

YEAR IN REVIEW (2019) & YEAR AHEAD (2020)

Census 2020

The WLS Board Innovation Committee identified the important role of WLS and our member libraries in supporting the upcoming 2020 Census as a funding initiative for 2019. Naming the project *Everybody Counts!*, Pat Brigham, Director of Development, crafted a project proposal outlining the goals and objectives to increase awareness of the importance of a Complete Count, dispel fear and mistrust, and remove any digital barriers (digital skills, internet and computer access) to complete the 2020 Census—the first one to allow for online responses.

This project will support a temporary part-time project manager to assist libraries in providing information and coordinating outreach programs to hard-to-count communities with member libraries and nonprofit partners, allocating secure laptops and desktops for 2020 Census completion at libraries, and develop marketing/promotional materials including a webpage and newsletters. In addition, funding has purchased 5,000 specially designed *We Count* counting books, an early childhood board book, for children and grown-ups in Spanish and English to help families understand how they are counted and why it is important.

In December, Dana Hysell Alongi joined WLS as the Census Coordinator to assess needs, prepare, support and evaluate the effectiveness of the public libraries' efforts to assist their communities in complete count efforts for the 2020 Census. A preliminary survey revealed member library requests and the desire for training about the 2020 Census questions, how staff are permitted to assist patrons, the types of advertising materials and use of the dedicated Census kiosks (PC or laptop). Census bookmarks and posters are currently under design.

Ms. Hysell Alongi and Joe Maurantonio, Manager of Special Projects, have attended various workshops on the 2020 Census, Library Programs and Partnerships in the 2020 Census, Digital Census Preparation Training and 2020 Census Complete Count Committees to be better informed on what WLS can offer and support.

The initial edition of the 2020 Census *Westchester Counts* newsletter was sent to member library staff to share quick information points and dates of upcoming events. The newsletter also introduced our new website at www.WestchesterCounts.org. A library *Census Assessment* survey is being developed to gather a precise number of materials and hardware needed by the member libraries to best serve their communities. All member libraries are encouraged to have a representative in their local Complete Count Committees, to reach out to community organizations and other stakeholders to join together and help identify hard-to-count areas.

In the upcoming months, our Special Projects team will continue to help prepare, inform, and support our member libraries toward a complete and accurate 2020 Census count – because in Westchester... *Everyone Counts!*

<i>DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS</i> Fundors for <i>Everybody Counts!</i>	
Con Edison	\$15,000
Herman Goldman Foundation	\$18,000
NY State Census Equity Fund (NY Community Trust)	\$25,000
TD Charitable Foundation (Sponsorship)	\$5,000
TD Charitable Foundation (Program)	\$5,000
Total:	\$68,000

Evergreen Migration / Information Technology (IT) Services

The WLS IT network sustained a number of crucial challenges in 2019 that included malware and ransomware attacks in addition to the migration of the Integrated Library System (ILS) to Evergreen. Despite numerous hours of training and preparation, switching to a new system with different inherent strengths and weaknesses resulted in a number of adverse situations that interfered with the member libraries' ability to service their communities.

Issues included: VDI connections; slow response time on the WLS network; Evergreen workflow anomalies for WLS protocols; acquisitions module integration (more below); and unclear communication between WLS and the libraries. While many issues have been addressed, WLS IT staff continues to work with the Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) ILS and Technology Committees to identify and prioritize ongoing issues.

In June, the WLS Board authorized an independent IT audit; and WLS contracted with Nutanix to review the WLS network, results of which will be released some time in February 2020. In addition, a RFP (Request for Proposals) for an audit to address expressed areas of concern (i.e., network security, VDI/Direct Access to Evergreen, Helpdesk support and service) was issued. However, this process did not find a suitable vendor, and the RFP was divided to address three core activities: virtualization desktop infrastructure (VDI) environment; network operations, structure and security; and IT operations. Vendors have been selected for all three, and the first audit on IT Operations started in early January 2020. In addition, WLS IT staff made site visits to each of the 44 library locations to examine and test the WLS network equipment at each site.

WLS is committed to resolving these important issues and working with PLDA to determine the best way to deliver service.

A new WLS helpdesk software portal was also implemented in 2019. More user friendly with better service tracking options, the new software allows individuals to review the status of their requests.

