

# **Transforming Lives Strengthening Communities**

## **Somerset County Library Commission**

**Art Carlson, Chair**

**Mary Caruso, Vice Chair**

**Albert Ellis**

**George Jarvis**

**James McGarry, Jr.**

**Anita Ventantonio**

**Robert Waldstein**

**Patrick Scaglione, Freeholder Liaison**

**Brian Auger, Secretary/Director**

## **Strategic Plan**

**2012 – 2017**

---

### **Branches:**

**BOUND BROOK MEMORIAL LIBRARY**  
402 East High Street  
Bound Brook, NJ 08805  
(732) 356-0043

**BRIDGEWATER LIBRARY**  
1 Vogt Drive  
Bridgewater, NJ 08807  
(908) 526-4016

**HILLSBOROUGH LIBRARY**  
379 South Branch Road  
Hillsborough Municipal Complex  
Hillsborough, NJ 08844  
(908) 369-2200

**MANVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
100 South 10th Avenue  
Manville, NJ 08835  
(908) 722-9722

**MARY JACOBS MEMORIAL LIBRARY**  
64 Washington Street  
Rocky Hill, NJ 08553  
(609) 924-7073

**NORTH PLAINFIELD MEMORIAL LIBRARY**  
6 Rockview Avenue  
North Plainfield, NJ 07060  
(908) 755-7909



**PEAPACK & GLADSTONE LIBRARY**  
Peapack & Gladstone Municipal Complex  
School Street  
Peapack, NJ 07977  
(908) 234-0598

**SOMERVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
35 West End Avenue  
Somerville, NJ 08876  
(908) 725-1336

**WARREN TOWNSHIP LIBRARY**  
42 Mountain Boulevard  
Warren, NJ 07059  
(908) 754-5554

**WATCHUNG LIBRARY**  
12 Stirling Road  
Watchung, NJ 07069  
(908) 561-0117

### **Reading Stations:**

**BRANCBURG LIBRARY**  
The Station House  
Olive Street  
Neshanic Station, NJ 08853  
(908) 369-5355

**WASHINGTON VALLEY LIBRARY**  
Washington Valley Road  
Martinsville, NJ 08836  
(732) 356-2363

**S O M E R S E T   C O U N T Y   L I B R A R Y   S Y S T E M**  
**Somerset County, NJ**  
**[www.sclsnj.org](http://www.sclsnj.org)**

**RESOLUTION APPROVING *TRANSFORMING LIVES, STRENGTHENING  
COMMUNITIES*, THE 2012 – 2017 SCLS STRATEGIC PLAN  
RESOLUTION 12-038**

**WHEREAS,** the draft plan, attached hereto, as developed by SCLS staff, community members and officials over the last year, sets the mission of the Somerset County Library System as: “Somerset County Library System partners with you to connect, to explore, to share and to discover”; and

**WHEREAS,** the draft plan sets the vision of the Library as: “Together we enrich lives, expand knowledge and strengthen communities”; and


**WHEREAS,** the draft plan sets forth an ambitious set of goals and objectives that will ensure the continuing role of the Somerset County Library System as a vital component in a robust community, and as a leader in public library service in an era of rapid change in technologies and user expectations;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Somerset County Library Commission approves the plan as the sixth strategic plan for the Library System covering the years 2012 – 2017 and hereby charges the Director and senior staff of the Library System with fulfilling its ambitious goals and objectives and enjoins them to report at least annually on their progress.

DATED: October 3, 2012

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Art Carlson, Chair

I certify that the above is a true copy of a resolution passed by the Somerset County Library Commission at the meeting held on October 3, 2012.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian K. Auger  
Secretary to the Commission





---

# Introduction

**T***ransforming Lives, Strengthening Communities*, the sixth strategic plan of Somerset County Library System (SCLS), proposes strategies to advance our vision to enrich lives, expand knowledge and strengthen communities over the next five years.

We, the staff of SCLS, authored this plan, the next chapter in the Library's history, with significant contributions from customers, county residents and community leaders.<sup>1</sup> *Transforming Lives, Strengthening Communities* is more than a collection of service initiatives. It is a statement about who we are, what we do, and why it is important to Somerset County. *Transforming Lives, Strengthening Communities* is the result of a year-long process to clarify our purpose and define our identity. We employed the philosophy and methods of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) to discover what we do best and what customers appreciate most, and to use this knowledge as the foundation for the Library's future.

Consequently, *Transforming Lives, Strengthening Communities* is less a blueprint than a shared vision of the future based on our collective strengths, the attributes that have made us successful. A traditional strategic plan, which focuses solely on service initiatives, is often made irrelevant by evolving social, economic, or technology trends. Life giving forces – our passion, intelligence, creativity - do not become irrelevant. Knowing our strengths will enable us to formulate new strategies in response to any unforeseen developments in our world.

*who are we?*  
*what do we do?*  
*why is it important?*

# Who We Are

## Our Values

Our values – **respect, trust, zeal, risk taking and teamwork** – contribute to our success in a variety of ways. They are the enduring beliefs that foster and sustain collaboration and trust as we work together and with stakeholders in the community to achieve our shared dreams of the future. Our values strengthen our passion for our mission and vision. Our passion will inspire customers, whose regard for our services will grow. Our values are our compass, enabling us to distinguish right from wrong and important from unimportant as we explore possibilities and make decisions to achieve our mission and vision. In uncertain times and unfamiliar situations, we consult our values to find our way, overcoming obstacles and never losing sight of our goals and objectives. We strive to live our values at all times in the workplace and when representing the Somerset County Library System in our communities.

### Respect

We respect the multiple perspectives of colleagues and community members as they provide us with a broader interpretation of customer needs. We listen with politeness and courtesy to viewpoints different than ours. We will incorporate multiple viewpoints in our decision-making process as a way to address the needs of all. We encourage everyone to share professional and personal strengths in order to build a strong base upon which to provide better service to our communities. We believe that a positive attitude expressed through behaviors such as punctuality and follow-through are vital to our success. We will use assertive communication skills when resolving differences of opinions. We acknowledge that all colleagues and customers have knowledge, skills and talents of value to the future success of Somerset County Library System.

*respect*  
*trust*  
*zeal*  
*risk taking*  
*teamwork*

## Trust

We assume the best motives in our colleagues and customers. We believe that our partners are telling the truth and working for the success of Somerset County Library System unless facts demonstrate otherwise. We rely on promises being kept when implementing new decisions. We will support our colleagues even when we disagree. We will support decisions that differ from our opinions and work to accomplish shared goals. We will not intentionally cause personal or professional hurt and expect no reprisals. We trust that our colleagues use their skills and knowledge to advance the services of the organization.

## Zeal

We approach all tasks with positive energy and support system goals with passion and optimism. We demonstrate excitement in our commitment to attaining system goals and objectives and collaborate with colleagues to accomplish our common mission. We approach all tasks with a sense of playfulness. We will be engaged, alert and attentive when meeting the needs of our colleagues and community members. We will always remember that we are partners with community members and join in their enthusiasm to explore their world.



## **Risk Taking**

We are empowered to take risks to achieve department, branch and system-wide goals and objectives. We explore creative ways to achieve the mission and vision of Somerset County Library System using informed and thoughtful judgment. We learn from our successes and failures and recognize that mistakes are a possibility when exploring new ideas. We hold ourselves accountable to learn from our mistakes.

## **Teamwork**

We work together to accomplish shared goals. This sense of unity guides all of our decisions and actions. We acknowledge that we can accomplish more as a team than as individuals. We view all tasks as an opportunity to build a new team or strengthen one already in existence.



