

NEW JERSEY STATE LIBRARY

2020 YEAR END WRAP-UP

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ROLE OF THE STATE LIBRARY

The New Jersey State Library, an affiliate of Thomas Edison State University (TESU), serves a broad variety of functions. These functions include delivering direct services to state government, to state employees, and to the public. The State Library provides a law library, a research library, and a library for the visually impaired.

We foster library development and innovation throughout the state, delivering statewide services that promote equity of access, leading initiatives that respond to current and timely issues, and building alliances that position the State Library to develop local partnerships and collaborations. We serve many diverse communities in New Jersey.

We do this in a way that is uniquely ours and speaks to the needs of our particular constituencies. In the case of the New Jersey State Library, we interpret our overarching purpose as “connecting people with information through libraries.” Under that umbrella, we strive to fulfill all of the roles mentioned above.



The New Jersey State Library provides services that fall into one or more of four primary areas:

- » The **State Library Information Center (SLIC)** is NJSL's operating library that serves the state legislature, state employees, and TESU students, faculty, and mentors.
- » The **Talking Book and Braille Center (TBBC)** provides free library services for New Jersey residents who cannot read regular printed books due to a visual or physical impairment or reading disability.
- » **NJSL's library development bureaus** provide support for library development across the multi-type New Jersey library community. Their services range from providing statewide resources and continuing education activities for staff and trustees to offering leadership models and opportunities for innovation.
- » **Statewide services and network support** includes support for summer reading and other programming, technological infrastructure and outreach, statewide electronic resources, and continuing education and professional development.

STATE LIBRARY MANAGEMENT TEAM



TOP ROW FROM LEFT

MARY L. CHUTE
STATE LIBRARIAN
New Jersey

MARGARET NIZOLEK
CHIEF DEPUTY STATE LIBRARIAN
State Library Information Center (SLIC)

ADAM SZCZEPANIAK
DEPUTY STATE LIBRARIAN
Talking Book & Braille Center (TBBC)

SHERI SHAFER
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
New Jersey State Library

BOTTOM ROW FROM LEFT

KATHLEEN MOELLER-PEIFFER
DEPUTY STATE LIBRARIAN
Library Support Services (LSS)

MICHELE STRICKER
DEPUTY STATE LIBRARIAN
Lifelong Learning (LLL)

PEGGY CADIGAN
DEPUTY STATE LIBRARIAN
Innovation & Strategic Partnerships

TIFFANY McCLARY
DIRECTOR, Communications,
Marketing & Outreach

The Office of the State Librarian promotes exemplary service in accordance with New Jersey Library Law; supports professional development through LibraryLinkNJ, the New Jersey Library Cooperative; and is responsible for Information Technology through JerseyConnect; the Business Office; and the Office of Communications, Marketing & Outreach. The Office of the State Librarian is also responsible for library development through the Lifelong Learning, Library Support Services, and Innovation & Strategic Partnerships business units.

STATEWIDE & NATIONAL LEADERSHIP

CARES Act Funding

The Institute of Museum and Library Services awarded the New Jersey State Library \$802,581 in CARES Act funding to expand digital access and provide support services to citizens in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Even in times of crisis, the New Jersey library community strives to fulfill the information needs of a vast and varied customer group. As always, the New Jersey State Library supports the state's public libraries in serving all New Jerseyans—from pre-Kindergartners on the brink of emergent literacy, to students on the path to graduation and early careers, to disconnected individuals of all ages on the far side of the digital divide.

As an immediate first step, the New Jersey State Library used a portion of the funding to license the following products for public libraries through September 30, 2021: READsquared Online Reading Program Software, Zoom virtual meeting software, Capira Curbside software to facilitate curbside pickup of library materials, SimplyE ebook platform, and Baker & Taylor/Axis360 ebooks with an emphasis on youth reading.

Additionally, with CARES Act funding, JerseyConnect has launched a new free service called Remote Assist. Available to all

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act



libraries across the state, Remote Assist helps library staff reach remote patrons or provide services in the library while maintaining social distance. Library staff are now able to connect with patrons, from anywhere, to assist them with using library resources. With remote access, libraries can manage library PC's from anywhere to assist patrons or perform administrative tasks such as updates and restarts.

Leadership Roles & Recognition

- » **JENNIFER APGAR** was awarded an NJLA Scholarship. This scholarship is awarded annually to library students who demonstrate academic achievement, innovation, and the potential for leadership.
- » The NJSL **OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS, MARKETING & OUTREACH** earned a Public Relations Award in the Information Literature category from NJLA. The award-winning campaign included a webpage and media kit to promote the launch of NJSL's new reentry program, Fresh Start @ Your Library.

