

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF  
**Labor & Workforce Development**  
NEWS RELEASE

**Media Contact**

Amanda Pisano

609-984-2841

[MediaCalls@dol.nj.gov](mailto:MediaCalls@dol.nj.gov)



For Immediate Release

**Christie Administration Expands Partnerships with Libraries to Provide Literacy Training**  
*Grants Awarded to Local Libraries to Enhance Literacy Skills of New Jersey's Workforce*

**TRENTON, N.J., June 24, 2016** – Continuing on the Christie Administration's efforts to create and expand partnerships to improve the skills of the state's workforce, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development today announced the award of nearly \$750,000 in grants to help 11 local libraries provide literacy training to unemployed and underemployed individuals throughout the Garden State.

"Literacy training is important for improving the long-term employment prospects of low-skilled, low-wage workers in New Jersey," said Commissioner Harold J. Wirths of the state Department of Labor and Workforce Development. "We are excited about this new initiative because it will make adult literacy services more accessible by leveraging the resources already in place at local libraries."

The Adult Literacy and Community Library Partnership Pilot Grant Program was developed to supplement the state's One-Stop Career Center system by creating direct partnerships between local libraries and adult literacy instructional service providers. The pilot program seeks to improve access and expand opportunities for workers to upgrade their adult basic education and/or English language proficiency skills through local libraries. All training efforts funded through these grants must contribute to greater employability opportunities or career advancement for New Jersey residents in need of jobs as well as those in low-wage, lower-skilled occupations.

"This program builds upon a rich history of literacy efforts in libraries including services to new Americans, English as a Second Language and citizenship education," said Mary Chute, New Jersey State Librarian. "As we continue to build on our partnership with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, we hope to expand New Jersey library horizons with service models that transcend traditional roles. This is yet another step in the transformation of public libraries in the digital age as they move to establish themselves beyond just being a repository of books to a full-fledged community resource."

The following libraries were awarded grants: Camden County, Gloucester County, Somerset County, Maplewood, Kearny, Sparta, Elizabeth, Montclair, Paterson, Newark and Passaic.

Earlier this month, the Christie Administration announced the investment of \$1.4 million at 18 libraries under the New Jersey Libraries Career Connections Grant for Uniform Career Guidance and Job Search Assistance Services, which extends the reach of the One-Stop Career Center system by training local library staff in the various workforce programs offered by the state and local partners. Every year, the

state Department of Labor and Workforce Development invests approximately \$15 million in basic skills and literacy training initiatives to promote adult literacy in the workplace.

More information on the Adult Literacy and Community Library Partnership Pilot Grant Program can be found [here](#).

###