# Our Strengths

**F**ive strengths have been fundamental to our past accomplishments and will be critical to our future success: **Commitment to Excellence, Community Connections, Outstanding Resources, Winning Teamwork,** and **Exceptional Customer Service.** Each strength consists of the beliefs and practices, capabilities and capacities, assets and attributes that were present at the times when we were the most creative, engaged, committed, inspired and innovative in achieving the Library's mission and vision.

The Strategic Plan Steering Committee described the strengths in the following way:

## Commitment to Excellence

At SCLS, an unflagging dedication to excellence drives all of our accomplishments. We are committed to our mission and purpose. Because we are able to take advantage of many opportunities for professional development and have access to the latest technological advances in the field, we are empowered to be creative and implement innovative ideas. We are able to use these assets to create warm and welcoming environments, to provide excellent customer service, and to create and provide excellent programs, collections, and services.



## Community Connections

Connecting with the community is a winning strategy for our library system. These connections help define our role as a vital community resource. They are established with individuals or groups, face-to-face or electronically. Connecting with the community provides us with opportunities to identify their ongoing needs and to develop new services. We make connections with customers of all ages at service desks and through programming and outreach. SCLS encourages staff to actively engage with the community.

## Outstanding Resources

Four resources have been key to the success of Somerset County Library System (SCLS): staff, collection, programs and technology. These resources enable us to provide exceptional customer service to a diverse community. Our staff's knowledge, talents, energies, and skills are the source of innovative programs and outstanding collections. Our physical and virtual collections are essential to our success. Entertaining and informational programs are an integral part of the life of the Library. SCLS strives to utilize and provide the latest technology. Our future success depends on our ability to develop these resources further.

## Winning Teamwork

In today's complex, ever-changing world, teamwork is an essential ingredient to our success. Teamwork fosters collaboration and innovation within and across departments, and unites all members of SCLS in a common purpose. Winning teamwork begins when team members feel they are "in it together." Respect and appreciation for each other grow from this belief. We work best, tackle challenges, and strive for excellence in an environment where positive energy and team spirit is high; where we can have fun in the workplace while working together to accomplish common goals. It has been said that the results of teamwork are greater than the sum of the parts. Winning teamwork adds value to team members, customers and the organization.

## Exceptional Customer Service

Exceptional customer service—meeting or exceeding the expectations of customers—is the goal of every service provider in the Somerset County Library System. Whether it is recommending a title, helping a student, leading book discussions, adjusting Library policy to accommodate customers, assisting job seekers in preparing their resumés, processing DVDs to get them in the hands of customers, or finding a mis-shelved book for a child, making a difference in the lives of our customers helps motivate us to the highest levels of achievement.

Together, our values and strengths define our identity and empower us to fulfill our aspirations.



# What We Do and Why it Matters:

## Mission and Vision

### Mission:

Somerset County Library System partners with you to connect, to explore, to share and to discover.

### Vision:

Together we enrich lives, expand knowledge and strengthen communities.

**W**e envision our future as one that provides experiences customized for each stakeholder. We view these experiences as opportunities to expand personal knowledge and to develop stronger communities. This partnership with stakeholders provides a unique perspective to develop services that will strengthen academic and workplace skills.



# Designing Our Future:

## Strategic Initiatives

*From today's successes come tomorrow's achievements*

**B**y examining yesterday's and today's successes, we have identified the most solid foundation upon which to build our future achievements. What have been our greatest recent successes?

When we asked customers, they identified staff, collections, facilities, technology and programs.<sup>2</sup> The Library's "biggest asset" remarked one customer, "is the staff," described as "professional," "friendly," "courteous," "knowledgeable," and "dedicated to customers' success." Customers praised the "broad selection" of analog and digital books, CDs and DVDs for children, teens and adults. One respondent said "You come in and they have every single book." While the availability of bestsellers and current DVDs attracted customers to the branch libraries, it was the "friendliness and charm" of each facility and a "homey environment" that encouraged customers to stay and browse, study or socialize. The combination of inviting public space and an inexhaustible selection of books made one customer serene: "The thing I like about the Library is they have almost every single series of book" and "the peaceful quietness makes me feel snuggled up under a warm blanket, drinking hot cocoa and into a good book at home."



Manville Public Library

For many other customers, public computers and Internet access were the primary attractions. The convenience of the virtual SCLS was cited as one of its greatest successes. One customer extolled the benefit of "being able to renew books without having to drive to the Library," another the usability of the web site, and another the ease of searching the catalog and reserving titles. "Whether you are a small child, a senior citizen and all ages in between," noted a customer, "there are events and resources that fit your needs and interests."

Drawing on the survey results, our formula for success can be expressed as an equation:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{exceptional staff} \\ + \\ \text{outstanding collections} \\ + \\ \text{hospitable facilities} \\ + \\ \text{empowering technology} \\ + \\ \text{creative programs} \end{array} = \begin{array}{l} \text{satisfied} \\ \text{AND} \\ \text{loyal customers} \end{array}$$

Will this formula continue to be effective over the next five years? How can it be strengthened and updated to keep current customers satisfied and attract new customers? One measure of the success of *Transforming Lives, Strengthening Communities* will be the number of customers retained and gained as a result of its initiatives. Ultimately, the formula for success must achieve our mission and vision. It is therefore imperative to understand the reasons for our existence, the fundamental sense of purpose that motivates everything we do. In the previous strategic plan, we committed to being a primary information resource for county residents. Is this purpose realistic in the digital age?

The answer to this last question appears to be “no.” We have little precise data about the changing information habits of Somerset County residents but it is reasonable to assume they are consistent with national habits. In 2007, a survey by the Pew Charitable Trust for the Internet and American Life revealed that one in eight respondents turned to the public library to “deal with a broad array of problems in their lives, from health care to education to employment to retirement.”<sup>3</sup> The Internet, professional advisors and family friends ranked ahead of public libraries as primary information sources. More than 78% of the American population has access to the Internet, and the attraction of public computers at the library will decrease as the gap between customers with dial-up and broadband Internet access closes.<sup>4</sup> Eighty-eight percent of American adults own a cell phone, and 46% of those devices are smartphones. According to a 2012 survey, smartphone owners are more prevalent in the population than the owners of more basic mobile phones. Fifty-five percent use their phone to go online and 17% of cell phone owners do most of their online browsing on their phone rather than a computer.<sup>5</sup> That percentage will continue to increase. The perceived value of services is a significant determinant of customer loyalty. Strictly on the basis of convenience and availability, we cannot compete with mobile devices as residents’ primary information resource.

What then is Somerset County Library System's place in the digital information landscape? A 2012 survey indicates that 21% of American adults have read an ebook in the past year and that figure will undoubtedly continue to increase.<sup>6</sup> Ebooks have been growing in popularity among our customers. We have responded by adding more titles to this collection as circulation continues to grow. Yet, it is premature to think of this format as *the* foundation of our future. The reason for caution, to quote Steve Coffman, researcher and author, is that "Publishers don't really seem to want libraries involved in the ebook market ... They have a very real concern that giving away free copies of ebooks could cannibalize potential sales of those same titles, and that too much free material in the marketplace devalues the prices they can charge for their books."<sup>7</sup> The constantly changing list of major publishers that will not sell or limit sales to public libraries and restrictive licensing makes it impossible to commit to a long-term plan while the ebook business model continues to develop.