Evergreen Migration / Cataloging Services

The bulk of the complications with Evergreen have concerned acquisitions. Most of the member libraries who purchase materials from vendors also receive matching MARC (MAchine Readable Cataloging) records from those vendors. The MARC records are loaded into the catalog by Doug Wray, Manager of Cataloging Services. They are the bibliographic records which represent titles and facilitate discovery and circulation and are shared by all of the member libraries.

The libraries who receive MARC records have different plans with their vendors for varying levels of service. Some order directly from their vendors' websites; three libraries order through the Evergreen acquisitions module, which offers a streamlined way of monitoring the status of orders, viewing invoices and keeping track of funds. Some libraries want brief records which arrive early and can be followed up by fuller records. Some want brief records but rely on the WLS catalogers to replace them with full records. Some libraries want records which have coding which will generate information about individual items (shelving locations, call numbers, prices, barcodes for linking to the catalog, etc.). When these are processed by Evergreen, the system will load a new bibliographic record, or, if a matching record is already in the catalog (the matching is based on ISBN or UPC), it will simply add the new item information to the existing record. (Duplicate bibliographic records are avoided.) Some individual libraries opt for a mixture of these approaches, with a single vendor or with multiple vendors.

For WLS Cataloging, Evergreen is more efficient than SirsiDynix in one big way: When files of vendor MARC records contain no customization, they can be joined and loaded in one large file, regardless of the identity of the library or libraries. In SirsiDynix, catalogers were required to load them one-by-one, using reports tailored to each library.

However, Evergreen requires that a “provider code” be entered whenever loading a file of records which were ordered via the acquisitions module. (The provider codes are funding codes.) This means that: each of the libraries using the acquisitions module needed to do the following:

- devise its own list of provider codes;
- the codes needed to be incorporated into a drop-down menu in Evergreen;
- the vendors had to change their grids to include a field for the provider codes as well as create new programming which would place the provider code in a certain field in the MARC records in the file;
- the library staff person doing the ordering had to remember to plug in the appropriate code for each order;
- and the WLS cataloger doing the processing had to open a record in every incoming file, to inspect the field containing the provider code in order to know which provider code to choose when handling the order.

This complexity created many opportunities for mistakes, presented a steep learning curve and required much patience, cooperation and communication.

Evergreen is also more particular than Sirsi/Dynix about the nomenclature used to code item information, and the vendors and libraries have had to adjust to the new vocabulary. Mr. Wray quickly discovered that missing or incorrect coding (even one character or space) would cause the loading failure of an entire file or of the item information of certain titles in a file. In these cases, the individual in the library was usually to blame for sending incomplete or erroneous data to the vendors, but it took many conversations with all parties to determine this. The file would always need to be diagnosed, corrected, resent, and reloaded. These errors still continue, but their occurrence is becoming much rarer. There have also been persistent cases of invoices being invisible to the ordering library; this has been attributed to a vendor’s need to adjust to Evergreen. Baker & Taylor Sales Consultant Tarita Murray gave a two-session workshop to explain their ordering system; and she talked mainly about selection, but also discussed how to fill out the grids which are required when ordering customized MARC records.

A separate issue had to do with the delivery of vendor files to WLS Cataloging Services. In the past, they had been procured in various ways: the vendors emailed them to us; the libraries downloaded them from the vendors’ sites and emailed them to us; Mr. Wray would download them from various places on the vendors’ sites (either proactively or after emailed notification from the vendor); or Mr. Wray and Cataloger Qingshe Ren would download them from folders in a FTP (File Transfer Protocol) site on the WLS server. Different vendors – and sometimes different departments within one vendor – had different methods. Working with IT staff, this process was simplified by adding folders to the FTP site and asking vendors to alter their workflows so that all files would be FTPed to our server (no small request). It took months, but this new delivery system is now functioning well. In her visit to WLS, Ms. Murray demonstrated how a newly created feature on Baker & Taylor’s order form should be used to direct each file to its correct WLS FTP folder. Some of the smaller vendors still email their files to WLS Cataloging Services; but, since this happens sporadically, it is manageable. WLS will work with these vendors to encourage them to adopt the FTP approach.

