

## **State Librarian's Report**

**December 2020**

### **State Library Information Center**

While working primarily from home, SLIC staff has been focused on digitizing NJ state government publications and compiling NJ legislative histories for addition to our digital repository; expanding and creating topical research guides such as the 2020 New Jersey Voting Locations guide; presenting virtual classes, programs and author talks; and providing reference and research services via email at [refdesk@njstatelib.org](mailto:refdesk@njstatelib.org) and [reflaw@njstatelib.org](mailto:reflaw@njstatelib.org)

Deborah Mercer participated in the Rutgers SCI class on government information the week of November 16-20. A webinar Deborah created on state documents was shown. Then Deborah posed two questions and the students participated in an online forum answering those questions with comments and responses from Deborah. There were 19 students this year.

On December 7, Leigh Clark presented tips on finding grants at a Virtual Grants Workshop hosted by Congressman Frank Pallone Jr. for nonprofits and fire departments in the 6th Congressional District. Leigh will be presenting another webinar titled Finding Grant Funding with FDO Essential on December 15. Register at:  
<https://www.njstatelib.org/event/webinar-finding-grant-funding-with-fdo-essential-2>

New Jersey Collection librarian, Caitlyn Cook, created a new, curated collection of Attorney General Press Releases specific to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Attorney General's office initially released these separately from the general releases on their own web page. However, they stopped this practice in June and resumed issuing the COVID-related releases among the more general ones. The new collection combines all of these releases. They cover March to the present.

The State Library Information Center will be participating in the NJ Office of Information Technology's virtual Customer Service Week Trade Show in January. It is intended for NJ State agencies and departments to share their customer success stories during the age of COVID.

### **Talking Book and Braille Center**

The Talking Book & Braille Center (TBBC) continues to serve its patrons while mostly working offsite.

In November, TBBC began a six-month pilot program with the Library of Congress' National Library for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS) to evaluate one of two electronic Braille readers. NLS's long range plan is substitute these units and restrict the printing of Braille books. (For example, a Harry Potter novel will come to TBBC in nine volumes in Braille. Each volume to be mailed separately to a patron. The HumanWare unit fits into the palm of the hand.) TBBC was sent 205 eBrailleers from one company, HumanWare, for the

pilot. ZoomMax is the other product that will be evaluated. TBBC has sought Braille readers to volunteer to receive the units. It has identified 130 patrons that are known Braille readers of the library. It has also announced the pilot to the New Jersey Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind and the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

TBBC has also partnered with the Benetech Corporation which oversees the program funded by the U.S. Department of Education to provide textbooks in accessible formats (Large Print, Braille, and Audio). Their product is called Bookshare. TBBC hopes that their Braille textbooks will be compatible with the HumanWare player. NLS plans to begin distribution of these units to all regional libraries in FY2021.

Nine staff members of the library attended a three-day virtual meeting of NLS in early December. There were multiple program addressing NLS's future directions with the program.

With both the ability to download books in both audio and Braille as well as TBBC producing cartridges in both format for those who cannot download without waiting, TBBC has entered into the period of: ANY BOOK, ANY TIME.

### **Library Support Services**

The Library Construction Bond Act recommendations were sent to both the State Librarian and the President of Thomas Edison State University. After review and revisions, these recommendations were sent as an Appropriations Act to both the Assembly and the Senate. Both houses of the legislature approved the awards on November 16, 2020 in bill A4942, and Governor Phil Murphy signed the legislation on November 20, 2020.

Kathleen continues to work on the Library Construction Bond Act, principally assisting the Chief Deputy State Librarian with OPRA requests and attending virtual meetings.

Kathleen also continues to attend DPLA Executive Committee and Marketing/Outreach Committee meetings, as the first harvest of data by DPLA is expected by the end of the year. Eileen Morales is holding meetings with the NJ/DE Digital Collective Outreach & Marketing Working Group.

LSS continues to notify the NJ library field about the availability of CARES Act products. Zoom and Capira have been doing two webinars per month for all NJ library staff. Kathleen is in the process of gathering questions for LYRASIS from the library field that LYRASIS can answer about SimplyE. Approximately 30 libraries are using the Baker and Taylor ebook collection.

Bob Keith is working with Counting Opinions on IMLS mandated changes to the Annual Survey and will be providing notice and training materials to public libraries prior to the opening of the Annual Survey in January.

## **LifeLong Learning**

**NJCN Job Seeker Community Introduction:** Please promote this upcoming event if you think it would benefit your community members. Library staff are also welcome to attend and learn more about the NJCN Job Seeker Community Introduction:

When: January 13 at 1:00pm. Link to register for the event:

<https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07eheyvjv27c727f9&oseq=&c=&ch>

Description: Are you looking for advice and ongoing support for your job search? Join us to learn more about the NJ Career Network online Job Seeker community, a FREE online community where you can participate in daily events, connect with other job seekers and get support for the search.

Link to the NJCN Job Seeker Community: <https://nj-career-network-jobseeker-community.mn.co/>

More information about the NJCN Job Seeker Community: [https://www.njstatelib.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/NJCN-JSC-Flyer\\_URL.pdf](https://www.njstatelib.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/NJCN-JSC-Flyer_URL.pdf)

**Reference Solutions Training:** The New Jersey State Library has created a new form for libraries to fill out if they are interested in hosting a Reference Solutions webinars for jobseekers or businesses in January-March 2021. These webinars would be available for anyone to attend statewide. Submissions will be collected weekly and scheduled as quickly as possible. If you have any questions, please contact Nayomi Torres-Velez or Andrea Levandowski. <https://www.njstatelib.org/2020-virtual-reference-solutions-program-request-form/> If libraries are interested in hosting a one-on-one session only for their library staff or for their library patrons only please contact Bill Carlson directly.