According to Coffman, it is time to give up the task of creating the electronic library. His conclusion is worth quoting at length:

Books are provided by Amazon, Google, Barnes & Noble, and Apple – all of whom boast much larger collections than can be found in almost any library, and many of which you can have for free just as if you borrowed them from our libraries, except you don't need to worry about bringing them back. Those books that do cost are generally available at affordable prices that are unlikely to set back the typical reader more than the cost of a six-pack...Cataloging is provided by Google, Amazon, and other information providers, with little or no regard for the MARC record, AACR2, RDA, the Library of Congress or the Dewey classification systems, and other arcana which have governed the practice of library bibliographic control for years. In fact most people seem to prefer the richly detailed catalog entries of the online commercial databases to the skeletal data found in the typical library catalog... Our readers advisory services have been taken over by the likes of Goodreads, LibraryThing, Amazon and dozens of similar 'communities' that let readers share their books and their likes and dislikes with their friends – all for free... Library reference collections and reference services have also migrated online. Today, when you have a question, you don't ask a librarian, you type a few words into the Google search box and get back thousands of results, all within a few nanoseconds. Most people find the information they get back good enough to answer most of their questions.<sup>8</sup>



*make something  
new out of the  
'not inconsiderable  
assets' of buildings,  
books and people*



If we accept Coffman's conclusion, we are left to wonder what is left for our future. Coffman's recommendation: "make something new out of the not inconsiderable assets of buildings, books and people." Technology will always be part of our future, but it is not the defining characteristic of SCLS. According to author and researcher, Steven Bell, to prevent technology-hastened obsolescence, it is imperative for us to understand the true nature of our business, and it is not information:

Statements such as, "They thought they were in the telegraph business, but they were really in the communication business" describe companies that became obsolete because they misinterpreted the nature of their business. It is up to us to prevent libraries from becoming one more example of an industry that was disrupted by new technologies because it thought it was in the information business but failed to understand what people really valued about its services.<sup>9</sup>

We have captured customers' feelings about our services in our new mission and vision statements:

- Somerset County Library System partners with you to connect, to explore, to share and to discover
- Together we enrich lives, expand knowledge and strengthen communities

We learned in the strategic planning process that Somerset County residents desire meaningful information experiences. They value and desire service that offers genuine, sincere, and rewarding human contact. On one level, we assist Somerset County residents as they transform information into knowledge and knowledge into personal achievement. On another and more profound level, we co-create informational experiences that stimulate their creativity, develop their talents and skills, encourage friendships, broaden their perspectives, and present new possibilities of self-discovery. What makes us special and what differentiates us from our digital competition is the personalized and customized service experience – the genuine partnership – we offer each person at all of the Library's touch points. We are committed to fostering a community guided by wisdom.

Accordingly, we have revised and future-proofed our formula for success to include our mission and vision:

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{exceptional staff} \\ + \\ \text{outstanding collections} \\ + \\ \text{hospitable facilities} \\ + \\ \text{empowering technology} \\ + \\ \text{creative programs} \\ + \\ \text{community connections} \\ + \\ \text{partnerships} \end{array} = \begin{array}{c} \text{personally meaningful} \\ \text{experience} \\ \text{AND} \\ \text{significant knowledge} \end{array}$$

The new variables – community connections and partnerships – reflect two of our most significant strengths. We recognize the importance of well-established community roots and that pooling our resources with government agencies and non-profit organizations will extend our reach, amplify our success and, most importantly, address significant community issues.

We dedicate ourselves, over the next five years, to three key strategies to achieve our mission and vision:

- Creating the conditions to fully develop the power of our strengths
- Extending our strengths to every aspect of our organization (structure, staffing, culture, leadership, procedures, practices)
- Applying our strengths to new services that satisfy customers' desires for meaningful information experiences and that address community needs





# Dreams

To direct these strategies, we have written the following dreams to describe the future, when each strength is flourishing, when optimal performance is the new standard and when extraordinary achievement is the new norm. Each dream envisions new possibilities and paints a compelling picture of what Somerset County Library System will become while enabling stakeholders to realize their deepest hopes and highest aspirations. Collectively, the dreams provide us with clear direction for creating our future.

## **Commitment to Excellence**

We are empowered to employ all available tools as we strive for excellence in all facets of our customer interactions. We envision a standard of excellence that encourages staff to assist a customer from start to finish. Our standard of excellence is maintained through communication: system-wide, branch-to-branch, department-to-department, individual-to-individual. We employ all available means of communication and have immediate access to system-wide information through a user-friendly information dissemination tool. We employ a creative process enabling staff to dream of the future as part of their daily activities. Staff are held accountable for maintaining our standard of excellence through a performance management system that promotes excellence through creativity and intrinsic motivation of staff.

*we are the digital  
facilitators in our  
community*

## **Community Connections**

We are going to build a community of big smiles through our customer service. We will have honest conversations with patrons in comfortable environments in order to learn from them, and create the best possible library. We will always be accessible to our community members. All staff represent the Library in the community. We participate in activities valuable to our community in order to market the Library and to demonstrate that we are part of the community. We support partnerships throughout the community to expand our community involvement to the widest audience by developing and implementing non-traditional library services. We are the digital facilitators in our community. We will encourage the community to become active stakeholders in the Library's future and to build bridges to our partners through all interactions. Staff will be enabled to actively participate in community and professional organizations.

## Outstanding Resources

Professional development is essential to the success of the Somerset County Library System. Continuous learning is our lifeblood. We believe that change provides opportunities for personal and professional growth. We prefer hands-on learning and use all opportunities to update our knowledge and perfect our skill. We encourage communicating new ideas among ourselves. Programming space facilitates staff creativity. Our programs inform, educate, entertain, inspire and connect people. Physical and virtual collections that reflect the needs, tastes and preferences of customers are essential to our success. We embrace new technology and explore ways to use it to ensure customers' success.

## Winning Teamwork

Members of winning teams:

- Play well together
- Share their knowledge
- Lean on each other
- Want each other to succeed
- Believe that if one succeeds, all succeed
- Care, respect and trust each other
- Have clear roles and goals
- Go outside the boundaries of their jobs to support each other and satisfy customers (no leash laws)
- Are flexible and adaptable
- Are willing to jump in and step up
- Use humor and a positive attitude to promote solidarity

Winning teams know that stakeholders are potential members of the team. Somerset County Library System fosters the attitudes and behaviors that allow teamwork to thrive.



### Exceptional Customer Service

Our goal is for every patron to say “We Make Their Day.” Patrons know we trust them. We design positive experiences for them; we create a welcoming environment; we work for their successes; we develop personal relationships with them; and we put ourselves in their shoes to fully understand the best ways to provide exceptional service. We also empower our patrons to be self-sufficient and develop the skills to successfully use the Library. We care about fulfilling their needs and listen actively to identify their wants and identify their needs. To foster exceptional service, we are enthusiastic, dedicated and knowledgeable. Our goal is “there is no wait for service or for materials.” Each customer’s problem becomes our own to solve. Exceptional service requires follow-through. Our success fosters customer loyalty. We create customers for life.





# Designing Our Dreams

---

# Exceptional Customer Experiences

---

## Community Commons

To ensure SCLS branch libraries remain preferred destinations in their respective communities, we will redesign interior space, furnishings and points of service to strengthen the appeal and usability of each facility.

The Assistant Director, with input from Branch Directors, will develop the implementation plan, manage the project and report progress to the Director of Strategic Initiatives.

