

The State Library of Pennsylvania Launches New Website for Persons With Print Disabilities

Mechanicsburg, PA – The Cumberland County Library System is pleased to help announce LAMP – the Library of Accessible Media for Pennsylvanians. LAMP – formerly known as the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped – has launched a new, centralized website for all Pennsylvanians. MyLAMP.org evolved from the Pennsylvania Office of Commonwealth Libraries in collaboration with Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh and the Free Library of Philadelphia.

“For the growing number of Pennsylvanians who cannot use traditional printed materials, it is essential to make these state-supported library services easier to find and use,” said Acting Deputy Secretary for the Office of Commonwealth Libraries Susan Banks. “Updating the name to LAMP allows a central focus on the services offered. The new website becomes a universal location for persons with print disabilities to access and borrow an array of audio, braille, and large print books and magazines, events, and information.”

Though the name has changed, LAMP’s commitment to serving its clients remains the same. It will continue to implement the Library of Congress’ National Library Service program throughout Pennsylvania to patrons with disabilities, including those who cannot access standard print due to blindness, visual, physical, cognitive, or reading disabilities and to those who are unable to hold a book or turn its pages.



Cumberland County Library System’s Adult Outreach Services Coordinator, Christa Bassett, comments, “Rebranding this program removes disability from the name and focuses on services to individuals who cannot access traditional printed materials.”

The Library System’s key adult outreach program is STAR – Service to Adult Readers. Established in 1987, STAR provides services to homebound, mostly senior residents of Cumberland County in two ways. The first is by partnering the homebound resident with a trained volunteer who visits the patron to discern reading likes and then visits every 4-6 weeks to deliver new reading materials and collect items already read to be returned to the library. The second is Mini-Libraries, the providing (and regular updating) of large-print reading materials in the community rooms of nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and senior apartments and day centers throughout the county. Several STAR homebound participants receive library services from both STAR and these services provided by the National Library Service. MyLAMP.org will be a wonderful resource for STAR homebound participants who benefit from the services provided by LAMP.

“LAMP helps print disabled Pennsylvanians read for life,” said Mark Lee, Administrator of LAMP services at Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. “We are excited to have a new name that reflects the many services offered for free to Pennsylvanians of all ages who have difficulty accessing standard print. People with reading disabilities, age related visual disabilities or blindness, are able to enjoy a host of library services and have access to hundreds of thousands of accessible titles.”

“The outdated name for these libraries did not reflect the patrons we served or the wealth of services and resources we provide. Our new name and website are better identifiers of the services we provide to anyone who wants to utilize our extensive physical and digital collections,” said Keri E. Wilkins, Administrator of LAMP services in Philadelphia. “LAMP, through state funding, has a long history of pioneering innovative services to the print disabled throughout the commonwealth. The Free Library of Philadelphia and Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh were chosen by the Library of Congress as two of the original 19 national locations in 1933 to distribute books for the blind, and we continue to honor that mission today.”

About the Pennsylvania State Library: The Pennsylvania Department of Education’s Office of Commonwealth Libraries supports, develops, and provides library services for learning and advancement. For more information on the Pennsylvania State Library, please visit statelibrary.pa.gov.

About the Cumberland County Library System: Cumberland County’s public libraries – Amelia Givin Library in Mt. Holly Springs, Bosler Memorial Library in Carlisle, Coy Public Library of Shippensburg, East Pennsboro Branch Library in Enola, Fredricksen Library in Camp Hill, John Graham Library in Newville, New Cumberland Public Library, and Simpson Library in Mechanicsburg - lead their communities with educational, cultural, and entertainment programs, as well as authoritative and interesting materials. For more information, please visit cumberlandcountylibraries.org.