

# SCLSNJ Strategic Plan Update

May-August 2019

<p><b>STRATEGIC PRIORITIES</b></p> <p>Here are the things we've worked on over the last several months that specifically support our strategic priorities:</p>	<p><b>CORE SERVICES</b></p> <p>Our recent core service activities are just a part of normal SCLSNJ business. With that said, here are a few highlights and examples:</p>
<p>Promoting the Library as an impartial platform for creating <b>MEANINGFUL INTERACTIONS AND CONNECTIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our Adult Learning and Community Engagement team began a partnership with the State Library and a state grant writer to apply for a federal grant for special needs patrons. SCLSNJ is sharing information on our annual Special Needs Jobs Fair and our Special Needs Social Hours, the success of which suggests there is an opportunity to scale up. The grant would be used to develop a state-wide program, benefiting this growing demographic and positioning SCLSNJ as a profession leader.</li><li>• SCLSNJ's 2019 summer reading challenge participation increased 4% over last year and there was a 6% increase in days logged.</li></ul>	<p>Making <b>PERSONALIZED CONNECTIONS</b> between patrons and materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In July, the U.S. Department of State inspected SCLSNJ's passport acceptance facility. The inspection included interviews with staff and a detailed examination of our work space, and the inspector shared techniques that will help further distinguish SCLSNJ as an exemplary passport acceptance facility. SCLSNJ achieved a <b>perfect national score</b> on this inspection.</li><li>• A Spanish speaking patron came to Somerville Library. He recently arrived to the US, seeking asylum from discrimination in Colombia. Our library staff showed him the Spanish language section, the ESL collection, assisted him in a job search, and signed up him for a library card. He was overjoyed with the resources he was offered.</li></ul>
<p>Exploring new ways to <b>SHAPE OUR SPACES</b> to meet community needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We opened a brand new technology room at the Bound Brook branch with new flooring, fixtures, furniture, public computers, and charging stations.</li><li>• In June, the Greany Learning Garden opened at the Bridgewater branch. This special space, accessible from the Youth Services Department, features a 600 square foot covered pavilion, a butterfly garden and four raised vegetable beds, enabling the Library to cultivate learning in natural science, nutrition, and conservation by pairing hands-on experiences with programming and materials for children and teens.</li><li>• SCLSNJ submitted data surveys to the State Library for the New Jersey Library Construction Bond Act. The surveys examined the scope of the actual construction projects and asked for initial rough cost estimates for eight potential construction projects.</li><li>• Watchung Library converted an unused office into a private study room for patrons.</li></ul>	<p>Presenting programs that help community members <b>CONNECT, EXPLORE, SHARE AND DISCOVER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The North Plainfield branch hosted a Skype author visit with award-winning YA novelist, Tomi Adeyemi. She spoke with teens about her writing and the publishing process.</li><li>• The Warren Township branch hosted the Around Town summer storytime series. Community members were invited to come in, read a story, and talk about what they do in Warren Township. A visit from a firefighter – with truck – was a highlight.</li><li>• SCLSNJ hosted another successful booth at the 4-H Fair and provided a storytime for fair attendees.</li><li>• Staff of all branches visited schools to encourage participation in our summer reading challenge.</li><li>• Hillsborough branch staff brought the summer reading challenge to all Hillsborough Township summer camps. Many of the participants had not participated in previous years.</li></ul>

<p><b>WELCOMING</b> new residents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The North Plainfield branch offers an ongoing display of a single word in 5 languages called “word of the week.”</li> <li>• Peapack &amp; Gladstone branch staff attended a local community day where new residents were signed up for the summer reading challenge.</li> </ul>	<p>Serving as a community <b>GATHERING SPACE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are offering Special Needs Social Hours at all ten branches.</li> <li>• The Bound Brook branch partnered with the Bound Brook Cultural Arts Committee and Somerset County 4-H/Middle Earth Student Ambassadors for Community Health Club to collaborate and hosted their latest art projects.</li> </ul>
<p>Addressing the needs of <b>SHIFTING DEMOGRAPHICS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are working with ConverSight.ai to provide a voice interface to our catalog and other services through their Libro product, allowing people to access their accounts without needing to see a screen or use a keyboard and mouse.</li> <li>• SCLSNJ has been invited to be a part of the Complete Count Committee for Somerset County.</li> <li>• The Bound Brook branch hosted a 12-week diabetes prevention and management program for Spanish speaking patrons.</li> </ul>	<p>Promoting and supporting <b>LIFELONG LEARNING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are looking for an alternative to Lynda.com, a self-paced video learning platform which recently altered its privacy policies in a way that makes it incompatible with use by public libraries.</li> <li>• On October 1 we will be adding BrainHQ, an online brain-training system based on research in neurological science and related medicine. It gamifies self-paced “brain-training”.</li> <li>• Young adult patrons participated in a program which encouraged and strengthened their creative skills – “Make Your Own Graphic Novel”.</li> </ul>
	<p>Providing <b>TECHNOLOGY ACCESS AND EXPERTISE</b> that meet the needs of the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several branches offered staff-led ‘coding camps’ this summer which taught our young patrons coding skills including scripts, animation, and sprites.</li> </ul>
	<p>Creating opportunities that build Somerset County’s <b>ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The SCLSNJ administrator has been asked to serve on the board of the Somerset County Business Partnership (SCBP).</li> <li>• The President and CEO of the SCBP, Mike Kerwin, is inviting community partners to learn more about RWJ Barnabas Health's new initiative, Our Hospital. This community hospital in Somerville is the first facility in New Jersey to offer primary care services for the LBGTQIA community, as well as one of only two hospitals in New Jersey with an inpatient Eating Disorders unit. Several staff members will tour the facility later this summer as we seek opportunities for new programs and community engagement.</li> <li>• Human Resources is creating social media accounts to advertise employment opportunities with SCLSNJ.</li> </ul>