Action	Reference
We will remake social space into a low key, comfortable, and welcoming environment that facilitates social interaction and personal creativity. Branch libraries will be the place for an increasing number of community members to relax or get work done, a place for individual study and for face-to-face networking.	Community Commons Goal 1
We will create conversation places, space for mingling and sharing ideas by storing the least used portions of collections off-site and removing shelving. Customers will have the ability to reserve these materials for pick up.	Community Commons Goal 2
<b>Design Guidelines</b>	
• Create a consistent design throughout the Library System	Community Commons Task 1
• Select modular furniture that customers can reconfigure to suit their activities	Community Commons Task 2
• Design the space to have a streamlined and open look and feel	Community Commons Task 3

---

• Select attractive, comfortable and plentiful furniture, including soft seating, tables and chairs	Community Commons Task 4
• Ensure ample lighting and electrical outlets for laptops and other devices	Community Commons Task 5
• Locate browsing collections and displays nearby	Community Commons Task 6
• Exhibit visually engaging artwork	Community Commons Task 7
• Ensure the space is Wi-Fi enabled	Community Commons Task 8
• Hire a design architect to visit all branch libraries, analyze space, make recommendations and calculate costs	Community Commons Task 9
• Work with member municipalities and the Grants & Partnership Committee to identify funding streams	Community Commons Task 10

---

# Exceptional Customer Experiences

---

## Technology to Create and Share Knowledge

For technology to remain a prime attraction, we will ensure that all facilities have a uniform platform of equipment, including color printers, fax machines and public computers, that are upgraded on a regular basis to provide customers with the best possible tools to create and share knowledge.

---

Our Technology Plan will design and implement these elements.

Action	Reference
The Technology Planning Committee will create a long range plan to identify the information technology infrastructure, hardware, software, staffing and staff development required to support our mission and vision.	
Among the topics to be addressed are equipment replacement schedules, the use of mobile devices to facilitate roving service, improved bandwidth, developing additional IT support positions, new productivity software on staff and customer computers, digital technology training for staff and the development of a virtual branch library.	Technology Goal 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Convene a task force to create a technology plan</li></ul>	Technology Task 1
Assess technology needs at each location in light of the technology plan	Technology Goal 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop annual operating and capital budgets that provide for technology needs identified in Technology Goal 2</li></ul>	Technology Task 2

---

---

# Exceptional Customer Experiences

---

## Enhanced Convenience and Strengthened Service

We will enhance the accessibility of collections and design new service options to meet customers' expectations for greater convenience and self-service.

Action	Reference
<b>Engaging Directional Signage</b> Drawing on the best practices of leading public libraries (San Jose Public Libraries, Chicago Metropolitan Library) we will create and implement a signage plan. Well designed, attention grabbing and strategically located signs will enable customers of all ages to find resources efficiently and with minimal assistance.	
<b>Roving Service</b> Although service desks will continue to be a destination for customers, we recognize that many users do not interact with us. Increased visibility will give us greater opportunities to assist these customers.	
We will create a Signage and Roving Service Task Force to assess signage needs and develop a program that provides roving service to our users.	Enhanced Convenience & Strengthened Service Goal 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>We will implement roving service throughout each branch of the Library System. Our goal is to get out from behind information/reference desks and be readily available to assist customers where they are working in the Library.</li></ul>	Enhanced Convenience & Strengthened Service Task 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>We will investigate outsourcing phone answering at the branch libraries. Routing all incoming calls to a central phone desk will provide us with more time to partner with community members and provide outreach services.</li></ul>	Enhanced Convenience & Strengthened Service Task 2

---

### One Stop Service

Trends in customers' questions support one stop service. The majority of questions are directional ("Where is the ..."), collection based ("Do you have ...?"), and customer service ("I have an overdue book, lost DVD or late fine ..."). Any appropriately trained colleague, whether an information or circulation specialist, will be able to answer these questions and fully assist customers. The remaining questions will be referred to specialists in the appropriate departments. When making referrals, we will always alert colleagues of incoming customers and share what we've learned about their wants and needs. This practice will ensure seamless service transition as well as spare customers the inconvenience of repeating themselves.

From our customers' perspective we are all knowledge professionals and able to assist them from start to finish. To meet this expectation, we will assist customers, at their first point of contact, without unnecessary referrals.

Training to support this initiative will be a priority of the new Coordinator of Professional Development.

The One Stop Service Standing Committee will manage this project, under the direction of the Director of Strategic Initiatives.

---

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Articulate new job responsibilities and performance expectations. Circulation specialists will not be expected to become reader's advisors and reference specialists. Rather, they will search the catalog to verify title, author and item status, place reserves and take other actions to expedite service. Information specialists will be trained to answer questions about borrowing, policies and other circulation matters.</li></ul>	Enhanced Convenience & Strengthened Service Task 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We will participate in training to sharpen our interviewing skills. Strong active listening skills will ensure accurate and thorough identification of the needs and wants of customers.</li></ul>	Enhanced Convenience & Strengthened Service Task 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Facilitate cross training to build shared skills and knowledge. Some possible classes will include Circulation for Information Specialists and Searching Basics for Circulation Specialists.</li></ul>	Enhanced Convenience & Strengthened Service Task 5

---

---

---

### Customer Conversations

To ensure that we continue to deliver exceptional service, we will engage customers in ongoing conversations about their library experiences to fully understand their perceptions, expectations, and experiences. We will use this knowledge to continually strengthen service and ceaselessly co-create library experiences that are truly memorable.

We will create the Customer Conversations Team to manage our conversations with customers. This team will work with the Head of Customer Service to accomplish the following initiatives.

• Implement a customer satisfaction survey. Understanding customers' evolving service expectations and perceptions of the performance of staff, facilities, technology, and policies is essential for our continued success.	Enhanced Convenience & Strengthened Service Task 6
• Establish customer service metrics.	Enhanced Convenience & Strengthened Service Task 7
• Apply survey responses to enhance and strengthen customer experiences.	Enhanced Convenience & Strengthened Service Task 8
• Expand the use of Facebook, Twitter and other social networks to encourage customers to share stories about their desires for meaningful experiences, how they use digital technology to create and share knowledge, and their relationship with SCLS.	Enhanced Convenience & Strengthened Service Task 9
• Conduct periodic exit interviews to understand customers' library habits. How customers use the Library and exit interviews will help us understand customers' new behaviors.	Enhanced Convenience & Strengthened Service Task 10
• Gather information at community events, especially from residents who are not regular library users and share with appropriate staff.	Enhanced Convenience & Strengthened Service Task 11
• The Customer Service Philosophy Team will write the SCLS customer service philosophy using the methods of Appreciative Inquiry. The service philosophy will be the lens through which we perceive customers, the map that orients our actions, and the system of meaning that provides us with clear and shared purpose and goals. A consistent, values-based philosophy of service is the foundation of exceptional service that produces customers for life.	Enhanced Convenience & Strengthened Service Task 12

---

---

---

## Strategic Communication

---

Inspired communication is the open and constructive exchange of information between colleagues, across departments, among branch libraries, and between administration and branch libraries to promote unity, facilitate mutual understanding, coordinate activities, create shared knowledge, and serve customers well and it is key to the health and well-being of SCLS.

### Action

### Reference

---

#### Establish a Communication Task Force

The Communication Task Force will investigate and recommend new and innovative means, methods, and strategies, consistent with our values, to foster efficient and effective communication throughout SCLS.

Strategic Communication Goal 1

Full attention will be given to implementing a new means of system-wide communication to inform staff of new services, policies, procedures, and professional development opportunities as well as solicit their input and feedback.

