MentorNJ Project Year 1 Final Report

MentorNJ: *Linking Library Staff Statewide*
http://librarylinknj.org/MentorNJ

Funding Organizations:
New Jersey State Library
LibraryLinkNJ, The New Jersey Library Cooperative ⌷

Co-Sponsoring Groups:
New Jersey Library Association Professional Development Committee
& Leadership and Education Subcommittee

This report is prepared by
MentorNJ Project Team

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I. Executive Summary

The MentorNJ Project started as a one-year pilot project funded by the New Jersey State Library (NJSL) and LibraryLinkNJ. It was developed from the Leadership Academy 2014, a 9-day leadership development program for library leaders, also sponsored by the New Jersey State Library and LibraryLinkNJ. The project proposal was approved by the two funding organizations and two co-sponsoring groups, New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) Professional Development Committee & Leadership and Education Subcommittee, in September 2014.

The purpose of the project was to develop mentor network services and programs, and a new guide to New Jersey libraries, that can serve as a gateway to librarians and paraprofessionals new to the profession or to the state. The project team started with five Leadership Academy participants, and has been reinforced with twelve additional members who represent different types of libraries and work responsibilities. Year 1 was set from October 2014 through September 2015, but later it was extended through the end of December 2015 to reflect the preliminary plan period in 2014. The total budget of $10,000 was funded equally by the ⌷New Jersey State Library and LibraryLinkNJ, and the State Library served as the fiscal agent.

During Year 1, the Virtual Guide to NJ Libraries and the Mentors' Directory were implemented and launched on March 23, 2015 (http://librarylinknj.org/MentorNJ). One online meet-up program, Library Bootcamp, was offered on May 21, 2015, and an in-person networking event was held on October 2, 2015. The project team also worked with LibraryLinkNJ to offer two webinar sessions on "How to Mentor Others" in July and October 2015. The team tried to promote the MentorNJ resources and services to library communities statewide and nationally.

With the successful progress of the project, the funding organizations approved funding the project for Year 2 (January - December 2016) with $10,000, $5,000 from each organization respectively.

This report summarizes the implementation of the MentorNJ Project for Year 1 and the plans for Year 2.

II. Goals and Objectives

The MentorNJ Project aimed to address the following goals and objectives in the **Statewide Strategic Plan for the Future of Libraries in NJ** (http://librarylinknj.org/strategic-plan):

Goal 2: Leadership and Coordination
- Learn from each other: Establish forums that enable the staff of libraries to regularly meet and share best practices in funding, service delivery, advocacy, innovation and leadership.

Goal 6: Professional Development and Self Care
- Time to learn: Designate time for informal networking, brainstorming and learning from each other.

The MentorNJ Project **Goals** are:
Promote professional sense of pride and connectedness among the New Jersey Library Community and expand library professional roles in the present and future.

Year 1 Objectives:
- Initiate a project in response to library community input for the Statewide Strategic Plan.
- Subsidize services and programs for library professionals and paraprofessionals statewide to achieve their professional development through learning from each other.
- Foster professional networking in New Jersey Library Community where library professionals and paraprofessionals can connect, share, and collaborate with each other.
- Encourage leadership among the library professionals and paraprofessionals in the State.

We, the project team, are confident that the project has satisfied the goals and objectives set for Year 1. Please find successful results and evaluations of the Year programs in IV. The Project Scope and Implementation section is on page 5.

For Year 1 of the project (2015), the main focuses were on launching the Virtual Guide to NJ Libraries and Mentors' Directory, and providing programs that promote the MentorNJ service to the NJ Library Community. We believe that we have built the base for the MentorNJ service during this year, and now we will need to focus on expanding the service and promoting it to a broader audience.

The objectives for Year 2 (January - December 2016) are:

- Promote the MentorNJ Virtual Guide and the Mentors' Directory and encourage building a mentoring relationship among the library colleagues both statewide and nationwide.
- Partner with library organizations in the State to provide practical trainings that support library professionals and paraprofessional for their professional development.
- Expand programs and events to strengthen "professional networking" in the New Jersey Library Community where library professionals and paraprofessionals can connect, share and collaborate with each other.
- Foster leadership among the library professionals and paraprofessionals that reflects diversity in NJ Library Community.

