



OUR LIBRARIES ARE VITAL AND VALUED



2021-2026
Strategic Plan

OUR LIBRARIES ARE READY FOR THE FUTURE

As a system of member libraries, we collaborate in our work for the Delaware County community. Each library has a unique set of resources, dedicated staff, trustees and volunteers, and a connection to their own community; yet we all work together as partners to ensure our entire County benefits from our library services. To do that effectively and efficiently, we have collaboratively created this Strategic Plan for the future. These are our shared Values, our shared Mission, our shared Vision, and our shared Strategic Goals.

THIS STRATEGIC PLAN IS A VISION AND ROAD MAP FOR THE COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS THAT EXIST BETWEEN THE DELAWARE COUNTY LIBRARIES DISTRICT CENTER AND THE TWENTY SIX MEMBER LIBRARIES ACROSS THE COMMUNITY.



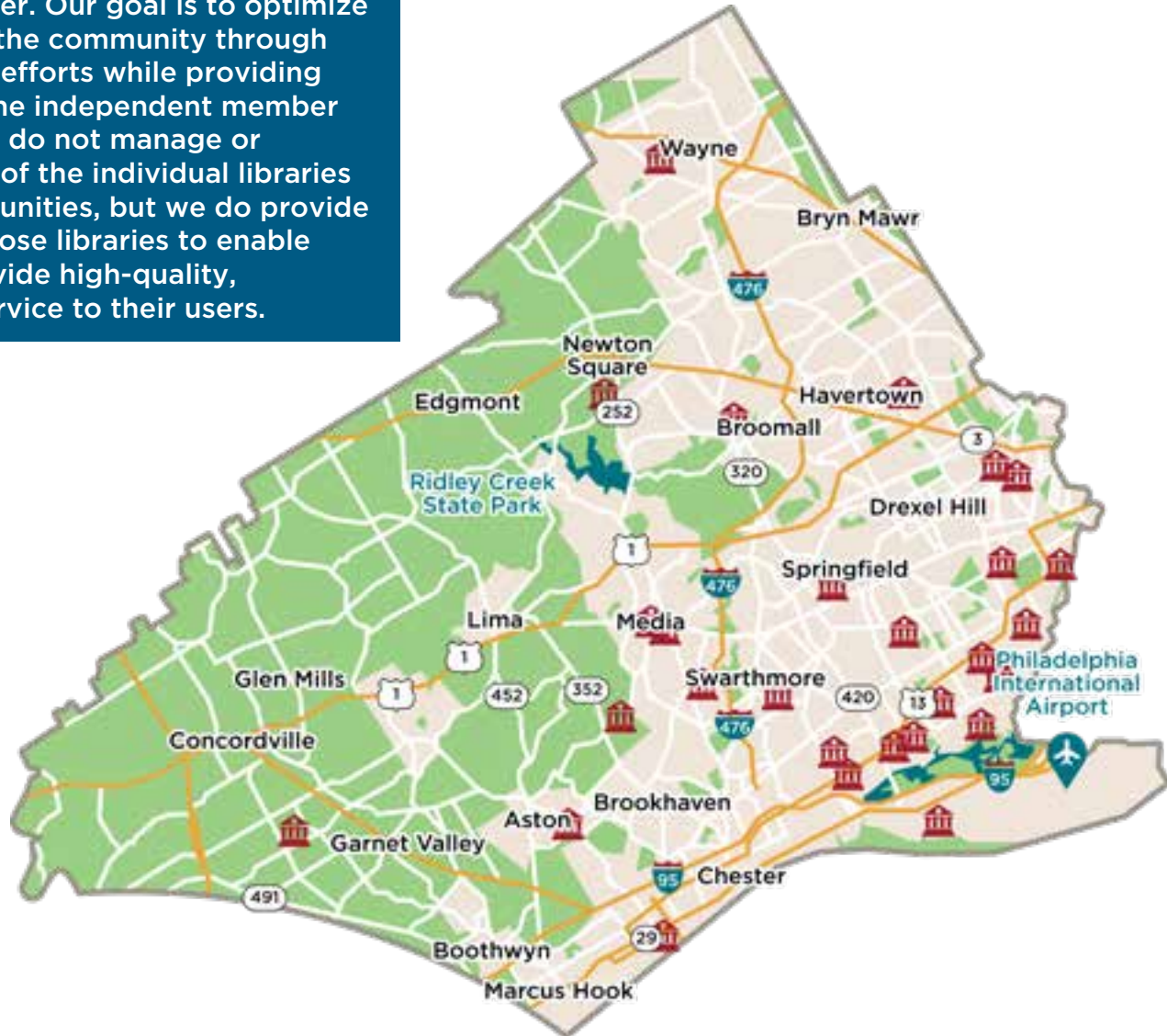
Delaware County Libraries (DCL) District Center Headquarters, an agency of County government with a Council-appointed Board of Directors, is a federated system of 26 member libraries and a Pennsylvania Library District Center. Our goal is to optimize services for the community through cooperative efforts while providing support to the independent member libraries. We do not manage or operate any of the individual libraries in our communities, but we do provide service to those libraries to enable them to provide high-quality, equitable service to their users.



