

Call to Meeting September 30, 2025

The next Regular Meeting of the Westchester Library System (WLS) is **Tuesday, September 30, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.** PLEASE NOTE: This meeting will take place at the WLS Headquarters, 570 Taxter Rd, Ste 400, Elmsford, NY 10523.

Regular Meeting Agenda

Minutes: June 24, 2025

Finances

Information Items

Information Item #1: **Banking Services RFP**

Information Item #2: **Delivery Services RFP**

Action Items

Action Item #1: **State Aid for Public Library Construction FY2025 2026**

President's Report

WLS Committee Reports

Executive Director's Report

PLDA Report – Erik Carlson, Director, Dobbs Ferry Public Library

NEXT MEETING: The next Regular Meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 28, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM
Trustee Meeting
June 24, 2025 – Pending Approval

REGULAR MEETING

The Regular Meeting of the Westchester Library System was called to order by Nishat Hydari at 6:02 p.m.

The quorum requirement was met with the following people in attendance:

Board Members present: Anthony Amiano, Andrea Bober, Robert Cartolano, Nishat Hydari, Alice Joselow, Maureen LeBlanc, David Mener, Julie Mills-Worthey, Diane Tabakman, Karen Zevin

Board Members absent: Wes Iwanski, Karen Kelley, Susan Morduch, Patricia Phelan, Barbara Tepper

Also present from WLS were: Terry Kirchner, Kate Meyer, Allison Midgley, Lindsay Stratton

Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) Representative: Erik Carlson, Director, Dobbs Ferry Public Library

Guest: Hudson Trader, former trustee, Mount Vernon Public Library

MINUTES

The minutes of May 27, 2025, Board Meeting were approved on a motion by Ms. Tabakman and seconded by Mr. Cartolano. The motion passed unanimously. [Ms. Zevin was not present for the vote.]

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Ms. LeBlanc, Treasurer, presented the financial report for May 2025 speaking to items of significance. She made note that cash-on-hand continues to decline while WLS awaits payment from Westchester County for the first quarter of the year and that cash reserves are being transferred to cover operating costs. She also noted significant variances in expenses against the budget which included the recognition of PC deployments from inventory, higher than expected pay-per-use electronic content fees and that the delivery service had 5 invoices in the month. Ms. LeBlanc encouraged the Board to send any questions for follow up to Mr. Caluori, who was excused from the meeting. Payment registers for May 2025 were distributed.

The financial reports for May 2025 were approved on a motion by Ms. Zevin and seconded by Ms. Mills-Worthey. The financial reports were accepted unanimously.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ms. Hydari welcomed Hudson Trader, former trustee with the Mount Vernon Library, to the meeting. The board was reminded that there are no meetings scheduled for the next two months, and the Board will meet in September.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A copy of the Executive Director's Report was mailed in advance of the meeting.

- Dr. Kirchner informed the Board of an upcoming program entitled *The Bias Inside Us* at the Rye Free Reading Room. He encouraged all to attend.
- Dr. Kirchner noted that all but four of the libraries' Annual Reports are approved.
- Dr. Kirchner is working with Ardsley and Tuckahoe libraries on their recruitment of new directors.
- The CFO is in the process of collecting RFPs for banking and hoping to have an update for the Finance Committee in October/November 2025.
- Dr. Kirchner has been consulting with Revolutionary Westchester 250 (RW250) celebration activities headed by Connie Kehoe. Dr. Kirchner is hopeful that the libraries will include some RW250 activities for their communities.
- The last of the library public computers are being installed.

PLDA LIASON'S REPORT

Erik Carlson, PLDA Vice President and WLS Board Liaison, reported that PLDA approved implementing a feature in Evergreen that adds a "courtesy notice by email" opt-out to patron records. This allows patrons to decide if they wish to stop receiving emailed overdue notices.

ADJOURNMENT

Having completed its agenda, the Board adjourned its meeting at 7:07 p.m. on a motion by Ms. Joselow and seconded by Mr. Cartolano that passed unanimously.

Respectively submitted,

Diane H. Tabakman
Secretary

WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS WITH NOTES – AUGUST 2025

REPORT NOTES

All of the figures in the accompanying notes are approximate to the nearest \$100 or 1% when practical. The figures in the financial statements are rounded to the nearest dollar and percentages are presented to two decimal places.

This month's report includes the following financial statements:

- Balance Sheet
- Statement of Revenues and Expenditures with Comparison to Budget
- Statement of Revenues and Expenditures with year-end projections
- Schedule of Temporarily Restricted Net Assets (TRNA)

CASH BALANCES UPDATE

During the period of June 1 through August 31 WLS received \$3,165,000 in aid from New York State (NYS). This represents all aid due from the State to date and includes \$287,200 in aid which is passed through to the member libraries. WLS also received \$671,600 in payments from Westchester County and \$174,100 from the Federal e-Rate program. The receipt of this anticipated revenue has brought the operating account to a suitable operating balance and all monies borrowed from reserves (\$300,000 in May, \$300,000 in June) have been returned.

TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Included with this report is a schedule for Temporarily Restricted Net Assets (TRNA). The TRNA schedule lists all grants for which WLS has an obligation to the funder to spend the funds in a specific way or to meet a specific purpose. For each grant or grant category, the report shows any funds that were carried into the current year, revenues earned within the year, expenses incurred that release the restrictions and the current balance to be spent.

The six-year history included at the bottom of the report shows that the balance carried over from year-to-year increased significantly between 2019 and 2022. This was driven, in part, by the COVID-19 pandemic and, in part, by the receipt of a large, multi-year grant which has now been fully spent. The balance being carried is now around pre-pandemic levels.

INCOME STATEMENT WITH PROJECTIONS

An Income Statement with Projections is included with the financial reports. This report currently projects that the year will end with expenses before depreciation outpacing revenues by \$448,800, but \$118,600 less than budgeted. This is a positive variance from the original budget which called for a \$567,400 deficit. However, it is important to note that this is an early projection based on activity through August and will likely fluctuate as the year continues to progress.

PAYMENTS OVER \$50,000

The WLS Purchasing Policy (Policy #13) requires that purchases exceeding \$50,000 without prior budget approval be formally reported to the Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting. To meet and exceed the policy directive, all payments over \$50,000 in June through August 2025 are listed below:

- Amount: \$122,971
 - Vendor: GovConnection, Inc.
 - Purpose: Three-year support agreement for network equipment
- Amount: \$83,455
 - Vendor: NYS Employees Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP)
 - Purpose: Employee health insurance for September 2025
- Amount: \$76,745
 - Vendor: Crown Castle Fiber LLC
 - Purpose: Internet access for WLS and the member libraries from July – September 2025
- Amount: \$76,630
 - Vendor: NYS Employees Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP)
 - Purpose: Employee health insurance for July 2025
- Amount: \$71,704
 - Vendor: NYS Employees Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP)
 - Purpose: Employee health insurance for August 2025
- Amount: \$68,219
 - Vendor: Midwest Tape (Hoopla)
 - Purpose: July 2025 Patron Pay-Per-Use Digital Content
- Amount: \$66,187
 - Vendor: Midwest Tape (Hoopla)
 - Purpose: May 2025 Patron Pay-Per-Use Digital Content
- Amount: \$63,552
 - Vendor: Midwest Tape (Hoopla)
 - Purpose: June 2025 Patron Pay-Per-Use Digital Content
- Amount: \$60,159
 - Vendor: Yonkers Public Library
 - Purpose: 2025-26 NYS Local Library Support Aid (90%)

BALANCE SHEET – AUGUST 2025

The Balance Sheet shows comparative figures for the period from month-ending (ME) May 2025 through ME August 2025. The key changes include an increase in cash, which partially offset decreases in *Unconditional Promises to Give* and increases in *Deferred Revenue*, resulting in a 9% decrease in *Net Assets*. Details are discussed below.

ASSETS:

This section indicates the organization's liquidity by showing what assets WLS holds in cash and other assets. The net result for the period is an overall decrease in assets driven primarily by an anticipated reductions in cash.