One of the greatest challenges during the year was getting all of the various parties to communicate, which hadn’t been as necessary during the Sirsi/Dynix years. WLS Cataloging Services, the WLS IT Department, Equinox, the libraries and the vendors each understood a small part of the picture rather than the entirety. Often, different departments within a large vendor were assigned different duties – sometimes for a single one of our member libraries – and those different departments were not familiar with each other’s procedures. This often made it difficult to find the right person at a given vendor to discuss a particular problem. This resulted in copious emailing and a slow rate of progress. Senior Technology Training Coordinator Allison Midgley helped tremendously following Melanie Carnes’ (System Librarian) retirement in July. Ms. Midgley has worked on connecting everyone and has tirelessly pursued the sharing of information, seeking solutions to even the most detailed and frustrating problems. Our new System

Librarian Lindsay Stratton has experience with Evergreen from her prior position at the Pioneer Library System in Canandaigua, NY; and she is a valuable addition to the entire process. Credit should also be given to Larchmont Public Library's Head of Reference, Liam Hegarty, who took the initiative to create an in-house manual for Larchmont staff members to use when ordering, which was shared with Ms. Midgley and Mr. Wray and has provided useful guidance and documentation.

Members of Equinox, WLS Cataloging and IT Services are currently engaged in biweekly conference calls to discuss acquisitions and other topics, and Equinox has been easy to communicate with and amenable to help at all times. At a point when handling files of vendor MARC records becomes trouble-free (or nearly trouble-free), Mr. Wray will create a manual and begin sharing the work with Mr. Ren and Cataloger Melissa Glazer.

Aside from all of the above, Evergreen has been good to use for cataloging. It improves on the Sirsi/Dynix cataloging module by offering "record buckets," folders into which one can place subgroups of records to isolate them for merging duplicates, editing or other operations. Plus, a record bucket will persist after the current session and assist in organizing the work. When editing a MARC record in Evergreen, the cataloger has the option of having it formatted as a flat text file, almost like a Word document. In Sirsi/Dynix, by contrast, one was limited to moving between the various fields in a MARC record by using function keys or a mouse, which was more cumbersome. Evergreen also has more search parameters constantly available. The "advanced search" windows in Sirsi/Dynix required special attention to set up and offered fewer options for narrowing searches.

Mr. Wray has been using the popular, free software program MarcEdit, which works well in conjunction with Evergreen. In particular, MarcEdit is extremely useful for joining multiple files, batch editing them and detecting instances of faulty coding. With Sirsi/Dynix, the catalogers spent a lot of time revising bibliographic records after they had been loaded into the catalog. The revising is done chiefly to make them conform to local cataloging policies. With MarcEdit and Evergreen, the files can now be edited, often in large batches and in macro find-and-replace fashion, before they are loaded, which is more efficient.

Mr. Ren continues to catalog AV materials (DVDs, Blu-rays and audiobooks) and has also worked on books when needed. Ms. Glazer catalogs most books and some AV. In addition, she has been in charge of handling the circulation of McNaughton plan (rented) books. All of the catalogers, including part-time cataloger Kate Finley, work on replacing brief vendor MARC records with full ones. They use weekly lists compiled automatically by Evergreen and managed by Mr. Wray. The brief records usually consist of little more than an ISBN or UPC, an author and a title, and while they can be linked to, in order to circulate materials, they offer little for discovery and description. The member libraries would need to pay their vendors extra and/or wait longer for fuller vendor MARC records if WLS Cataloging staff did not provide this service.

In 2019, WLS Cataloging Services continued to see many self-published books, as well as unorthodox library materials such as knitting needles, musical instruments, electronic educational toys and other objects. These usually require original cataloging. Mr. Wray has been periodically cataloging items from the very large CD collection of former WLS Director Dr. Maurice Freedman, which is now owned by Mount Vernon Public Library. Ms. Glazer and Mr. Wray cataloged a quantity of Findaway Launchpads (preloaded computer tablets) for an outreach project initiated and maintained by Elena Falcone, Director, Public Innovation and Engagement.

Interlibrary Loan (ILL)

The ILL Department has been working hard to maintain service levels while adjusting to staff changes since the retirement of ILL Manager, Hui Sheng, in June 2019. Rob Caluori, Director of Transformation and Strategic Operations, now oversees ILL operations. Paul Gunther-Mohr now works part-time for ILL along with full-time staff member Molly Tobin. A detailed procedure manual has been developed to help orient

new staff and provide existing staff with a guide when performing tasks that are unscheduled and more sporadic by nature.

