

Jerseyville Public Library Receives \$10,000 National Grant For Small and Rural Libraries

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JERSEYVILLE — Jerseyville Public Library has been selected as one of 310 libraries to participate in round two of Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities, an American Library Association (ALA) initiative that provides community engagement and accessibility resources to small and rural libraries to help them better serve people with disabilities.

The competitive award comes with a \$10,000 grant that will help the library expand its anticipated children's "Discovery Zone" which will be installed as part of the upcoming Expansion project slated to begin in the Spring/Summer of 2024.

"We are so excited for the opportunity provided by this grant to make our library spaces more accessible, engaging, and comfortable for our neighbors with disabilities," said Library Director Judy Pruitt.

As part of the grant, the Project Director will attend an online course on how to lead community conversations and then meet with residents about their thoughts on how best to accommodate youngsters and children with special needs. These conversations will aide in how the grant funds will be used to purchase accessible, fun and educational installations to be placed in the children's Discovery Zone.

"We are very proud of this latest award, the process of which was extremely competitive (according to the ALA), and are looking forward to these new installations which will help make our library even more accessible to our community through this grant," said Beth Smilack, Marketing & Communications Specialist at the Library.

Follow the Library's Facebook page (@JvilleLibrary) or visit www.jerseyvillelibrary.org for more information about the upcoming community conversation with parents of young children and special needs individuals in the next few months.

Since 2014, ALA's Libraries Transforming Communities initiative has re-imagined the role libraries play in supporting communities. Libraries of all types have utilized free dialogue and deliberation training and resources to lead community and campus forums; take part in anti-violence activities; provide a space for residents to come together and discuss challenging topics; and have productive conversations with civic leaders, library trustees and staff. *"Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities is an initiative of the American Library Association (ALA) in collaboration with the Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL)."*