

Get Connected

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ANNUAL REPORT

covering the fiscal year
from July 2023 to June 2024

LibraryLinkNJ, The New Jersey Library Cooperative, and its services are funded by the New Jersey State Library, which is responsible for the coordination, promotion, and funding of the New Jersey Library Network. Members join at no charge and pay no dues.

Welcome Message



Dear LibraryLinkNJ Community,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to our FY2024 Annual Report. This past year has been one of growth, collaboration, and innovation. Through a myriad of in-person and virtual opportunities, new partnerships, and ongoing services, we have continued to support libraries across the state, ensuring that they remain vibrant and integral parts of their communities.

As we look ahead, we are excited about the direction in which LibraryLinkNJ is moving, particularly with our focus on digital literacy, EDI and AI initiatives, alongside expanding opportunities for libraries. Thank you for your continued engagement and support.
Sincerely,

Ralph S. Bingham III
Executive Director



Content

What is LibraryLinkNJ?	04
Delivery	06
Partnerships	07
In-Person Opportunities	08
Virtual Opportunities	10
MentorNJ	12
Statistics	14
Executive Board & Staff Info	16
Statewide Initiatives	18
AI Ambassadors	19

What is LibraryLinkNJ

The New Jersey Library Cooperative serves over 2,400 public, school, academic, medical, special, institutional libraries, and library-related agencies in New Jersey. This annual overview focuses primarily on organizational and service changes as well as selected strategic accomplishments. LibraryLinkNJ is funded by, and reports its accomplishments to the New Jersey State Library, as well as the membership.

04

05

LibraryLinkNJ

LibraryLinkNJ empowers 2,400+ libraries with vital resources!



LLNJ staff pose for a group picture during the 2024 NJLA Conference

Acknowledgment of the Executive Board

We extend our deepest thanks to the Executive Board for their dedication and vision. Their leadership has been instrumental in guiding LibraryLinkNJ through a year of growth and innovation. Special thanks to Executive Board President Ranjna Das and the entire board for their invaluable contributions.

Vision: Every New Jersey Library - Connected and Thriving

Mission: We connect all New Jersey's libraries to each other and to the resources they need to serve their communities.

Delivery

Through a statewide delivery service for which all member institutions are eligible, LLNJ helped make the collective resources of New Jersey Library Network members available to the public at 279 participating libraries.



Participating libraries shipped **821,556 packages**.



Administrative Operations Manager Jennifer Bruno and Member Services Specialist Carol Fishwick manage delivery communication and supplies for members.



In September 2023, we launched location scanning using barcodes posted at all delivery pickup/dropoff locations.



In February 2024, 200+ library staff attended a virtual information session built to help our members better understand the ILL/Jersey-Cat/Delivery process. Programming & Outreach Manager Darby Malvey and Administrative Operations Manager Jennifer Bruno, along with Michael Maziekien from the New Jersey State Library, hosted the session. Feedback was positive and live engagement was very high, with many questions for all three presenters.

Partnerships

Partnerships with organizations such as the New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) and the New Jersey State Library (NJSL) have strengthened, resulting in joint initiatives that enhance resource sharing and professional development across the state.

We worked with the NJSL marketing team to create a packet of information about shared services and programs that was mailed to library media specialists at every K-12 school in New Jersey in October 2023.

A new partnership with the Global Center for Human Trafficking at Montclair State University afforded us the opportunity to host two virtual anti-trafficking trainings designed to help library staff recognize the signs of human trafficking and respond appropriately.

We also partnered with NJSL, NJASL, and other stakeholders on the Reimagining Information Literacy Standards Initiative. This IMLS FY2023 National Leadership Grants for Libraries award received by NJSL will develop replicable models and tools that support learning of information literacy for K-12 students. The initiative plans to create an engaging, collaboratively developed online platform of training modules that teaches information literacy and makes vital resources available to a broad audience including library media specialists, public librarians, academic librarians and teachers.



In-Person Opportunities

Tech Summit

In May 2024, L-TAG and the NJLA Emerging Technology Section hosted the return of the Tech Summit after a 5-year hiatus! This day-long event was held in Somerset County and featured a keynote by Brian Pichman of the Evolve Project, which covered Artificial Intelligence (AI) and how libraries can adapt and adopt it into their strategic plan.



Our Spring Membership Meeting was held at Middlesex College in June 2024. This was our first in-person Membership Meeting since 2019 and featured a keynote presentation on the Transformative Power of Books by author Eric Smith, presentations from LibraryLinkNJ staff, and an update from the New Jersey State Library.