Operating Cash & Cash Equivalents (This shows the cash in WLS's operating and payroll bank accounts and petty cash): WLS's operating cash increased by \$2,812,800. With \$5,227,200 in receipts, activity included \$3,165,000 in aid from NYS of which \$287,200 will pass-through to member libraries as Local Library Support Aid, \$1,188,200 from member libraries for IT services and group purchases, \$671,600 from Westchester County for the first half of 2025, and \$174,100 from the Federal e-Rate program. Notable expenditures aside from rent, payroll and benefits, Internet, and delivery to libraries included \$123,000 to GovConnection for a three-year support agreement for network equipment in place at member libraries, \$197,900 to Hoopla for pay-per-use materials for patrons for May through July, \$20,800 to Bill.com for a two-year renewal to the accounts payable and receivable service, and \$18,750 to Aequa Strategies for their work on the SCALE data dashboard. Activity also included a transfer of \$300,000 from reserves to cover operating expenses and two transfers totaling \$600,000 to return all borrowed monies to the reserve account.

Reserve Cash & Cash Equivalents (This shows the cash in WLS's reserve accounts and short-term investment holdings): This line increased by \$326,200, the result of a transfer of \$300,000 to the operating account, which was offset by \$600,000 in transfer to return monies borrowed for operational cashflow to the reserve account, \$26,200 in earnings on reserve funds held with NYCLASS, TD Bank, and earnings on US Treasury investments.

Unconditional Promises (These are promises to give money to WLS such as governmental aid): This line decreased \$1,586,300, the result of recording \$1,077,700 in receivable revenues from NYS, Westchester County, and the Federal E-Rate program against the receipt of 2,664,000 in earned revenues from NYS, Westchester County, and the Federal E-Rate program.

LIABILITIES:

This section shows WLS's near-term obligations. The net result for the period is an overall reduction in liabilities, primarily driven by the recognition of *Deferred Revenue*. Details are discussed below:

Deferred Revenue (Funds received which have not yet been earned): This figure increased by \$1,654,700, the result of deferring \$1,093,400 in revenues from 6-month and 3-month invoices to member libraries for IT services and group purchases for digital content, \$967,000 in revenues from NYS, and \$92,500 in revenues from the Federal e-Rate program against the recognition of \$479,700 in revenues from 6-month and 3-month invoices to member libraries for IT services and group purchases for digital content, and movie licensing, and \$18,500 in revenues from the Federal e-Rate program.

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES

COMPARISON TO BUDGET WITH PREVIOUS YEARS TO DATE – AUGUST 2025

Revenues were \$14,300 less than expenses before depreciation for August which represents \$33,000 positive variance from the budget, which had called for a \$47,300 deficit.

REVENUES:

Total revenue exceeded the budget for August driven primarily by deficits in *County Revenues with Restrictions* and *Other Revenues with Restrictions* being offset by surpluses in *Federal Revenues without Restrictions* and *Interest*, which is discussed in detail below.

State Revenues without Restrictions and *State Revenues with Restrictions* – These lines have a slight surplus against the budget. The final NYS aid figures came in 0.6% more than budgeted. Revenue had been recognized in-line with the budget through July. With the final figures known, the additional revenue (\$16,500) will be recognized from August through December.

Federal Revenues without Restrictions – This line was \$6,800 higher than budget. The revenue in this line is recognized in-line with budget until the final figure is known. The reimbursement through the e-Rate program came in \$34,100 higher than anticipated and will be recognized from August through December.

Interest revenues exceeded budget for the month. While this is expected due to conservative budgeting, interest was also greater than anticipated due to depositing funds in NYLAF (New York State Liquid Asset Fund), which gives WLS access to higher interest rates.

Other Revenues with Restrictions ended the month \$11,300 short of the budget. This was due to (1) a shortfall in restricted contributions where the line fell short of its grants and fundraising goal and (2) no activity for the LIU Palmer School program, which does not operate in the summer months. Other activity in this line includes revenue from New Rochelle BTOP (Broadband Technology Opportunity Program).

EXPENSES:

Expenses before depreciation came in under budget by \$26,000 but were \$14,300 more than revenue for the month. Lines with significant variances and/or noteworthy activity are discussed below:

Library Materials expenses were more than the budget by \$22,000, driven by greater-than-anticipated patron activity in pay-per-use materials from Hoopla and Kanopy. A majority of the overage in this area is related to Hoopla activity, which continues to increase. The line is also \$137,900 over budget for the YTD. WLS has identified ways to curb these expenses and will be implementing them at the end of the year to allow member libraries to adjust to the changes to the program. The line is projected to carry a \$206,800 deficit at the year-end.

Equipment – This line was \$9,100 over budget for the month and \$102,700 for the YTD. The deficit in this line is driven by the computer replacement project. The computers for the project were purchased in 2024 and recorded in computer inventory. These units are being installed during 2025 and the related expenses are being recognized monthly. The computer inventory, typically conducted annually, is currently performed monthly during the replacement phase to provide the Board with greater visibility into the project's financial impact. The line is projected to carry a \$140,600 deficit at the year-end which was anticipated as a result of the PC replacement project.

Professional Fees – This line was \$1,900 over budget due to an unexpected \$5,000 legal expense. WLS was wrongly named in an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) claim. WLS was required to engage its insurance company and their

council to resolve the issue. This expense represents the deductible for the organization's share of the total cost. The line is projected to be essentially in line with budget at the year-end.

Salaries – This line is currently projected to end the year with a surplus of \$63,600. The primary driver of this surplus was a position that was vacated after the budget was finalized and not filled. The responsibilities this position were partially filled with a new part-time employee and assignment of tasks to other existing employees.

Fringe Benefits – This line is projected to end the year with a surplus of \$196,000. There are two primary drivers of this surplus: (1) Health insurance premiums were anticipated to increase by 15%, but had minimal increases and, (2) the NYS pension system costs were lower due to rates being lower than anticipated.

Supplies – This line is projected to end the year with a surplus of \$24,400. This was primarily the result of conservative spending by staff in multiple departments.

Westchester Library System
Balance Sheet
As of August 31, 2025

	Month Ending 08/31/2025	Month Ending 05/31/2025	Month Ending 08/31/2025		Year Ending 12/31/2024
	Actual	Actual	Period difference	Period variance	Actual
Assets					
Current Assets					
Operating Cash & Cash Equivalents	3,246,809	434,047	2,812,762	648.03 %	1,885,918
Reserve Cash & Cash Equivalents	3,039,214	2,713,001	326,212	12.02 %	2,968,992
Unconditional Promises to Give	223,854	1,810,147	(1,586,292)	(87.63) %	365,676
Accounts Receivable	189,529	40,159	149,370	371.94 %	98,558
Prepaid Expenses	857,327	874,988	(17,661)	(2.01) %	728,543
Total Current Assets	7,556,733	5,872,342	1,684,391	28.68 %	6,047,687
Long-Term Assets					
Property & Equipment	287,006	388,365	(101,359)	(26.09) %	574,690
Right Of Use Asset	677,962	677,961	0	0.00 %	677,961
Total Long-Term Assets	964,968	1,066,326	(101,359)	(9.50) %	1,252,651
Total Assets	8,521,701	6,938,668	1,583,033	22.81 %	7,300,338
Liabilities					
Short-Term Liabilities					
Accounts Payable	558,210	465,179	93,030	19.99 %	826,258
Deferred Revenue	1,911,100	256,410	1,654,692	645.33 %	584
Short-Term Right of Use	309,841	309,841	0	0.00 %	309,841
Total Short-Term Liabilities	2,779,151	1,031,430	1,747,722	169.44 %	1,136,683
Long-Term Liabilities					
Long-Term Right of Use	506,113	506,113	0	0.00 %	506,113
Post-Retirement Benefits Payable	3,563,008	3,563,008	0	0.00 %	3,563,008
Total Long-Term Liabilities	4,069,121	4,069,121	0	0.00 %	4,069,121
Total Liabilities	6,848,272	5,100,551	1,747,722	34.26 %	5,205,804
Net Assets					
Net Assets, Beg Bal	1,707,475	1,894,006	(186,532)	(9.84) %	1,809,705
Change in Net Assets	(34,046)	(55,889)	21,843	39.08 %	284,829
Total Net Assets	1,673,429	1,838,117	(164,690)	(8.95) %	2,094,534
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	8,521,701	6,938,668	1,583,033	22.81 %	7,300,338
Net Asset Detail					
Working Capital	4,777,582	4,840,912	(63,330)	(1.30) %	4,911,004
Long-Term Net Assets	(3,104,154)	(3,002,794)	(101,359)	(3.37) %	(2,816,469)
Total Net Asset Detail	1,673,428	1,838,118	(164,689)	(8.95) %	2,094,535