The ILL Department reviewed its communication practices with member libraries to create a more streamlined path support. All calls to ILL are now directed to the main ILL department line, which is immediately answered by voicemail. The voicemail asks the caller to provide all relevant information needed for a loan request. The voicemail is then sent to the ILL department email, which is monitored by ILL staff, and the issue can be researched before returning the call. Research may include reviewing the loan and contacting the loaning library. This new workflow empowers the ILL staff so that when they are on the phone with the member library, they are fully informed and can provide the information the library needs.

A analysis was conducted by the ILL Department of the cost involved for moving to a purchase-on-demand model for filling ILL requests as opposed to the traditional external loan process currently in use. ILL activity from 2013-2018 was used to conduct this analysis, and it was concluded that a purchase-on-demand model would not be cost effective at this time because it would not provide enough available materials. However, this may be worth reviewing again in the future as more libraries and library systems begin to use a purchase-on-demand model.

The ILL Department had already begun exploring alternative delivery options to save on shipping costs via the U.S. Postal Service (USPS), when it received notice from the Metropolitan Library Council (Metro) that fees charged for delivery service would be dramatically increased beginning in 2020. The Department uses a variety of delivery services to transport materials to external institutions for interlibrary loans. The department looked into joining the Empire State Library Network, which is the host organization for the statewide Empire Library Delivery (ELD) service. This service provides shipping to colleges, universities and other public library systems throughout the State through regional hubs that expedite local transfers. The service is billed at a monthly flat rate as opposed the USPS and UPS which use a per-piece pricing model, and Metro has now moved to a per-piece model, which has raised their cost. The use of the ELD service began as of 1/1/2020 and has allowed ILL to dramatically reduce the amount of shipping supplies used in the transfer of items between WLS and external institutions. Reusable shipping bags are used instead of boxes and packing filler, saving on the cost of supplies, staff time in preparing shipments and reducing the impact on the environment from shipping waste. Molly Tobin, who was recently promoted to Senior ILL Clerk, is working directly with the ELD staff to optimize use of this new service.

Public Innovation & Engagement (PIE)

Public Innovation & Engagement (PIE) focuses on equitable development, access and delivery of library services across the county to:

1. Engage *target audiences* that may be unaware of what libraries have to offer through content development, direct service, and outreach.
2. Prepare *member library staff* to effectively serve new client groups through professional education.
3. Build connections with *public and private county organizations* to foster an understanding of how library services can assist their clients through collaboration and outreach.

The **2018-2019 Community Conversations** project, also known as the **Westchester Resilience Coalition**, continued its work to foster both awareness of the impact of trauma and exploration of actions that can be taken by individuals and communities to prevent trauma and heal. Two key actions of WLS in this period - aside from the ongoing support of public screenings - were:

- October 2019 **Breath-Body-Mind (BBM) Introductory Workshop** - 100 people attended this two-day program to engage with simple, evidence based techniques for reducing stress. The aim of the workshop was to both support library staff and service providers and to promote their consideration of

these techniques in their own practice. As a result of the successful event, follow-up “teacher training” is planned for Fall 2020.

- **Empathy-Driven Problem Solving** series - Produced by the Homeless Training Institute, this 3-hour video series both educates specifically on the impact of homelessness and housing insecurity on individual behavior and introduces broadly applicable techniques for engaging and supporting individuals who can be challenging to service. Member library staff participated in an initial group review of the series, which is available to all member libraries for group and individual viewing through May 30, 2020.

One of the many outcomes of the partnerships developed through the Resilience Coalition has been work with the **Westchester County Department of Social Services** to place “**Kid Zone**” **book carts** in the three major DSS offices (Mount Vernon, White Plains, Yonkers). In addition to member library donations of gently used children’s books, materials were purchased using a First Books grant. These carts offer a trifecta of service: a needed distraction for young children accompanying their parents during a stressful process to obtain essential services, an opportunity to promote the library as a resource for a young family, and promotion of early literacy. The carts, restocked several times during the year, have been positively received.

In 2019, development and publication of the **Westchester Reentry Task Force Resource Guide** was completed. This resource, produced in collaboration with the County’s Reentry Task Force, is designed to serve those returning to Westchester County from state correctional facilities. The guide leverages our participation in several reentry collaborations and our ongoing presence with our website/ information service - **Westchester Connections**. The guide has been distributed to all member libraries and transitional service offices at all 53 correctional facilities in NY State. It is also available by request to Reentry Services at WLS.

