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**MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER**

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Ralph S. Bingham III, Executive Director

## **2022 New Jersey Academic Libraries Conference - LibraryLinkNJ Update**

On behalf of LibraryLinkNJ, its Executive Board and staff, I would like to wish everyone a happy and healthy new year. Thank you for this opportunity to participate in this year's conference and report on the recent activities of LibraryLinkNJ.

Our virtual **Membership Meeting** held on December 14 was a great success and a fantastic way to wrap up 2021! John Chrastka from EveryLibrary presented on "From Advocacy to Activism" to 107 attendees. The meeting recordings and the keynote presentation slides are available on our website on the Fall 2021 Membership Meeting information page. Also, many thanks to our staff and the following representatives from our partner organizations for participating in the meeting and for presenting reports:

- Jennifer Nelson, State Librarian, New Jersey State Library
- Juliet Machie, Executive Director, New Jersey Library Association
- Ewa Elliot, President-Elect, New Jersey Association of School Librarians
- Kurt Wagner, Chair, Executive Committee, Virtual Academic Library Environment of New Jersey

On December 13, we posted our RFQ for a **Strategic Planning Facilitator** on our website and on [libraryconsultants.org](http://libraryconsultants.org). We will begin the new year by selecting a consultant in January and start our FY23-FY25 Strategic Planning Process shortly thereafter. Planning will continue throughout early 2022 with the new plan to be presented to the membership in June 2022.

The final draft of the **Statewide Delivery Service RFP** was approved by our Executive Board at their December 16 meeting and has been advertised. We will open bids in mid-February and select a vendor in April after a lengthy evaluation process. The new contract will start on July 1, 2022. Many thanks to the members of the Delivery Task Force, especially Chair Phillip Berg (Executive Director, MAIN), for their hard work and dedication to completing this important task.

We attended the **New Jersey Association of School Librarians Annual Conference** in Atlantic City on December 5-7. With the help of MentorNJ Project Team members, we

staffed a booth at the conference and presented sessions on LibraryLinkNj Programs & Services and on the MentorNJ project.

In October, we announced that, as part of the **New Jersey Libraries: Ready for Anything Mini-Grants** program, 12 New Jersey libraries accepted contract awards to fund valuable, vital projects that help their communities prepare for the next great challenge. With 29 applicants requesting a total of more than \$118,000, this was a competitive process that culminated in the awarding of a total of \$50,312, made possible by funding from EBSCO Information Services and LibraryLinkNJ.

Also in October, the **Information Equity Conference** co-sponsored by the New Jersey State Library, the New Jersey Association of School Librarians, and the New Jersey Library Association--including representatives from NJLA CUS ACRL-NJ--had more than 130 participants. This collaborative event focused on barriers to information for all community members.

The **MentorNJ** project continues to coordinate webinars, online meetups, and other professional development opportunities on a variety of topics. MentorNJ has built a mentor network, both virtual and in-person, available to library staff at all types of libraries. It also creates an environment that supports and promotes effective resource-sharing and successful collaboration in the New Jersey library community.

Ongoing professional education is essential in the work lives of all staff members, and we want to make it as efficient and cost-effective as possible. LibraryLinkNJ will subsidize up to \$500 of the cost of one staff development workshop per year for member libraries through our **On-Demand Training Subsidy**.

Many thanks to VALE and our other partner organizations for your help and support since I came on board at LibraryLinkNj in July. It has been an exciting and rewarding six months of collaboration.

Best regards,

Ralph S. Bingham III  
Executive Director, LibraryLinkNJ  
January 4, 2022