

Library Foundation Supports Cumberland County Libraries – During National Library Week and All Year Long

Mechanicsburg, Pa. – For the past ten years, Cumberland County’s public libraries have had a little extra help from a 501(c)(3) established for the specific purpose of providing fundraising assistance to the County’s public libraries: the Cumberland County Library System Foundation.

As a federally tax exempt organization, the Library Foundation assists the County’s libraries with fundraising, especially grantwriting. There are eight library locations in Cumberland County: Amelia Givin Library in Mt. Holly Springs, Bosler Memorial Library in Carlisle, Coy Public Library of Shippensburg, East Pennsboro Branch Library in Enola, Fredricksen Public Library in Camp Hill, John Graham Library in Newville, New Cumberland Public Library, and Simpson Library in Mechanicsburg. Each library has a Friends of the Library volunteer organization to provide fundraising support, and several of the larger libraries have employees who manage fundraising efforts. Still, with state funding levels still less than they were ten years ago, and more people than ever accessing library services, every bit of extra support is needed.

The Cumberland County Library System Foundation has long been an approved Educational Improvement Organization by the Commonwealth’s Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) for the Summer Learning Program. Contributions received from EITC-approved companies are distributed among the member libraries to support their programs that foster a love of reading and develop reading, writing, and learning skills during the summer months when public schools are traditionally closed. In 2019, the Cumberland County Library System Foundation was also approved by DCED to accept contributions for School-Year STEM programs across the System.

The Cumberland County Library System Foundation joins libraries throughout Pennsylvania and the country in celebrating National Library Week 2020, observed April 19-25. National Library Week spotlights the changing role of libraries, librarians, and library workers. Libraries aren’t just book repositories or places of quiet study, but community centers that provide refuge, fuel creativity and civic engagement, and keep communities connected even during times of uncertainty. Even during the stay-at-home order for Pennsylvania, cardholders and visitors can collaborate, use new technologies, gain skills, access online classes, and connect with other community members.

Cumberland County’s public libraries lead their communities with educational, cultural, and entertaining programs, as well as authoritative and interesting materials. The County’s libraries loan hotspots for wireless internet access on the go, host concerts and movies, bring foreign language immersion to the community, and invite community speakers on topics of current interest. The extensive collection of books, DVDs and more can be browsed online and materials can be placed on hold.

“Our libraries provide crucial services to the people we serve, offering unlimited opportunities for personal growth and lifelong learning,” said Carolyn Blatchley, executive director of the Cumberland County Library System. “While residents are under orders to stay at home during the COVID-19 crisis, the vitality and relevance of libraries and the service of library staff remains clear through online connections.” She notes that libraries are offering online programming for kids, teens, and adults. E-book usage is skyrocketing and homework help services doubled in March. “Earlier this month, we launched a Digital Access Card so that we can serve people who didn’t get a card before we abruptly closed due to COVID-19 concerns. Over 300 people have registered so far. Our website also features books and audiobooks available without a card during the shutdown.”

Member libraries are celebrating National Library Week with a variety of online programs and special offers for visitors of all ages. Participate in a book group, attend a lecture, join a story or craft time, explore a database, download a movie or e-book, or visit the website – www.cumberlandcountylibraries.org – to see the world of available resources.

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. The Library Foundation supports the System and member libraries with fundraising and grantwriting support. Find more information on the Cumberland County Library System and the Library Foundation at www.cumberlandcountylibraries.org.