Concurrent with our work with state correctional facilities, close connections were maintained with the county jail through book donations, support of an inmate/staff book group (Bound Readers), and a new collaboration to plan a jail library.

FirstFind.org continues to be a launchpoint for information on core adult learning tasks such as obtaining a high school equivalency diploma, building core reading and math skills, learning English and finding employment. In 2019, the site was tapped by 8,400 users; this is in addition to another 80 calls to the high school equivalency (HSE) Helpline. WLS also won an XPrize award for Adult Literacy which allowed for active promotion of our adult learning resources (Learning Express, Tutor.com, etc.) with a special focus on an effective multi-media learning tool - **Learning Upgrade**. Outreach for this resource included embedding the content in FirstFind and encouraging enrollment at venues such as Children’s Village, Reentry Fairs, Northern/Southern Westchester BOCES, and SUNY JobStar. Note that in 2020 licenses to Learning Upgrade for adult learners will continue to be offered, and interested libraries should contact Krishna Horrigan, Outreach Services Programmer, at khorrigan@wlsmail.org.

Along with Learning Upgrade promotion, **Read Better** - our core literacy tutoring service offered in collaboration with Hadassah Westchester – was also promoted. Read Better tutors meet adult developing readers at library locations convenient to the student. Read Better is a companion service to **HSE Connect!** that offers information on pathways and resources for obtaining a HSE diploma. A total of 57 students engaged with our program in 2019, tapping the services of a pool of more than two dozen adult literacy volunteers.

The year 2019 marked the completion of a four-year **early literacy outreach** program. WLS worked to promote early literacy education among library staff concurrent with conducting outreach at early childhood centers and Head Start programs in several Westchester communities (Mount Vernon, Bedford Hills, Peekskill, Mount Kisco, Shrub Oak, Port Chester, Yonkers). A key aim of this program was to make an active connection between new families and their local library. In the final year of this program, we were able to support 13 library-based Family Night/Family Saturday events as well as 19 early childhood center

programs and policy council presentations reaching parents and staff. A happy outcome of the program has been the publication of *Let's Sing / Vamos a Cantar*, a bilingual songbook that has been distributed to libraries and partner agencies. In 2020, distribution of this booklet will continue to hospitals and other venues to build awareness of local library services to children - and early literacy.

Outreach to older youth continued through our partnership with **SUNY's Great Potential** programs that offer a six-week job readiness and job search program at Mount Vernon Nelly Thornton High School. The curriculum includes both workshop instruction and coaching. **High School: College for a Day** - a County-wide event that brings high school students to Purchase College – was also supported.

Essential Online Health Information for Older Adults, a 2018 project made possible by a grant from the National Library of Medicine, continued into 2019 with an additional 12 programs at libraries and community organizations. The program was especially valuable in providing context for internet security and media literacy.

Library services were strongly represented at all three major **Senior Law Day** events, including our second year at the Yonkers Public Library Grinton I. Will Library Branch. WLS staff co-chair the Senior Law Day collaborative and WLS hosts and updates **SeniorLawDay.info**, which continues to evolve as a resource for information on essential topics for elder law and related concerns. In 2019, more than a dozen workshops tapping the expertise of Senior Law Day professionals were held at member libraries.

In the closing quarter of 2019, the Field Hall Foundation awarded a \$15,000 grant for **Vision Labs: Reading for a Lifetime**. This WLS pilot program is aimed at addressing the needs of low vision and visually impaired adults. Advanced technology including a desk-top video magnifier (CCTV) with an HD 3-in-1 camera, full-page text-to-speech OCR (Optical Character Reader—available in both English and Spanish), hand-held HD magnifiers to allow visually impaired to scan library stacks and materials, and access to a rotating Talking Braille Collection will be made available in two locations: the Yonkers Public Library Grinton I. Will Branch Library during designated library hours and by appointment at the WLS Headquarters at 570 Taxter Road, Elmsford.

The mission of *Vision Labs* is to provide tools and training that supports older adults experiencing a loss of vision or motor skill that impacts their ability to read. Because libraries are committed to equitable access to resources that support personal enrichment and community engagement, *Vision Labs* aims to provide the public with services that can assure their continued use of library resources and programs. Given that 80% of vision impairment and vision loss is avoidable, WLS is also committed to advocacy and education for eye health literacy. The two pilot Vision Labs sites are expected to be operational by June 2020.

