
Executive Director's Report September 2022

Regents Advisory Council on Libraries

The Regents Advisory Council on Libraries (RAC) recently released their Vision 2022 document, which can be found online at <https://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/rac/RACVision2022.pdf>. An online webinar to explore the Vision 2022 document in more depth will be hosted on October 20, 2022, at 1 PM. There is no cost to participate in the webinar but registration is required at <https://nyslibrary.libcal.com/event/9676314>. The webinar will be recorded and made available for viewing.

The RAC, which advocates for libraries, library staff and library trustees, will be appointing three new members to serve five-year terms from November 1, 2022, to September 30, 2027. More information about the RAC can be found at <https://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/rac/index.html>. If you or someone you know would like to serve on the RAC, send nominations along with a resume, by September 30th to: April Clifford, Administrative Specialist, Office of the State Librarian and Assistant Commissioner for Libraries, New York State Library, 10C34 Cultural Education Center, Albany, NY 12230 or email: April.Clifford@nysed.gov.

Cataloging Services

Following the retirement of longtime Cataloger Qingshe Ren at the end of June, WLS Cataloging Services began a search to fill his full-time position, and to add a part-time cataloger. WLS Cataloging Services is very pleased to announce that the former head of the department, Steven Pisani, will return to WLS at the beginning of October to assume the part-time role. The search for a full-time cataloger is ongoing. During the summer, Manager of Cataloging Services Douglas Wray was promoted to Director of Cataloging Services, and Cataloger Melissa Glazer was promoted to Manager of Cataloging Services.

One of the strategic goals of WLS is to promote equity and access, and the WLS catalogers constantly work toward this goal by making the member libraries' collections visible and accessible to the Westchester community, through the shared online catalog. To do this, the catalogers add bibliographic records to the catalog, either by downloading them from the OCLC WorldCat database, by importing vendor-provided records (which more often than not need to be edited to meet WLS standards) or by creating them "from scratch," as required. For the catalog to be useful, it must be up-to-date. It must also be accurate and consistent, and contain the metadata which will facilitate successful patron searches. Without this work by the WLS catalogers, the Westchester community would not have complete knowledge of the libraries' holdings, nor would they have the

ability to connect with the materials—by placing holds, borrowing, or simply viewing them at the library.

WLS Cataloging Services also consult with the member libraries, offering guidance with call numbers, searching methods, vendor complications and other issues. The member libraries benefit from having a centralized cataloging department on which to rely.

In addition to cataloging such popular items as books, DVDs, Blu-rays, CD audiobooks, electronic games and music CDs, the WLS catalogers ensure that other materials are represented in the catalog, when the member libraries make that request. Among other things, these include special collections, reference works, government documents, and “library of things” objects.

In July, Mr. Wray visited Katonah Village Library to take notes on their musical instrument collection, in order to catalog it. The collection includes a marimba, a dulcimer, three ukuleles, a banjo, a rain stick, a guiro (a percussion instrument), a Japanese wooden flute and seven guitars of various types. Mr. Wray also cataloged a ukulele for New Rochelle Public Library.

Ms. Glazer and Mr. Wray are more than halfway done with cataloging the approximately 6,000-book collection of the National Maritime Historical Society in Peekskill, a project which also includes the Hendrick Hudson Free Library as a partner.

Mr. Wray is cataloging the New Rochelle Public Library's Louise Edeiken Score Collection. Ms. Edeiken, a New Rochelle resident, is a singer, actress and published author, and has performed in Broadway productions such as *Phantom of the Opera* and *Nine*.

A few of the other materials cataloged during the summer were: board games for Harrison Public Library and Rye Free Reading Room; hiking maps for John C. Hart Memorial Library; an environmental impact study for Ossining Public Library; and children's backpack kits for Harrison Public Library.

Career Coaching Services

Career Coaching Services offers programming on trending career topics and advice. The program is known for its free career seminar which provides participants with relevant information around self-assessment and employer hiring practices. In addition to the seminar, workshops and other career related events are offered—keeping in mind work related issues and needs in the workplace today.

SEMINAR - *Managing Your Career in Changing Times*

This virtual seminar is designed to help adults in career transition, providing them with the tools to increase their self-awareness, make informed decisions, strategize an approach to their job search and determine their career goals.