Westchester Library System
Statement of Revenues and Expenditures
Comparison to Budget with Previous Years To Date
As of August 31, 2025

	Month Ending 08/31/2025			Year To Date 08/31/2023	Year To Date 08/31/2024	Year To Date 08/31/2025			Year Ending 12/31/2025
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	Variance	Total Budget
Revenue									
State Revenues without Restrictions	187,186	185,507	1,679	1,398,431	1,427,537	1,485,731	1,484,060	1,671	2,226,090
County Revenues without Restrictions	111,927	114,164	(2,237)	865,400	895,360	895,417	913,307	(17,889)	1,369,960
Federal Revenues without Restrictions	18,495	11,666	6,828	110,000	93,308	100,157	93,333	6,823	140,000
Member Technology Fees	230,689	232,084	(1,394)	1,782,857	1,800,357	1,838,679	1,856,666	(17,987)	2,785,000
Fund Raising & Contributions	11	0	12	249	960	3,551	0	3,550	0
Interest	17,267	5,416	11,849	77,819	101,701	93,186	43,334	49,853	65,000
Other Revenues without Restrictions	1,261	1,375	(114)	(124)	23,015	16,037	11,000	5,037	16,500
State Revenues with Restrictions	54,559	52,930	1,631	402,820	411,068	425,069	423,433	1,636	635,150
Other Revenues with Restrictions	1,487	12,816	(11,330)	38,719	23,370	53,280	102,533	(49,253)	153,800
Total Revenue	622,882	615,958	6,924	4,676,171	4,776,676	4,911,107	4,927,666	(16,559)	7,391,500
Expenditures									
Salaries	190,199	202,741	12,543	1,440,933	1,484,987	1,558,931	1,621,933	63,002	2,432,900
Fringe Benefits	105,207	120,884	15,676	783,134	877,548	882,058	967,067	85,009	1,450,600
Professional Fees	6,292	4,333	(1,959)	14,486	34,638	19,953	34,667	14,714	52,000
Equipment	22,418	13,333	(9,085)	96,665	40,483	209,364	106,666	(102,698)	160,000
Library Materials	116,917	94,775	(22,141)	557,176	735,149	896,116	758,200	(137,915)	1,137,300
Rent and Utilities	35,751	34,825	(926)	265,830	252,944	258,321	278,600	20,279	417,900
Repairs and Maintenance	46,025	51,725	5,699	441,376	433,764	401,139	413,800	12,660	620,700
Supplies	3	3,334	3,331	3,160	8,577	9,087	26,667	17,580	40,000
Telephone and Internet	34,333	37,966	3,634	324,099	298,234	281,820	303,733	21,914	455,600
Printing and Postage	1,103	5,434	4,329	41,543	33,614	31,431	43,467	12,035	65,200
Bibliographic Fees	7,619	7,658	40	57,141	58,924	61,204	61,267	62	91,900
Professional Development	480	9,467	8,987	28,750	13,053	40,224	75,733	35,510	113,600
Travel	3,180	5,483	2,303	35,993	29,143	28,208	43,867	15,658	65,800
Memberships	2,013	2,333	320	16,398	18,991	14,309	18,666	4,358	28,000
Contractual Services	20,433	22,367	1,934	259,770	165,743	181,067	178,933	(2,134)	268,400
Delivery Service	40,364	40,417	53	293,605	308,243	319,188	323,334	4,145	485,000
Insurance	3,249	3,333	84	21,925	22,473	24,906	26,667	1,762	40,000
Miscellaneous	1,592	2,833	1,241	4,522	8,578	11,000	22,666	11,667	34,000
Total Expenditures	637,178	663,241	26,063	4,686,506	4,825,086	5,228,326	5,305,933	77,608	7,958,900
Total Net Revenue Before Depreciation	(14,296)	(47,283)	32,987	(10,335)	(48,410)	(317,219)	(378,267)	61,049	(567,400)
Non-Cash Activity									
Depreciation	12,187	12,084	(103)	115,945	110,206	98,347	96,667	(1,681)	145,000
Unrealized Gain/Loss on Investments	7,563	0	(7,564)	813	4,140	5,540	0	(5,540)	0
Total Non-Cash Activity	19,750	12,084	(7,667)	116,758	114,346	103,887	96,667	(7,221)	145,000
Total Net Revenue	(34,046)	(59,367)	25,320	(127,093)	(162,756)	(421,106)	(474,934)	53,828	(712,400)

Westchester Library System
Statement of Revenues and Expenditures with Projections
As of August 31, 2025

	Year Ending 12/31/2025	YTD Through 08/31/2025	Current Year Projected Sep.-Dec.	Current Year Total Projected	Current Year Proj vs. Budget
Revenues	Budget	Actual			
State Revenues without Restrictions	2,226,090	1,485,731	748,745	2,234,476	8,386
County Revenues without Restrictions	1,369,960	895,417	447,712	1,343,129	(26,831)
Federal Revenues without Restrictions	140,000	100,157	73,978	174,135	34,135
Member Technology Fees	2,785,000	1,838,680	907,535	2,746,215	(38,785)
Fund Raising & Contributions	-	3,550	450	4,000	4,000
Interest	65,000	93,186	43,565	136,751	71,751
Other Revenues without Restrictions	16,500	16,037	2,305	18,342	1,842
State Revenues with Restrictions	635,150	425,070	218,238	643,308	8,158
Other Revenues with Restrictions	153,800	53,280	36,521	89,801	(63,999)
Total Revenues	7,391,500	4,911,107	2,479,050	7,390,157	(1,343)
Expenses					
Salaries	2,432,900	1,558,931	810,370	2,369,301	63,599
Fringe Benefits	1,450,600	882,058	372,548	1,254,606	195,994
Professional Fees	52,000	19,953	31,884	51,837	163
Equipment	160,000	209,364	91,207	300,571	(140,571)
Library Materials	1,137,300	896,116	447,930	1,344,046	(206,746)
Rent and Utilities	417,900	258,321	132,424	390,745	27,155
Repairs and Maintenance	620,700	401,139	217,180	618,319	2,381
Supplies	40,000	9,087	6,563	15,650	24,350
Telephone and Internet	455,600	281,820	144,559	426,379	29,221
Printing and Postage	65,200	31,432	15,140	46,571	18,629
Bibliographic Fees	91,900	61,204	30,656	91,860	41
Professional Development	113,600	40,223	48,538	88,761	24,839
Travel	65,800	28,209	11,699	39,908	25,892
Memberships	28,000	14,308	16,647	30,955	(2,955)
Contractual Services	268,400	181,067	56,814	237,881	30,519
Delivery Service	485,000	319,188	160,923	480,111	4,889
Insurance	40,000	24,905	11,065	35,970	4,030
Miscellaneous	34,000	11,000	4,500	15,500	18,500
Total Expenses	7,958,900	5,228,326	2,610,645	7,838,971	119,929
Net Revenue Before Depreciation	(567,400)	(317,219)	(131,595)	(448,814)	118,586
Non-Cash Activity					
Depreciation	145,000	98,347	49,358	147,705	(2,705)
Gain/Loss on Post-Retirement Benefits	-	-	-	-	-
Unrealized Gain/Loss on Investments	-	5,540	-	5,540	(5,540)
Total Non-Cash Activity	145,000	103,887	49,358	153,245	(8,245)
Total Net Revenue	(712,400)	(421,106)	(180,953)	(602,058)	110,342