Westchester Seniors Out Speaking (WSOS), which includes community presentations and one-to-one counseling, had a strong service year in 2019, driven in part by consumer need for assistance in using a new Medicare Plan Finder tool and changes in Medicare plans available in the County. A total of 1,400 patrons accessed the **Senior Benefits Individual Counseling Service (SBICs)** sites available at nine locations; and an additional 100 accessed services via our Helpline. The **Medicare Minute** program, hosted at 37 sites across the county, had an attendance of over 10,500. More than 36 community presentations on Medicare and related topics were provided with more than 500 people in attendance.

DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS	
Digital Inclusion: To support ongoing training and marketing of WLS digital resources	
Entergy	\$25,000
Communities Competition Award (XPrize)	\$20,833
Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation	\$5,000
Total:	\$50,000

Resilience: To support ongoing Community Conversation program expenses	
NYS Senate Grant-in-aid (Andrea Stewart Cousins)	\$30,000

Youth / Family Literacy: To support Battle of the Books and Family Literacy initiatives	
Hope for Youth Foundation	\$5,000

Senior Outreach Programs: To support projects as shown below		
M&T Bank	Music & Memory	\$1,500
Field Hall Foundation	Vision Labs Pilot with Yonkers Public Library Grinton I. Will Branch	\$15,000
Total:		\$16,500

WEBS

WEBS assisted the member libraries in engaging their communities and improving customer service by offering career counseling services for unemployed or underemployed patrons. As digital and technological advancements in the workplace continue to displace workers, WEBS programs provide assessment, up-to-date career and educational information, and the latest tools and strategies to advance their careers. A combined approach using both technology and people-based solutions helps clients cope with frequent job transitions, engage in lifelong learning and learn about future directions for different fields.

During the year, WEBS provided ten 10-session career seminars at the libraries in Yonkers (2), White Plains (2), Chappaqua (2), Somers, Yorktown, Pelham and Eastchester. Evaluation surveys completed after the seminars indicted an overall rating of excellent or good by 100% of clients.

In addition to helping people learn practical strategies for transitioning to new career paths, it's important to note that these programs promote "community" and a sense of connectedness that provide meaning and support. Participants have a unique opportunity to focus on themselves in a confidential setting, engage in dynamic group activities and discussions, and determine how they can make vital changes in their career goals and outlook. The group counseling process enables people to listen to each other, compare experiences, and develop broader perspectives. All participants take two formal assessments which are useful in providing direction and improving organizational performance. This year's improved economy has enabled many more of our clients to have successful job searches!

Twenty workshops/trainings were held at libraries throughout the county on topics including: *Latest Trends in Resumes* (2); *Create a LinkedIn Profile with Impact* (2); *Creative Approaches to Networking* (3); *Ace the Interview and Get the Job You Want* (2); *Thinking about a Career Change?* (2); *What's Next in My Life & Career?* (3); *Positioning Your Professional Image* (2); *Careers in Healthcare* (2); *Get LinkedIn to Your Job Search* (1); *Key Strategies for Success in Your Job Search* (1).

Bi-weekly individual career counseling at the Yonkers Public Library Grinton I. Will Branch continued to be a well-utilized service with full sign-ups. Additionally, ongoing professional development was provided for the WEBS counselors throughout the year.

WLS 60th Anniversary Celebration

WLS’s 60th Annual Meeting was a great success with 85 directors, trustees, and guests representing WLS and 34 of its member libraries in attendance. A number of government officials showed their support including New York State Senator and Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins [35th District]; NYS Senator Shelley Mayer [37th District]; NYS Assembly Member Steven Otis [91st District]; Ruth Walter, a Trustee of the Bronxville Public Library and recently elected to the Westchester County Board of Legislators [15th District]; and NYS Assembly Member Thomas Abinanti [92nd District], who issued a Citation from the NYS Assembly recognizing WLS’s for 60 years of service. New WLS Trustees were elected, and special guest speaker Rich Harwood, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of The Harwood Institute, who spoke of dignity as an intrinsic birthright and how he has devoted his life to helping teach communities how to come together to focus on shared aspirations to overcome the current polarization in society and restore belief in ourselves as Americans. A copy of Mr. Harwood’s latest book, *Stepping Forward*, was given out to all attendees. Our anniversary celebration provided time to reflect on the only true constant—change—and to look forward to providing pathways for future success. A webpage of Anniversary photos, newsletters, and collected statistical data will be available soon on the WLS website.

