The E's of Libraries®: Demonstrating Your Library's Value to Everyone, Everywhere
Introductions

Jillian Wentworth
Manager of Marketing & Membership,
United for Libraries

Alan Fishel
United for Libraries Board Member
Chair, The E's of Libraries® Task Force
Partner, Arent Fox, Washington, D.C.
The E's of Libraries®:

Education
Employment
Entrepreneurship
Empowerment
Engagement
Libraries & The Reality-Perception Gap

On a scale from essential, to nice-to-have, to obsolete

- Perception of Far Too Many People: Libraries are either nice-to-have or obsolete

- Reality: Libraries are Essential in Numerous Ways
Reality Perception Gap Exists for Two Main Reasons

Past Perception Hurdle

Lack of Dominant Activity Hurdle
Many people view libraries based on their past perceptions – they believe libraries are a good place to go to borrow books, but believe they are now largely outdated.

Other people view libraries as primarily providers of information, but think that any information you need can be found online.
Lack of One Dominant Activity Hurdle

Libraries do many great things; they do not, however, have one dominant specific function.

Most entities that are viewed as essential have one dominant activity (e.g., schools educate and hospitals heal).
Addressing the Hurdles

Libraries may need to utilize messaging that addresses the hurdles in order to overcome the hurdles and eliminate this reality perception gap.

Messaging that does not address the hurdles may still be effective for internal distribution, and can at times help externally, but such messaging may not have the impact necessary to truly change the mindset of so many people outside of the library community who because of the hurdles described above view libraries as nice-to-have or obsolete.
How The E’s of Libraries® Addresses the Hurdles

- Addressing the Past Perception Hurdle: Once people become familiar in a persuasive, memorable, and organized way with the categories of activities in which libraries are involved, which categories virtually everyone would agree are connected to essential work, the public perception can change.

- Addressing the Lack of One Dominant Activity Hurdle: The E’s of Libraries take what can be a negative in terms of messaging (i.e. the jack of all trades concept), and turn it into a positive
The E’s of Libraries®

- The categories of activities that comprise The E’s are generally viewed as essential.
- This messaging uses language that is familiar to third-parties.
- This messaging focuses on the types of activities that funders and potential business partners want to support.
- This messaging allows people in the library community to use a common language.
- This messaging helps people outside of the library community remember what libraries do in a way that they are more likely to retain the information.
Remember:

Don't tell them what you want to say.

Tell them what they need to know.
The E's of Libraries®

Education
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Education

- Early Childhood Learning
- K-12 Education
- Adult Education
Employment

Self-Evaluation

Skill Building

Finding and Landing the Job
Entrepreneurship

Area of Interest Exploration

Facilitating Connections

Identifying resources for funding and growing your business
Empowerment

Financial, Technology, and Health Literacy

Civic and Legal Literacy

Support for underserved populations
Engagement

Learning

Social

Community
The E's in Action

- Budget presentations
- Making the case to funders - or "nonbelievers"
- Engaging community partners
**Engagement**

- Librarians visit WIC Centers to promote early learning practices and spread awareness of library services.
- Held in April, the annual BC Reads program promotes community-wide discussion through reading and the arts.
- Baltimore County Health and Human Services provides smoking cessation, diabetes education, and Narcan trainings at various branches.
- The Library provides book clubs, technology instruction, and mobile library services at County Senior Centers.
- Collaboration with Baltimore County Department of Recreation & Parks to provide off-site library services through Talking is Teaching panels, Story Trails, and Little Free Libraries.

**Equity**

- Summer lunches and after-school snacks are provided at no cost to the library or to the children. More than 27,000 meals and snacks were served in FY18 alone.
- Maryland Legal Aid provides, drop-in legal assistance with civil matters at various branches.
- A grant from the Maryland State Library enabled BCPL to offer the “Build Your Own Computer” series at two branches. Presented by Baltimore Robotics Club, participants learned to build their own computer, which they were able to keep at the end of the program.
- Social justice programs bring participants together with local authors, artists, activists and leaders. Our branches provide safe spaces for conversation and thoughtful discourse on challenging issues.
- E-devices, including Google Chromebooks, are now circulated to make technology accessible to all Baltimore County residents.

**Innovation and Partnerships: Collective Impact**

The Library leverages partnerships with County and State agencies, nonprofits, and local businesses in order to extend the reach of library services and resources. Collaborative programming allows for innovative ideas to reach wider audiences; cross-promotion ensures greater return on investment, and greater access to resources means more opportunity for Baltimore County residents.

**Education**

- All 115,000 BCPL students now have automatic Student Accounts with BCPL. These accounts can be used to check out materials, utilize research databases, and, best of all, do not accrue fines, eliminating a barrier to access.
- More than 50,000 children participate in the Summer Reading program each year, which provides fun and accessible ways to connect to reading and learning throughout the summer, keeping children better prepared for the start of a new school year.
- Librarians from the Parkville Branch maintain a close relationship with the Hickory School, providing regular book discussion visits at this youth detention center. In support of this program, BCPL has won funding through an ALA Great Stories grant.
- Partnering with Towson University has enabled a variety of collaborative programs, including professors speaking at programs, BC Reads events hosted on the TU Campus and book discussions in support of TU grant projects.

**Economy**

- The William & Lateese C. Featherston Foundation provides workforce and technical training for Latino and underserved customers.
- The Maryland Small Business Development Center, Small Business Administration and CADD Campaign work with the library to provide workshops at several branches that support the development and success of entrepreneurs, small businesses, and microblenders.
- Librarians assist customers daily with online job applications, learning new job skills and interview tips.
- CADD Campaign of Maryland will provide personal finance classes and free tax preparation for low-income customers in FY19. Funding for the tax preparation service is provided in part by grants from Wells Fargo and PNC.

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**Maryland Public Libraries In a Year***

- **56,980,321** Items Were Checked Out
- **2,393,632** People Attended Library Programs
- **26,089,963** People Visited Maryland Public Libraries
- **8,234,905** Questions Answered by Library Staff
- **5,604,327** People Used Internet at Library Computers
- **15,122,526** People Used WiFi in Maryland Libraries
- **3,630,368** Registered Library Card Holders
- **16,049,911** Total Items Available for Borrowing

**Carroll County Public Library**
Libraries create enthusiasm for reading for students of all socio-economic classes. Reading levels for students are raised through countywide education programs such as Battle of the Books.

**Northern Middle School Library, Garrett County**
Libraries expand the universe of possibilities for students through opportunities such as STEM programs, LEGO Leagues, and computer coding.

*Source: FY17 Maryland State Library Report*
Maryland libraries are about ENGAGEMENT

Anne Arundel County Public Library
At an Adulting 101 program, MD State Delegate Mark Chang shares the basics of local government and how teens can effect change through civic engagement.

Harford County Public Library
“Choose Civility” programs uplift communities through acts of kindness.

Howard County Library System
Thousands of visitors attended the grand opening of the HCLS Ellicott Branch + DIY Education Center in March. The new branch features a DIY collection with tools for home repair, baking, and sewing for borrowing at no cost.

Prince George’s County Memorial Library System
The library has many functions that meet the needs of many different people. It’s diverse and inclusive.

Maryland libraries are for EVERYONE
EMPLOYMENT

- 73% of public libraries assist patrons with job applications and interviewing skills.
- LSTA funds trained school and public librarians to prepare students for today’s competitive job market by providing coding classes and other STEM activities.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- Nearly 100% of libraries offer economic/workforce services; about half of those provide entrepreneurship and small business development services.
- LSTA funds allowed entrepreneurs in rural areas to receive business development assistance from a skilled business & technology outreach librarian.
“The more I thought about it, the more I really like the message of the 5 E's. It really does summarize well the ways that a library is essential to a community. I will definitely be using it more and working from it in the future.”

-Becky Isbell
Director, Brownwood (Texas) Public Library
Your Library in Their Language: How to Tailor The E’s of Libraries® for Your Library and Community

The E’s in Action in Your Library
- Analysis of library services

The Key E’s of Your Community
- How does the library solve the community’s problems?

What’s Your E™: Library Stories
- Use storytelling with The E’s of Libraries®
What's Your E?™

• For librarians/staff
• For customers/patrons
• For library advocates
• For community members
What's Next for The E's of Libraries®?

The E's of Libraries® Webinar
Tues., Sept. 24, 2-3 p.m. Eastern
FREE
Register at
www.ala.org/united/advocacy/e
s-of-libraries

ALA Editions title:
Coming in 2020!
Be a part of
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Have your badge scanned following the program

Email us at united@ala.org

www.ala.org/united/advocacy/es-of-libraries
United for Libraries: The Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations, is a division of the American Library Association with approximately 4,000 personal and group members representing hundreds of thousands of library supporters.

United for Libraries supports those who govern, promote, advocate, and fundraise for libraries, and brings together library Trustees, advocates, Friends, and Foundations into a partnership that creates a powerful force for libraries in the 21st century.

FACEBOOK
United for Libraries

TWITTER
@ala_united
Contact Us

www.ala.org/united
united@ala.org
(800) 545-2433, ext. 2161
www.ala.org/united/advocacy/es-of-libraries