

SCLSNJ Strategic Plan Update

April - June 2021

<p>STRATEGIC PRIORITIES Here are the initiatives worked on over the last several months that specifically support our strategic priorities:</p>	<p>CORE SERVICES Core service activities are a part of normal SCLSNJ business. Here are a few recent highlights and examples:</p>
<p>Promoting the Library as an impartial platform for creating MEANINGFUL INTERACTIONS AND CONNECTIONS</p> <p>SCLSNJ was involved at the national, state, and local levels for work on the 2020 U.S. Census. Work began in the spring on synthesizing the data that many SCLSNJ staff undertook around census initiatives for the public. Key goals included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ways SCLSNJ brought forward the census work to the public• how resources collected data• positive impacts on public service• relevant information priorities from the county committee	<p>Making PERSONALIZED CONNECTIONS between patrons and materials</p> <p>SCLSNJ offered the special SUMMER library card again beginning June 14. This card is for 18-years-old or younger who live in Somerset County, but not in one of the member municipalities (Bedminster, Bernards Township, Bernardsville, Far Hills, Franklin Township, and Raritan). The summer card was active from the time they registered through the end of August 31st, 2021.</p>
<p>Exploring new ways to SHAPE OUR SPACES to meet community needs</p> <p>The New Jersey Library Construction Bond Act projects were finalized for six branches. The grant applications were due 6/1/21 to the State Library.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bound Brook: Extensive roofing and wall repair.• Manville: Upgrade of electrical infrastructure. Engineering design firm is on board to update documents for 2021 regulations.• North Plainfield: Project remains first floor redesign and rehabilitation. Communication ongoing with architectural design team on retainer with borough.• Peapack and Gladstone: Redesign of space, additional meeting room. Working with Friends of the Library as they are the funders for the grant.	<p>Presenting programs that help community members CONNECT, EXPLORE, SHARE AND DISCOVER</p> <p>Young Minds and Family Resources (YMFR) announced the Celebrate Summer Series in partnership with both the Somerset County Department of Human Services (SCDHS) and the Somerset County Office of Youth Services (SCOYS). Three distinct events were designed to support Somerset County teen mental wellness through fun and educational activities across the summer months. Each event will allow for up to 30 teens (grades 9-12) in-person and unlimited virtually (which will be simultaneously streamed). The events are a hybrid of in-person attendance outside at three branches and online:</p> <p>Summer Has Begun This event featured trivia and a scavenger hunt to blow off some steam.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bridgewater: HVAC system tear out and replacement. Working with architecture and electrical design teams. ● Watchung: New construction and land acquisition. Working with the mayor and borough. 	<p>Self-Care This session focused on walking meditation, yoga, and self-care skills and crafting.</p> <p>Back to School This was a youth-led peer panel to discuss preparing to go back to school, organizational tips, and how to prioritize expectations.</p>
<p>WELCOMING new residents</p> <p>Work started in earnest on the opening of the new Montgomery branch, as well as the service vision for what will remain at the Mary Jacobs branch. All of these efforts will require the entire library system to come together around the physical move, customer service, materials management, and community engagement. A new task force was announced entitled the Mary Jacobs Customer Service Transition Task Force. This task force focused on the suite of services that the Mary Jacobs branch will continue to offer after the opening of Montgomery. Focus areas included the checking in-and-out of materials, youth services programming, as well exploring new ways to share the space to meet community needs and welcome new residents at both locations.</p>	<p>Serving as a community GATHERING SPACE</p> <p>The borough of Manville approved a resolution for \$114,979 to obtain construction monies for needed physical location improvements via a Community Block Grant. Meetings will take place with the Borough Administrator as appropriate to make sure anything proposed adheres to SCLSNJ’s customer service standards. The focus of this redesign monies will be a circulation desk reconfiguration and additional meeting room space for the public.</p>
<p>Addressing the needs of SHIFTING DEMOGRAPHICS</p> <p>Demographic studies show a stark reality for the number of residents in the county who live in poverty. When SCLSNJ looked at fines free data, as well as civic and community partnerships, these numbers are ever present as library services are developed:</p>	<p>Promoting and supporting LIFELONG LEARNING</p> <p>SCLSNJ announced its partner organization, coLAB Arts was being awarded a \$75,000 National Endowment for the Arts Our Town grant to develop two artists in residency at the Somerville and Manville branches. coLAB has a solid engagement and artistic foothold in Middlesex County, and as the primary partners in this grant, SCLSNJ will work with them to make the creations and artifacts from this project accessible to our patrons and a wider audience.</p>
	<p>Providing TECHNOLOGY ACCESS AND EXPERTISE that meet the needs of the community</p>

Creating opportunities that build Somerset County's ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

SCLSNJ recognized users were looking at their economic interests, as well as new financial tools to help with financial responsibilities. As such, a special financial literacy program was held entitled *Venmo, PayPal, Zelle, and Other Payment Sharing Tools* for the public. Led by Michael Skara, who oversees all aspects of the technology implementations for Berkeley Heights Public Schools, a school-district of 3000 students & 450 staff members, customers learned how to send and receive money more easily using digital payment systems. Attendees were taught what they needed to know about payment apps and how to make sending money easier than ever.