Two seminar sessions were facilitated in the spring, Wednesday afternoon and evening. There were a total of 14 participants with seven in each group. Program evaluations received were very positive—100% of the participants who responded thought the materials provided were useful and relevant and the facilitators were knowledgeable and effective in presenting the concepts. Responses to the seminar itself rated the time allotted and virtual format highly as well.

INDIVIDUAL ADVISEMENT - Seminar Session - Pilot

Individual Advisement Seminar Sessions were conducted, on a pilot basis, for three seminar registrants who were unable to participate in the Spring 2022 program due to their schedules not aligning with the seminar offerings. Since one of our seminar facilitators (career coach) did not have a group seminar, it was determined that she would conduct the career coaching sessions with the three registrants. Their specific needs/interests/goals/commitment were determined and, utilizing the existing seminar curriculum material, personally tailored sessions were created for each respectively.

Their evaluations were strong in appreciation for the one-on-one instruction and advisement and found the assessment materials very useful in assisting with their decision making process of career direction.

Each of these participants made extensive progress in identifying potential careers of interest, as reflected in their program evaluations. Due to the success of the pilot, this program will be considered in the future as an option for individuals who are unable to attend a seminar due to conflicts in their schedule.

WORKSHOPS

In support of member library career programming interest, three virtual workshops were sponsored by individual libraries as follows:

- *Latest Trends in Resumes That Can Help You Get Noticed* (Sponsored by Briarcliff Manor Public Library)
- *Tips for Successful Interviewing* (Sponsored by Somers Library)
- *Creating a LinkedIn Profile with Impact* (Sponsored by Eastchester Public Library)

Sponsorship continues to be of great interest to the libraries and we are supportive of their interest in collaborating with us to bring relevant programming to their patrons. Over the summer, a sponsored Job Search Workshop series was planned with Ossining Public Library and Lewisboro Library as a co-host that will be implemented this fall.

LINKEDIN BOOT CAMP – Summer Program

In response to ongoing interest for LinkedIn training, we secured Dr. Elisse Barnes JD, PhD, to present her popular two-session/two-day workshop focusing on both the mechanics and strategy of using LinkedIn as a tool to conduct a successful job search. Her audience is primarily age 45+ job seekers, who are beginners with LinkedIn or want to learn more about how they can utilize it to enhance their professional career. The program was publicized to WLS staff, member library staff and library patrons. The workshops were offered during a two-week period in August. These LinkedIn sessions were very well received with enthusiastic engagement and positive feedback.

SPEAKER SERIES

The recently implemented CCS Speaker Series hosts guest professionals to address trending topics as they relate to the employment market. These guest professionals are career coaches, recruiters, and employers themselves.

The second event, held virtually on June 16th, was entitled, *How to Create Magnetic Pull in your Next Interview*. The speaker Damon Montal, Executive Career Management Consultant, coaches mid-level to senior-level managers and executives. He facilitates group strategy sessions and

creates and delivers multiple training seminars. Mr. Montal's topic addressed how to present yourself from a position of strength for interviews, networking or business meetings. He explained four major mindset traps and how to avoid them and how to create a 'magnet' or rapport between you and the other party.

Digital Equity Initiatives

In addition to *Digital Equity on the Road* and *Reconnect with Tech*, WLS secured funding from long-time supporter Con Edison for *The STEM in the Library*. This grant connects STEM educators from Westchester Community College with member libraries to offer focused STEM projects for middle school students. WLS Technology Trainer Allison Midgley will leverage WLS resources in the delivery of multi-week sessions, and Sherry Mayo, Director, Center for the Digital Arts, Peekskill Extension, Westchester Community College, is assisting in the program development and coordination. The spirit of the grant is to expand STEM awareness and education in a non-school setting and provide meaningful after-school programming for middle school students. Libraries currently participating in the project are: Eastchester Public Library, Larchmont Public Library, Mamaroneck Public Library, Dobbs Ferry Public Library, Lewisboro Library and Greenburgh Public Library. WLS Director of Development Patricia Brigham will be working with these libraries in their efforts to build program sustainability.