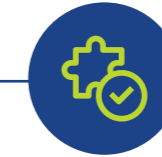
Super Library Supervisors



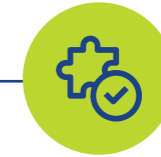
Twenty-nine new supervisors joined us for four days of training on motivating your staff, evaluating personnel, resolving conflict, and more. A virtual version of this series was also hosted in Spring 2024 for thirty-two participants.



We partnered with NJSL to offer the Experienced Directors Summit on November 15, 2023 at Hunterdon County Library. 56 registrants joined us to refresh and update their skills and knowledge.



Our twice-yearly Show & Share events afford programming staff the opportunity to view crafts made by their colleagues and swap unused materials.



We were thrilled to be part of a NJLA pre-conference, where we collaborated with NJSL to provide a holistic perspective of the multifaceted econtent landscape.

Virtual Opportunities

Under the leadership of Programming and Outreach Manager Darby Malvey, the Continuing Education (CE) Team delivered 95 professional development opportunities, benefiting 4,330 New Jersey library workers. This reflects a significant 39% increase in CE offerings and a 12% rise in attendance compared to FY2023.

LearningSpace

Our on-demand training platform gathered 22,509 views across 236 courses, including three original modules focused on information literacy, recorded webinars and skill-sharing discussions, as well as the Virtual Conference on Literacy.

The most popular courses focused on information literacy, customer service, and EDI initiatives. Recorded webinars and the Virtual Conference on Literacy also drew in repeat viewings. We collaborated with media literacy author and educator David Cooper Moore to produce a three-part series on information literacy, focused on how educators can foster positive habits and foundational skills at every age and grade level.



Summer Book Bash

LibraryLinkNJ's third annual Book Bash featured engaging book buzzes and author events, highlighting works by Kyle Lukoff, Debbi Michiko Florence, and Breanna Carzoo. Supported by sponsors like Astra Books and Penguin Random House, the event enriched library collections and offered exciting literary prizes.



MentorNJ

A Task Force of 12 volunteers continued their work in connecting library staff with monthly Online Meetups, and one-on-one support via the Mentors' Directory.



Skill-Sharing Discussions

These one-hour virtual conversations included discussions on creating inclusive opportunities, addressing book challenges, and practical tips for hosting events like comic cons, cooking classes, and writers' workshops at libraries.



Webinars

Over 80 webinars were hosted, attended by 2,700 participants, covering leadership development, technology integration, and community engagement.

Virtual Literacy Conference

With more than 280 registrants and an inspiring slate of local and nationwide presenters, our third annual Fall Virtual Conference, held on September 27, 2023 was another resounding success with overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees. This year's theme was Literacy, and the conference featured 15 total sessions with topics ranging from Building Health Literacy, to Supporting Dyslexic and Neurodivergent Patrons, to Harnessing the Power of AI.

Winter Meeting

More than 150 individuals attended our virtual meeting on December 13, 2023. Along with staff and statewide partner organization updates, we were joined by Nick Tanzi (the-digital-librarian.com) for a keynote presentation on libraries leading the way in the age of artificial intelligence.

MentorNJ

The initiative continues to coordinate networking and community-building opportunities for library staff across the state. MentorNJ has built a diverse network of individuals, both online and in-person, from libraries of all types that supports and promotes resource-sharing, collaboration, and a collegial atmosphere in the NJ library community.

113
meetups
990
attendees



in-person MentorNJ Mega Meetup and meetups at the NJLA Annual Conference



MentorNJ expanded to include participants from the Tennessee Library Association (TNLA), which has broadened our scope of mentorship and professional development activities.

The MentorNJ Mentors' Directory features more than 100 library staffers willing to share their expertise with colleagues from across NJ and TN. The directory provides an opportunity for library staff to showcase their skills and valuable experience and encourages individuals seeking guidance to build connections in a low-stress environment.

Thank you to the volunteers who help make MentorNJ such a vibrant and valuable resource! Our Task Force of volunteers from all library types donates their time and talent to make these resources and events possible.

In FY24, MentorNJ hosted 11 individual Online Meetups on a monthly, twice-monthly, or bi-monthly basis, for a total of more than 100 meetups throughout the year!

Topics range from Adventures in Administration to Latino Library Staff to Wellness Wednesday. Our thanks to the volunteer Discussion Hosts who make MentorNJ Online Meetups Possible!



While at the NJLA Conference in Atlantic City, LLNJ hosted five MentorNJ sessions including the Latino Library Meetup.