---

#### Establish a Marketing Task Force

The Marketing Task Force will develop a marketing plan that does more than inform current and potential customers of our programs and services. Our challenge is, in the words of Taylor and LaBarre, “How do you make a compelling offer to customers who already have enough of what you're selling?”

Our Marketing Plan will identify how we stand out from the digital competition. What do we have to offer for those who do not have access to mobile devices or experiences in social networks or other virtual communities?

Strategic Communication Goal 2

Our marketing plan will tell stories about SCLS that people find captivating and engaging. Our stories will chronicle how we create meaningful information experiences tailored to each customer. Our message - SCLS transforms lives - will connect with customers' lifestyle and self-image, strengthening their identification with us. Current and potential customers will see themselves reflected in SCLS, enhancing the value and appeal of our services. What makes SCLS distinct and appealing in the digital age? It is our roots in the communities we serve, our personal connection to every customer, and how we use our knowledge and the Library's resources for their success and the betterment of Somerset County.

---

---



---

In recent years we have established a consistent and distinctive graphic identity, beginning with the new SCLS logo, palette and fonts. The marketing plan will strengthen brand identification. Our logo will be immediately recognizable and generate positive associations based on memorable experiences.

- 
- Develop an SCLS marketing plan.

Strategic Communication Task 1

---

---

# Partnerships to Strengthen Communities

---

A successful public library is an essential feature of a vibrant community and as such public libraries must weave themselves into the fabric of the communities they serve. In order to succeed in the future, SCLS must build and strengthen its partnerships with municipal governments, non-profits, community groups, and businesses throughout our service area and must partner with local, state and national library organizations.

Action	Reference
<p><b>Volunteers in Service to SCLS</b></p> <p>We want to capitalize on the pool of county residents who have retired after full professional careers and are willing, ready and able to volunteer their expertise. These highly skilled volunteers will assist in developing and implementing system projects, such as public service announcements, fundraising and publicity, and work within branches. We also welcome the skills brought by the many community residents of all ages who would like to volunteer at their local branch library.</p>	Partnerships to Strengthen Communities Goal 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To renew the SCLS volunteer program, we recommend establishing the system position of Volunteer Coordinator.</li></ul> <p>The responsibilities for this position will be identified by a Volunteer Task Force. The coordinator will be responsible for maintaining the guidelines which identify the use and training of volunteers, working with all branch Friends groups and other community organizations to recruit volunteers, and posting volunteer opportunities at the branch libraries on the web site. To manage Volunteers in Service to SCLS, the coordinator will maintain a list of system projects, recruit and screen volunteers, match their skills to projects and refer them to appropriate staff.</p>	Partnerships to Strengthen Communities Task 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Establish a Volunteer Task Force</li></ul>	Partnerships to Strengthen Communities Task 2

---

---

**Workforce Development Initiative**

The continued success of the county's economy depends on developing a workforce with the talent capable of mastering the skills of today and the skills needed for tomorrow. We will redouble our commitment to workforce development initiatives on a local and state level.

Partnerships to Strengthen Communities  
Goal 2

- 
- We will create the Workforce Development Committee, a standing sub-committee of the Grants & Partnership Committee, to investigate partnership opportunities, identify our role, resources and potential contributions, along with outcomes to be achieved and measurements of success. This committee will partner with the Coordinator of Professional Development to develop staff's knowledge and instructional skills and the Collection Development Department to acquire the appropriate workforce development resources, digital and analog.

Partnerships to Strengthen Communities  
Task 3

- 
- We will partner with the Greater Raritan Workforce Investment Board, Chamber of Commerce, Raritan Valley Community College, Somerset County Business Partnership and Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, to assist in workforce education and development.

Partnerships to Strengthen Communities  
Task 4

- 
- We will provide access to job, career and education information and offer instruction in using these resources efficiently and effectively.

Partnerships to Strengthen Communities  
Task 5

- 
- We will explore using a Mobile Tech Lab to teach computer skills and knowledge. In addition to basic computer skills, we will explore teaching classes or one-on-one tutorials in resumé writing, interviewing and completing electronic job applications.
- 

Partnerships to Strengthen Communities  
Task 6

---

**Cultural Connections: Serving English for Speakers of Other Language (ESOL) Communities**

The ESOL communities in Somerset County have been traditionally underserved. We intend to become an essential component in the economic and social success of New Americans.

Partnerships to Strengthen Communities  
Goal 3

- 
- To improve service to this population, we will form a standing committee composed of staff and representatives of organizations serving this community (ESOL Coordinators at public schools, Catholic Charities, United Way, Jewish Family Services of Somerville and others) to reach out to the community through church and community groups to identify its diverse information wants and needs and to create a long-term plan to address those needs through the Library's collection and services.

Partnerships to Strengthen Communities  
Task 7

- 
- Assisting the ESOL population to develop skills and knowledge to improve their competitiveness in the Somerset County economy will be a feature of this initiative as this population is expected to account for 49% of the growth in the county's labor force between 2008 – 2018 and grow at a faster rate, +31.5 %, than all other segments. An important outcome will be the establishment of a permanent partnership between community organizations serving New Americans and SCLS.

Partnerships to Strengthen Communities  
Task 8

- 
- Develop programming to serve the needs of New Americans

Partnerships to Strengthen Communities  
Task 9

---

---

## Resources to Transform Lives

---

There is a tendency to think that libraries are being supplanted by resources available through the Internet. Our experience is just the opposite – with the explosion of information and content available, both good and bad – successful libraries play an increasingly essential role in connecting people with the best of what is available using the best available technologies.

Action	Reference
<b>Mobile Tech Lab</b> Community leaders are looking for us to be the leaders in digital education.  We will develop a portable, wireless technology lab that is easily transportable to the branch libraries to facilitate instruction in digital literacy, from online job applications and resumés to productivity software (word processing, presentations, spreadsheets) and social media. Instruction will be tailored to the needs of each community.  Staff from branch libraries will be recruited to be instructors. The task force will work with the Coordinator of Professional Development to train instructors. The curriculum will offer classes for all ages in each community that will complement and/or supplement classes offered by the public school system and Raritan Valley Community College. The Mobile Tech Lab will also be used in the Workforce Development Initiative.  To fund this project, the Mobile Tech Lab Task Force will work with the Grants & Partnership Committee.	Resources to Transform Lives Goal 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Establish a Mobile Tech Lab Task Force</li></ul>	Resources to Transform Lives Task 1

---

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Mobile Tech Lab Task Force will write a proposal that identifies:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted population(s) to be served and their needs</li> <li>Outputs and outcomes to be achieved</li> <li>Equipment, technical requirements</li> <li>Classes and instructors</li> <li>Marketing plan</li> <li>Costs (equipment, transportation, and staffing)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Resources to Transform Lives Task 2
<p><b>SCLS on the Go</b>            Customers in communities without a nearby SCLS branch library have expressed their desire to have greater access to SCLS materials and to experience our outstanding programs.</p> <p>Under the direction of the Coordinator of Adult Programming, Coordinator of Children’s Programming and the Head of Circulation, the SCLS on the Go Committee, composed of staff and community representatives, will develop an initiative to expand access to materials and services throughout our service area.</p>	Resources to Transform Lives Goal 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will explore the possibility of partnering with local municipalities and organizations to provide space for programs, including space in community centers and assisted living communities.</li> </ul>	Resources to Transform Lives Task 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will investigate delivering library materials to facilities in these communities to enhance customer convenience.</li> </ul>	Resources to Transform Lives Task 4
<p><b>New SCLS Web Site</b>            The virtual counterpart of the branch libraries, the SCLS web site reflects our promise to transform lives. Its new design will be even more user-centered, engaging, and easy to use. It will support users’ tasks and goals efficiently and effectively. SCLS will engage in a major update of its web site.</p>	Resources to Transform Lives Goal 3

- 
- To redesign our current web site, we propose forming a Web Site Design Team and hiring a web site design consultant. Together we will establish design criteria and service objectives, assess the usability of the current web site, create a prototype web site, and conduct usability testing to perfect the final design.