Temporarily Restricted Net Assets
as of August 31, 2025

Code	Asset Title	Asset Description	Temporarily Restricted Net Assets December 31, 2024	2025 Revenue	2025 Expenses	Temporarily Restricted Net Assets August 31, 2025
34025	Central Library	Library materials, services & training	\$0	\$266,270	\$127,475	\$138,795
80008	Outreach Fundraising	Fundraising to support outreach activities (continuous)	\$13,107	\$2,079	\$0	\$15,186
70127	Homebound Delivery (FH)	Support for delivery to homebound patrons	\$13,132	\$0	\$2,104	\$11,028
70132	United Way - CI2025	Community Impact Grant - Supporting Outreach Activities	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
21902	Great Potentials	Program to educate middle school students on Leadership, Communication, Anti-Bullying and Teamwork	\$0	\$4,200	\$0	\$4,200
40400	BTOP - New Rochelle	Broadband Technology Opportunity Program at New Rochelle Public Library	\$0	\$12,495	\$11,900	\$595
70102	TASC - Private contributions	Private monies for adult literacy programs	\$599	\$0	\$130	\$469
70130	RWT 2025 (ConEd)	2025 Support for Reconnect w/ Tech.	\$7,500	\$0	\$7,173	\$327
80225	LIU Certificate Program	Supports training in public library administration through Long Island University	\$0	\$29,200	\$29,200	\$0
	TOTALS		\$34,338	\$319,244	\$177,982	\$175,600

History of TRNA balance as of 12/31

2019 - \$239,361
2020 - \$264,015
2021 - \$314,375
2022 - \$423,228
2023 - \$212,210
2024 - \$34,338

Item: Banking Services RFP

Background: The WLS Investment of Funds policy provides comprehensive direction on the deposit and investment of cash assets. The WLS Purchasing policy additionally directs the prudent and economical use of revenues.

To that end, WLS is currently engaged in a Request for Proposals (RFP) for banking services to ensure that: (1) funds are in accounts that return interest on deposited funds, and (2) minimize banking fees to the extent possible.

The last RFP was conducted in 2015.

Status: The Banking Services RFP was publicly posted to the WLS website on July 14, 2025. Any qualified institution was welcome to submit a proposal. In addition, nine institutions were invited to submit proposals, including WLS's current bank.

The deadline for bidders to submit proposals was September 4, 2025; six proposals were received. Management is currently reviewing the submitted proposals and will be engaged with bidders through October 10 for clarifications and questions.

Management intends to review results of the RFP with the Board Treasurer and bring a recommendation forward on selecting a banking institution as an action item at the October 28, 2025 meeting.

September 30, 2025

Item: Delivery Services RFP

Background: WLS currently engages with a delivery service provider to facilitate the movement of library materials between member library locations and the WLS office. This service currently operates six days-a-week and is critical to the intra-library loan program which allows patrons of a library to access materials from any of the 44 library locations in Westchester. It is core to WLS's mission to provide equity of access. The service also ensures that library materials are returned to their owning library efficiently, maximizing their availability to the public and transports approximately 1.5 million items per year.

The current contract for delivery service expires on December 31, 2025.

Status: The Delivery Services RFP was publicly posted to the WLS website on August 26, 2025. Any qualified vendor is welcome to submit a proposal. In addition, two vendors, including the incumbent vendor, were invited to submit proposals.

The deadline for bidders to submit proposals is October 16, 2025. Management will review the submitted proposals and is expected to select a vendor by November 1.

The purchase of these services is included in the current year's approved budget and the following year's proposed budget, therefore separate approval will not be required to move forward with awarding a contract for these services. However, management will keep the Board informed throughout the process in future information items.

September 30, 2025

Item: State Aid for Public Library Construction \$44 Million Program
FY2025-2026

Background: A total of \$44 Million was approved for the Public Library Construction Aid Program in the FY2025-2026 State Budget. For Westchester Library System, the allocation of aid available is based on population and totals \$2,072,494.

Status: A total of 16 applications were received for this grant cycle, up from 10 applications last year. All the applications were found to meet the criteria established for the Public Library Construction Aid as required by New York State Commissioner's Regulations [Section 90.12], which include more effective library service; more efficient utilization of the library building; improved access to and use of building services; and provision of library services in communities which are geographically isolated or economically disadvantaged. Six applications were recommended at their maximum allocation of 50% (Bronxville, Dobbs Ferry, Eastchester, John C. Hart [Yorktown], Larchmont, and Rye), nine applications (Bedford Free, Katonah, Mount Kisco, New Rochelle-Huguenot, New Rochelle-Main, Warner [Tarrytown], White Plains, and Yonkers-Crestwood) were recommended at 55%, one library (Ossining) was recommended at 56%, and one library (Yonkers-Will) was recommended at 20% (which was \$663,384).

The Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) Public Library Construction Aid Committee made up of Chair Beth Bermel, Scarsdale Public Library; Augusta Turner, Town of Pelham Public Library; Christina Ryan-Linder, Greenburgh Public Library; Dana Hysell, The Field Library; and Jennifer Coulter, Pound Ridge Library. The WLS representative on this committee was Terry Kirchner. The committee members reviewed and approved the construction project applications on September 15, 2025. The committee's allocation recommendations were presented to and approved by the Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) on September 18, 2025.

The Committee reviewed the applications based on the nature of the projects and aid previously received. The recommended award amounts are noted on the attached list. Should additional funding be allocated to WLS (this regularly occurs when other systems are not able to utilize their funds), the following projects have been identified as higher priority projects to receive an equal portion of any additional funding until a library reaches the 90% threshold: Bedford Hills, Mount Kisco, New Rochelle-Huguenot, Ossining, and Yonkers-Crestwood.

This year's allotment to WLS equaled \$2,072,494. The Total Project Cost for all applications equals \$5,950,757, which is \$1,368,845 more than last year's total and highlights the ongoing need for Public Library Construction Aid.

Recommended

Action: Approval of the recommendations submitted by the PLDA Public Library Construction Aid Committee.

Westchester Library System

Action Item #1 (09/30/25)

Library:	Total Project Cost:	Recommended Allocation:	Project Number:	Project Description:
Bedford Hill Free Library* (55%)	\$ 141,100	\$ 77,605	0386-26-1839	Roof and window replacement
Bronxville Public Library (50%)	\$ 373,600	\$ 186,800	0386-26-1647	Boiler replacement
Dobbs Ferry Public Library (50%)	\$ 99,134	\$ 49,567	0386-26-1692	Replace flooring, security cameras, replace broken A/C compressor and create a teen space
Eastchester Public Library (50%)	\$ 15,700	\$ 7,850	0386-26-1762	Install heaters and thermostats in upper and lower library lobby areas
John C Hart Memorial Library [Yorktown] (50%)	\$ 180,000	\$ 90,000	0386-26-1805	Install wall mounted ductless heat pump system and upgrade existing automated HVAC system and VAV boxes
Katonah Village Library* (55%)	\$ 201,600	\$ 110,880	0386-26-1666	Replace bluestone ramps and walkways, add ramp for interior meeting room
Larchmont Public Library (50%)	\$ 48,418	\$ 24,209	0386-26-1753	Security camera system replacement
Mount Kisco Public Library* (55%)	\$ 116,151	\$ 63,883	0386-26-1787	Elevator modernization/replacement
New Rochelle Public Library - Huegenot* (55%)	\$ 175,000	\$ 96,250	0386-26-1808	New roof
New Rochelle Public Library -Main* (55%)	\$ 178,610	\$ 98,236	0386-26-1689	Upgrade main and second floor door hardware and access controls. Install acoustic baffles in Children's room & ADA compliant door handles.
Ossining Public Library* (56%)	\$ 355,870	\$ 200,532	0386-26-1816	Install a new heating/cooling system
Rye Free Reading Room (50%)	\$ 73,150	\$ 36,575	0386-26-1651	Building safety upgrade of fire and security systems
Warner Library [Tarrytown]* (55%)	\$ 135,273	\$ 74,400	0386-26-1738	Replace flooring and shelving to create ADA compliant public space
White Plains Public Library* (55%)	\$ 74,366	\$ 40,901	0386-26-1643	Install ADA assistive devices and a public address system to enhance public safety and security

Westchester Library System

Action Item #1 (09/30/25)

Yonkers Public Library -Crestwood * (55%)	\$ 465,864	\$ 256,225	0386-26-1745	ADA accessibility
Yonkers Public Library - Will* (20%)	\$ 3,316,921	\$ 663,384	0386-26-1784	Auditorium renovation
Total:	\$5,950,757	\$2,072,494		

*Indicates library is eligible to receive up to 90% of total project cost as an allocation.