ABOUT DELAWARE COUNTY LIBRARIES

As a collaborative group of libraries across the County, we have created vital and valued resources for our communities that include:

DCL DISTRICT CENTER SERVICES INCLUDE:



	26 Member Libraries		325,458 Average Public Access Computer Sessions
	2,100,000 Physical and online materials		12,802 Average Programs
	1,852,237 Average Annual Visitors		262,564 Average Program Attendance
	221,754 Cardholders		2,630,791 Average Circulation
	152,751 Average Reference Questions		\$24,030,078 2020 Budget for 26 Libraries + DCL District Center

- Administrative support through consulting, continuing education, grant writing support, advocacy, and direct monetary support.
- Programs to libraries and patrons directly, support for county-wide initiatives, and tools like Zoom, Beanstack, bingo and small games of chance licenses, a movie license, and a combined events calendar for promotion.
- Collection management services including cataloging, delivery among libraries, interlibrary loan, and library cards
- Broadband and high-speed internet access with the hardware and software necessary to ensure staff and patron access to the internet and the library circulation system
- Collections and resources like Overdrive/Libby and Hoopla for digital books, high-quality research resources not available on the free internet, circulating hotspots, Book Club in a Bag, etc.
- Equipment and services including copying, laminating, poster printing, fax machines, marketing materials, and bookable equipment
- Outreach and coordinated programming for children, young adults, older adults, and other special groups



OUR LIBRARIES ARE VITAL AND VALUED

Our libraries are a community anchor that play a critical role in the areas of early literacy, out of school learning, workforce and economic development, and neighborhood vitality.

The libraries are open, accessible, and welcoming spaces that enable people to transform their lives through life-long learning, digital literacy, and connections to others. As we move through this strategic plan, the Delaware County Libraries District Center will be a connector for our member libraries. Through the member libraries, ideas, people, and, organizations will interact to create positive change. Across neighborhoods, age groups, demographics, platforms, and time, our libraries will promote literacy and support a community that values innovative, patron-centered services, welcoming gathering spaces, curiosity, tolerance, respect, and the acquisition of knowledge.

OUR LIBRARIES ARE A COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP

This strategic plan has been organized into eight interconnected areas of focus that reflect the priorities of our community and enable all people to realize their own power and potential.

OUR MISSION

To provide access to resources, programming, services, and support to educate, enrich, and engage our diverse communities.

OUR VISION

We are a vital and beloved community resource for all, meeting challenges and leading change with unfettered access to equitable, diverse, and inclusive opportunities that promote discovery, innovation, and learning.



OUR LIBRARIES ARE COMMUNITY CENTERED AND ENGAGING

Engaged and informed people are the foundation of a thriving community.

