

NEW BRITAIN PUBLIC LIBRARY ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



APRIL
2024



NEW BRITAIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023 - 2028

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1: PROVIDE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

- a. Increase NBPL usage and the number of card holders.
- b. Provide program offerings geared to community needs (social issues, housing, employment, education, health, technology training).
- c. Meet the community where they are (outreach and promotion of services).

GOAL 2: COMMUNITY

- a. Develop and implement DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) initiatives for the particular needs of our Staff, Board of Trustees and New Britain population.
- b. Work with Central Connecticut State University (CCSU), the Chamber of Commerce, New Britain Public Schools, and Religious, Civic and Community Partners to develop programs connecting all of us.
- c. Improve and expand programming and interaction with New Britain youth in grades 6-12, and young adults ages 18-24.
- d. Recruit and appoint members to the Board of Trustees who reflect the diversity of the community including young people.
- e. Expand the reach of NBPL services including ways to go to the community rather than have them come to us, via bookmobiles, traveling programs, etc.

GOAL 3: BUILDING: PROVIDE HEALTHY, SAFE SPACE AT NEW BRITAIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

- a. Work with the New Britain Institute Board of Managers to monitor the NBPL endowment and the use of funds to maintain and improve its buildings.
- b. Continue monitoring and funding building improvements.
- c. Complete fundraising for Phase II of outdoor renovations.
- d. Create a fundraising plan for parking lot entrance renovation.
- e. Explore additional small meeting rooms and a small business center.
- f. Expand space or change location of Local History Room and explore the possibility of re-establishing a New Britain Historical Society.

GOAL 4: OPERATIONS AND FUNDRAISING

- a. Review personnel policies and procedures.
- b. Conduct a Staff climate survey annually in order to promote a positive, creative and inclusive culture.
- c. Review backup and recovery supports for all technological systems; adjust as needed.
- d. Expand training opportunities for Trustees in the areas of DEI, fundraising, library services and programming.
- e. Invite staff to make quarterly presentations on programs and/or services to the Board so members can be better stewards of the NBPL.



NEW BRITAIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE

GOAL 1: PROVIDE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS



On April 8th, we helped New Britain celebrate the solar eclipse by handing out solar eclipse glasses, showing a livestream of the eclipse, and making eclipse themed crafts. We had a large group meet us in the Rose Garden at the top of Walnut Hill to watch. The next partial solar eclipse that might be visible in Connecticut will be on May 11, 2027, with about 85 percent of the sun covered by the moon, and the next totality will not happen in Connecticut until May 1, 2079!

Many families were able to come in to celebrate the festivities with fun craft activities. We also had the Teen Room open early so the kids could access the room in its entirety, including Nintendo Switch. Many teens took this opportunity to hang out before heading up to Walnut Hill with their families. This day saw our highest visitor count in April. *(Goals 1b & 2c.)*

We had a small crowd of regulars for our Open Mic Night, and we were joined by two new acoustic guitar players! Open Mic Night will be celebrating its one year anniversary in June, meeting bi-monthly on Monday night. In the past, participants have sung original music to backing tracks or live instruments, read poetry, and performed stand up routines. (We even had a belly dancer perform a dance!)

One of the new participants is excited to come again in June, writing a song inspired by the experience at the open mic night called "Welcomed." The theme for June will be Pride, and will be presented in collaboration with New Britain Pride. *(Goal 1b.)*



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STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE

GOAL 1: PROVIDE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

& GOAL 2: COMMUNITY



We continued our outreach efforts at the New Britain High School to get library cards into the hands of the Freshman English classes. We created an additional 51 cards for students who didn't fill out the applications but wanted to check out the library after attending a presentation about the many services and programs available to teens, presented by Teen Librarian, Brett Garabedian. Through this outreach, we were able to tackle Goals 1a and 1c, as well as supporting 2b and 2c.

We also went to visit CREC Academy of Science and Innovation again this month to promote library services and create library cards. For this visit we were set up in the school cafeteria with a table to promote upcoming teen events and explain the various teen room materials available to New Britain residents. Students were excited to learn about the last round of our March Manga Madness with 55 teens casting their vote in the finals! (Goals 1a, 1c, 2b & 2c.)



We continued to provide outreach programming at Pathways/Senderos, an afterschool program in New Britain. During each visit, we are able to provide the New Britain Teens who typically don't have the transportation to make it to the library, with fun programming like VR access and group activities, like the Pokemon Trading Card Game. (Goals 1c, 2b & 2c.)



NEW BRITAIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE

GOAL 1: PROVIDE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

& GOAL 2: COMMUNITY

The Circulation Department kept busy this month with our every day duties of creating/renewing cards and homebound deliveries, but also covered up to 25 hours a week at the Jefferson Branch as the recruitment for the Branch Coordinator position continued. In total, 429 cards were issued (including 145 renewed cards). *(Goal 1a.)*



Adult Programming Librarian Rachel Szostek continued the mobile makerspace program with New Life II, a local recovery center. The opportunity to be creative and experiment with the materials has been appreciated. They are excited to have us come back and have scheduled monthly visits. *(Goals 1c, 2b & 2e.)*

Community Liaison Librarian Jason Villani has been working with Mitch Page, the Director of the new Masters in Social Work degree program at CCSU. He was recently involved with helping Mitch promote and bring out people to their information session that discussed the new MSW program and how they want to link with and engage with the community.

