

Librarian's fellowship already paying dividends

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Emily Nanney is one of Charlotte Mecklenburg Library's top experts when it comes to children. As coordinator of Children's Services, a post she's held since 2012, Nanney provides synchronicity and integration to the 19 branches in the system that offer children's services. In March she was named a Public Library Association (PLA) Leadership Fellow and spent a week in Charleston, SC with 31 other librarians selected for the PLA Leadership Academy.

Each participant of the PLA Leadership Academy has developed a project to work on throughout the year. During the academy, fellows learned about the importance of the Library in the community and how crucial it is to garner feedback and input from constituents.

Nanney's project will involve strategic planning in Children's Services with an emphasis on building weekly programming at all locations throughout the year, especially in May, August, and December, which have traditionally been slower programming months. This model seeks to serve an overarching goal: to provide children with a strong literacy background to propel them toward success in their teen years through Teen Library Services. "Programs should be both fun and educational, so that children will have the opportunity and want to learn every day throughout the year," Nanney said.

With a new understanding about the importance of feedback, Nanney has already started working with staff to query the community about the types of family or children's programs that would bring them into the library, especially during May, August, and December. The focus will be on three pilot library locations: Beatties Ford Road, North County Regional and Plaza Midwood. Together with staff from those locations, they will examine the community's feedback and decide what new programs to offer during those months.

The PLA Leadership Academy is an in-person immersion program developed to inspire participants with the knowledge needed to be successful and innovative leaders in the 21st Century and beyond. This program is unique in its focus on helping library professionals learn how to work with municipal officials to be effective in their joint goals to serve the community.