We will center our services and programs around community needs, and ensure that everyone is aware of how to access resources that are beneficial and support their enrichment.

Goals:

- Create opportunities and experiences for everyone to be a part of the community
- Ensure our community is fully aware of the libraries' resources and benefits
- Place the library at the center of the community as a relevant conduit of information and resources

Indicators of success:

- People know about their libraries and community services
- County residents will become informed of meeting spaces
- Partnerships and collaboration with community agencies that address drug abuse, health outcomes, recidivism, and homelessness.

Relevant statistics, measures and stories:

- Regular measurement and survey of community needs
- Feedback and data that show use and value of programs and services



People will experience:

Interesting, fun, interactive virtual and physical spaces and services that inspire, educate and reward return visits.

Community will experience:

Innovative opportunities for learning based on the requests and needs of people in each neighborhood.

Library staff, Board and volunteers will contribute:

The ability and flexibility to adapt and evolve physical and virtual spaces for new and better experiences and services.



OUR LIBRARIES ARE DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE

Our whole community benefits from our libraries.

We will collaborate with our diverse community to ensure that our services, staff, programs, and collections are inclusive.

Goals:

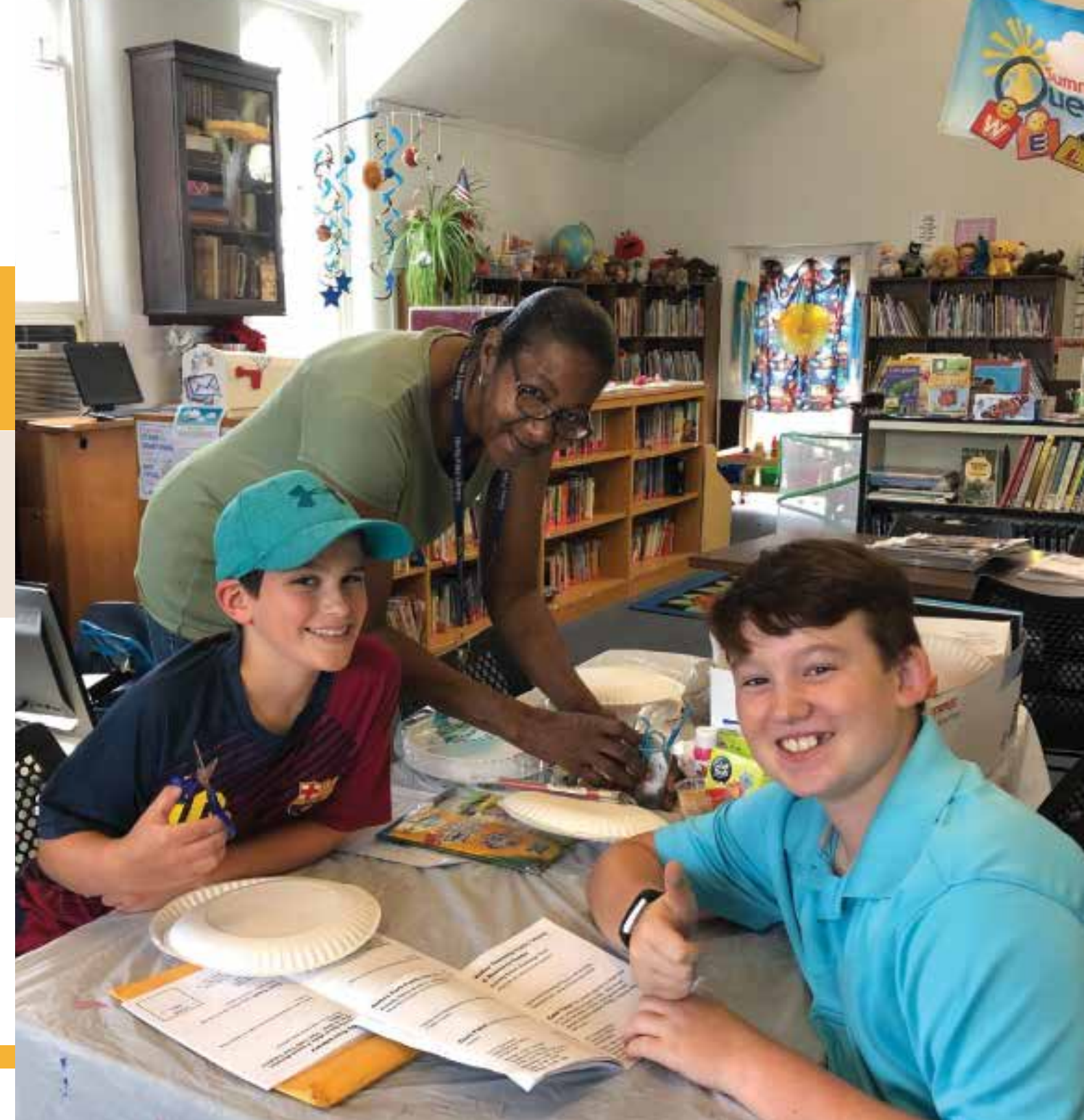
- Integrate our libraries as part of the network of community health and human service organizations
- Reduce barriers to library services
- Create diverse and inclusive collections
- Recruit and retain a diverse staff