Resources to Transform Lives Task 6

---

#### **SCLS Card for Kindergartners**

Nothing is more important than a library card to unlock the resources of SCLS. For a child, there is no more memorable library experience than getting his or her own library card and choosing books, CDs or DVDs to borrow. A library card creates habits that will last a lifetime.

Resources to Transform Lives Goal 4

Our goal is to offer a library card to every incoming kindergarten student in member municipalities.

---

#### **Establish a Kindergartner Library Card Task Force which will:**

- Design an SCLS information packet, including a simplified registration form, to be distributed during the kindergarten registration/orientation process each spring.
- Market benefits directly to parents in a friendly and informative letter included in the information package.
- Simplify the registration process and eliminate or minimize fines and other policies to create a “risk free library card” that is easy to use and manage.
- Identify attractive incentives or rewards for using a library card, including a specially designed card and lanyard.
- Revise procedures making it easier for parents to obtain and use their own library cards to promote family usage.
- Implement a process to expedite the delivery of completed cards.
- Partner with the public school system to distribute and collect registration forms and cards and to promote this initiative.
- Attract partners in the business community to supply or fund prizes used as incentives.

Resources to Transform Lives Task 7

---



# Conclusion

**T**o construct the new SCLS from these designs, we will become craftpersons, creating our future with our hands, hearts and minds. We, the Strategic Plan Steering Committee, remind you that there will be many opportunities to contribute your enthusiasm, knowledge and skills to our many projects.

What will be required of us as we work together to implement the initiatives identified in our strategic plan? We must be dedicated to the mission and vision of ***Transforming Lives, Strengthening Communities*** and be prepared to live the values of SCLS. We must be able to balance our regular work activities with the joys of transforming our dreams into reality. Eagerness to learn new knowledge and skills, to challenge oneself and grow professionally and personally are preferred. Training will be provided. Task force and committee leaders and facilitators, for example, will be expected to learn project management skills.

Constructing the future SCLS will be a long and complex process, lasting five years and requiring the coordination of many artisans and the allocation of extensive resources. We recommend creating a new position, the Director of Strategic Initiatives.

The Director of Strategic Initiatives is charged with:

- Creating an implementation schedule and timeline, establishing priorities and assignments, project expectations and deadlines.
- Assisting with the recruiting and assembling of each task force, committee, and team.
- Assisting with the development of responsibilities and performance expectations for circulation specialists, adult and children program support coordinators, Professional Development Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator, and Coordinator of Customer Service.
- Administering the activities of the committees, task forces, teams and coordinators identified in ***Transforming Lives, Strengthening Communities***.
- Developing and implementing processes that will encourage SCLS staff to continue dreaming of our future.
- Involving SCLS staff in the process of identifying and defining system needs utilizing Appreciative Inquiry.
- Developing and executing annual and mid-plan assessments.

Task forces, committees, coordinators and teams reporting to Director of Strategic Initiatives:

- Signage and Roving Task Force
- One Stop Service Standing Committee
- Head of Customer Service
- Customer Conversations Team
- Customer Service Philosophy Team
- Coordinator of Professional Development
- Staff Development Committee
- Adult Program Support Coordinator
- Youth Services Program Support Coordinator
- Communication Task Force
- Marketing Task Force
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Volunteer Task Force
- Grants & Partnership Committee
- Workforce Development Standing Committee
- ESOL Service Committee
- Mobile Tech Lab Task Force
- SCLS on the Go Committee
- Technology Planning Committee
- Technology Task Force
- Webpage Design Team
- Kindergarten Library Card Task Force

Each task force, standing committee and team will consist of 6-8 members.

The term of service for a committee is two years with a maximum membership of four years. Half of the original members will have a term of two years. After sitting out for two years, the member may again join the committee.

A task force or team will be disbanded after its charge has been fulfilled.

# Appendix

*Transforming Lives, Strengthening Communities* is the product of an inclusive and participatory process, based on the philosophy and methodology of Appreciative Inquiry (AI), that engaged stakeholders, from front-line staff and managers to customers and community leaders, in imagining and designing the Library's future. According to author Sue Hammond, "Appreciative Inquiry is a way of thinking, seeing and acting for powerful, purposeful change in organizations. Appreciative Inquiry works on the assumption that whatever you want more of, already exists in all organizations."<sup>10</sup> The proposition that future success is founded on yesterday's and today's achievements guided the planning process which consisted of four stages mirroring the stages of AI: Discover, Dream, Design, and Delivery.

## Discover

Staff began designing the Library's future by sharing experiences about our recent past:

**We are asking you to share an interaction — tell us a story —  
describe an experience that illustrates what the  
Somerset County Library System does best.**

We focused on positive experiences to learn about things that were working well – the successes – to find out what works and do more of it. The questions elicited stories about moments of exceptional service, caring relationships, significant accomplishments, inspired leadership, or innovative partnerships to discover the forces giving life to SCLS.

The Strategic Plan Steering Committee analyzed staff's stories of success and identified five recurring themes that reflect the strengths of SCLS:

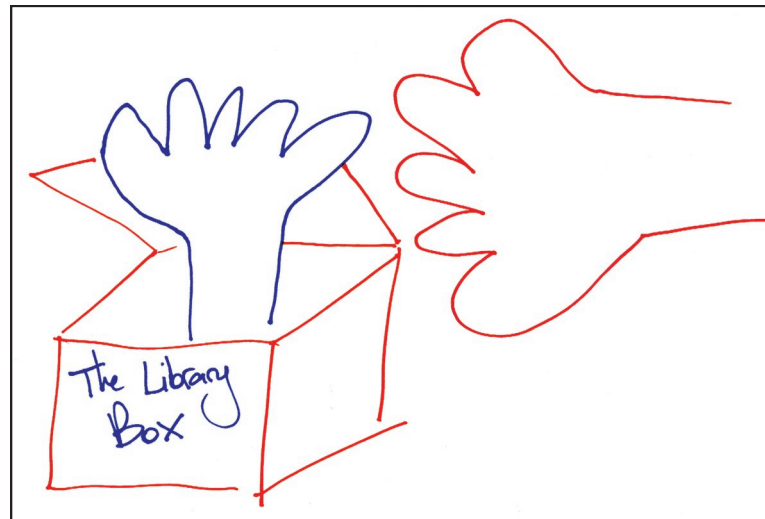
- Commitment to Excellence
- Community Connections
- Outstanding Resources
- Winning Teamwork
- Exceptional Customer Service

These strengths are the assets, capabilities, values, traditions, practices, philosophies, and other factors that shaped staff's successes. The Strategic Plan Steering Committee wrote and distributed a questionnaire to staff to fully investigate each of the strengths. Each staff member was instructed to select a partner and they took turns interviewing each other. Drawing on their own experiences, the partners explored the characteristics of each strength, and shared their discoveries with the Strategic Plan Steering Committee. When staff focused on the positive, their stories became a springboard for the future, generating useful information about what is to be enhanced and built upon as they re-imagined their Library.