- » **DEBORAH MERCER** earned the Roger McDonough Librarianship Award. Roger H. McDonough was the New Jersey State Librarian from 1947 to 1975. Beginning in 2002, the New Jersey Studies Academic Alliance, together with the New Jersey Historical Commission, Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference-New Jersey Caucus, and the New Jersey Library Association History & Preservation Section, has given an award to a librarian, archivist, or manuscript curator for excellence in service to the New Jersey history research community and/or the general public.

State Librarian Announces Retirement

After eight years of dedicated service to the library community, State Librarian Mary L. Chute announced her retirement in February. As State Librarian, Mary led NJSL in the launch of many innovative projects that have helped New Jersey libraries serve as national models for delivering services to all populations of library patrons.

Her leadership paved the way for ground-breaking programs in areas including workforce development, reentry services for the formerly incarcerated, cultural competency and translation training for bi-lingual library staff, preservation and digitization, and disaster preparedness and recovery.

She also led the expansion of an agency-wide focus on both internal and external collaboration and partnerships during a time of reduced or level library funding. Thomas Edison State Library worked with Bradbury Miller Associates and an internal Search Committee to seek out a candidate to direct and further develop the New Jersey State Library, including the State Library Information Center, the Library Development Bureau, and the Talking Book and Braille Center, as well as the 2,000-member New Jersey Library Network. The search concluded in December, and the new State Librarian will begin February 2021.



MARY L. CHUTE
STATE LIBRARIAN
New Jersey

PROMOTING EQUITY OF ACCESS

Information Technology



With an urgent need to move staff to a remote environment during the Covid-19 pandemic, the NJSL IT department compiled a list of resources for staff to access applications online, assigned staff equipment through a loaner pool, and launched a new service called NextCloud, which provides a web interface for staff to access files and folders on the network.

The JerseyConnect team continued serving the NJ library community without interruption as libraries across the state relied heavily on the resources we provide for them to work remotely. The team also completed several projects, such as reconfiguring the core network to accommodate our new switches and adding a third upstream ISP to ensure we provided our customers enough bandwidth to support their remote work efforts.

Staff also rolled out Big Blue Button over the summer, a video conference and webinar service. Now available to all library staff across the state, the service allows any library staff member to hold meetings, conduct online classes or outreach sessions, or run webinars with up to about 100 attendees. It supports chat, presentations, screen sharing, a collaborative whiteboard, and other features great for instructors like polls and breakout rooms.

Talking Book & Braille Center (TBBC)

Like almost all other NJSL staff, the staff of TBBC has been working offsite since March. While books cannot be mailed out to patrons, staff have been actively supporting patrons and the patron's relatives and caregivers as they download audiobooks. This has been a successful endeavor, as demonstrated by the approximate 20% increase in the monthly totals of downloaded audiobooks. Additionally, TBBC moved to a new circulation and duplication system (WebReads & Guttenberg).



The new process greatly improved the delivery and production of books. Multiple books can now be placed on single-book cartridges, with one cartridge containing ten books, replacing ten individual cartridges. Also, as soon as an audiobook is added to the download program, every request is shipped immediately. In many cases, new releases are available the same day as the release.

Digital Public Library of America

NJSL's efforts in support of the Digital Public Library of America service hub development moved into the Library Support Services unit under the direction of the Deputy State Librarian for LSS. A project manager was recruited from the Somerset County Library System; the New Jersey State Library paid the registration fee; Rutgers University offered space on one of their servers for the digitized materials; Princeton University supported Rutgers with technology assistance; the University of Delaware hired a metadata specialist; and the State Library of Delaware contributed funds towards the overall costs of the endeavor. The first metadata will be sent to DPLA in January 2021.

Library Construction

The New Jersey Library Construction Bond Act unanimously passed both the Assembly and the Senate on November 16, 2020.

The Governor signed legislation on November 20, 2020, authorizing distribution of nearly \$87.5 million for proposed projects during the first round of funding, and the successful awardees were notified.

This funding will provide crucial improvements to New Jersey public libraries, including ADA compliance upgrades for disabled residents, HVAC improvements, and projects to improve public access to information and modernize community space, including procuring new technology.

This initial grant round will also fund ten new library buildings. A second round of awards is planned for 2021; however, at this time there is no set schedule for the second round of construction grants.



Virtual Library Comic Convention

The New Jersey State Library announced the availability of more than 4,000 comics, graphic novels, and children's materials as part of an innovative program to make this content free to all residents of New Jersey

throughout the summer. This project was a collaboration with 9 other states and was intended to provide easy access to digital resources while supporting statewide summer reading programs for all ages during the Covid-19 pandemic.