He also helped bring community members/stakeholders to the follow up focus groups that Mitch has set up to continue this work that seeks to bridge the gap between what the program can offer in the service of community needs. The hope is that the library will be in partnership with the program for future collaboration, which may include having social work interns working at the library and trauma informed community engagement programming. *(Goals 2a & 2b.)*



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STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE

GOAL 1: PROVIDE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

In past years, our annual Story Walk was offered through a partnership with the Board of Education. This year, it was presented by the library alone. We borrowed a StoryWalk book, *Gracias, Omu!* from the Middletown Library Service Center and added the pages in English for *Thank You, Omu!* The pages were posted through the following week, which was National Library Week, so that families could participate even if they could not attend the official event. In all, 46 families, 125 participants followed and read the story. Families received a free book after completing the Story Walk and were entered into a drawing for one of two bicycles which had been donated to the library. (Goal 1a.)



Mallory Kokus from the University of Hartford Community Division presented the First Steps in Music class to families with children ages infant to five years. She provided hand instruments for the children to play, led lap activities (tapping and wiggling rhymes and songs with the child in their adult's lap), dances and a circle song, and finished with a song tale (she sang the book). There were 27 people in attendance, all of whom were very complimentary of the program. (Goal 1a.)



We recently asked the parents that attend our popular weekly Time for Tots program about their families' experiences with the program.

The response was positive, with one parent sharing that "it has been a pleasure bringing my child here every Friday", but staff also received constructive feedback from a patron, which triggered positive changes to the program setup. This is one of the ways that we attempt to stay in constant conversation with our community members and be responsive to their needs and wants. (Goals 1a & 3b.)



NEW BRITAIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE

GOAL 1: PROVIDE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

& GOAL 2: COMMUNITY



We were invited to attend the Consolidated School District of New Britain's Autism Fair, held at Gaffney Elementary School. Adult Programming Librarian Rachel Szostek & Children's Librarian Christina Ehnot represented the library and had 122 visitors at our table.

They also connected with a number of community organizations interested in partnering with the library for future events, including Project Search, the Hospital for Special Care, and Welcome to My World. This event also sparked inter-department conversation about creating future autism friendly/sensory day experiences at the library. *(Goals 1a, 1c, 2a & 2b.)*

April marked the beginning of our Mobile Library program with the Family Enrichment Center at the Hospital of Central Connecticut. We dropped off 10 Arabic and Spanish books to be circulated amongst the families they serve. We will continue this partnership by visiting every 3 weeks to bring the books back to the library and dropping off new books for them to circulate amongst the families they serve. *(Goals 1c, 2a & 2b.)*

A total of 10 staff members attended the annual conference of the Connecticut Library Association in Groton on April 29 & 30. Staff had the opportunity to see keynote speaker, Mychal Threats, a great library advocate that spreads his "library joy" through his work as a librarian as well as through his social media. Our team also attended sessions on strategic planning, social work in the library, working with neurodiverse populations, and much more. *(Goal 2a, 4b and more.)*