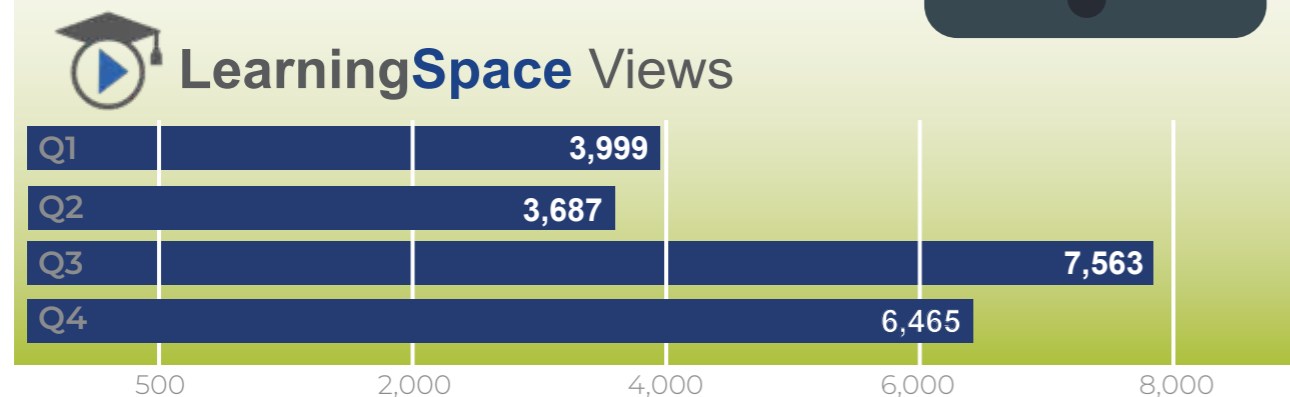
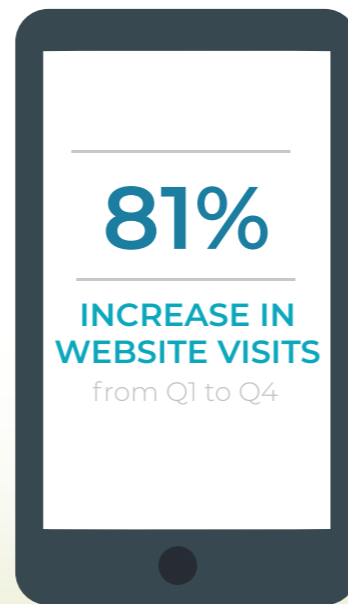
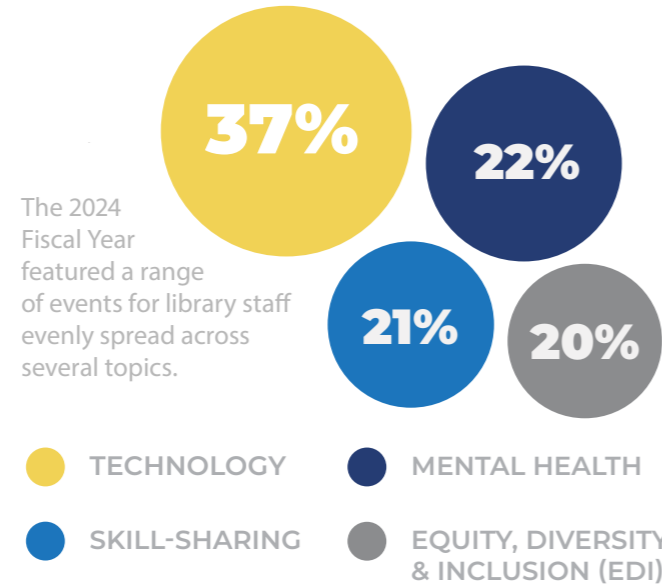
We joined a partnership with peer library consortia in the International Coalition of Library Consortia (ICOLC) to participate in their Professional Development Alliance (PDA). The PDA is dedicated to sharing professional development opportunities with other alliance members. This initiative multiplies the number and variety of online professional development opportunities available to the member libraries of each participating consortium.

PDA webinars are freely available to library workers at all of our member libraries.

Statistics



As part of our mission to connect New Jersey libraries to each other and the resources they need to serve their communities, we provided a diverse range of programming designed to meet the evolving needs and interests of our members. Our programming was carefully curated to ensure an even distribution of topics. This approach contributed to a remarkable 27% increase in program attendance from 2023 to 2024, and an astounding 368% increase from 2022's attendance!

