Academic PA Forward
Gold Star Libraries: Journey and Impact

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What is PA Forward? What is a Gold Star Library?

- Highlights five key literacies for libraries connect with community needs:
  - Basic
  - Information
  - Civic & Social
  - Health
  - Financial
- Star Library is a recognition program within PA Forward started in 2017:
  - Supports libraries integrating PA Forward literacies in their programming activities.
  - Libraries are recognized for meeting benchmarks at bronze, silver and gold star levels.
  - Gold Star libraries have achieved bronze and silver levels, offering programming and resources for all five literacies.
- All resources discussed today are available at crdpala.org.
- Get all information about PA Forward at palibraries.org.
Pennsylvania College of Technology
Madigan Library’s Process to Implement PA Forward Star Library Program

Met with director to explain initiative and program, obtained support to proceed (Major question/concern--staff time involved, budget cost, and purpose)

At staff training, introduced to staff (Goal was to be the first academic library to reach gold)

Worked with Outreach Team to identify literacy/literacies that fit each event/display they had already planned, and how to visibly mark or “tag” each with the logos (Checklist VERY helpful to keep track of things)
Set-up and Start

File system for documentation, our own archive

PA Forward logo, PA Forward literacy logos ("Graphics & Logos")

Definitions ("Fact Sheets")

Created table tents for each literacy to set out with displays
Collaboration and Partners

Mobile display shares facts behind the artifacts

A traveling museum honoring the contributions of African-American inventors, from George Washington Carver’s groundbreaking scientific discoveries to the lesser-known faces behind societal icons, helped the Penn College community observe Black History Month.

Sammie L. Davis, coordinator of diversity and cultural life, facilitated the unique collection of inventions on the first floor of Madison Library from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday. Curators Clifton Brown and Leland Scott were on hand to interact with visitors and answer questions about the displays, each of which includes a patent document, biographical sketch, and additional historical information and facts. “People are often surprised to learn who is responsible for inventing or improving upon so many of the products and items we see and use everyday,” said Brown, a Chrysler retiree who founded the pop-up museum (and related exhibits that celebrate other African-American notables, from sports figures to musicians to civil rights pioneers). “And I want people to know that there is enough history to celebrate year-round, not just in February.” As the state’s first Gold Star Library in the PA Forward Star Program, Madison Library was a natural to house the Ohio-based exhibit; African-American History on Wheels epitomizes the “Civic and social literacy” skill that helps form the five-sided foundation of the commonwealth’s library initiative. For a complete list of campus programming, check out the Diversity and Community Engagement portal or this year’s poster: Black History Month.

Recognition and Fun
Pennsylvania College of Health Sciences
Who we are

Student population

- Non-residential: All commuting or online
- Health care programs

Library staff

- One director
- Two librarians
- Library aides
Literacies

**Basic:** Common book initiative

**Information:** Research parties

**Civic and social:** National Library of Medicine Exhibit “Surviving and Thriving: AIDS, Politics, and Culture”

**Health:** “Taking the Stress Out of Finals” workshop

**Financial:** Money Smart Week programming
Since our Gold Star

- Presentations: Poster session and Connect & Communicate webinar
- Learning Commons split into two groups: Library and Learner Support
- More sustainable Civic and Social literacy programming
- Freshman seminar
Penn State Harrisburg
About our Library and Campus

- Serve approximately 5,000 undergraduate and graduate students
- Large international student population
- Mix of residential and commuter students
- 6 full-time librarians (one director and five subject liaisons)
- Earned Gold Star in 2019
Getting to Gold

Our strategy

- Build off existing programs to address about half of the literacies
- Developed new programs which leveraged free resources for literacies we did not previously program for
- Developed partnerships with campus units and PA Forward partners
- Offered First Year Seminar credit for most programs to help draw an audience, but often had more non-FYS attendees than those seeking credit
- Librarians utilized their subject specialties and coordinator roles to develop the programs
Our First Programs

- **Basic**
  - Penn State Harrisburg Reads, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*

- **Information**
  - Documentary Screening and Discussion, *Paywall: The Business of Scholarship*
  - Part of Open Access Week

- **Financial**
  - Financial Literacy 101 with First National Bank
  - FNB was a PA Forward Partner at the time of the program

- **Health**
  - Documentary Screening and Discussion, *Eating Animals*
  - Free performance rights from Rocco*Films

- **Civic and Social**
  - 2018 Midterm Election Voter Workshop
We adapted our regular exhibits & displays to incorporate PA Forward information/logos

- Added handouts to exhibits to highlight different resources
  - See: prompts for Literacy actions in the Star Libraries program
- Rebranded workshops & events
  - Included PA Forward content
- 3 Workshop Series
  - Adulting 101
  - Get Lit(eracy)
  - Raider Readiness

Information Literacy was easy to cover with our regular events & workshops

- Constitution Day in September
  - Civic/Social Literacy
- Money Smart week in April
  - Financial Literacy
- Reading-based displays all year
  - Basic Literacy
    - Blind Date with a Book
    - Books Staff Loves displays
- Raider Readiness
  - Research tips for target populations
The library is not an island, find your natural partners and help them help you (and them)

- **Get Lit{eracy}**
  - Workshop Series covering the 5 literacies
  - Strategic program development
- **Adulting 101**
  - Life skills
  - Critical thinking
  - Fun
- **Star Library Program Bonus Actions**
  - Promote your efforts and events
  - Increase campus visibility
  - Build awareness of your resources and services

Use existing connections & expand partnerships on campus to meet different literacy components

- **Etter Health Center**
  - Health Literacy workshops
  - Health Literacy content for the blog
- **PSECU & Financial Aid Office**
  - Financial Literacy events
- **ShipVotes**
  - Civic/Social Literacy events
  - Get Out the Vote awareness
- **The Slate (student newspaper)**
  - Library resources promotion
Leverage Your Existing Efforts and Resources

Our Gold Star is a formal recognition of everyone’s effort to build student and campus community library awareness and skills

- We reviewed what the library does
- We reorganized some efforts for branding
- We expanded campus partnerships
- We documented our efforts

Following the Star Library documentation process helped us build awareness of library resources and services.

- Achieving Gold Star Status was surprisingly quick and easy process
- Success does not mean adding new stuff and more staff time & resources
- Creatively think about what we already do (or things we want to be doing anyway)
- Fit those into the Star Library prompts
  - Program is flexible
  - Room to make things your own

++ Will Do Again!
Why did you decide to join PA Forward?
How much time and effort did this take?
What kind of resources did you need/use?
Who did you partner with?
What has had the biggest impact?
What was the campus response?
What barriers/challenges did you face?
What is the most important thing you learned?
Questions?