III. Project Stakeholders and Project Team

This project required a statewide collaboration among the library organizations and participation of library professionals and paraprofessionals in leadership roles. The primary target audience/customers are the library staff in New Jersey, but it also includes any library staff who can benefit from the project resources and services.

Funding Organizations and Co-Sponsoring Groups
This project has been managed as a joint project among the sponsoring organizations/groups below:
- LibraryLinkNJ, The New Jersey Library Cooperative ⌷
- New Jersey State Library (NJSL) ⌷
- New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) Professional Development Committee & Leadership and Education Subcommittee

The total budget of $10,000 is funded equally by the ⌷New Jersey State Library and LibraryLinkNJ. The State Library served as fiscal agent, and both the State Library and LibraryLinkNJ allowed the staff time to manage the project. The NJLA Professional Development Committee & Leadership and Education Subcommittee will contribute their expertise to the NJLA Mentoring Program.

Project Team
The Project Team started with five members and twelve members joined the team throughout Year 1 period. The seventeen members represent different types of libraries, contribute diverse aspects of library work responsibilities, and share various and extensive knowledge and experiences as a library professional and paraprofessional. The team members are:

- **Maryjean Bakaletz**, Library Assistant, Hunterdon County Library
- **Doug Baldwin**, Emerging Technologies Librarian, Piscataway Public Library
- **Ralph Bingham**, Head of Reference and Digital Services, Gloucester County Library System
- **Peggy Cadigan**, Deputy State Librarian Department of Innovation and Outreach, NJSL *(NJSL Liaison)*
- **Lynnette Fucci**, Youth Services Librarian, Monroe Township Library
- **Lorie Harding**, Head of Instructional Services, The Bunn Library, The Lawrenceville School
- **Sally Harrison**, Youth Services Librarian, Ocean County Library System
- **Jerry Holtz**, Systems Administrator, Woodbridge Public Library
- **Mimi Hui**, Library Director, Free Public Library of Hasbrouck Heights *(NJLA Professional Development Committee Chair & Liaison)*
- **Erica Krivopal**, Teen Services Librarian, Piscataway Public Library *(NJLA Leadership & Education Subcommittee Chair & Liaison)*
- **Irene Langlois**, Head of Teen Services, Maplewood Memorial Library

- **Mi-Sun Lyu**, IT Project Manager & Program Coordinator LibraryLinkNJ
  (*MentorNJ Project Manager & LibraryLinkNJ Liaison*)
- **Melissa Nemitz**, Youth and Teen Services, West Windsor Public Library
  (*NJLA Leadership & Education Subcommittee Liaison*)
- **Kimberly Paone**, Library Director, Matawan Aberdeen Public Library
- **Nadine Sergejeff**, Reference & Special Collections Librarian, Newark Public Library
- **Julie Walsh**, Educational Medical Specialist, Westfield High School Library
- **Zara Wilkinson**, Reference and Instruction Librarian, Rutgers University-Camden

Please find more information about the team members and contact information at:
http://librarylinknj.org/MentorNJ/project-team

IV. Project Scope and Implementation

1. Virtual Guide to NJ Libraries
http://librarylinknj.org/MentorNJ

The Virtual Guide to NJ Libraries was launched on March 23, 2015 and it is hosted on LibraryLinkNJ's website. The project team worked together to organize and plan the structure and the content requirements, and Mi-Sun Lyu serves as the web admin for this online resource.

The virtual guide currently presents the following resources:

- VIRTUAL GUIDE to NJ LIBRARIES
  - ORGANIZATIONS
  - LISTSERVS & ONLINE FORUMS
  - LIBRARY DIRECTORIES
  - LINKS to NEW JERSEY LIBRARIES' ONLINE RESOURCES
  - JOBS in NEW JERSEY
- DOCUMENT SHARING
- MENTORS' DIRECTORY
- GUIDELINES for MENTORS & MENTEES
- PROGRAMS & EVENTS
- PROJECT TEAM

We encourage library staff anywhere:
- Explore valuable resources for those new to the profession and the state;
- Share your experience and knowledge with other colleagues;
- Network with other colleagues and celebrate our profession.

Since the Virtual Guide was launched on March 23, 2015, the total number of MentorNJ pages viewed was 10,055 (based on Google Analytics), which was ranked as one of the most viewed pages on LibraryLinkNJ's website.

We hope this Virtual Guide continue to save time and effort that library staff spend researching various organizations, libraries, and other online resources. We also expect that this Virtual Guide will create an environment that supports and promotes effective resource sharing and successful collaborations in the New Jersey library community.

2. Mentor Network

Mentors' Directory Online:
http://librarylinknj.org/MentorNJ/mentors
We implemented the Mentors' Directory as a part of the Virtual Guide to NJ Libraries that lists library professionals and paraprofessionals who are able and willing to be a mentor and are willing to share their information. There are currently 79 mentors listed on the Mentors' Directory. Mentors can be searched by type of library that they have worked at and areas of expertise and job responsibilities that they want to mentor for.

Anyone who has a user account on the LibraryLinkNJ's website and meets the minimum requirements can list themselves as mentor. Anyone who needs a mentor to his/her new library position can contact the mentors listed on the directory. The project team or the sponsoring organizations do not match mentors and mentees, as developing or maintaining of the mentoring relationship between any specific mentor and mentee was not included in the project scope.

We also conducted a Mentors' survey to work on our objectives for Mentor Network for Year 2. 53 mentors participated in the survey (conducted between November 23 and December 15, 2015) --- identified their librarianship as 35 public, 6 school, 11 academic, 1 special, 1 consultant. In spite of the busy traffic on MentorNJ webpages, only 12 mentors out of 53 responded that they were contacted by a mentee or mentees. One positive note is that the mentors who helped a mentee or mentees thought their interactions with mentees were effective for mentees. We already have a great group of mentors on the directory, and we will focus on proactively reaching out to potential mentees in Year 2. We will use the survey results to promote the Mentors' Directory and plan additional programs for mentors and mentees.

Online Meet-ups:
We initially planned to offer two online meet-ups for Year 1, but we offered one online meet-up and hosted two sessions of 'How to Mentor Others' webinar via LibraryLinkNJ's Continuing Education program, instead. This scope change was approved by the funding organizations.

We conducted an online survey to select a theme for the online meet-up and the webinar topic. Based on the survey results, we offered the following online programs for Year 1 that, we believe, satisfied the project scope for online networking:

Library Bootcamp (Online Meet-up):
- May 21, 2015 via AdobeConnect (via LibraryLinkNJ)
- We budgeted presenter fees, but were able to host the program at no cost, thanks to all volunteered panelists of NJ library leaders.
- Panelists:
  - Katie Anderson, Paul Robeson Library, Rutgers University-Camden
  - Doug Baldwin, Piscataway Public Library
  - Ralph Bingham, Gloucester County Library System
  - Sophie Brookover, LibraryLinkNJ
  - Heidi Cramer, Newark Public Library
  - Martha Hickson, North Hunterdon High School Library
  - Karen Klapperstuck, Monroe Township Public Library
  - Heather Dalal, Moore Library, Rider University
  - Kate Vasilik, Piscataway Public Library
- Program information page: http://librarylinknj.org/MentorNJ/programs/online-meetup1
- Overall, the evaluations for the online meet-up were very positive, and the panelists were all great! We asked our panelists to touch on various topics that they think essential for library professionals and paraprofessionals, especially who will be entering or new to the profession/position, need to know or be aware of. Please note that the program was not intended as a full continuing education webinar that may go deep into a particular subject.
- Evaluation Results:
  - Multiple Choice Questions:
    https://librarylinknj.wufoo.com/reports/library-bootcamp-multiple-choice/
  - Open-Ended Questions:
    https://librarylinknj.wufoo.com/reports/library-bootcamp-openended/

How to Mentor Others (Webinars):
July 22 & October 20, 2015 via AdobeConnect (via LibraryLinkNJ)
- Presented by Mary Beth Weber, Rutgers University Libraries
- The presenter fee of $800 was sponsored by LibraryLinkNJ, which was funded in addition to the project budget.
- Program information page:
  http://librarylinknj.org/content/webinar-how-mentor-others
- The webinars received very positive feedback, and we might plan additional programs with the presenter in Year 2.
- Evaluation Results:
  - Responses to the multiple choice evaluation questions (7/22):
    https://librarylinknj.wufoo.com/reports/how-to-mentor-others-multiple-choice/

○ Responses to the open-ended questions (7/22):
https://librarylinknj.wufoo.com/reports/how-to-mentor-others-openended/
○ Responses to the multiple choice evaluation questions (10/20):
https://librarylinknj.wufoo.com/reports/how-to-mentor-others-102015-multiple-choice/
○ Responses to the open-ended questions (10/22):
https://librarylinknj.wufoo.com/reports/how-to-mentor-others-102015-openended/

In-Person Networking:

We hosted an in-person networking event on October 2, 2015 at the Monroe Township Library, as included in the project proposal. LibraryLinkNJ funded an additional $1,250 for prizes and the Monroe Township Library (venue) provided coffee service at no cost. We are deeply grateful for their generosity and for their excellent staff support.

We partnered with the NJLA Member Services Committee for this event and worked with the four committee liaisons, and Erica and Maryjean joined the project team through this collaboration.

- Erica Solomon, Co-Chair, Piscataway Public Library
- Lynn Schott, Co-Chair, Bergen Community College
- Cassidy Charles, Madison Free Public Library
- Maryjean Bakaletz, Hunterdon County Library

The event was promoted and hosted as being exclusively for professional networking. The event offered space, food and atmosphere for library staff to network casually, and provided practical professional development opportunities with the panel discussions, resume reviews

and mock-interview sessions. Professional headshot sessions were also arranged, and the trivia game was full of fun shared among the participants.

Please find more detailed information about the panelists, volunteers and event activities at:
http://librarylinknj.org/MentorNJ/programs#offline

Participants' Feedback available at:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gXZa-cvm4TjF0BmEEeeLGFh3ZFSMKpsgTN3T-n_UJBs/edit

3. Communication & Documentation

The project team primarily communicated via Google Groups and used Google Docs for collaborations on project details.

For Year 2, we will explore a software and some other tools that might help the team organize and manage the project more effectively, in addition to using Google Docs.

MentorNJ Project Google Docs:
Please find the list of Year 1 & 2 Docs:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1uZGPSACWPSB_dmeTeTh_A2CwfcoVxc6IKYE2DERxQx0/edit

4. Promotion & Partnership

The MentorNJ Project team put considerable effort into promoting MentorNJ not only to the NJ Library Community, but also to a nationwide audience. We also partnered with NJLA's Member Services Committee for our in-person networking event. For Year 2, we will continue our efforts to promote MentorNJ to a broader audience and explore effective ways to use Social Media channels. We have already partnered with several NJLA committees and sections for NJLA Conference programs, and will seek out more partnership opportunities in Year 2.

Here are some of our efforts to promote MentorNJ:

Promotion in New Jersey
- MentorNJ services and programs announcements were continuously distributed to NJ libraries via the State Library's online newsletter (*NJSL Direct*) and LibraryLinkNJ's Online Forums, mass-mailings and online newsletters (E-Update).
- The team promoted MentorNJ to NJ library listservs, including the State Library, NJLA and NJASL listserv. We also reached out to library organizations, such as NJSL, LibraryLinkNJ, NJLA, NJASL, NJALA, VALE, HSLANJ and many more, to post the MentorNJ information on their website.
- We also promoted it to the Rutgers MLIS students group via their listserv. Mimi Hui distributed the flyer at the Rutgers Career Fair.
- LibraryLinkNJ staff produced and mailed MentorNJ promo flyers to member public libraries and asked the library directors to display it in their staff room or somewhere their staff can easily see.
- The team hosted a table at the NJLA Conference 2015 and distributed promo pens, flyers and brochures to everyone. The team members also made appearances at several programs, e.g. a mixer event and the resume speed dating, to promote MentorNJ.
- We also distributed a promo lunch bag and a lanyard to the mentors, that says "I AM A MENTORNJ MENTOR". At Irene Langlois's suggestion, we also created E-Badges for Mentors that they can add to their email signature. The E-badge information is available at: http://librarylinknj.org/MentorNJ/mentors/ebadge

Promoting MentorNJ Nationwide
- The team sought for collaboration and support from ALA to promote MentorNJ link to the ALA members. We also reached out to the ALA Student Chapters.
- Mi-Sun Lyu attended several programs at the ALA Conference 2015 in San Francisco, and shared the MentorNJ Project and the website URL with other participants. Many people expressed their needs and interest in library mentoring programs.
- We also tried to publish an article on *American Libraries Magazine*. **Melissa Nemitz wrote a beautiful article (Appendix A)** on MentorNJ for *American Libraries*, but unfortunately it wasn't selected for publication. We will try to share her article via the MentorNJ webpage and many other channels.

V. Budget and Cost

Year 1 Budget: $10,000 (Equally funded by the State Library and LibraryLinkNJ)

Year 1 Estimated Cost:

Items	Cost
Virtual Guide Online Implementation	$0.00
Online Meet-ups	$1,000.00
In-Person Networking Event	$5,200.00
Promotional Materials	$3,500.00
Miscellaneous (Meetings, etc.)	$300.00
Total planned:	$10,000.00

Year 1 Actual Cost:

Items	Cost
Virtual Guide Online Implementation	$0.00
Online Meet-ups	$0.00
In-Person Networking Event	$2,700.66
Cranberry's catering ($1,660.00)	
Water & Soda ($40.66)	
Photographer for Headshot Sessions ($1,000.00)	
Promotional Materials	$4,117.76
Motivators.com Pens (Quantity: 2,000, $640.00)	
PrideProduct.com Lunch Bags (Quantity: 600, $2,259.03)	
PrideProduct.com Promo Lanyards (Quantity: 500, $1,218.73)	
Miscellaneous (Meetings, etc.)	$555.19
Total spent:	$7,373.61
Carry-over amount for Year 2 (approved by funding organizations)	$2,626.39
	= $10,000.00

Year 2 Budget: $12,626.39
- Carry-over budget from Year 1: $2,626.39
- Year 2 funding: $10,000 (Equally funded by the State Library and LibraryLinkNJ)

VI. Year 2 Plans in Progress

We are currently working on the details of Year 2 plans, and the following program and promotional ideas are in progress. Please note that we are planning to host programs at NJLA and NJASL Conference 2016, and these plans were also approved by the funding organizations

in September 2015. We expect that we can take a great advantage of using the grand and convenient facilities of the venue without extra cost.

1. NJLA Conference 2016 Programs:
We worked together to submit several proposals with co-sponsoring groups for the NJLA Conference 2016.

The MentorNJ Team will serve as the primary hosting group, and both program proposals were submitted by the Professional Development Committee.

Getting to Yes: Tips for Selling Your Ideas to the People Who Matter
Tuesday, May 17, 11:30-12:20
Sponsoring Groups:
- Professional Development Committee
- Leadership & Education Subcommittee
- Member Services Committee
- College and University Section
- MentorNJ Project Team

Resume Review & Mock Interview Station
Tuesday, May 17, 10:00-11:30am and 2:00-4:00pm; Wednesday, May 18, 10:00-11:30am.
Sponsoring Groups:
- Member Services Committee
- Professional Development Committee
- Leadership & Education Subcommittee
- Administration and Management Section
- College and University Section
- Personal Admin Committee
- College & University Section
- MentorNJ Project Team

The following program is proposed and primarily hosted by the NJLA Member Services Committee:

Meet the Mentors & Mixer on Tuesday Evening
Tuesday, May 17, 5:00-6:00 pm
Sponsoring Groups:
- Member Services Committee
- Professional Development Committee
- Leadership & Education Subcommittee
- Administration and Management Section
- College and University Section
- MentorNJ Project Team

Other Programs that we are endorsing and helping to organize the program (3 programs):

Maximizing our Collective Energies: Grow, Share and Strengthen
Proposal by College and University Section (CUS)

Effectively Training New Hires
Proposal by Reference Section & also co-sponsored by CUS

Grooming the next generation of leader: mentoring for management in the library environment (working title)
Proposal by Admin & Management Section

2. NJASL Conference Program(s):
We will work with the NJASL to schedule one or more programs at their 2016 Conference.

3. Workshops

- Webinar & In-Person Workshop on Resume/Cover Letter Reviews & Mock Interviews
- In-person Networking event in Fall 2016
- How to mentor at work

4. Presenting MentorNJ at ALA
Present a program at an ALA-level event.

5. Reaching out to potential mentees

- Host a program at Rutgers Colloquium or Career Day
- Reach out to other library schools in PA, DE, NY, e.g. Drexel

6. Social Media Presence
Use Social Media to promote the MentorNJ services.

Please find more details of Year 2 Plans on this shared Google Doc:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1B75pbD8ihK-JjyMSo5BojXrQ9exvEOkb94vIZ64enAw/edit
(If you experience any trouble to access this document, please contact Mi-Sun at lyu@librarylinknj.org or 732-943-6123.)

VII. Conclusion

We truly believe the MentorNJ Project is a unique statewide initiative that is dedicated to networking among the library staff in New Jersey and celebrating the profession everywhere. The Virtual Guide to NJ Libraries website stats, the program evaluations and other results we collected throughout Year 1 encourage the team to continue to work together and partner with more library staff to improve this unique initiative.

The following statement in Melissa's article on MentorNJ defines the value and the mission of the project clearly:

"Library MentorNJ is a unique and informative resource and will serve as an example for other states interested in creating a networking community to complement state library organizations. As MentorNJ grows within the State of New Jersey, providing new opportunities for library professional development, it also hopes to expand on a national level as well. MentorNJ may be based in New Jersey, but its resources and Mentor Directory are available for all new librarians and library staff throughout the country.

The goal of MentorNJ is not only to make connections among librarians and library staff stronger, but by doing so, make our libraries stronger. Connection and collaboration among librarians and library staff is key to making libraries thrive. This connectedness serves as a platform for sharing ideas and forming collaborations all with the philosophy of superior customer service in mind."

We will continue to promote and expand our services and programs to meet and exceed our customers' (any library staff in the State and everywhere) expectations for Year 2 and beyond.

We are extremely grateful to our funding organizations for their generosity in supporting this unique initiative for Year 2.

Acknowledgement:

We are deeply grateful to **Mary Chute**, the State Librarian and **Cheryl O'Connor**, Former Executive Director of LibraryLinkNJ for your huge support for the MentorNJ Project. We are also thankful to **Kathy Schalk-Greene**, Executive Director of LibraryLinkNJ, for her support for the team with our Year 2 project plans.

We would like to thank **Peggy Cadigan**, Deputy State Librarian for Innovation & Outreach, NJSL, who served on the project team as the State Library Liaison and gave the team tremendous help to work with the State Library staff. We would also like to thank **Joanne Roukens**, Assistant Director, LibraryLinkNJ, who coordinated producing and distributing various program promo materials and served as a panel discussion facilitator at the in-person event.

We would like to acknowledge and thank you for the support of our funding organizations and their following staff who have helped the team with managing, promoting and preparing materials for all online programs and the in-person networking event:
Sheri Shafer, CFO, NJSL
Diana Delgross, Library Support Services Department, NJSL
Tiffany McClary, Director of Communications, Marketing & Outreach, NJSL
Gary Cooper, Communications, Marketing & Outreach, NJSL
Sophie Brookover, Program Coordinator & Social Media Manager, LibraryLinkNJ
Carol Fishwick, Member Services, LibraryLinkNJ
Nanette Cox, Business Administrator, LibraryLinkNJ
Daniella Franov, Part-time clerical, LibraryLinkNJ

We also would like to share our sincere appreciation with staff at the Monroe Township Library where our in-person networking and meetings were held. Their staff were extremely helpful and supportive throughout the event preparations and on the day of the event.

Finally, we would like to thank everyone who served as mentors, panelists, presenters and volunteers and joined as partnering groups, participants, mentees and users of the MentorNJ resources, services and programs!

Appendix A

MentorNJ: Linking Library Staff Statewide
By Melissa Nemitz

Library students and new library professionals today have an abundance of online resources at their fingertips connecting them to librarians and library-related information from around the country and around the world. With such a massive amount of information on hand, navigating these resources and making meaningful connections as a new professional can, at times, be overwhelming and confusing. In an effort to consolidate this information, MentorNJ was formed to assist library students, library paraprofessionals, and new librarians by connecting them with experienced and reliable mentors, who represent various fields of librarianship, throughout the state of New Jersey.

What is it?

Led by the New Jersey Library Leadership Academy and funded by the New Jersey State Library and LibraryLinkNJ, The New Jersey Library Cooperative, MentorNJ is a brand new initiative that is designed to serve as a guide for new librarians and library paraprofessionals. Launched in March 2015, MentorNJ already has about eighty library professionals and paraprofessionals who have volunteered to serve as mentors. With an outstanding list of mentors to choose from (including library directors, archivists, school librarians, university librarians and emerging technologies librarians), students and those new to the profession have the opportunity to learn from those in the top of their field.

Aside from creating an effective online and in-person mentor network, MentorNJ also hopes to create an environment that supports and promotes effective resource sharing and successful collaboration in the New Jersey library community. With a *Virtual Guide to NJ Libraries*, MentorNJ provides directories of libraries and library jobs in New Jersey, as well as professional library organizations.

Along with critical information about New Jersey libraries, MentorNJ provides a Document Sharing feature that allows librarians and library staff to contribute, search for, and view library-related documents. This is a space for librarians and library staff to share documents including strategic plans, lesson planning, grant applications, and computer policies that have been successful and can serve as an example for other librarians and library staff to follow.

Providing more

Part of the MentorNJ initiative includes hosting webinars and in-person networking events. Its first webinar, held in May, attracted seventy attendees. MentorNJ plans to host more webinars in the future and recently held an In-Person Networking Event in October that brought mentees and mentors together for a day of both learning and fun.

MentorNJ's first webinar, *Library Bootcamp*, consisted of a panel of professional librarians who spoke about their own personal experiences and provided resources and tips about developing a career in librarianship. Maryjean Bakaletz, a current MLIS student at Rutgers University and now a Project Team member, attended the webinar and found it to be "an informative and interactive opportunity to learn about the ins and outs of librarianship. The presenters provided us with information that went beyond the classroom and into the workplace." The recording of the webinar, as well as additional resources provided by the panelists, can be accessed at the MentorNJ website.

At MentorNJ's first In-Person Networking Event, library staff and library students from around the state came together to share and learn tips about writing resumes, cover letters and standing out in an interview. Including panel discussions, resume reviews, professional headshots and mock interview sessions, the day was jam-packed with informative events that were beneficial to library students and new library staff. However, the event was not without its share of fun, as the day concluded on a high note with a trivia game full of laughs (and prizes!).

In the future, MentorNJ plans to partner with the New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) and the New Jersey Association of School Librarians (NJASL) committees to host programs and meet-ups at upcoming conferences. As is the mission of MentorNJ, these events are designed to open up a discussion about the library profession and promote a professional sense of pride and connectedness among the New Jersey Library Community.

Long-term mission

MentorNJ is a unique and informative resource and will serve as an example for other states interested in creating a networking community to complement state library organizations. As MentorNJ grows within the state of New Jersey, providing new opportunities for library professional development, it also hopes to expand on a national level as well. MentorNJ may be based in New Jersey, but its resources and Mentor Directory are available for all new librarians and library staff throughout the country.

The goal of MentorNJ is not only to make connections among librarians and library staff stronger, but by doing so, make our libraries stronger. Connection and collaboration among librarians and library staff is key to making libraries thrive. This connectedness serves as a platform for sharing ideas and forming collaborations all with the philosophy of superior customer service in mind. For more information, please visit: http://librarylinknj.org/MentorNJ.

iMentorNJ

Be A Mentor!

Linking Library Staff Statewide
Meet our New Jersey mentors and get inspired!
Be a mentor or mentee, and be part of this high-powered network!

librarylinknj.org/MentorNJ

MentorNJ is a new joint initiative funded
by the New Jersey State Library and LibraryLinkNJ.

MentorNJ

Linking Library Staff Statewide

MentorNJ is a result of the MentorNJ Project funded by the New Jersey State Library and LibraryLinkNJ, in order to serve as a gateway to librarians and library paraprofessionals new to the profession or the state. The goal of this service is to promote professional sense of pride and connectedness among the New Jersey Library Community and expand library professional roles in the present and future.

Meet our New Jersey mentors and get inspired! Be a mentor or mentee, and be part of this high-powered network!

LibraryLinkNJ
THE NEW JERSEY LIBRARY COOPERATIVE

NJ State Library
An affiliate of Thomas Edison State College

NEW JERSEY NJLA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP & EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

*Special Thanks to
the Sponsoring Organizations/Groups:*
LibraryLinkNJ, The NJ Library Cooperative,
New Jersey State Library (NJSL),
New Jersey Library Association (NJLA)
Professional Development Committee &
Leadership Education Subcommittee

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Linking Library Staff Statewide

MentorNJ is for everyone! Our mission is to strengthen relationships in the New Jersey library community and provide an avenue for collegial collaboration and support.

Explore valuable resources for those new to the profession and the state: MentorNJ - A virtual guide to NJ Libraries provides information on consortia, local professional organizations and groups, links to New Jersey libraries' online resources, and a guide to listservs and online forums.

It also provides a directory of people working in the New Jersey library community who have volunteered to share their experience and knowledge with any librarian or library support staff, especially those new to the field, who could benefit from professional advice and guidance. MentorNJ makes it easy to connect to a professional who can provide relevant, useful information to help as you grow in your career. To search for a mentor in your area of interest, simply peruse the Mentors' Directory and reach out to one of our many mentors.

Share your experience and knowledge with other colleagues: Be a mentor! MentorNJ invites our NJ library colleagues --- at all professional levels, and from all types of libraries --- to participate as a mentor. Please find more information on how you can participate as a mentor: http://librarylinknj.org/MentorNJ/guidelines

Network with other colleagues and celebrate our profession: Participate in MentorNJ online meet-ups and in-person networking programs and events. For more information: http://librarylinknj.org/MentorNJ/programs

Please contact us if you have any questions, and thank you for your consideration!

- MentorNJ Project Team

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MentorNJ is a result of the MentorNJ Project funded by the New Jersey State Library and LibraryLinkNJ, in order to serve as a gateway to librarians and library paraprofessionals new to the profession or the state. The goal of this service is to promote professional sense of pride and connectedness among the New Jersey Library Community and expand library professional roles in the present and future.

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LibraryLinkNJ
THE NEW JERSEY LIBRARY COOPERATIVE

NJ State Library
An affiliate of Thomas Edison State College

NEW JERSEY NJLA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP & EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

*Special Thanks to
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LibraryLinkNJ - The New Jersey Library Cooperative,
New Jersey State Library (NJSL),
New Jersey Library Association Professional Development Committee &
Leadership Education Subcommittee

Meet the MentorNJ Project Team:
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