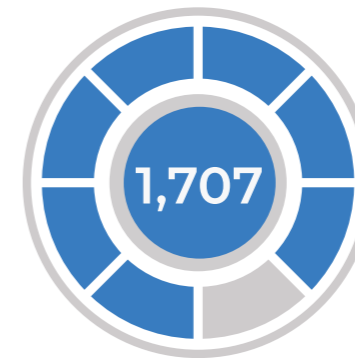


Nearly 800 posts were shared across LibraryLinkNJ social networks, highlighting upcoming events, courses added to the LearningSpace, MentorNJ meetups, delivery updates, and more!



Membership

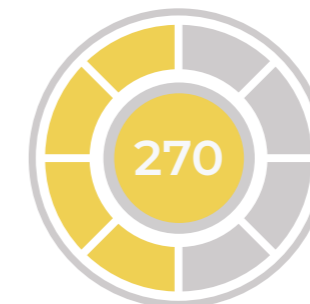
Our network of libraries spans all types, but how does our membership break down by category? Let's explore the numbers.



SCHOOL LIBRARIES
ACROSS 534
SCHOOL DISTRICTS



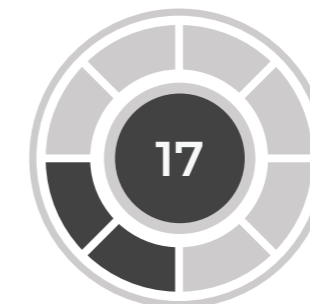
PUBLIC LIBRARIES
104 BRANCHES
12 COUNTY LIBRARIES



SPECIAL LIBRARIES



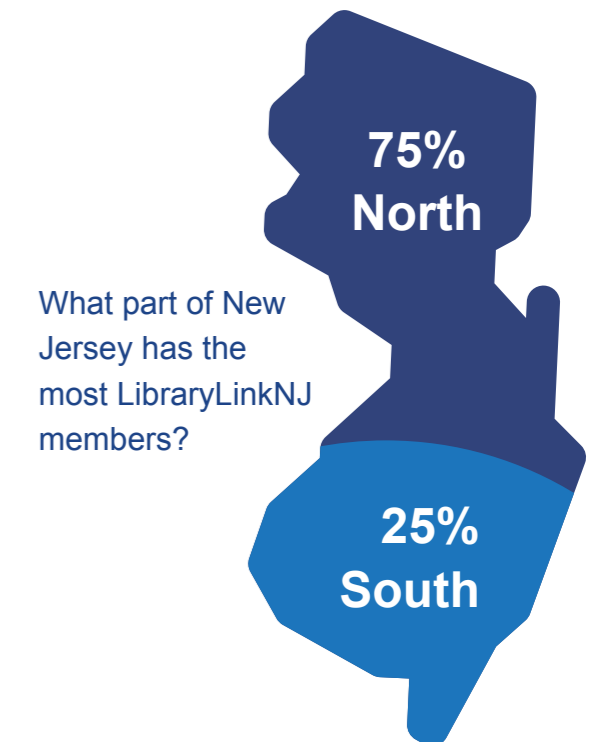
ACADEMIC LIBRARIES



LIBRARY AGENCIES INCLUDING RUTGERS



Stephanie Sendaula, Tiffany McClary (NJSL), & Julia Giantomasi (NJSL) were acknowledged during the 2024 NJLA Honors and Awards for the PR Campaign Life Happens @ Your Library.



What part of New Jersey has the most LibraryLinkNJ members?

FY24 Executive Board

LibraryLinkNJ is a member-based organization governed by the New Jersey State Library's regulations, with a 15-member Executive Board elected by voting representatives from member libraries. These representatives vote on board vacancies, the strategic plan, annual programs, and the budget at the annual membership meeting.

Phillip Berg, Member-at-Large, Assistant Treasurer
Executive Director, Main Library Alliance

Shannon Kish, Member-at-Large
School Library Media Specialist, Robbinsville High School

Mary Fran Daley, Member-at-Large, Treasurer
Executive Director, Bernardsville Public Library

Allan Kleiman, Member-at-Large
Director, Edison Township Public Library

Ranjna Das, Member-at-Large, President
Director, Burlington County Library System

Bonnie Lafazan, Member-at-Large, Secretary
Assistant Director, Springfield Free Public Library

Corey Fleming, Member-at-Large
Director, Paterson Free Public Library

Irene Langlois, Public Library Representative
Interim Head of Outreach Services, Maplewood Memorial Library

John Foglia, Academic Library Representative
Manger, Information Commons and Library Systems Brookdale Community College