Indicators of success:

- All people, regardless of age, gender identity, race, ethnicity, ability, immigration status, housing security, mental health, or sexual orientation have equal access to library services
- All libraries across Delaware County are ADA-accessible
- Families feel part of their community
- Library workers are trained to meet the needs of all users including those with physical and mental disabilities
- Staff are increasingly prepared to serve their diverse communities
- Libraries create a work culture in which all staff are supported, can thrive and be successful
- People see themselves reflected in our materials, displays and programs

Relevant statistics, measures and stories:

- Success in engaging all communities, races and cultures in our services and programs.
- Organizational equity and inclusivity in staffing, volunteers and board members.
- Consistently review and enhance materials, programs, and displays by and about historically excluded communities and creators.



DIVERSE
AND
INCLUSIVE

People will experience:

Awareness of differing points of view and the skills to influence and impact decisions affecting our community.

Community will experience:

Collaborative approaches to understanding issues, addressing shared problems and achieving common goals.

Library staff, Board and volunteers will contribute:

Expanded participation in community life, leveraging existing connections, identifying gaps and broadening engagement.



OUR LIBRARIES ARE INNOVATIVE AND CREATIVE

Technological and social changes fuel a need for new resources and creative ways to learn.

We will provide leading edge interactive educational and entertainment tools.

Goals:

- Address the digital divide
- Increase advanced technology in all libraries in the County
- Encourage the community's creativity

Indicators of success:

- People engage with others through the Library and these connections support wider civic participation.
- The Library is a presence in all communities and supports a path toward constructive action.
- Partnerships with regional stakeholders and civic groups further amplify individual voices.
- Library users can discern accurate information and know how to protect personal data.

Relevant statistics, measures and stories:

- Increased use of technology within libraries



INNOVATIVE
AND
CREATIVE

People will experience:

Spaces and programs that encourage creativity and provide opportunities for learning new and fun ways.

Community will experience:

Innovative opportunities for learning based on the requests and needs of people in each neighborhood.

Library staff, Board and volunteers will contribute:

Curiosity and a willingness to try new things as everyday mentors and facilitators of learning.



OUR LIBRARIES ARE LEADERS IN LIFELONG LEARNING

Community is fostered when people have places to gather and connect.

We will provide hands on, interactive opportunities for our communities to increase their skills and knowledge for work, life, and educational goals

Goals:

- Prepare people in the community for employment and career changes
- Support the availability of access to technology and wifi throughout the county
- Connect individuals to employment services
- Make inter-agency connections within the County of Delaware

Indicators of success:

- Lower unemployment rates – people find employment
- Summer slide for students is eliminated
- Partnership with school librarians
- High school students continue to read and engage with the library
- Provide access to databases for workforce development

Relevant statistics, measures and stories:

- Library learning initiatives that align with those of local educational institutions to maximize collective impact.
- Measures of library usage that result from educational partnerships.



People will experience:

Enjoyable and approachable ways to explore personal interests and chart individual learning paths.

Community will experience:

Innovative opportunities for learning based on the requests and needs of people in each neighborhood.

Library staff, Board and volunteers will contribute:

Curiosity and a willingness to try new things as everyday mentors and facilitators of learning.



OUR LIBRARIES ARE OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE

Access to resources and information is critical to the well being of our communities.

We will address factors and circumstances that impact or impede individual access to library services.

Goals:

- Acquire technology that is accessible across all platforms
- Ensure our physical and digital spaces are accessible
- Secure funding to ensure our libraries are open when our communities desire

Indicators of success:

- Increased opportunities for access to electronic resources
- Access to tech for all, bridge the digital divide
- Every resident has a library card

Relevant statistics, measures and stories:

- Increase in access and use
- Data sharing with partners and wider community
- All programs are accessible physically and digitally



People will experience:
Services designed, developed and evaluated in consultation with the communities most impacted.

Community will experience:
Libraries that connect with our entire community and collaboratively evolves to accommodate all needs.

Library staff, Board and volunteers will contribute:
Practices that recognize, respect, and arm all people that the Library serves.



OUR LIBRARIES ARE RESOURCEFUL AND RESPONSIVE

Being able to meet challenges and opportunities with quick and targeted responsiveness will open the door for growth and sustainability for all.

We will be flexible and adaptable, meeting our community where they are with resources, support and information that responds to their needs.

Goals:

- Strengthen partnerships by connecting people to available community services
- Engage early with our community in areas that are responsive to their needs
- Respond to challenges to materials, programs, and resources and champion the Freedom to Read

Indicators of success:

- Increased number of afterschool opportunities for children
- All children enjoy reading and are ready to start kindergarten
- Partnerships with institutions providing service to infants (or new parents)
- Member libraries have collection development policies that address challenges to materials and resources and all staff understands the policy and process

Relevant statistics, measures and stories:

- Increased user satisfaction with library services



People will experience:

- Library services that are flexible, timely and interconnected across locations and platforms.

Community will experience:

- Library initiatives cast explicitly in context with community priorities and goals.

Library staff, Board and volunteers will contribute:

- A culture of responding to community needs through data driven surveys and outreach.



OUR LIBRARIES ARE SAFE AND WELCOMING

Our communities thrive when people have spaces to gather and connect.

We will create destination spaces and experiences that encourage lifelong learning and full utilization of resources that enrich lives.

Goals:

- Offer a place for our community that feels safe and welcoming that encourages optimism and promotes a desire to stay

Indicators of success:

- Increased participation for library services
- Libraries are the first place people think of for any services they need
- Fewer interactions between law enforcement and community members
- Libraries will provide materials and services to SCI (state correctional institutions)

Relevant statistics, measures and stories:

- Increased use of library as a space to congregate and meet for all
- Virtual spaces that are protected



People will experience:
Staff who are understanding, compassionate, and willing to help.

Community will experience:
Libraries that provide a stable human interface in a chaotic world.

Library staff, Board and volunteers will contribute:
Knowledge about community needs that reflect social factors and life circumstances of the whole person.



OUR LIBRARIES ARE COLLABORATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE

A strong and stable library system is essential to a vibrant community.

We will develop strong organizations, thriving partnerships, and sustainable funding to enhance the quality of library services in Delaware County.

Goals:

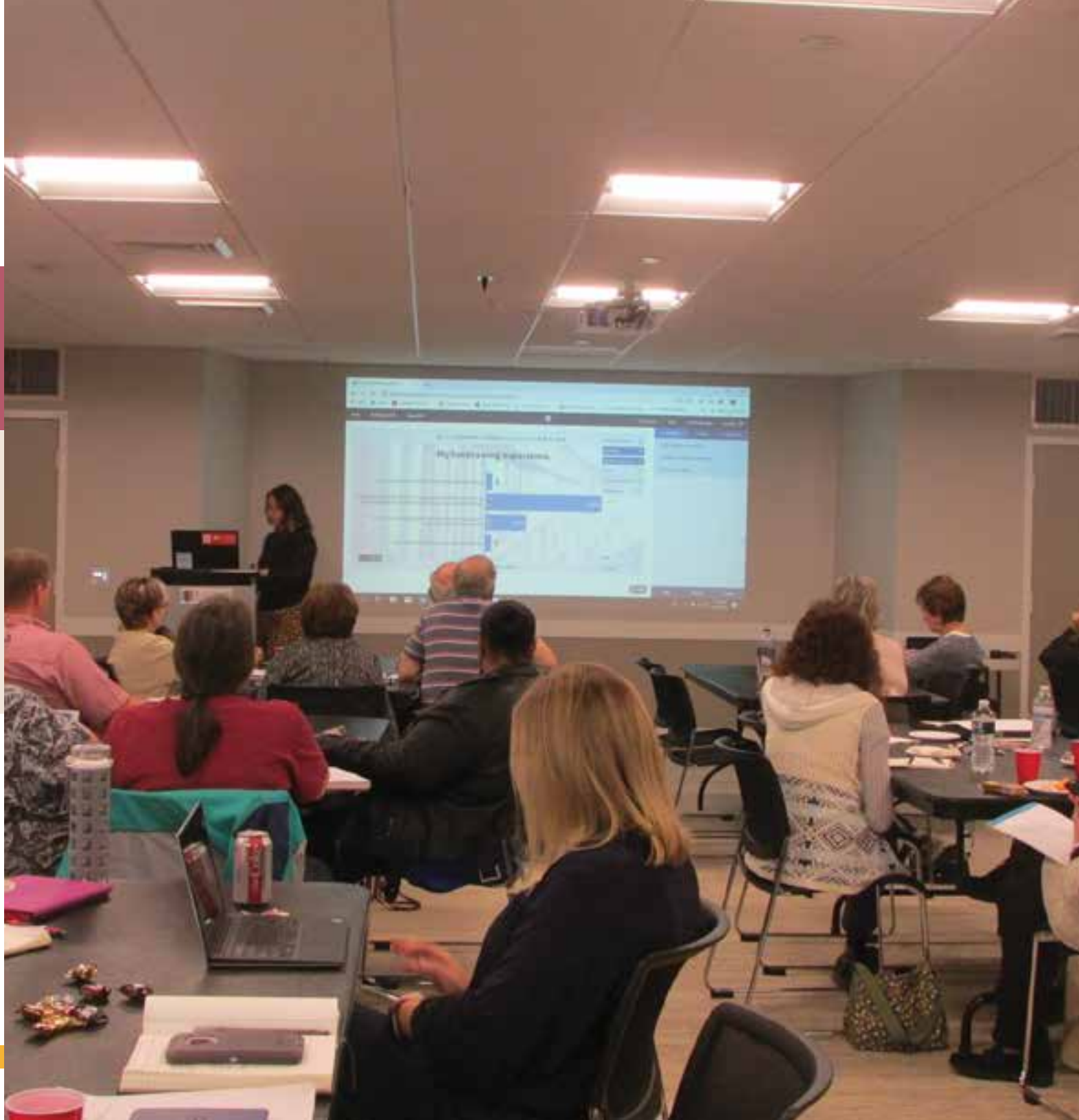
- Foster full participation from all internal district stakeholders
- Enhance communication between DCL District Center and Member Libraries
- Deepen collaboration between and among DCL District Center and member libraries
- Focus on professional development for staff, volunteers, and trustees
- Update the Delaware County Libraries’ System Agreement
- Provide commitment, leadership, and expertise toward quality library services in Delaware County

Indicator of success:

- Roles and responsibilities for DCL District Center and member libraries are clearly defined
- Measures of accountability are understood and reviewed regularly
- Staff at all levels has the tools needed to effectively communicate within the District

Relevant statistics, measures and stories:

- Fully funded library services in each community
- Active and relevant service agreements in use for funding



People will experience:
Opportunities to contribute to and support quality library service. Consistent quality service in libraries across Delaware County.

