Cultivating an Inclusive Environment: Engagement and Outreach in Academic and Public Libraries

ASERL – July 11, 2024
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About Us

Molly Olney-Zide – At UD for 10 years with a focus on instruction and undergraduate student outreach, including transfer programs, orientations and book displays. Seven years of DEI-focused program experience.

Jamie Morris - Started at Dover Public Library in 2019 and is currently an adult services librarian. Prior to that social worker with a focus on children in the homeless community. Generally creates displays for adults but has done all ages displays. Also served as the chair of the Strategic Planning Committee at DPL which had a focus on DEI goals.
Who Are You?

Go to:
https://www. menti.com/ale96ucbdcbh

Access code: 5877 1397

Results:
https://www.mentimeter.com/app/presentation/n/alm7t35o35viau877hxfr59cotv8gr2b/results
Dover Public Library

- Downtown Dover
- Anchor Library
- Population of around 40,000
- 49.6% nonwhite
- 17.3% 65 and over
- 19.6% under 18
- 20.0% under the poverty line
- Air Force Base nearby

¹American Community Survey (Selected Characteristics of the Total and Native Populations in the United States), 2022: https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S0601?q=population%20in%20Dover%20Delaware
First Floor Displays

- Foyer
- Adult Books
- Fireplace
- Art Displays
- Children's Area
Foyer

- Perfect for partnerships
- Right as patrons enter
- Enough space for large posters while still ADA compliant
Adult Books

- 3 Large displays (150-200 books)
- Near circulation for browsing
- Provide interactive elements where possible
- Split displays if needed
Fireplace

- Back of first floor
- Collaborative
- Allow for library to “be in the news” rather than “being the news”
- Increases foot traffic

Dover library shoots for the moon with ILC, DuPont space exhibit
Art Displays

Local artists sourced by a local artist
Throughout First Floor
Children's Art Display
Children’s Area

Small Rolling Display

- Holds 10-15 books
- Can travel for programs and outreach
- Easy to change out
Children’s Area

Other Displays

- Multiple ways to style them
- Anywhere from 20-100 books
- Gives the freedom to increase or decrease based on topic or collaboration
- Interactive Elements
Children’s Area

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Second Floor Displays

- Spinner Rack Spotlights (12 books)
- Peek into the Teen Loft art display
- Seed Library
Third Floor Displays

- Highly Interactive
- Goal is inclusivity
Passive Programming as Displays

- Allows for immediate feedback
- Gives patrons a reason to come back
- Sense of Community
- Fun!
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University of Delaware New DEI Book Display Initiative
University of Delaware

- Located in Newark, Delaware
- 4-year, public
- 19,482 undergrad, 4,557 grad

Undergraduate data
- 44% non-White
- 59% women
- 73% grant and scholarship aid
- 16% receive Pell grants

¹US Dept of Education (College Scorecard and IPEDS), 2022: http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/?q=university+of+delaware&s=all&id=130943
University of Delaware Library, Museums and Press*

- Morris Library located on Newark campus
- 123 staff members (38 professional librarians)
- 25% non-White
- 69% women

*Demographic information from the University of Delaware Library, Museums and Press, Staff Demographics, August 1, 2023.
First Conversations with Student Diversity and Inclusion (SDI)
Successful initial collaboration led to a book display idea to mirror one already at SDI office.

Feb 2023 - Mar 2024
SDI-led Student Book Displays
SDI chose themes and books (print and e) to display in the main library. Location changed regularly, but we finally bought display furniture on wheels!

New Collaborations
Began mixing it up by working with student groups such as the Spectrum Scholars, Student Voting Group, Library students, and Counseling Services

Apr - Dec 2024
2024-2025
Online Presence, more Engagement Opportunities and More Marketing!
Expand beyond social media to online displays and exhibits and create more engagement activities
Book Display Iterations

Feb. 2023 – Women’s History

May 2023 – Asian Pacific Islander and Desi American Heritage

April 2024 – Autism Inclusion
Displaying Books

Bookmarks

Check me out!

Important because...

This book was specifically written in opposition to then Vice President Pence’s negative views on same-sex marriage and LGBTQ+ rights.

Posters

CELEBRATE LATINOX AND HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Borrow any book on display and enter a raffle* to win one of the featured titles.

*Raffle for currently enrolled UD students only

Student Diversity and Inclusion Library, Museums and Press

Print/ebooks

BECOMING

eBook available on the Libby app
Take a picture of me!!
tinyurl.com/yeyk5kc9

Autism Inclusion Means... seeing every part of us. Even when we’re at our lowest, our condition isn’t just funny quirks

Look me in the eye

John Elder Robison

My Life with Asperger’s

Day in the Life of Marlen Bucio
Assessment

Assessment is important but difficult to assess⁴

- **Checkouts**
  - Not always easy to collect, especially with ebooks
  - Did not see much in the way of checkouts.

- **Raffle Submissions** – Why is March so popular?

- **Student Comments** – Book recommendations and raffle submissions

- **Whiteboard Engagement** – “More Jesmyn Ward!” (Feb. 2024 suggestion)

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https://doi.org/10.1080/01930826.2019.1593709
April 2023 – Sexual Assault Awareness Month
“As someone who has experienced sexual assault, I am going to take this month to be extra kind to myself regarding my social interactions and my self worth and I will talk to my friends about what we can be doing to create safe environments for the people around us.”

October 2023 – LGBTQ+ History Month
“I recently have come out with my own identity and i would love to learn more about other people's experiences and how they see and live their lives with added pressures and see if i relate to any of them.”

May 2024 – Asian Pacific Islander Desi American Heritage Month
“ I didn’t know about this at all! Just Googling.”

¹Comments retrieved from monthly student raffle ticket submissions.
Moving Forward

- **Online Presence**
  - Learning tips from my collaborators
  - Online display in-process with Cataloging Team
  - Research guide/LibGuide

- **Engagement Opportunities**
  - Games, eBook engagement, new collaborations

- **More Marketing**
  - Library newsletter, signage, website...
Tips for Success

**Experiment!**
Not everything will work for everyone but try different options. Don’t be discouraged!

**Sustainability**
**Branch out from just books**
**Be Creative**
Involve other staff and groups to prevent burnout and have backups if needed
Utilize digital, interactive, and fun elements
Don’t rely on only certain times of year, diversity is year round
Adapting for Other Libraries

Special Libraries
- Interactive displays
- Link to online collections
- Use QR codes

School Libraries
- Interactive elements are very important
- Create ownership of space for young readers
- “This is my library!”
Additional DEI Outreach Ideas

**Be creative** with transfer seminar activities

**Be present** with orientations for DEI, international students, and first generation students
Additional DEI Outreach Ideas

- Keep tabs on local events
- Utilize programming connections
- