



**2019 was another busy year for East Brunswick Public Library. Throughout the year, 316,858 customers walked through the library's doors to use our materials and services, a number higher than the 2019 combined attendance for the MLS soccer team the New York Red Bulls! Our customers checked out 662,470 items throughout the year.**

East Brunswick Public Library continues to hold events and programs for library users of all ages. Library staff planned activities and workshops on a variety of themes, including National Short Story Month, Literary March Madness, and Tech Week. The staff prepared classes to help our customers better use the library's digital resources, including Pronunciator, Ancestry.com, and eLibrary NJ. The library continues to screen films on a variety of subjects and topics. The "Documentary & Discussion" series pairs viewing a documentary focusing on a civic or social issue with a facilitated discussion led by an academic expert.

One of the highlights of our adult programming was the four-part series "Understanding America," which highlighted current political issues. The program series consisted of facilitated discussions and documentary screenings led by academic experts. This spring, the library partnered with the Friends of the Library to sponsor an author event featuring teen idol Bobby Rydell. One of the most popular entertainers of the 20th century, Rydell shared his public triumphs and behind-the-scenes stories of his six decade spanning career.

Adult programming also highlighted the DIY and crafting equipment in the EB Create makerspace. Some of our most popular classes included sewing, home landscape design, cross-stitching, photography, and audio editing. Our lendable kits allow library customers to borrow non-traditional items, including a guitar, telescope, and even a Roku device pre-



*FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Some of the most popular programs at the library featured animals. Library staff participated in a variety of community events throughout the year. Pop music legend Bobby Rydell was the special guest at one of the most popular author programs of the year.*



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: TPrograms at East Brunswick Public Library share different cultures to our community, ranging from Haitian musician Gaston Jean-Baptiste (left) to our annual Chinese New Year Celebration (center). The Friends of the Library introduced a new group for teens to volunteer and support the library.

loaded with several popular streaming video services.

Our Youth Services department had another successful year. A partnership with Hammaraskjold Middle School led to library staff registering over 800 students and 100 of their teachers for their first library card. This partnership now allows us to circulate our library materials to students through the middle school's media center.

By increasing the number of children with library cards and removing fines and fees for children's books and DVDs, the library has been able to increase the circulation of children's materials. In 2019, a total of 283,287 children's items were checked out. This is a twenty percent increase over the past five years. Children's programs continue to be popular, with over 26,000 children and their guardians coming to library programs over the course of the year.

In 2019, the library launched a new initiative with Rutgers University's Graduate School of Social Work. An intern was onsite at the library for eight hours a week, gaining professional experience while providing the community with information about addressing a myriad of questions from the on topics such as mental

health support, affordable housing, and low-cost medical care.

Our Just For The Health Of It! consumer health and wellness initiative completed a successful first year of a grant through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Called Mobilizing Just for the Health of It, the goal of this health literacy grant to improve health outcomes among

groups such as low income, elderly, and new immigrants who lack access to health information due to low literacy, visual, or physical disabilities.

The team of consumer health librarians reached a total of 7,324 people at our weekly outreach tables to spread the word about the importance of

choosing a healthy lifestyle. Our medical research librarian conducted over 500 custom searches on health topics such as diabetes, stress, and even found health information in other languages for residents whose native language is not English. Just For The Health Of It! has an active role in promoting community health and wellness by bringing local hospitals and healthcare providers onsite to conduct screenings for diabetes, hypertension, memory loss, osteoporosis, skin cancer, and balance. The library hosted multiple blood drives throughout the year.

**662,470**  
**items were checked**  
**out by library users.**



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: The library added several new lendable kits for customers to check out, including a sewing machine. The EBPL Foundation sponsored a special children's program with bestselling author Dan Gutman. EBPL was the only public library in New Jersey chosen by the NIH's All Of Us health outreach tour.

Throughout the year, the library also has worked to help small businesses by providing training on a variety of topics. Our most popular program was "Business Registration and Reporting Business Income," which was offered through a partnership with the New Jersey Department of Taxation. Jobseekers were provided workshops on several topics, including resume writing, setting up a LinkedIn profile, and professional headshots. To help job seekers, East Brunswick Public Library teamed up with the United States Census Bureau, providing information to prospective census workers and providing meeting room space for census training.

Answering reference questions is still an essential task at the library. The library's online databases are well used, performing over 250,000 searches last year. To better serve customers with more specific or elaborate projects, the Book A Librarian service was launched. Our customers can schedule an appointment with a librarian, who will spend up to an hour providing guided assistance for their research project.

East Brunswick Public Library continues to be an extremely active, officially-designated

passport acceptance facility by the United States Department of State. In 2019, our staff processed 9,431 passports. The Information Technology staff also installed a new online check-in system, allowing customers to see where they are on the waiting list and receive a text message notification when it is their turn. This new system has been working well; it has reducing the stress of customers waiting to use the service and allows them to use the whole library while they wait.

**316,858**  
**visitors came to East Brunswick Public Library in 2018.**

Speaking of our Information Technology department, they spent much of 2019 working on projects that made improvements for both staff and customer usage. These projects included updating

our training lab, implementing a new print management solution, deploying new computers and workstations throughout the library, implementing a new firewall security system, and upgrading the server room. The library had over 568,578 individual visitors to the website over the year; the teen site and health portal were both overhauled. The department also offered several new software training programs, including QuickBooks Online.

The library also launched a new ESL Digital Lab. Building from the ESL program, citizenship



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Over a thousand people stopped by the library for our annual Week of Making STEAM programs. The EB Create makerspace continues to be popular with our customers. Library staff and customers worked together for several different collaborative art projects that were on display throughout the year.

classes, and conversation groups that the library already offers, these workshops help library customers develop computer skills using the library's resources, all the while learning English.

The library debuted its first Pop-Up Library at the East Brunswick Transportation Center. Commuters can now access eBooks that they can download onto their devices and take with them. Our Pop-Up Library created a space for readers outside of the physical building. These new resources enabled us to further reach patrons who prefer to use the library in a digital capacity.

The number of library cardholders in East Brunswick continues to grow. There are 23,949 library card holders, which is about half of the township. The library gained 3,427 new library card users. Most impressive were the 1,116 library cards issued through our new online sign-up service, which allows future customers to sign up for a library card at their convenience. Library staff regularly go out into

the community, interacting with the public at events at Brunswick Square Mall, Rutgers Gardens Farmers Market, and other township events to sign people up for their library cards. Through our outreach, we have had the pleasure of speaking to over 2,400 members of the community!

**37,807**  
**people of all ages**  
**attended East**  
**Brunswick Public**  
**Library programs.**

East Brunswick Public Library would like to thank several organizations that it partnered with throughout 2019, including NJ Council for the Humanities, Sunrise Senior Living, Friends of the East Brunswick Environmental Commission, East Brunswick Arts Commission, East Brunswick Human

Relations Council, East Brunswick Hadassah, East Brunswick Department on Aging, Brandeis National Committee Middlesex Chapter, Regional Cancer Care, New Jersey Department of Taxation, National Libraries of Medicine, Rutgers University, East Brunswick Adult School for ESL, United States Census Bureau and the Rutgers Gardens Farmers Market.

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