A survey was distributed to customers - children, teens and adults - to capture their perceptions of what has made SCLS a force in their lives and their hopes for the Library's future.

### **Dream**

The questionnaire produced a rich collection of ideas expressed in language spiced with metaphors and images. A team, composed of staff from the branch libraries, was charged with transforming this material into dreams about the future of SCLS. Each dream was to capture SCLS when the strength is fully functional all of the time. The dreams connect the best of what exists now with visions of what might be, to provide clear future direction for SCLS. Each team expressed its thoughts and ideas in creative and innovative ways.





At the same time Management Team redefined the Library's mission and vision and identified the values that will unite staff in constructing their Library's future.

### **Design**

The Design Team, also composed of representatives from the branch libraries, identified the new organizational architecture necessary to transform the dreams into reality. Organizational architecture included:

- Expanded or new roles/jobs/relationships
- Organizational structures and management systems/policies
- Organizational culture (the governing beliefs and assumptions, management and service philosophies that support the vision and mission)
- Information Technology

Their design recommendations were incorporated into the strategic recommendations presented in the Designing Our Dreams section of ***Transforming Lives, Strengthening Communities***.

#### **Community Leadership Breakfast**

Government officials, representatives from the education community and non-profit organizations met over breakfast at Raritan Valley Community College to imagine the future of SCLS. This event contained all stages of the strategic planning process. Participants were asked to discover the reasons for SCLS' successes, to identify current and future social, economic and technology trends affecting Somerset County, and to imagine how the Library could effectively address those trends. Participants' contributions are also reflected in the strategic recommendations.

#### **Delivery**

While the work of implementing ***Transforming Lives, Strengthening Communities*** has already begun, staff will have many opportunities to contribute their knowledge and skills to construct the Library of their dreams.

#### **Conclusion**

***Transforming Lives, Strengthening Communities*** is more than a list of enhanced and new services. Creating the plan was comparable to writing a collective autobiography of SCLS. Staff explored who they are, what they do, and why it is important. Each person had their own story, told in their own voice, to add to the collective story of SCLS. So, too, did community members, from current library customers to elected officials. Appreciative Inquiry provided the methodology for these voices to be heard and their stories blended into one narrative capturing their hopes for the future. ***Transforming Lives, Strengthening Communities*** is a plan to transform SCLS and strengthen Somerset County. In its pages, stakeholders have identified who they will become, how they will transform themselves and why change is desirable. The creative process has forged a stronger identity, a distinctive sense of purpose and a shared destiny among stakeholders.



# Contributors



### **Somerset County Freeholders**

Patricia L. Walsh, Director  
 Peter S. Palmer, Deputy Director  
 Mark Caliguire  
 Patrick Scaglione, Library Liaison  
 Robert Zaborowski

### **Somerset County Library Commission**

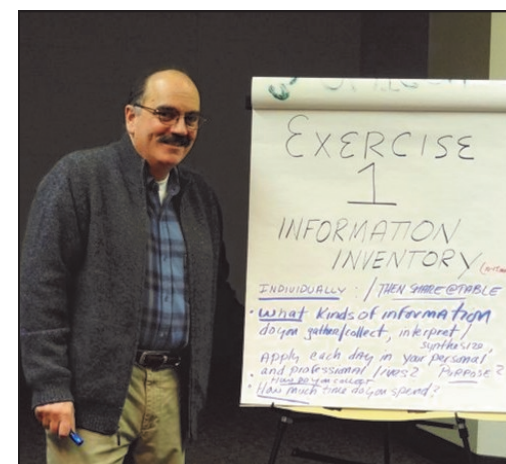
Art Carlson, Chairperson  
 Mary Caruso, Vice-Chairperson  
 Albert Ellis  
 George Jarvis  
 James McGarry, Jr.  
 Anita Ventantonio  
 Robert Waldstein

### **Somerset County Library System**

Brian Auger, Director  
 Keith McCoy, Assistant Director

### **Somerset County Library System Management Team**

Melissa Banks, Branch Director,  
 Somerville Public Library  
 Adele Barree, SCLS Technical Services  
 Lisa Bogart, SCLS Marketing  
 Mun-Hwa Chen, SCLS Adult Services  
 Wendy Clarkson, SCLS Automation  
 Sue Coslick, SCLS Circulation  
 Rebecca Crawford, SCLS Youth Services  
 Marna Elliott, Branch Director,  
 Bridgewater Public Library  
 Deanna Gray, SCLS Human Resources  
 Edward Hoag, Branch Director,  
 Hillsborough Public Library  
 Hannah Kerwin, Branch Director,  
 Bound Brook Memorial Library  
 Richard Loomis, SCLS Electronic Resources  
 Cindy Mangel, Branch Director,  
 Mary Jacobs Memorial Library  
 Brian Morgan, SCLS Business Manager  
 Karen Pifher, Branch Director,  
 Peapack & Gladstone Public Library  
 Doug Poswencyk, Branch Director,  
 Watchung Public Library  
 Lauren Ryan, Branch Director,  
 North Plainfield Memorial Library  
 Edward Smith, Branch Director,  
 Manville Public Library  
 Elaine Whiting, Branch Director,  
 Warren Township Library



### **Steering Committee Members**

Lew Belfont, Process Facilitator  
 Karen Pifher, Peapack & Gladstone  
 Branch, SCLS Coordinator  
 Adele Barree, SCLS Technical Services  
 Lisa Bogart, SCLS Marketing  
 Sue Coslick, Bridgewater Library  
 Antonette D'Orazio, Warren Township  
 Library  
 Marna Elliott, Bridgewater Library  
 Albert Ellis, SCLS Library Commission  
 Richard Loomis, SCLS Electronic  
 Resources  
 Cindy Mangel, Mary Jacobs Memorial  
 Library  
 Keith McCoy, SCLS Administration  
 Suzanne Ridzy, Mary Jacobs Memorial  
 Library  
 Lauren Ryan, North Plainfield Library



In addition to those individuals listed below, SCLS staff supported the development of ***Transforming Lives, Strengthening Communities*** in meaningful ways by covering service desks, attending staff meetings to discuss the strategic planning process, participating in informal discussions of the Appreciative Inquiry process and providing anonymous responses to questionnaires used by the Dream Team.