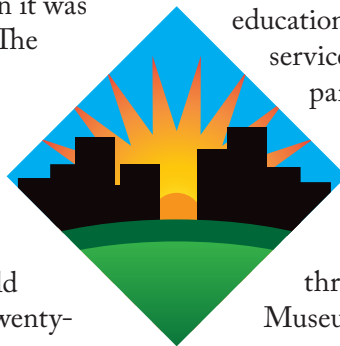
All of the ebooks were available in an unlimited, simultaneous use model and served to patrons via geolocation. The collection was free to libraries and patrons through August 31st and served as a valuable tool in statewide summer reading program support for all libraries.



Paterson Public Library is one of six in New Jersey to be part of the New Jersey State Library's "Fresh Start @ Your Library" initiative. Municipal officials, along with Deputy State Librarian Peggy Cadigan (center) held a press conference in February, at the steps of the historic library on Broadway in Paterson, New Jersey, to announce the initiative.

Fresh Start @ Your Library

Fresh Start @ Your Library, a program dedicated to assisting returning citizens find the resources necessary to begin a successful transition to freedom had begun to hit its stride in 2020, when it was challenged by the Covid-19 pandemic. The program was able to pivot from offering one-on-one counseling services to offering services virtually. Educational opportunities including free high school equivalency educational software and test vouchers remained available. A virtual resource fair was held and recorded for future use, featuring twenty-



two vendors who provided information for vital services within their specialized fields.

Fresh Start social workers created resource guides unique to each of the six target program libraries. The community guides pinpointed employment, education, housing, health and other necessary services. Tutoring and entrepreneurial partnerships were established with local organizations to fortify and augment ways in which the program can assist returning citizens.

Fresh Start @ Your Library is funded through a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library services.

DELIVERY OF DIRECT SERVICE

State Library Information Center (SLIC)

2020 was a year of challenges as staff began working from home in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Cuts to the library budget meant suspending the purchase of print materials in most of our circulating collections in order to maintain law sets, ongoing subscriptions, and critical databases. Interlibrary loan service was preserved for articles needed by state employees and TESU that were not available in our collections. Subject and collection specialists developed new tutorial videos and updated existing ones to facilitate use of the library's website and resources by our customers. Reference and research services for state government, TESU staff and students, and the public were conducted via email by the law, reference, and special collections staff.

SLIC's shift in collection development priorities over the past years positioned us to have the electronic resources that enabled us to provide library services without regular access to print resources. On occasion, a staff member went onsite to scan from print resources to meet the emergent needs of state government. Our ongoing digitization of New Jersey state government publications, legislative histories, and superseded New Jersey administrative code pages was critical to our ability to provide historical background on key issues of importance to state government during this time.

SLIC staff created several new research guides of topical interest. The "Votes for Women!" research guide, timed with the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th amendment guaranteeing women the right to vote, was widely recognized throughout the state and beyond for its coverage



NJSL Presents classes and author talks have an enthusiastic following among state employees and the public. After March, classes by staff and guest presenters were offered as webinars, and onsite and offsite outreach activities moved from in-person to virtual experiences. Sixty-five classes, twenty-six "onsite" outreach sessions, and twenty-five "offsite" outreach sessions were held.

of this historic event. The "2020 Census Resources for New Jersey Libraries" guide was referred to, promoted by libraries and organizations around the state, and adapted by other states. The "Coronavirus (Covid-19) Resources" research guide, developed in the spring, was shared with other libraries within New Jersey and with other state libraries, and it continues to be heavily accessed. The "Civil Rights in New Jersey:1945-2020" research guide was initiated as a project to help the NJ Division on Civil Rights promote the 75th anniversary of the Laws Against Discrimination.

Statewide Wi-Fi Locator Map

At the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, staff members at the State Library created a Drive Up Wi-Fi Map with details about how to connect to Wi-Fi from outside of library buildings that had been closed due to the coronavirus pandemic. The State Library later collaborated with the TOPCATS Futures Work Group to develop a statewide Wi-Fi locator map in an effort to bridge the digital divide, which is not a new problem but has become a dire consequence of the coronavirus pandemic.

The statewide Wi-Fi locator map expanded and enhanced the State Library's Drive Up Wi-Fi Map in order to increase its visibility and the types of free Wi-Fi providers included to benefit its users. We invited schools, libraries, colleges, universities and other organizations to participate so we could include their organizations on the map. This tool is helping New Jersey residents find the Wi-Fi Internet access they need for school, work, and other critical services.

Voting Locator Resource

SLIC staff created a voting locator resource for New Jerseyans to locate drop boxes and polling locations in their counties and municipalities. The voter locator resource provided valuable and timely information that supported the general public, as well as public libraries responding to questions from the general public, regarding voting in this year's election.