In your travels around Westchester, you may notice some WLS signage featuring a giraffe! This visual campaign is designed to highlight the WLS information and resource portal, FirstFind.org. There are three billboards located in Mount Vernon and Yonkers and 12 bus shelters in those communities as well as in Peekskill. To draw attention to the campaign, there is a contest to "name the giraffe," via the FirstFind.org website. The "Giraffe Campaign" will run into October; our goal is to increase visibility of WLS outreach services and drive traffic to the site. Website traffic will be carefully monitored as a metric that will assist in ongoing efforts to build private support.

The summer activities included attending community events in White Plains, Peekskill and Yonkers and visiting food pantries in both Peekskill and Mount Vernon. On Wednesday, August 18th, Joe Maurantonio and Krishna Brodigan of WLS presented at the Mount Vernon "Senior Citizens Conquering the Digital Divide" event in Hartley Park. They spoke to over 104 attendees about the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), loaner chromebooks and hotspots, free library cards, online resources, and senior assistance. The team gave out reusable bags filled with WLS brochures. Mount Vernon Public Library was on hand to share details about their upcoming in-person programs and classes.

The team also ran a successful series of Legislative Breakfasts to thank Westchester Legislators for their funding and support and provide them with an overview of digital equity activities. The breakfasts were held in the four corners of the County starting in Croton-on-Hudson then on to Somers, Harrison and wrapping up in Yonkers at the Grinton I. Will Branch, where they were joined by County Executive George Latimer.

WLS has supported digital equity efforts at 22 member libraries by providing chromebooks that could be checked out by patrons. Hotspots as well as chromebooks are now available for checkout at these libraries. A few member libraries have requested additional chromebooks and hotspots as the devices have been well received in their communities.

Information Technology (IT)

The IT Department has been working on completing systemwide upgrades: the VDI hardware deployment with an upgrade to Windows 10, transfer over to a new Internet Service Provider (ISP) and new networking equipment.

A primary focus is the security of the network/work environment. As cybercrimes have increased drastically over the last few years, libraries have been more frequently attacked. Our unfortunate experience with ransomware attacks shows that we can and will be a target for future attacks. At a recent conference, many presentations were held which openly discussed how as IT professionals we will always be behind the curve when dealing with cybersecurity crimes if we are not keeping up with the proper security protocols. As we move forward, the concern of library security needs to be addressed at a faster pace. Network hardening is the first step, the next step will depend on staff acceptance of new security standards such as multi-factor authentication and Zero Trust networking architectures. These will be upcoming topics for PLDA and WLS IT with the overall goal to improve security and insure the safety of staff and patron data.

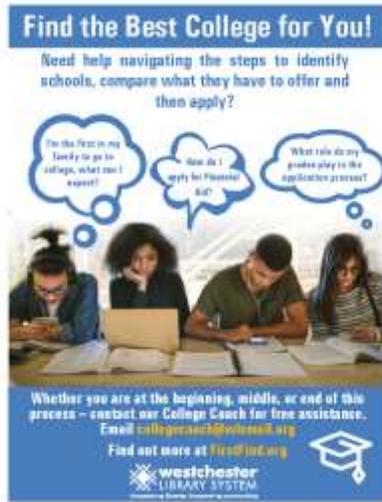
Public Innovation & Engagement (PIE)

Westchester Library System's outreach supports access to library services through outreach activities (programming, marketing), content creation, collaboration and direct service. We work with member libraries and service agencies (both local and national) to serve the evolving needs of Westchester County residents. Additionally, we provide training for library professionals and act as a resource for member libraries. Fundamentally, our work is structured to support the organization's goals for equity, access, and engagement.

A summary of current public-facing program activities by audience is detailed in the attached chart. Each program is regularly assessed in terms of effort required (dollars and staff time), reach (traffic, service volume, program activity), and impact (client feedback and regular review of how service inquiries were handled).

Two challenges have shaped our current roster of programs: (1) a persistent lack of awareness (community-wide) of the services available through libraries and through the broader array of community agencies and (2) an expressed need for information, referral, and resources by those not fully served by local organizations. As a partner agency recently framed it: "Most New York State services are siloed; they offer services for specific groups...the challenge is in understanding what you, as an individual, are eligible for. What you [WLS and libraries generally] are doing [uniquely] is helping the individual make those connections."