WLS Executive Director Report September 30, 2025

WLS Strategic Initiatives



Promoting equity and access



Expand Community/Member Library/Partner Engagement



Update and Improve Our Infrastructure

New York State and Federal Funding and Legislative Updates

Advocacy – Legislators’ Appreciation Supper

On July 22, WLS hosted this year’s Legislators’ Appreciation Supper. The event brought together library staff, Friends groups, WLS staff, and board members along with local, state, and county legislators. The evening celebrated the strong partnerships that support libraries across Westchester and highlighted our shared commitment to building stronger, more informed, and more connected communities. A special thank you to everyone who was able to attend this year’s event.



Career Coaching Services (CCS)

Seminar – *Managing Your Career in Changing Times*

These seminars provide participants with relevant information about self-assessment and employer hiring practices. The seminars meet weekly for ninety-minute sessions over six consecutive weeks during the Winter, Spring and Fall. Two Seminars are being held this fall:

Tuesdays, September 30, 2025 – November 4, 2025 – In person
Wednesdays October 29, 2025 – December 10, 2025 – In person

Individual Advisement and Career Coaching

Individual Advisement and Career Coaching services provide patrons who find themselves in between seminar schedules or have specific career needs which can be personally addressed with a professional Career Coach. Although summer months are typically less active, this service has remained consistent with some new and existing clients.

Community Engagement

In July and August, we worked with several member libraries to present and plan in-person programming for the summer and fall.

We have collaborated with the Mamaroneck Library to present a ‘Fighting Ageism in the Workplace’ workshop for September 15th which will be held in person. In addition, we have worked with the

Chappaqua Library to facilitate our “Managing Your Career in Changing Times” seminar, in person, beginning on Tuesday, September 30th from 12:00 – 1:30pm.

CCS will be hosting the seminar for the METRO Library Council beginning October 29th at a New York City location for their member library staff. This is a second program where we have collaborated to offer professional development to their membership.

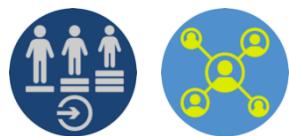
Workshops

In August we facilitated ‘Latest Trends in Resumes’ workshop at the White Plains Library. This



event was well attended by a diverse audience ranging in work experience from recent graduates through pre-retirement. It is evident that this topic is top of mind for job seekers as the most relevant tools and concepts are important to be noticed in today’s job market.

A virtual LinkedIn Boot Camp was hosted in mid-August facilitated by Dr. Elisse Barnes. Dr. Barnes focuses on encouraging participants to create strong profiles highlighting one’s professional brand and value. In this interactive program she explains the power of LinkedIn for their job search, career transition, networking, entrepreneurship, and leadership. The 2-day webinar was well attended, and the participants were engaged with Dr. Barnes who also offered constructive feedback regarding their LinkedIn profiles.



Cataloging Services

WLS Cataloging Services often serves as a liaison between the member libraries and the vendors with whom the libraries have contracts to buy books and non-print materials. Vendor-provided bibliographic records representing materials purchased by libraries are edited to reflect local practices and imported into the shared WLS catalog by Director of Cataloging Services Douglas

Wray and Manager of Cataloging Services Melissa Glazer. The liaison role is necessary because when a plan is being set up, the libraries and vendors both usually need someone who is experienced with the Evergreen ILS (integrated library system).

During the summer, Mr. Wray assisted Rye Free Reading Room and Ingram Book Group, as well as Yonkers Public Library and Baker & Taylor. Recently, a librarian inquired about the bibliographic records which Amazon has begun offering free of charge to its library customers. Mr. Wray reviewed samples of Amazon's records and deemed them too incomplete to be useful in the WLS catalog. Amazon's cataloging team then requested a call with Mr. Wray, to seek advice on how to improve their records. A call was scheduled for September 17. The entire WLS cataloging team will provide input.

Without bibliographic records in the catalog to represent them, materials would be invisible to patrons seeking to find them, place holds on them and borrow them. The records come from three sources: OCLC's WorldCat database; vendors; and the WLS catalogers, who create them from scratch (original cataloging) when necessary. Here are three examples of such original cataloging, done during the summer by Part-time Cataloger Steven Pisani:

House calls: the Larchmont Historical Society Holiday House tours 1981-1993

This book is a photographic tour of historic homes in Larchmont, including architectural and historical information. It was published by the Larchmont Historical Society. (Cataloged for Larchmont Public Library)

What shall I read?: and other stories / Cornelia Cotton

The author is a resident of Croton-on-Hudson. This is her second book of short stories recounting her experiences growing up in Germany and emigrating to the United States. (Cataloged for Croton Free Library)

Captured legacy: Bethany Arts Community Black history & culture exhibits / Joyce Sharrock Cole

This is a pictorial catalog of Ossining's Bethany Arts Community Black History & Culture exhibitions from 2021 through 2024, with a preview of the 2025 exhibition. (Cataloged for Ossining Public Library)

The member libraries continue to add "library of things" (non-traditional objects) to their collections. During the summer, Mr. Wray created bibliographic records for:

- a laminated card featuring an image of the children's book character Pete the Cat holding a Chappaqua Library library card, which is intended to be included in kids' selfies when they travel, thus advertising the library;
- trekking poles and a pickleball set (for Larchmont Public Library);
- an optical character recognition device, which scans printed text and reads it aloud to the user (for the John C. Hart Memorial Library); and
- six pieces of maker space equipment (also for the John C. Hart Memorial Library).

WLS Cataloging Services cataloged works in Chinese, French, Hebrew, Hindi, Japanese and Spanish, with Ms. Glazer expertly managing the especially challenging non-Roman alphabet works.

Mr. Wray has resumed cataloging the large Joseph Albanese Collection of CDs for New Rochelle Public Library. The project had to pause for several months while the library purchased

additional shelving. Currently, 1475 titles have been cataloged by Mr. Wray, and many more are on the way.

An OCLC Streamlined WorldCat Holdings Update was completed during the summer. The project reconciled the contents of the WLS catalog with OCLC's accounting of them. This is valuable because OCLC facilitates outside libraries' borrowing of WLS materials via interlibrary loan (ILL). Mr. Wray worked on this, with essential help from WLS Integrated Library System Administrator / Systems Librarian Lindsay Stratton.



ILS, Discovery, and ILL Services

Evergreen (ILS)

On August 26, WLS launched Unique's MessageBee service for sending available hold notifications by text. Since launch, over 7,000 texts have been sent to library patrons with a 99% success rate.

WLS Integrated Library System Administrator / Systems Librarian Lindsay Stratton assisted The Ossining Public Library with implementation of their Bibliotheca Remote Lockers; set up API connections to the ILS for Rye Free Reading Room and Yonkers Public Library as they launch Patron Point marketing services; and added configurations and developed workflow documentation for the Evergreen self-check module for the Mamaroneck Public Library.

On September 10, ILS Discovery Specialist Allison Pryor hosted an Evergreen training directed towards New Hires based on the influx of new library staff hired in the last few weeks. This session was well attended. She will be offering another New Hire session on October 7th in the evening for staff who cannot attend during regular "office hours." Ms. Pryor has also been working with The Field Library Director Dana Hysell to offer customized Evergreen training for the Field staff (One training being an Evergreen overview, and the other being Evergreen Holds).