### Story Gathering Attendees

Christine Adamcio	June DeCaro	Ken Kaufman	Kim Melillo	Joanne Sheats
Bob Allen	Kathy DeCristofaro	Hedy Kelly	Laura Mellor	Vita Sheehan
Cassandra Alpaugh	Carolyn Della Sala	Fiona Kennedy	Kathy Memoli	Roopa Shet
Maryellen Approvato	Nancy DiBetta	Hannah Kerwin	Brian Morgan	Jan Shulak
Morris Balacco	Lalita Dileep	Rebecca Klein	Lorraine Mozgai	Jane Sites
Melissa Banks	Margaret Draghi	Jennifer Konopacki	Dianne Nevitt	Pamela Sloan
Winnie Bao	Theresa Durning	Mitford Kwok	Mary Nunn	James Sommerville
Barbara Barbano	William Easton	Jean Lapotasky	Sharon Orlando	Kathy Sparks
Teresa Bayles	Carol Elfo	Kay Laughland	Jackie Panila	Elaine Stringer
Karen Bilton	Elaine Eversen	Sophie Lee	Charlene Perkins	Kathy Tenzer
Rosa Blanco	Karen Fine	Rosemarie Lamperti	Nanette Peterson	Mary Terepka
Brendan Boyle	Sarah Fisher	Theresa Leonard	Vera Polonskaya	Shirley Todoroff
Gobinder Braich	June Flachs	Nancy Lepionka	Doug Poswencyk	Linda Tripp
Cathy Briant	Sharon Franklin	Carol Simon Levin	Kyle Pucciarello	Jessica Trujillo
Phyllis Carone	Samantha Gale	Debbie Levin	Katia Radeva	MerrieTuttle
Diana Chabrier	Shirley Gessner	Ann Lewis	Rachel Reigle	Steven Valentini
Khana Chakraborty	Elisa Gillette	Fan Li	Lauren Reilly	Jo Walker
Mun-Hwa Chen	Joanne Golomb	Edith Lit	Tamara Richman	Yijun Wang
Jane Choi	Liz Griesbach	Brianna LoSardo	Linda Romeo	Ziyan Wang
Diana Collins	Robert Helmbrecht	Mary Anne Luckenbach	Heather Rustay	Linda Waitikowich
Sue Cook	Edward Hoag	Xiangning Luo	Cynthia Santiago	Elaine Whiting
Pat Cosenza	Bing Hojilla	Manju Mahajan	Elaine Schoeffel	Judy Wilhelm
Terri Coss	Maria Holguin	Janice Marshall	Paul Schroeder	Helen Yakalis
Mike Costante	Jean Hummel	Pat Mason	Carol Schwab	Megan Yudd
Rebecca Crawford	Melissa John	Elizabeth Mayberry	Yvonne Selander	Shiyu Zheng
Urvashi Dave	Susan Kane	Lynn Mazur	Selwa Shamy	

### Dream Team

Morris Balacco  
Barbara Barbano  
Denise Berlin  
Khana Chakraborty  
Pat Cosenza  
Rebecca Crawford  
Lalita Dileep  
Bill Easton  
Sarah Fisher  
Samantha Gale  
Bing Hojilla  
Melissa John

Cynthia Lambert  
Jean Lapotasky  
Edith Lit  
Manju Mahajan  
Lynn Mazur  
Laura Mellor  
Kathy Memoli  
Melissa Meola  
Gretchen Pierce  
Cynthia Santiago  
Lawrence Sapienza  
Shirley Todoroff



### Design Team

Christine Adamcio  
Teresa Bayles  
Cathy Briant  
Alana Danois  
Nancy DiBetta  
Jenna Galley  
Susan Kane  
Ken Kaufman  
Jennifer Konopacki  
Carol Simon Levin  
Kim Melillo  
Chris Murray

Mary Nelson  
Sharon Orlando  
Nanette Peterson  
Kyle Pucciarello  
Tamara Richman  
Yvonne Selander  
Selwa Shamy  
Joanne Sheats  
Patrice Sprovieri  
Steve Valentini  
Ziyan Wang  
Helen Yakalis





## Customer Surveys

Community members responding to print and electronic surveys.

## Community Leaders

June Adams	President, Friends of the Somerset County Library
Thomas Atkinson	Director of Technology, Bridgewater-Raritan Regional School District
Stephanie Bakos	Member, Bridgewater Library Advisory Board
Art Carlson	Chair, Somerset County Library Commission
Kimberly Cowart	Director, Somerset County Department of Community Development
Rita Donald	Coordinator, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program
Brenda Esler	Assistant Director, EmPoWER Somerset
Brenda Fallon	President, Mary Jacobs Library Foundation
Joanne Fetzko	Office on Aging and Disability Services
Carolann Garafola	Mayor, Warren Township
Mike Giordano	Mayor, Borough of North Plainfield
Faith Giovino	Member, Bound Brook Memorial Library Advisory Board
Paul Grzella	Editor, Courier News
Herb Hall	President, Somerville Library Board of Trustees
Denise Katula	Grants Coordinator, Somerset County
Christine Kretz	President, Hillsborough Library Advisory Board
Beverly Lang	President, Warren Township Library Advisory Board
Ruth Lufkin	Library Director, Bernards Township Library
Julie Maginn	Director, Evelyn S. Field Library, Raritan Valley Community College
John Malchow	Member, Watchung Library Advisory Board
Jadusingh Martin	President, Friends of the Somerville Public Library
Ellisa Matthews	President, Friends of the Watchung Library
Yumiko Mishima	Director, Jointure of Community Adult Education

### **Community Leaders (continued)**

Cheryl O'Connor	Executive Director, LibraryLinkNJ
Wendy Rayner	President, Friends of the Mary Jacobs Memorial Library
Patrick Scaglione	Somerset County Freeholder
Carol Senff	President, Friends of the Warren Township Library
Edward Smith	Director, Manville Public Library
Robyn Ulmer	Community Relations Manager, Barnes & Noble
Martin Warzala	Director, Collection Management & Technical Development, Baker & Taylor
Leslie Workman	Trustee, Bernards Township Library Board of Trustees
Edward P. Zimmerman	Mayor, Borough of Rocky Hill



### **Editorial Assistance**

Nasser Afzali  
Barbra Barbano  
Carol Levin  
Richard Loomis  
Joanne Sheats

### **Layout and Design**

Christine Adamcio  
Lisa Bogart  
Karen Pifher

### **Photography**

Hannah Kerwin  
Karen Pifher  
*11/30/2012*

## Notes

1. For full information about the planning process see the Appendix.
2. Customer Surveys created by the Somerset County Library System staff (Christine Adamcio, Rebecca Crawford and Carol Levin) were distributed at all SCLS branch libraries February 28, 2012 through March 30, 2012. Electronic surveys were available through <http://www.sclsnj.org>.
3. Lee Rainie, Kristen Purcell, Tony Siesfeld, Mayur Patel. "How the Public Perceives Community Information Systems." *Pew Internet*. Chapter 3: Who Goes to Public Libraries. 30 December 2007. Web. June 2012. <http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2007/12/chapter-3-who-goes-to-public-libraries/>.
4. Aaron Smith. "Cell Internet Use 2012." *Pew Internet*. 26 June 2012. Web. June 2012. <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2012/Cell-Internet-Use-2012.aspx>.
5. Aaron Smith. "Cell Internet Use 2012." *Pew Internet*. 26 June 2012. Web. June 2012. <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2012/Cell-Internet-Use-2012.aspx>.
6. Lee Rainie; Kathryn Zickhur, Kristen Purcell, Mary Madden, Joanna Brenner. "The rise of e-reading." *Pew Internet*. 4 April 2012. Web. June 2012. <http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2012/04/04/the-rise-of-e-reading/>.
7. Steven Coffman. "The Decline and Fall of the Library Empire." *Information Today, Inc. Searcher*. Volume 20. No. 3. April 2012. Web. June 2012. <http://www.infotoday.com/searcher/apr12/Coffman--The-Divine-and-Fall-of-the-Library-Empire.shtml>.
8. Steven Coffman. "The Decline and Fall of the Library Empire." *Information Today, Inc. Searcher*. Volume 20. No. 3. April 2012. Web. June 2012. <http://www.infotoday.com/searcher/apr12/Coffman--The-Divine-and-Fall-of-the-Library-Empire.shtml>.
9. Steven Bell. "From Gatekeeper to Gateopeners: Our Future Lies in Designing Meaningful Library User Experiences." *American Libraries*. 40 8-9 Aug-Sept 2009. p. 53.
10. Joe Hall, Sue Hammond. "What is Appreciative Inquiry?" *Thin Books*. Web. June 2012. <http://www.thinbook.com/docs/doc-whatissai.pdf>.