**Taxation University Training:** Virtual training is being offered by Taxation University on a limited basis through Spring 2021. Due to restrictions on how sessions can be offered, only libraries on the NJLibsGrowBiz list will be notified about the opportunity to sign up. However, the schedule of training events will be shared widely for libraries to offer to their patrons.

**NJASL 2020 Virtual Event,** Dec. 4-5, 2020: Sharon Rawlins presented a session during the NJASL 2020 Virtual Event on Saturday Dec. 5, 2020 called "Nonfiction Works That Highlight Social Justice for Young People" written for middle and high school grades that was part of the Social Justice strand of programs. The session had 32 virtual attendees.

**CSLP Incentives for 2021 Provided for Free to All Public Libraries:** All public libraries will receive the same CSLP summer reading incentives for 2021 that they have received in previous years, regardless of whether or not they offered a summer reading program in 2020. These incentives are provided for free courtesy of the NJ State Library using LSTA summer reading funding.

If your library does not want or need these incentives, please let Sharon Rawlins know by emailing her at [srawlins@njstatelib.org](mailto:srawlins@njstatelib.org) at your earliest convenience.

The incentives include a banner, and children's, teen and adult posters and bookmarks. Sharon has ordered a printed incentives catalog for all public libraries, but since she is still

working remotely, she is unable to pack it to send it to all libraries. The catalog is online: <https://www.cslpreads.org/cslp-store/>

**Leap into Science Training:** Sharon Rawlins will be providing a Leap into Science virtual training with the other two state leaders on the State Leadership Team on Feb. 19, 2021 for a select group of staff from libraries who have participated in the NJ Makers Day events. Leap into Science training is open to public or school library staff, afterschool organization staff and educators who want to learn to provide virtual training on STEM activities for children ages 6-10 and their caregivers in NJ urban and rural underserved communities using the curriculum from the Franklin Institute. If any library or organization is interested in a virtual training, please contact Sharon at [srawlins@njstatelib.org](mailto:srawlins@njstatelib.org)

**Transforming Teen Services:** A Train-the-Trainer Approach (T3) trainings: Sharon and the other two state trainers will be offering T3 virtual training for Ocean County Library youth service staff on Connected Learning and Computational Thinking on February 3rd and 17th, 2021. T3 trainings are for public and school library staff who work with teens and tweens who want to learn more about how to apply Connected Learning (CL) and Computational Thinking (CT) to provide youth with more agency in determining library programming and engage them in the library community while helping them gain valuable life skills. Anyone interested in scheduling a virtual training can contact Sharon at [srawlins@njstatelib.org](mailto:srawlins@njstatelib.org).

**NJLA 2021 Conference Proposals:** Sharon and the other state leaders for T3 submitted a proposal for a double session on Connected Learning training and a preconference session on training for both Connected Learning and Computational Thinking. Sharon, who is a member of the Readers Advisory Round Table, also proposed a session on books that celebrate anti-ableism.

**TeachMeTV:** After an initial virtual discussion with a TeachMeTV representative and Sharon and Andrea, Sharon is working with them to share information with public libraries about their free resources. TeachMeTV is an educational learning platform for kids ages 5-12 and their caregivers that aims to assist parents by highlighting how they can help their kids in school and how they can support their learning in general. Sharon reached out to the children's librarians to encourage the families they serve to share the free links with families for their feedback on the site's content. It is free for public libraries to provide to library users, although the site eventually will charge a fee for individuals. The website has a lot of printables, and, for every family that participates in the survey, TeachMeTV will send a copy of TeachMeTV's educator and author Carolyn Sloan's book, Welcome to Jazz to the library for the family. The survey for children's library staff to share with families to get their feedback about the website is: <https://forms.gle/9rfdAp5sb4TmxqVMA>

## **Innovation & Strategic Partnerships**

**Fresh Start @ Your Library:** Peggy Cadigan met with Sarah Fuller, Senior Program Officer at IMLS, to provide an update of the affairs of the Fresh Start program. Peggy presented the budget and data on the number of returning citizens who have been served during the first year of the grant. The success of the program in its ability to transition to working virtually while continuing to serve the community during the time of the pandemic, was stressed.

A virtual Resource Fair for Monmouth County was held on November 19, 2020. 22 vendors contributed information about their associations and their availability to assist returning citizens in such areas as: employment, housing, veteran's services, voter registration and substance abuse. Additional Resource Fairs are currently being planned for Cumberland County and Essex County.

### **JerseyConnect**

JerseyConnect is excited to announce a new free service called Remote Assist available to all libraries across the state, to help reach remote patrons or provide services in the library while maintaining social distance. Here are some of the key features available:

- Remote assistance lets you connect with patrons anywhere, from anywhere, to assist them with using library resources. Patrons just need a session code to join.
- Remote access lets you manage your library's PC from anywhere, to assist patrons sitting at a public PC or perform administrative tasks like updates and restarts.
- Chat support lets you interact with patrons from your library's website, with no software for visitors to install.
- There are no limits to the number of staff users, managed PCs, or sessions.

For more information including quick start guides for staff and patrons, check out our info page at: <https://www.jerseyconnect.net/services/cloud/remote-assist/>

And if you have any questions or would like to get started, just contact us at [support@jerseyconnect.net](mailto:support@jerseyconnect.net); JerseyConnect Operations, [www.jerseyconnect.net](http://www.jerseyconnect.net); helpdesk.jerseyconnect.net; 866-468-7043