Aspen Discovery Services

Ms. Pryor assisted the Field Library and Katonah Village Library with their Aspen Discovery rebranding. There have also been two one-on-one screensharing sessions with Aspen Administrators (Jonathan Heifetz, Head of Adult Services, Eastchester Public Library to create browse categories for their instance, and Ursula Cornely, Library Clerk, Hastings Public Library for a refresher.)

Battle of the Books

Ms. Pryor has been working with the Battle of the Books Planning Committee, getting ready for the October 25th battle date, as well as collaborating with libraries to lend the WLS-owned buzzer systems to aid in their team practices.

Interlibrary Loan

Ms. Stratton has been working with WLS Interlibrary Loan (ILL) Senior Clerk Molly Tobin and Ms. Pryor to update the ILL information available to patrons on the WLS website. This will

clarify ILL service guidelines.

Over the summer, Ms. Tobin processed 998 ILL in-bound requests, with 877 fulfilled or in-process; and 319 out-bound requests, with 162 fulfilled or in-process.



IT Services

One of the major projects that the WLS IT department completed this Summer was the public computer roll out to participating libraries. The new public computer workstations include the most recent version of Microsoft Office for public use. The full deployment of the public computers coincides with the release of our new unified cybersecurity platform. This new platform covers endpoint protection, threat detection, and incident response.

The department continues to enhance the overall library network during the summer to improve security and staff usability. One of the objectives is to improve internet performance and to prepare for network performance models. The department has been evaluating the bandwidth utilization at the datacenter and several libraries to help identify the future needs of the libraries in the upcoming years.

The 2026 WLS IT service level agreements (SLAs) have been processed and distributed to all 38 member libraries. The 2026 SLA has been discussed at the monthly PLDA Technology Committee meetings and information was provided to the directors before it was sent out for library board review and approval.



Outreach Services

LinkedIn Training for Reentry Professionals

In the second week of September, we held a LinkedIn training instructed by Dr. Elisse Barnes. As part of our Outreach efforts, we focused on providers of reentry organizations. Dr. Barnes invited Coach Alisa Smedley, a Training Consultant with extensive experience working with the justice-impacted community, to create a special edition of her program. Attendees learned effective strategies for helping their clients use LinkedIn to find job and networking opportunities, and some also gained new insights for their own professional use. Participants included representatives from the Department of Correction, ACCESS-VR, and the Mental Health Empowerment Project.

Return of Adult and Youth Services Meetings, New Teen Services Listserv

Monthly Adult and Youth Services meetings are back in swing! These meetings offer an opportunity for member library staff to come together online and in person to share and discuss any topics they see fit. Attendees frequently ask how other libraries are handling specific issues,

policies, and workflows, giving the outreach team a look at what is top of mind for member librarians. These meetings also function as an opportunity to share announcements and information from WLS, with the added benefit of gathering immediate feedback or suggestions.

There has also been interest in holding a less frequent teen services meeting, highlighting the unique circumstances and challenges presented to the oft-overlooked teen services librarians. We have also set up a new teen services email list, providing another avenue for discussion.

SolarWinds Ticketing System

The Outreach team has adopted the SolarWinds ticketing system to streamline requests and improve service tracking. In its first phase, the system will be used to manage internal requests, as well as those from member library staff and partner agencies. Over time, it will expand to include inquiries from community members accessing WLS resources. This phased rollout will allow Outreach to ensure timely follow-up, strengthen coordination, and collect consistent data for the WLS Annual Report, while building a comprehensive picture of service demand and impact. The new email for use with this ticketing system is askoutreach@wlsmail.org.

Westchester County Department of Corrections (WCDOC)

WLS Outreach Assistant: Family and Re-Entry Services, Janet Donat, launched a new program inside the Westchester County Department of Corrections – a weekly literary group for women titled **Turning The Page**. The program is designed to support the creative expression of those attending, as well as connecting them with WLS’s re-entry support and services when they leave the jail.

Participants were given a journal, colored pencils, and a pen along with copies of poetry by Maya Angelou. Participants were actively engaged in reading and responding to the following poems: “Phenomenal Woman, Still I Rise,” “Alone,” “Caged Bird,” and “Life Doesn’t Frighten Me.” Using their journals they also authored their own poems – inspired by Maya Angelou’s works.

The group then elected to read Maya Angelou’s autobiographical novel, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* and met weekly for 6 additional weeks to discuss and reflect on the book and how the themes related to their own lives.

Disconnect to Reconnect (D2R)

WLS has agreed to take the lead agency in the Disconnect to Reconnect (D2R) initiative going forward. A steering committee has been formed comprised of key community stakeholders – WLS, Westchester County Department of Community Mental Health (DCMH), Westchester Board of Legislators, Westchester Children’s Association, Westchester Jewish Community Services (WJCS), Westchester Children’s Museum (WCM), Childcare Council of Westchester (CCCW), New Rochelle Y, and New Hope Community Services – as well as two community advocacy groups: OK to Delay and IRL (In Real Life). DCMH Commissioner Michael Orth and DCMH Program Director for Children’s Mental Health Dr. Andy Bell have written a white paper/strategic plan which along with the DCMH survey results will help guide and focus D2R on priorities moving forward.

A screening of the documentary *Playing For Keeps* has been scheduled for October 23 at the White Plains Public Library. This screening will be geared toward D2R campaign supporters and service providers and professionals in the community. Additional screenings will be offered at various times in libraries throughout Westchester to accommodate working families and those

unable to attend the screening in October. All screenings will be followed by an interactive group discussion facilitated by a D2R steering committee member.

D2R is planning to host a conference in April 2026 focusing on the importance of Play as a crucial mitigating factor in dealing with the toxic effects of overexposure to social media and screen exposure.

Westchester Breaths / Breath Body Mind (BBM)

Thanks to WLS Outreach Liaison Elena Falcone, additional Breath Body Mind (BBM) certified instructors are ready to begin facilitating Westchester Breaths classes throughout Westchester County as an offering of WLS and its focus on health and wellness. Libraries, correctional institutions, special populations (ARC, survivors of domestic violence and residents in skilled living facilities) will be scheduled for Westchester Breaths sessions this fall.

Legal Aid Society of Westchester (LASWest)

WLS continues to strengthen a collaborative relationship with the Legal Aid Society of Westchester (LASWest) and are in the process of exploring collaborative workshop opportunities in their new state-of-the-art training facility. LASWest currently supplies their clients with information on WLS's services and resources – including the Job Search Tool Kit – displayed prominently in their client waiting area.



Small Business and Workforce Development

In the first half of 2025, the focus has been on WLS Small Business and Workforce Development (WLS SB & WD) implementation including deployment of new digital tools and extensive community engagement and networking.

The [Small Business Resources website](#) and [Blue Career](#) were successfully launched in early 2025 and used extensively in community engagement including small business expos, job fairs, and community events (e.g. chambers of commerce). Building strong relationships and partnerships with small business and workforce support organizations are critical to deployment success. We have developed collaborative partnerships with SCORE Westchester (SBA affiliated small business mentoring) along with other non-profit and business support organizations. WLS SB & WD attended a total of eight various community events in the first half of 2025. These actions in direct engagement with Westchester County residents.

In early September, WLS SB & WD attended ConXpo a small business expo, sponsored by Westchester County Economic Development. Our resource table received a lot of visits from the expo participants.

In addition, we had “listen and learn” conversations with start-up small business owners and networked with small business support organizations (e.g., chambers of commerce). The feedback on WLS small business resources was positive.



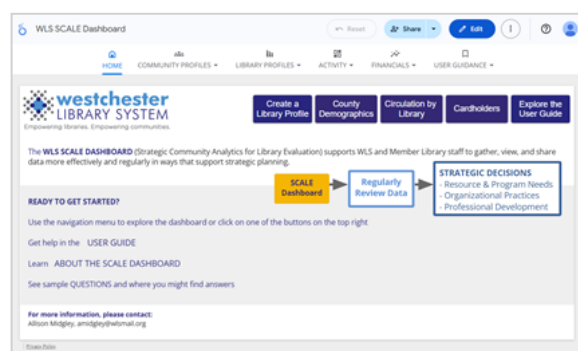
Our busy fall schedule includes attending more job fairs, community events as well as hosting small business and BlueCareer offerings.



Strategic Data Analysis and Member Library Support

The NYS Department of Library Development has approved almost all WLS Member Library Annual Reports. The Mount Vernon Public Library has received a request for corrections from DLD to work toward final completion.

Development of the WLS interactive data dashboard, *Strategic Community Analysis for Library Evaluation (SCALE)*, the dashboard underwent testing by WLS and library staff during demonstrations and training in June, July, and August. Workshops will continue throughout the fall to widen the user base. Allison Midgley, Manager of Strategic Data Analysis and Member Library Support, and Bijan Kimiagar of AEQUA Strategies led the formation of a data review team consisting of WLS and member library staff that will meet periodically to review trends captured and reflected in SCALE and Annual Member Libraries Statistics Reports. The team met to discuss the current iteration of SCALE as well as a Database Development Plan to establish future goals.



In conjunction with this, Ms. Midgley and Mr. Kimiagar met with Terry Kirchner to finalize an Action Plan that summarizes the broader accomplishments and goals of the WLS Data-Driven Resources & Practices project. After discussion with Ms. Midgley, Mr. Kirchner and Rob Calouri, Mr. Kimiagar submitted two project proposals. One continues development of the SCALE dashboard and data-driven organizational culture. The other focuses on migrating the current WLS Data Dashboard of primarily monthly statistics to a system similar to the SCALE Dashboard as well as building new systems, processes, and "in-house" capacity for that work. The 2024 WLS Member Libraries Report draft is underway. Ms. Midgley and Mr. Kimiagar revised the report to include an executive summary, key demographic information, library outcome comparisons, and trend analysis that reflect WLS' role and strategic initiatives. The new version of the report includes individual library profiles. These "snapshots in time" will help libraries show stakeholders how and why they are a wise community investment.

In August, increased awareness and use of digital resources focused on Tutor.com. Efforts included three training sessions, led by Maxine Nebro, Tutor.com Sr. Customer Success Manager, and distribution to libraries of newly branded posters and bookmarks. On-demand training is also available for staff through training session recordings and Tutor.com University, a platform where staff can complete coursework at their own pace.

Current data analysis is also part of developing a strategy for digital resources like OverDrive and Hoopla and a joint effort with other library systems to investigate options for changes to eContent vendor relationships. WLS staff, including Ms. Midgley, attended a PULISDO mini conference in early August. It was a valuable opportunity to learn how other systems gather, analyze, and use data in decision-making; process annual reports; and work with member libraries. Finally, Ms. Midgley's involvement in the WLS Communications Working Group and working with WLS staff to integrate AI into their workflows bring data awareness into WLS processes from the outset.



Strategic Relations and Development

Strategic Relations

In June, Director of Strategic Relations and Development Pat Brigham had the opportunity to attend the annual *International Public Library Fundraising Conference*. This year was a standout – with over 100 library fundraisers from across the county and Canada attending this 3-day event held at the beautiful San Diego Central Public Library. Library foundation directors, their marketing and communication staff and board members from both large and small, urban, suburban, and rural libraries networked and shared some best practices, successful annual and capital campaigns (including wildly successful Library Giving Days!) and planned giving strategies. A key takeaway is this – the most successful library fundraising is rooted in a professional foundation working in strategic alignment with the library's goals, vision, and branding/marketing. Success comes from a multi-tiered fundraising strategy with individual giving a key component.

For WLS and member libraries, as part of a cooperative system, the fundraising structure may be different from some national models– but basic principles along with some creative thinking can bring fundraising into a stronger focus here in Westchester. To that end, this department offers workshops with staff and other professionals to provide member libraries, their Friends, Foundations, and fundraising committees with best practices, inspiration, and ideas to meet fundraising goals. Also available are resources and information at www.wslibraryfundraising.org.

In July, Ms. Brigham offered two workshops on Library Storytelling, with the goal of inspiring participants to uncover the hidden, powerful library stories and share how good impactful stories can motivate volunteers, engage business leaders, galvanize public officials, and inspire donors. Story. Presented on zoom, member library trustees, WLS and Capital District Library staff attended.

Additionally, Ms. Brigham is working with The Field Library Board fundraising committee in an advisory capacity.

Workshop scheduled for October 30 in person at WLS, 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm: **Sustainable Fundraising Strategies! Demystify Incorporating Planned Giving, Designated Funds and Working with Professional Advisors.** A conversation with Laura Rossi, vice president of the New York Community Trust, Westchester Division. Ms. Rossi will demystify the process of

planned giving, share how the NYCT promotes planned giving to individuals to support the causes and issues they care about the most, how they work with professional advisors to boost awareness, and how a designated fund for a library (or WLS itself) can be a solution. [Register](#)

A previously scheduled roundtable and workshop on September 25, 2025, with representatives from member library foundations on establishing and sustaining a library foundation will be rescheduled in the coming months.

Ms. Brigham will represent WLS on YWCA Central Westchester's Advisory Committee for Voices Unfiltered, a civic leadership program for 8th – 11th graders and was invited to co-chair the Westchester Women's Agenda's Voter's Rights Committee.

Ms. Brigham will be working with the Disconnect 2 Reconnect steering committee along with Janet Donat, WLS Outreach. The committee is exploring presenting a conference and developing sponsorships to support this initiative.

Development

In August, WLS responded to the Digital Equity Capacity Grant RFP from NY's ConnectAll Office. Governor Hochul's office has designated \$5.35 million to fund digital literacy programs in NY through a competitive grant process. Our proposal, Hudson Valley Connects! is designed to strengthen NYS's digital equity ecosystem through measurable activities that progress towards closing the digital divide and support NY State's goals to increase employment and job readiness, education, health and well-being, civic engagement, and access to essential government services.

Through an asset-based approach, our project partners, Southeastern NY Library Resource Council (SENYLRC) Ramapo Catskill Library System and Mid-Hudson Library System will scale and improve library digital literacy services for residents in nine counties (Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, and Westchester); the project will focus on meeting the needs of our most vulnerable populations, including seniors, low-income families, and low-literacy adults. WLS is the lead partner in this initiative. If funded, SENYLRC will manage the project, expanding the current multi-system collaboration with SENYLRC's Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley project. Awards will be announced in early Fall.

WLS is also in conversation with Con Edison to develop and build a partnership supporting sustainable libraries and to promote libraries as informational resources for community resilience. If approved, a grant announcement is expected before the end of the year. In alignment with the spirit of this potential funding WLS has joined [Sustainable Libraries Initiative](#), a project of American Library Association. Membership encourages Sustainable Library Certification. Harrison Public Library is the most recent Westchester library to be certified; Hendrick Hudson Free Library completed certification in the early phase of the program. All member libraries are invited to participate in this program.

This quarter, WLS received a \$5,000 Community Impact Grant from United Way Westchester & Putnam (UWWP) for general support of WLS Outreach Services. This funding provides additional resources for Outreach Services, primarily funded through NY Coordinated Outreach Funds and Westchester County. A list of all WLS Outreach projects, which in part formed the proposal to UWWP follows the Executive Director's report.



Trustee Education Opportunities

October 8, 6:00 PM-8:00 PM – ***IN PERSON at WLS Headquarters*** – **Trustee Institute: Understanding Your Insurance Options - Minimize Risks and Maximize Protections**

Licensed insurance agent Erica Martinson will share her professional insights and discuss cost effective ways that libraries of all types can use insurance tools to minimize risk and maximize overall protection for your library. Light dinner provided. [Registration required.](#)

October 30, 2025, 6:30 PM-8:30 PM – ***IN PERSON at WLS Headquarters*** – **Sustainable Fundraising Strategies! Demystify Incorporating Planned Giving, Designated Funds, and Working with Professional Advisors**

A conversation with Laura Rossi, vice president of the New York Community Trust, Westchester Division. Ms. Rossi will demystify the process of planned giving, share how the NYCT promotes planned giving to individuals to support the causes and issues they care about the most, how they work with professional advisors to boost awareness, and how a designated fund for a library (or WLS itself) can be a solution. [Registration required.](#)

November 18, 2025, 5:00 PM-6:30 PM – ***ONLINE*** – **Trustee Handbook Book Club – Next Level Trusteeship: Building an Effective and Impactful Board Culture**

To register for and to learn more information about each of the 2025 sessions, go to the Trustee Handbook Book Club website at <https://midhudson.org/trusteebookclub/>. Archived recordings of earlier sessions are available on the Trustee Handbook Book Club Archive at <https://midhudson.org/trustee-handbook-book-club-archive/>.



