

SCLSNJ Strategic Plan Update

January-April 2019

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES Here are the things we've worked on over the last several months that specifically support our strategic priorities:	CORE SERVICES Our recent core service activities are just a part of normal SCLSNJ business. With that said, here are a few highlights and examples:
<p>Promoting the Library as an impartial platform for creating MEANINGFUL INTERACTIONS AND CONNECTIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The second annual Special Needs Job Fair in early April attracted 197 attendees who were able to connect with 21 organizations and businesses that help place young adult and adult clients in employment opportunities (up from 13 organizations in 2018). The event was also attended by Peggy Cadigan of the New Jersey State Library, which has led to a preliminary discussion about a possible partnership with SCLSNJ for a statewide special needs conference and for providing mentorship to other libraries on how to support the employment needs of the special needs population.• The Current Event Conversations program series started in early 2019. Attendees hear different viewpoints and perspectives from experts in a variety of thought-provoking fields, such as human rights, genetic testing, and climate change, and are encouraged to share their opinions while listening respectfully and engaging others in fruitful conversations.	<p>Making PERSONALIZED CONNECTIONS between patrons and materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the first four months of 2019, our Collection Development team has processed over 1,900 suggestions from patrons.• Continued outreach efforts to schools across the system to promote our materials. Recently a teacher from the Matheny Medical and Educational Center discovered our Launchpad collection at PGL. Teachers, students, and administrators love the tablets, and we had a number of new card sign-ups from Matheny staff and students.
<p>Exploring new ways to SHAPE OUR SPACES to meet community needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We are working with officials in at least six of the municipalities hosting SCLSNJ branches to prepare to apply for state matching funds as part of the New Jersey Library Construction Bond Act.• We will dedicate an outdoor pavilion at the Bridgewater Library made possible by a family bequest. The space will be used for programs and events highlighting nature, the outdoors, and gardening for children.• Plans are underway for an outdoor theatre and program space at the Warren branch.	<p>Presenting programs that help community members CONNECT, EXPLORE, SHARE AND DISCOVER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SCLSNJ was awarded the 2019 Multicultural Award from the New Jersey State Library for Little Explorers, a series of children's programs focusing on world cultures.• We continue to offer our regular slate of programs, but new projects and ideas are on hold due to the restructuring of the former support services. We are eagerly anticipating a new programming and community engagement manager joining the team soon.

<p>WELCOMING new residents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are finishing up plans for a new series of onboarding emails that will go to new library card holders after they register for the first time that should start going out this summer. 	<p>Serving as a community GATHERING SPACE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCLSNJ hosted its fourth Scripps National Spelling Bee competition with champions from 33 county schools. Alternatives, Inc. is using our meeting rooms as satellite offices to reach more clients in need in Somerset County.
<p>Addressing the needs of SHIFTING DEMOGRAPHICS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most SCLSNJ branches will start off a year's worth of program offerings for adults with special needs in May or June 2019. Three branches are in their second year of a partnership with Rutgers to host social service interns. We increased the number of programs for Spanish speaking patrons (such as Beginning English classes) at the Bound Brook branch from three to four, due to high demand. As new patrons have come to the branch, bi-lingual storytimes saw a threefold increase in attendance in the past six months. As a result of efforts to recruit staff talent with skills in languages other than English so that we can better assist our patrons, we were able to fill a full-time opening at the Bound Brook branch with a staff member who speaks Spanish fluently. 	<p>Promoting and supporting LIFELONG LEARNING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We added a new database, Creativebug, which offers more than 1,000 award-winning art and craft video classes taught by recognized design experts and artists. SCLSNJ's annual volunteer luncheon in April allowed us to recognize community members who keep themselves involved and engaged by supporting the Library. So far in 2019, we have had over 700+ hours of volunteer time.
	<p>Providing TECHNOLOGY ACCESS AND EXPERTISE that meet the needs of the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have made plans to substantially increase bandwidth at all branches starting in July 2019. We have purchased a set of laptops to create a mobile lab to be shared between branches.
	<p>Creating opportunities that build Somerset County's ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Librarians taught several classes at the Small Business Development Center at RVCC on library resources for business owners. Librarians created a new Business Kit on the Gig Economy