in January, we've registered 22 participants. Of those, two found jobs almost immediately, one went back to college, and the remaining are in the midst of their plans. We've received positive feedback from community leaders, organizations, and most importantly, from the job seekers themselves. It is extremely rewarding to help even one person find work and perhaps provide inspiration to others in their situation. So many are frustrated and, at times, doubtful they will succeed.

I recall one of our first registrants expressing frustration and doubt. He was a middle-aged man torn between finding a second job or following his life-long dream of returning to college. He was dejected and said that he did not feel worthy of a degree. After two meetings, he returned to the library and proudly stated that he had registered for community college! To me, his empowerment validated our entire initiative. Our program is not just about

assisting ex-offenders to find jobs or to learn computer and socialization skills; it's also about instilling hope in the hopeless by encouraging them to utilize not only the resources of the library but also the tools within themselves.

Tonya Garcia Badillo is a librarian at the Long Branch Public Library in Long Branch, NJ. She holds an M.L.I.S. from Rutgers University School of Communication and Information. Her email address is tbadillo@lmxac.org.

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