

The NJ State Library and Talking Book and Braille Center will be closed on Monday, January 19, 2026, for Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday.



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State Librarian's Update – January 2026

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January 9, 2026

I would like to take a moment as the new year begins, to give a shout out to the staff of the New Jersey State Library (NJSL). They are a diverse group with many talents beyond their professional roles. We have fiber artists, musicians, photographers, bakers and more.

Your library may be a customer of JerseyConnect, our statewide information technology service that offers backbone services at no cost. The JerseyConnect team, led by Mike Rasimowicz, accomplishes a tremendous amount with limited staffing and resources and really looks out for the best interests of libraries in the state. Also, behind the scenes, Chief Operating Officer, Sheri Shafer, leads our finance and facilities teams, who make sure the lights stay on and the bills get paid each month. They make life easy for the rest of us who rely on their assistance.

I hope you've seen some of the work that our Communications team has done recently. Led by Tiffany McClary, they produced a guide to crisis communications for libraries last year and put out a monthly information filled marketing blog. The team is also responsible for making sure that you hear about the great work happening across NJSL through our newsletters.

The team at the Talking Book in Braille Center, led by Liz Burns, work diligently every day to make sure library patrons have accessible reading materials available and that people across the state can learn about their services. The continued evolution of technology impacts their services, and they seem to specialize in adapting to change.

The Library Development team, under Jen Brenner's guidance, have that rare mix of creativity and attention to rules and regulations. They make sure that state aid for libraries gets distributed, that summer reading is supported, and that we can provide shared services like JerseyCat and JerseyClicks to libraries across the state. They are also the group that move forward a variety of initiatives, like our support for digital literacy.

The jewels in the NJSL crown are the Research and Law Libraries. With an eye toward making sure our collection is comprehensive and accessible, Maria Baratta's reference, cataloging, circulation, and digitization groups are at the forefront of the field. With limited resources, they catalog hundreds of items annually and answer thousands of research questions. And over the last few years, have digitized hundreds of thousands of documents.

I am grateful for the dedication of each and every staff member and the unique skills and knowledge they bring to their work. I have been at NJSL for five years now and continue to learn something new each day, thanks to this wonderful staff.

Jen Nelson
State Librarian

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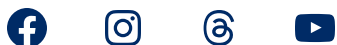
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Talking Book and Braille Center

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