While we are often asked to report on quantitative statistics such as website traffic, program activities and the number of people served, we wanted to also share some of the qualitative feedback we recently received from those using our services.



FROM: A pilot program for college guidance launched at the Mamaroneck Public Library and available via FirstFind.org

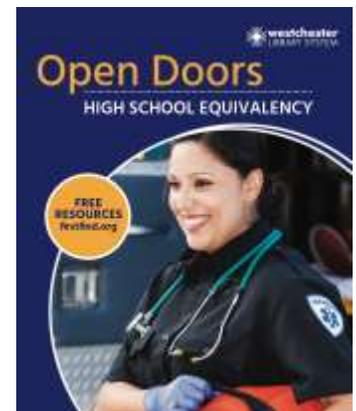
"...this application process is very complicated and Amy [Gonzalez, WLS Outreach Coordinator] corrected the mistakes and made everything a success. Now my daughter is enrolled and she starts college in September, thanks to Amy we were able to apply... and we lowered the costs. I am very proud that my daughter is enrolled in Pace University and I have already been recommending to my friends and family. Very happy and grateful for everything."

"The guidance on zoom was great and necessary in a way. Amy helped me so much because I didn't know where to start with my FAFSA and TAP application. Most students have never seen this website or even know what they should apply for. I am highly satisfied with the service."

FROM: HSE Connect!

"This morning I took the GED Math test, I passed!! I can tell you that without my coach this could not have happened. Laura is so sweet and encouraged me every single day to keep going. I will make appointments for all the subject tests in the following days to finish this adventure. Thanks to you too, for having this wonderful program to help people like me."

From a Reentry Coordinator in the Young Offenders program, commenting on a new graduate: "He made it!! Thank you for all your help."



FROM: A literacy support service

"The part that I regularly enjoy is learning every Monday at 8.30am. These are the days I meet with my teacher through Zoom meetings. We go through the last week's revision of homework. I learn from the mistakes that I made, and I get corrected. I have seen great improvement, especially in my writing. I hope that these skills will allow me to speak with greater confidence whether in casual settings or in job interviews. My improvement in writing skills will help me with job applications. Finally, I hope to help my daughter with her studies when she is in high school."

Shared by the Program Coordinator: *"Several weeks ago I spoke with S., who wanted to learn to read better to help her five year old daughter with her school work. I asked if she had a computer, she said she did not. [I connected her with the Chromebook program.] She called me today and was very excited to share that she now has a Chromebook! Using the phone, I walked her through how to get on Zoom! We were both joyous when she appeared on the screen, we clapped. S proceeded to tell me that her real goal was to*

become a traffic enforcement officer and was concerned because she needed to take the exam, but said even if she does not pass she will continue to study and retake the test. Now that she has a computer she can begin to study. I found a volunteer who will work with her 1:1 right away."



FROM: A 1-1 coaching service and online resource

From a client seeking an administrative job: "Thank you for helping me with my resume and cover letter....I did receive a very generous offer. I feel very lucky and grateful because I got to prepare for the interview with you....I never did that before and it made a difference."

From the coach at The ARC Westchester [serving adults with intellectual disabilities]: "The mock interview prep really helped. Thank you Rebecca. He did a good job at the interview yesterday and now we're just waiting for the on-boarding paperwork from the employer."

From a participant who worked with us on two career changes: "Thank you very much, Rebecca! You are a constant source of encouragement and grace. I will always be grateful for all the help and energy you gave me."



*Music & Memory
at the library!*

FROM: A program to support caregivers by helping them use library resources and loanable music devices for family members at home with memory loss

"My father has a general positive mood when he is listening to the music and he comments and wants to share with my mother. He is usually more of a loner so the music of his youth is encouraging more interactions.....The Music Program is a wonderful idea. It is specially relevant for my father because being from a foreign country, the music of his youth would not be played in the radio or other media. The program allows for customization to the particular person. It was also made very easy by the friendly staff helping with the technical side of entering the music into the device."