Upcoming Events – Check Your Calendar!

2025 Battle of the Books – October 25, 2025, at the Anne M. Dorner Middle School in Ossining

Register to be a volunteer at this year's Battle of the Books at [2025 WLS Battle of the Books Volunteer Form](#). This is truly a fun and exciting volunteer activity that focuses on friendly team competition.



WLS OUTREACH PROGRAMS 2025 – 2026
SERVICE ACTIVITIES AND PARTNERS
Empowering People and Communities

The Westchester Library System helps community members discover and connect with information and services that advance their knowledge, needs, and dreams. These services are available to anyone who lives, works, or attends school in Westchester County. From the organization and delivery of materials to personalized services, we work across community needs, meeting individuals where they are.

ADULT AND FAMILY RESOURCES AND SERVICES

- ***HSE Connect/Read Better*** – 1-1 remote coaching in the use of an online GED study and literacy resources (also relevant for ESL students). Key partners: BOCES, Department of Social Services, Westchester Educational Opportunity Center. [High School Equivalency and the GED](#)
- ***College Guidance*** – one-to-one counseling and workshops; bilingual service. Key partners: Member libraries, high school guidance departments, and the Community Resource Center. [Connect with a College Coach](#)
- ***Family Resources*** – early literacy and special education guidance. Key partners: Department of Social Services, HeadStart (Family Services of Westchester, WestCOP), Student Advocacy. [Family Literacy](#)
- For more information: [First Find](#)

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- ***Career Counseling Services*** - offers specialized programs to guide individuals on their career path. Programs are focused on helping adults in career transition, seeking work before or after retirement, or recent college graduates determining their career direction. Career Development seminars, interactive workshops, and career-related speaker events are offered throughout the year, facilitated by professional career coaches. [Career Counseling Services](#).
- ***WLS Small Business Resources*** provides resources and programs to support small businesses and talent pathways into the workforce. [Small Business Resources](#) Key Partner- SCORE, BOCES
- ***Job Search Tool Kit and Job Search Services*** – 1-1 remote coaching for job search. The Job Search Tool Kit is a comprehensive guide for Job Seekers available online and in print. Key partners include the Westchester Educational Opportunity Center and the Department of Social Services. [Job Search Tool Kit](#)

OLDER ADULT SERVICES

- ***Senior Benefits Referrals*** – orientation towards information and assistance for Medicare and other benefits. Key partners: Member libraries, Department of Senior Programs and Services, Westchester Disabled on the Move, West COP. [Senior Services](#)
- ***Senior Law Day Collaborative*** – free educational services, professional consultations, and information resources. Key partners: Member Libraries Hosts (YWI and others), Westchester County Public Private Partnership for Aging Services, the Westchester County Department of Senior Programs and Services, and attorneys, financial advisers, and care managers from the public and private sectors. [Senior Law Day Collaborative](#)

SOCIAL JUSTICE

- ***Correctional Facility Support*** – InterLibraryLoan and guidance for Bedford Hills, Taconic, and Sing Sing Correctional Facilities. Resources and programming for the Westchester County Jail.

Key partners: NYS Department of Correction and Community Supervision, Westchester County Department of Corrections.

- **Reentry Services** – information and direct service for justice impacted individuals, e.g., HSE and Job Search; Reconnect with Tech (digital skills support) program. Key partners: Westchester Reentry Task Force, Westchester County Department of Corrections, NYS Department of Corrections, Youth Shelter of Westchester, Westchester Economic Opportunity Center, and local reentry support services. [Westchester Connections Reentry](#)

GENERAL SERVICES and SPECIAL INITIATIVES

- **Outreach & Resource Promotion** – presentations and 1-1 assistance to community organizations and potential patrons. Key partners include BOCES, Community Groups, Senior Centers, Westchester County Service Agencies, and Youth-Serving Organizations. To arrange a presentation, contact: outreach@wlsmail.org
- **Health and Wellness Information and Resources**
 - **Resilience Coalition**– community-directed education on the impact of adverse childhood experiences and trauma on mental/physical health. Key partners: Member Library Hosts (documentary screenings and events), NYS Office of Mental Health, Department of Community Mental Health, Department of Social Services, Department of Health, Resilience Coalition Members. [Westchester Resilience Coalition](#)
 - **Westchester Breathes** provides the experience of gentle movement, breathing, and relaxation exercises that can reduce stress and anxiety and increase a sense of calm and well-being. Free public classes are offered throughout the year, both online and in person, at WLS member libraries and through community partners. Collaborative partners include member libraries, ARC of Westchester, Drum Hill Senior Residence (Peekskill), JCC – Mid Westchester, Family Ties, and County Service agencies. [Westchester Breathes](#)
 - **VisionLabs: Reading for a Lifetime** – consultation for accessible library resources and available low vision services. Key partners: VISIONS, NYS Commission for the Blind, Westchester Disabled on the Move, Westchester Institute of Human Development, Westchester Council of the Blind. [VisionLabs](#)
 - **Health Resources and Information** -This guide includes a select list of resources and recommended strategies to help the public when researching a health topic, evaluating and managing service options, and finding assistance. Also available in print. [Health Research](#)
- **Library By Mail** – coordinated delivery by mail of library materials for homebound patrons. [WLS Senior Resources](#)
- **Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley** – this collaboration with the Southeastern Regional Library Resource Council, Ramapo Catskill Library System, and the Mid-Hudson Library System trains library staff in assisting patrons in developing digital skills, increasing their confidence using technology safely. [Hudson Valley Connected](#)
- **Disconnect 2 Reconnect-** is a County-wide Campaign launched through a partnership of Westchester Children’s Museum, the Child Care Council of Westchester, County Government, and WLS. Working in collaboration with educators, health providers, nonprofits, and parents, the Campaign aims to educate parents about the effects of social media usage and to provide alternative activities, helping families feel more in control of their children's choices. WLS serves as the lead partner coordinating a County-wide Steering Committee, managing a digital

newsletter for parents and caregivers, website, and a planned Spring Conference. [Disconnect 2 Reconnect](#).

- ***Sustainable Libraries Initiative*** – This initiative empowers library leaders to advance environmentally sound, socially equitable, and economically feasible practices to address climate change and co-create thriving communities intentionally and promotes the public library as a community leader in addressing climate challenges, community resilience, and securing a vital, vibrant place in the community. [Sustainable Libraries Initiative](#)

WLS Cares – throughout the year, WLS staff and member libraries participate in system-wide community care drives supporting organizations that assist our friends and neighbors. WLS staff members are actively involved in their own communities, fostering community engagement and civic responsibility.

- The Sharing Shelf – School Supplies and Diaper Drive
- Feeding Westchester – Food Drive
- United Way Westchester and Putnam – Coat Drive
- Book Collection for social service agencies and Westchester County Jail
- And many others, organized internally and individually by staff members.

WLS Community Leadership – WLS' offices are made available for board and staff meetings, information sessions, and learning for several Westchester nonprofit organizations.

- AARP Tax Volunteer Annual Training and Library site coordination
- Association of Fundraising Professionals, Greater Hudson Valley – fundraising workshops and discussion group for development and fundraising professionals.
- Child Care Council of Westchester - staff meetings
- Impact 100 – member orientation and information sessions
- Leadership Westchester – leadership programs
- Nonprofit Westchester – trainings, information and educational workshops, legislative panels
- United Way Westchester and Putnam 211 partner and board member