Community will experience:
A healthy, financially stable library system. A Library committed to delivering an exceptional experience within our facilities, throughout the community and across virtual platforms.

Library staff, Board and volunteers will contribute:
A culture of ongoing advocacy and fundraising efforts. Active participation in skill building and competency fulfillment. Leadership in the delivery of quality service across all libraries in Delaware County.





OUR LIBRARIES ARE SOMETHING WE ALL DO TOGETHER

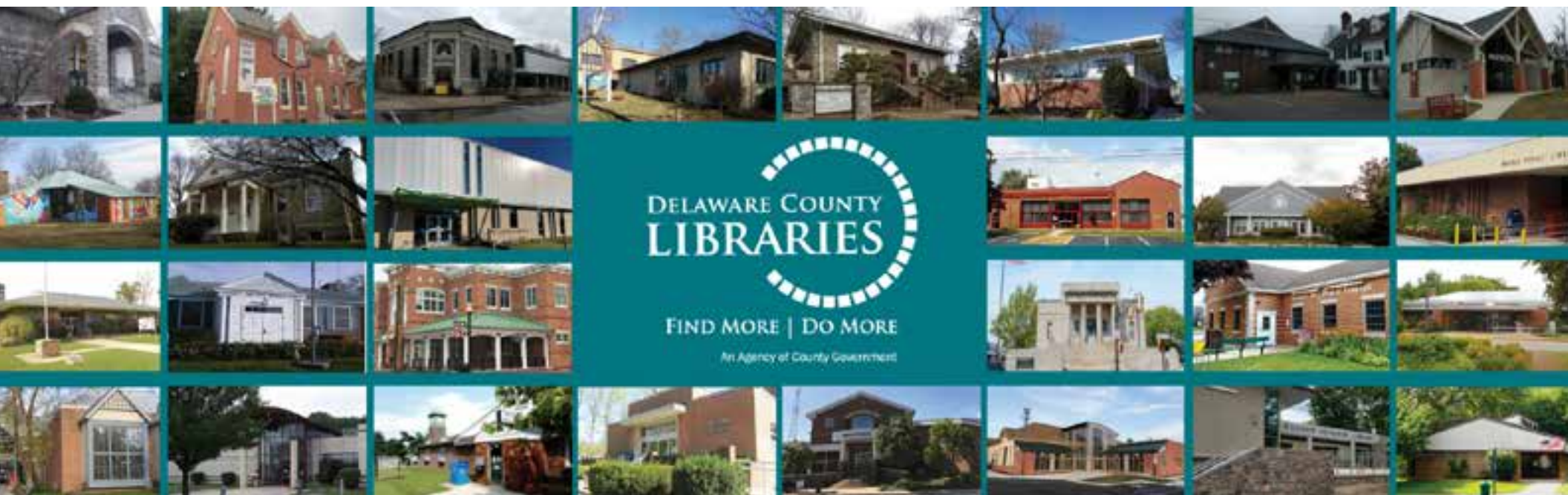
Our communities consistently move through invention and reinvention, facing challenges and opportunities with optimism and courage. Our libraries are there in support, growing and changing every step of the way.

As our community around us changes, so do we.

We are excited about the challenges and opportunities ahead and look forward to engaging with the community in new and innovative ways.

We are always stronger together.





For more information about Delaware County Libraries and any of our twenty six member libraries in the community, please visit www.delcolibraries.org
Learn how you can support our libraries and keep this vital and valued resource in your community.