FROM: An education and consultation service addressing legal and financial topics relevant to older adults and caregivers

"I want to thank you and everyone responsible for Senior Law Day. I learned so much and everyone was so nice, giving, and eager to serve. I appreciate each and every one of you."

"I attended two webinars this year - one on senior law and the most recent about the difference between nursing home and home care services. Both were excellent and provided answers to my questions. I have highly recommended this service to others."

"Having the videos of the presentations is WONDERFUL. Because of my work schedule, it is difficult for me to attend the in-person or webinar events, but I was able to get pertinent information just from the video."





FROM: A program piloted with the Yonkers Public Library and funding from the Field Hall Foundation

"Thanks so much for meeting with P. and me yesterday. You met her right where she is, taking time to listen to her

strengths and challenges and acknowledging them, then explaining so carefully how you can help. I saw her physical demeanor relax as she spoke with you. It was clear that it was one of the first times she'd felt that someone truly understood what she's going through. Thanks again -- you were so helpful."

FROM: A digital equity effort specifically designed to serve justice-impacted individuals

"I really enjoyed it, and learned quite a bit of new information. I believe the training will help many that want to participate."

"They really made me feel comfortable in their teaching style and the delivery of information (very patient)."



FROM: A health and wellness program serving multiple audiences

"Feeling connected with anyone and anything throughout the pandemic has been tough; the consistency and the care and guidance that you've offered is really

incredible. It literally made my day. And that was only my personal experience. Seeing and hearing the other participants share their relief, gratefulness and happiness with being connected was very moving. The quality of instruction is top notch and I believe that every person you've touched is 'paying it forward' in some way."

"Week after week, during the time immediately following the hourly session, I am literally the most relaxed of my entire week. This happens every time I attend. I have learned many skills to help me de-stress and refocus my energy in a more positive manner on an on-going and regular basis through this program."

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terry L. Kirchner".

Terry L. Kirchner
Executive Director

WLS PUBLIC INNOVATION AND ENGAGEMENT OUTREACH PROGRAMS BY AUDIENCE

* Each project/program strengthens our network of community relationships. All programs are funded by a mix of government and private sources.

KEY

-  In Progress
-  Website Traffic
-  1-to-1 Service
-  Outreach programs

UNDER / UNEMPLOYED
EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE
(CORE LITERACIES)
JUSTICE-IMPACTED
INDIVIDUALS
DISABILITY (PHYSICAL
OR COGNITIVE)
SENIORS
FAMILIES / CAREGIVERS
HISPANIC
METRICS

ADULT LEARNING SERVICES firstfind.org									
FAMILY RESOURCES							✓	✓	 
FIND THE BEST COLLEGE FOR YOU!									  
HSE CONNECT!/READ BETTER	✓	✓	✓					✓	  
JOB SEARCH SERVICES	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	  
OLDER ADULT SERVICES (55+) seniors.westchesterlibraries.org seniorlawday.info									
DEMYSTIFYING MEDICARE				✓	✓	✓			 
MUSIC AND MEMORY @ THE LIBRARY				✓	✓	✓			
SENIOR LAW DAY COLLABORATIVE					✓	✓	✓		  
VISION LABS: READING FOR A LIFETIME	✓			✓	✓	✓			  
REENTRY SERVICES connections.westchesterlibraries.org									
FACILITY SUPPORT	✓	✓	✓						 
REENTRY SERVICES	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		  
RECONNECT WITH TECH	✓	✓	✓						  
GENERAL SERVICES conversations.westchesterlibraries.org westchesterdigitalequity.org									
COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS					✓				 
E/LIBRARY RESOURCE ASSISTANCE									  
WESTCHESTER BREATHEES/ RESILIENCE			✓		✓	✓			  
WESTCHESTER DIGITAL EQUITY	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	  

PIE staff facilitate monthly adult and youth services meetings and regular opportunities for library staff to become familiar with outreach programs, including a review of the service environment and client needs. Our aim is for staff to be able to direct patrons to resources at the point of need or to support referral to PIE staff. Additionally, promotional materials are circulated to member libraries. Patron-directed materials are available for library events and programs; see our latest [Publications Catalog](#).

Updated
September 2022



westchester
LIBRARY SYSTEM

Empowering libraries. Empowering communities.