<i>DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS</i>	
60 th Anniversary – funds for ongoing WLS initiatives	
Full Deck Design	\$1,000
T- Mobile	\$1,000
The Westchester Bank	\$1,000
Board Gifts – (8)	\$2,400
Staff Gifts (7)	\$3,200
Total	\$8,600

Community Partnerships

Executive Director Terry Kirchner has worked with several partners throughout 2019 to help create more awareness and involvement of library services with other government agencies and community-minded service organizations. These include: Westchester County Board of Legislators’ Family Task Force; NYS 9th Judicial District’s Access to Justice Initiative, The 400 Years Project, a Countywide Collaborative, African American History in Westchester Commemoration Committee, Westchester County Complete Count Committee, and Westchester Library Association. Below are several accomplishments and upcoming activities that have resulted from these interactions.

AT&T Code Heroes is an educational initiative created by AT&T and Digital Arts Experience (DAE) with support from WLS to engage youth from all Westchester communities to learn computer coding basics and how technology and computer science can be used for social good. In 2020 every library location in Westchester will host the coding workshop that will be taught by experienced teachers from DAE. The program is cost free to ensure that youth can participate regardless of ability to pay and is expected to reach over 400 individuals. Participants also will not need a computer to take part, all technologies will be provided to each student for the duration of the program. The goal of the program is to help address the significant gender and diversity gaps within the technology industry and encourage the pursuit of study in the tech sector.

One Book Westchester is a literacy initiative sponsored by the Westchester County Executive’s Office. The goal of the initiative is to promote literacy in Westchester County by focusing on local authors who highlight the history of the County and celebrate its diversity and shared vision of a better future. Three local authors/illustrators were selected to meet the initiative’s goals while targeting three different age groups.

Adult Novel: Mary Calvi. *Dear George, Dear Mary: A Novel of George Washington's First Love*

YA/Middle School Novel: Veera Hiranandani. *The Night Diary*

Elementary School Author/Illustrator: Eric Velasquez

As Fast As Words Could Fly; Beautiful Moon: A Child's Prayer; Grandma's Gift; Journey to Jo'burg: A South African Story; My Friend Maya Loves to Dance; My Uncle Martin's Words for America New Shoes; Octopus Stew; Ol' Clip-Clop: A Ghost Story; Our Children Can Soar: A Celebration of Rosa, Barack, and the Pioneers of Change; The Real Lucky Charm; Schomburg: The Man Who Built a Library; Strong Voices: Fifteen American Speeches Worth Knowing (Forthcoming); Touch the Sky: Alice Coachman, Olympic High Jumper; Twice as Good: The Story of William Powell and Clearview, the Only Golf Course Designed, Built, and Owned by an African American

WLS has purchased access to e-book and audiobook formats of these titles (when available) on OverDrive. Many print copies of the One Book Westchester titles are available in the online catalog. If your library is interested in hosting an event with one of the local authors/illustrators, contact Roseanne (Rosie) Finizio, Assistant to the County Executive/Operations at (914) 995-2501 or RFinizio@westchestergov.com. She can help you get connected with the authors. A flyer promoting the initiative is attached. More information is also available on the [One Book Westchester website](#).

Nonprofit Westchester (NPW)

NPW provides a wide range of professional development, networking and advocacy opportunities that support public library efforts to develop partnerships with nonprofits and community-based organizations in their service area and throughout Westchester County. As NPW's President in 2019, Dr. Kirchner helped oversee their operations and transition in leadership with Jan Fisher being named as Executive Director. NPW serves as a central source of communication to its membership that includes upcoming events at all of their member organizations (and is a good way to promote major library events). Library staff, trustees and volunteers may be added to the NPW email lists.

DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS	
Private funds allocated to WLS initiatives	
Individual Gifts from WLS grateful patrons and supporters will support ongoing WLS initiatives:	
Total of 10 gifts:	\$2,005

Memorial Gifts	
Staff Gift (Kirchner) In Memory/Esther Kirchner	\$1,000
Staff & Friends of Family In Memory/Sue Neale, former WLS Trustee	\$675
Total:	\$1,675

DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS	
Total funds secured in 2019: \$181,780	