Laurie Matassa, School Library Representative
Media Specialist, Jackson Liberty High School

Janina Kaldan, Special Library Representative
Library Manager, Shinn-Lathrope Health Sciences Library

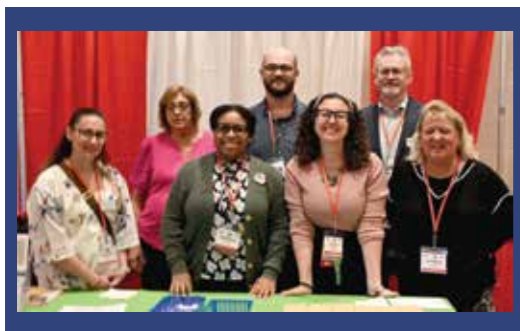
Michelle Sutton-Kerchner, Lay Representative
President, Signatures & Folios Publishing Services

Laura Giacobbe, Member-at-Large
Specialist Librarian, Guggenheim Memorial Library Monmouth University

Joan M. Serpico, Member-at-Large, Vice President
Director, Moorestown Library

Vickie Volyn, Lay Representative

FY24 LibraryLinkNJ Staff



- Ralph S. Bingham III**, Executive Director
- Jon Braun**, Online Learning & Digital Content Specialist
- Jennifer Bruno**, Administrative Operations Manager
- Carol Fishwick**, Member Services Specialist
- Mi-Sun Lyu**, Director of Special Projects
- Darby Malvey**, Programming & Outreach Manager
- Stephanie Sendaula**, Programing & Outreach Specialist
- Kimberly Sullivan-Gladwell**, Bookkeeper

Connect With Us



We connect with our membership through a variety of platforms to keep you informed and engaged! Stay updated with our weekly, monthly, and AI-focused **newsletters**, and join the conversation through our mailing list. You can also find us on **Facebook**, **Instagram**, and **LinkedIn** by searching for LibraryLinkNJ.



Share and collaborate directly with colleagues through our **Google Group Mailing List**, where you can ask questions, exchange resources, and receive direct responses from the LLNJ community. Looking for new opportunities?



Check out our **Job Posting Form**, a convenient way to share or explore openings from libraries of all types across the state

Sign up for our online newsletters when you visit our website:

librarylinknj.org

Do you have a question or need assistance?

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Statewide Initiatives

Along with our statewide partner organizations, we continue to lead the **New Jersey Libraries Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI-NJ) Initiative.**

EDI-NJ, comprised of a diverse group of library workers representing all types of library organizations, remains committed to coordinating EDI-related activities and projects across professional organizations in New Jersey.

In February 2024, EDI-NJ launched the Strategic Roadmap for the **EDI Framework for NJ Libraries Project** with four key goal areas:



Key Milestones of Phase One February - September 2024

- Designed and conducted a Training Needs Assessment Survey
- Created and implemented an EDI Collective Assessment Survey
- Planned and hosted the Culture Connection Kickoff Event

The project is led by Selwa Shamy, Brett Bonfield (NJLA), Ali Cole (VALE), Leigh Clark (NJSL), Jen Nelson (State Librarian), and LLNJ Executive Director Ralph Bingham, with contributions from the New Jersey Association of School Libraries and the New Jersey Association of Library Assistants.

Mi-Sun Lyu, LLNJ Director of Special Projects, serves as project manager, while Ozy Aloziem, Founder of Heal Inc LLC, provides EDI expertise to guide the team in executing project plans.

AI Ambassadors

Our first cohort of twenty AI Ambassadors completed an AI training series tailored for tech-savvy library staff from libraries of all types across New Jersey. Participants committed to sharing their new skills and expertise with the New Jersey library community by providing at least one AI training session for library staff in their local area, or by participating in a group presentation at a library event or conference by the end of June 2024.



Training and Engagement

Through workshops, panels, and seminars, the AI Ambassadors collectively trained more than 750 individuals in FY2024, including public, academic, and school library staff. Highlights of the program's reach include:

AI Ambassadors showcased practical AI applications and tools like Otter.ai and CanvaPro, emphasizing hands-on learning in presentations for the PALS Plus network and the NJLA Conference.	Heather Lubchansky engaged 120+ attendees through multiple workshops, covering AI basics, ethical considerations, and interactive activities to equip library staff with essential knowledge for their roles.	Workshops by Joseph Pascale, David Williams, and Sharon Whitfield engaged 63 educators and academic staff, exploring AI's role in teaching, research, and data tasks, emphasizing its relevance in academia.
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learn more about this program at librarylink.org/ai-ambassadors