



An Investment for Life

## CUMBERLAND COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### ***The STAR Program of the Cumberland County Library System Partners Adults with Intellectual Disabilities and Mobility-Limited Adults***

**Carlisle, Pa.** – Sometimes a program isn't just a "win-win." It's a "win-win-win-win." A recent collaboration among the STAR Program of the Cumberland County Library System, the Shippensburg Public Library, the Cottages of Shippensburg, and the Adult Training Program at Red Tomato Farm and Inn provides adults with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to learn real-world skills while providing a vital service to mobility-limited adults and other residents of the Cottages of Shippensburg.

Christa Bassett, Adult Outreach Services Coordinator for the Cumberland County Library System, manages the STAR – Service to Adult Readers – Program. Working with a cadre of volunteers who select and deliver library materials to Cumberland County's homebound adult residents, she introduced the idea of engaging volunteers from Red Tomato Farm to provide STAR services to the residents of the Cottages. "When key staff members of Red Tomato Farm contacted the library system looking for a volunteer project, the match with the Cottages of Shippensburg seemed like something that would be good for everyone involved, and I'm just thrilled how well it's working!"

This past spring, professional staff from Red Tomato Farm completed training for the STAR Program. In order to teach their clients, they learned how to select a variety of large-print books from the collections of Shippensburg Public Library for use by the residents of the Cottages of Shippensburg, and they learned procedures to check out the materials, deliver them to the Cottages, shelve books, and document transactions.

The monthly process has evolved as follows: a professional staffer from Red Tomato Farm transports up to three farm volunteers to Shippensburg Public Library, where they review available large-print books and select 20, representing a variety of genres, and check the borrowing history to ensure that books they have chosen have a STAR Program label and have not recently been placed at the Cottages of Shippensburg. After the 20 new books have been selected, another group of Red Tomato Farm volunteers make delivery to the self-serve mini library in the Community Room at the Cottages of Shippensburg.

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Delivery involves finding the last batch of STAR Program books, checking them against the last month's checkout list provided by Shippensburg Public Library, then putting the new books on the shelf and packing up the old ones to be returned to the Library. Yet another group of Red Tomato Farm volunteers continue the process by returning those books.

Phyllis Imhoff, who supervised the Red Tomato Farm volunteers for their August 2018 volunteer stint and has worked for Red Tomato Farm for nearly two years, appreciates the opportunities to contribute to the community and provide a service, "It's not so much about what I'm doing – it's about what they're doing for the community." She adds, "Everyone really enjoys getting out and going to the library!"

Jody Cole, Executive Director of the Shippensburg Public Library, speaks for her whole staff when she says, "The Library is here for everyone. We're honored to offer the STAR Program and to support the partnership with Red Tomato Farm, getting library materials out to patrons who can't easily get to us."

The STAR Program of the Cumberland County Library System, which was already bringing a vital service to the County's homebound adults, has further improved the quality of life for two groups of people often left on the fringes of society, mobility-limited adults and adults with developmental disabilities.

Additional STAR patrons are always welcome to apply for services, and STAR volunteers are needed, as well as funds to purchase large-print books for the eight library locations of the Cumberland County Library System and the 21 self-serve mini libraries located within senior centers and older adult living communities throughout Cumberland County. For more information about the STAR Program and the Shippensburg Public Library, visit [www.cumberlandcountylibraries.org](http://www.cumberlandcountylibraries.org).

For more information about Red Tomato Farm & Inn, visit [www.hempfieldpa.com](http://www.hempfieldpa.com).

For more information about The Cottages of Shippensburg, visit <https://cottagesofshippensburg.com>.

Led by Executive Director Carolyn Blatchley and governed by an independent board of directors, the Cumberland County Library System consists of seven federated local libraries, one branch facility, a system headquarters office, and an associated non-profit Foundation. The Library System provides support to its member libraries through information technology, securing library materials, older adult services, training opportunities, and administrative and financial services.

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*Cumberland County is the fastest growing county in the Commonwealth and offers the perfect mix of small town, suburban and rural living. Established in 1750, Cumberland County consistently maintains one of the lowest tax and unemployment rates in the State, while providing exceptional services for its more than 250,000 residents. More information on Cumberland County can be found at [www.ccpa.net](http://www.ccpa.net).*