GOAL 4: OPERATIONS AND FUNDRAISING

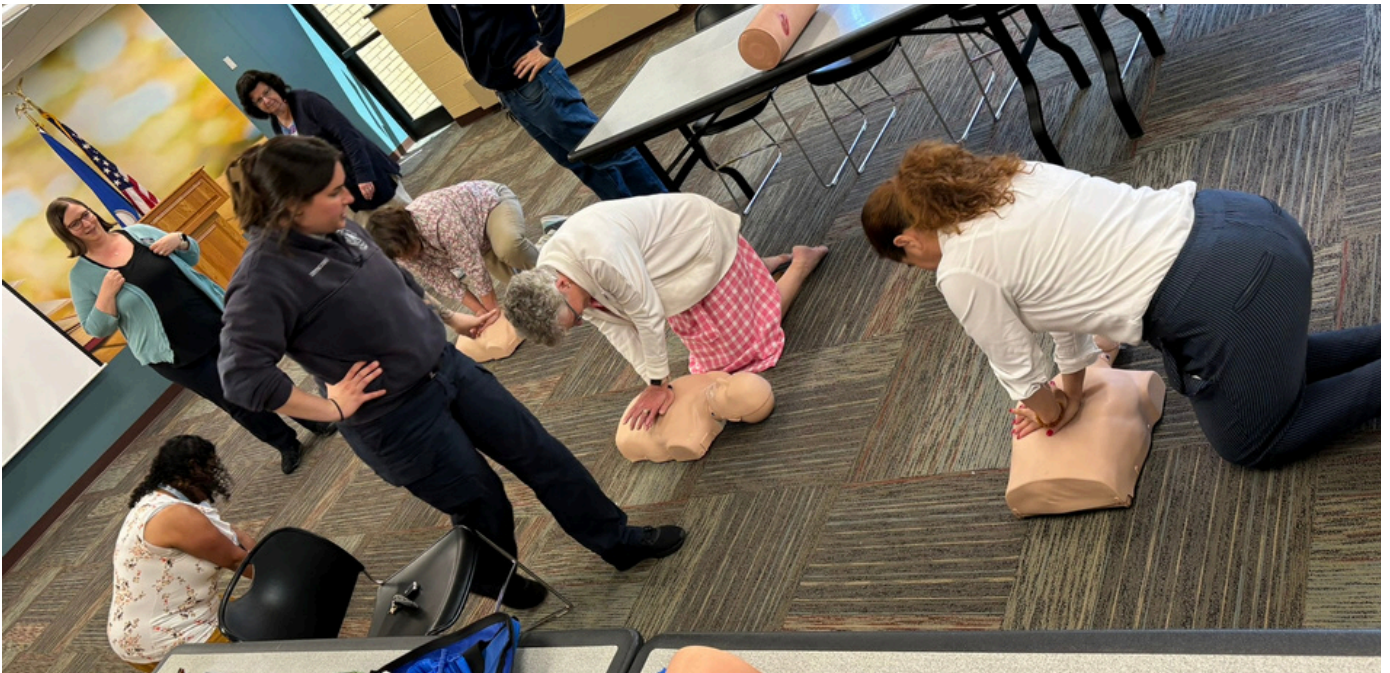
The Library's Policy Review Team finalized a complete revision of the Library's Rules and Regulations document and transformed into a Code of Conduct, which will be presented for approval by the Library Board at the May meeting. *(Goal 4a.)*

Following last month's assessment of the Library's network and IT environment, IT Specialist Bryan Gomez has identified solutions that will improve the organizations backup system. *(Goal 4c.)*



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

GOAL 2: COMMUNITY, GOAL 3: BUILDING: PROVIDE HEALTH & SAFE SPACE, & GOAL 4: OPERATIONS



Library staff participated in a healthy and safety professional development opportunity focused on CPR, First Aid, and Stop the Bleed training facilitated by New Britain Emergency Medical Services. This training's benefits included gaining essential life-saving techniques, gaining first aid knowledge and skills, as well as building confidence and empowerment.



BUILDING & MAINTENANCE DEPT.

GOAL 3: BUILDING PROVIDE HEALTHY SAFE SPACE AT NEW BRITAIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

COMPLETED



Before

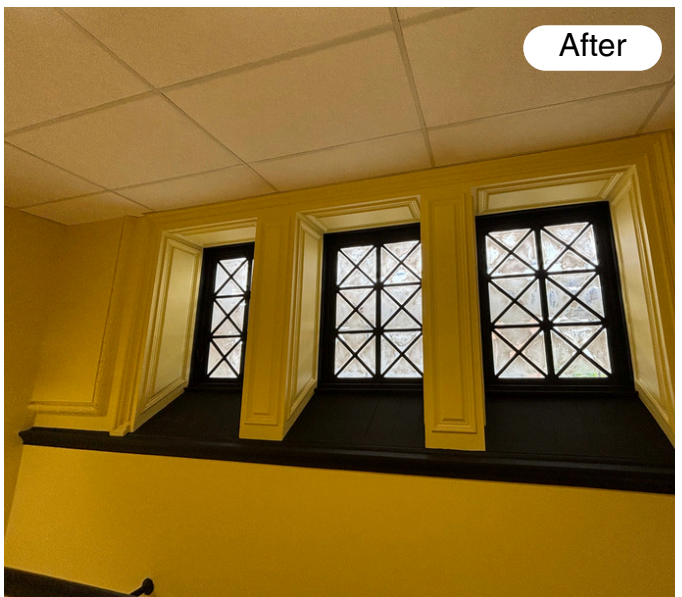


After

Phase 1 of the Exterior Renovation to the Erwin Wing has been completed. The deteriorated pieces of terracotta have been replaced. *(Goal 3b: Continue monitoring and funding building improvements).*



Before



After

Phase 1 of the Exterior Renovation to the Erwin Wing also included a change order to include plaster restoration to the interior Erwin stairwell that endured immense water damage due to the deteriorated terracotta and windows. *(Goal 3b: Continue monitoring and funding building improvements).*





With remaining contingency reserves from Phase 1 of the Exterior Renovation to the Erwin Wing, we were able to repair 6 windows on the third floor that had led to immense interior water damage. *(Goal 3b: Continue monitoring and funding building improvements).*

IN PROGRESS



Damaged and unused furniture has been discarded creating opportunity for better use of library spaces and bolstering efficiencies. This work will continue through the staff Space Committee. *(Goal 3b: Continue monitoring and funding building improvements).*



The renovation of both first floor display cases has begun and will be completed by the end of May. *(Goal 3b: Continue monitoring and funding building improvements).*