NJ Library Services Map

In response to library closures due to the coronavirus pandemic, the New Jersey State Library created a map, organized by city/town, that indicated which libraries were open to the public with limited capacity, offered curbside pickup, hosted virtual events, and provided remote services including access to databases, ebooks, and/or other electronic resources.

LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

Census 2020 Training

The State Library hosted census training for library staff. Regional census trainers showed staff how to use the new online census form and explained how best to provide assistance to patrons. Library staff who were interested in supporting the census complete count initiative and wanted to learn how to assist their patrons with the online version attended one of our nearly two dozen statewide workshops. In addition, a grant was procured in order to purchase tablets and cellular service for libraries in areas with historically low response rates.

Scholarship to Support ARSL Annual Conference Attendance

The New Jersey State Library sponsored Spotswood Public Library Director C. L. Quillen's attendance at the Association for Rural and Small Libraries Conference. Originally scheduled to be held in Wichita, Kansas, the conference switched to an online format and took place

September through October. When selecting Quillen for the sponsorship, NJSL gave priority to first-time ARSL Conference attendees, ARSL members, and public library service communities with a population of 10,000 or less.

LYRASIS 2020 Catalyst Fund Award

LYRASIS awarded the New Jersey State Library with an \$18,250 grant award as part of the LYRASIS 2020 Catalyst Fund. The NJSL project, "Increasing Staff Confidence to Implement User Experience and Design Principles in Website Creation," will develop a robust online version of its User Experience (UX) Boot Camp and make it available at no cost to attendees. The course is designed to equip participants with the skills to create vibrant and appealing websites that serve the needs of the public. While the Boot Camp is marketed to public librarians, the curriculum is largely applicable to all members of the LYRASIS community who have any responsibility for a public-facing website.

Covid-19 Support for NJ Libraries

NJSL's Lifelong Learning unit pivoted to virtual online training in order to continue providing statewide support for NJ's public librarians. Some webinar topics included, Mental Health Self Care and Coping Skills for Librarians, Library Design Strategies in the Age of Social Distancing, and more. Additionally, in order to assist with the difficult decisions public libraries must make regarding closing and reopening, NJSL assembled a number of resources to help guide the decision-making process. Various resources were made available to the library community. Topics include Library Staff and Customer Safety during a Pandemic and a Reopening Guide for Cleaning and Disinfecting.

Virtual Trustee Institute

The New Jersey State Library, in collaboration with the New Jersey Library Trustee Association, hosted the annual Trustee Institute in October. This year's virtual

event featured an introduction from State Librarian Mary Chute and NJ Library Trustee Association President Pat Pavlak. The event included discussion topics such as Roles & Responsibilities of Library Trustees, Trends & Topics in Library Security & Safety, Employment Law in the Age of Covid-19, and a tour of the redesigned United for Libraries Virtual Trustee Academy website. The Trustee Institute was open to all Library Board Trustees and their Directors.

Navigating the New Normal: Lessons Learned for Building More Resilient Libraries

The New Jersey State Library, in collaboration with Library Link NJ and TOPCATS, co-sponsored a half-day, virtual summit in September to help public libraries continue operations during the pandemic, stay connected while working remotely, protect the safety and security of patrons and staff, and build resilience under stress. The series of webinars discussed

new ways libraries can apply technological solutions to meet many of these challenges.

NJLibsGrowBiz Virtual Summit

The New Jersey State Library hosted its annual NJLibsGrowsBiz Summit in April. The event is a part of the library's coordinated, statewide effort to increase the capacity of New Jersey libraries to meet the needs of their business communities. NJLibsGrowBiz connects library staff across the state to focus on best practices, resource sharing, and collaboration. This year's event helped libraries continue to embrace their unique position in the entrepreneurial and small business ecosystems and understand the full scope of resources and service providers available at the local, county, and state levels. Keynote Speaker Ginny Sterpka led a discussion called "Building Entrepreneurial Networks and Mapping Community Assets." Breakout Sessions included "Grow with Google," "Identifying Entrepreneurial Needs," and "Where the Law

Lives: Research for Business Owners." The NJLibsGrowBiz Summit is the only event solely focused on the role of New Jersey libraries in community economic development.

New Jersey State Library Award Winners

The New Jersey State Library awarded seven nominees in the categories of Early Literacy, Multicultural Programming, and Innovative Partnerships to recognize their hard work laying the groundwork for successful community coalition-building and carefully targeted programming. The winning programs exemplified the essential role that library programming plays in the lives of residents across the state and proved that it is not the size or budget of the library that counts, but the desire to encourage lifelong learning as they fulfill roles as community centers of cultural and civic engagement.

To view the list of awardees and descriptions of each project, visit: <https://www.njstatelib.org/2020-njsl-awards-final/>



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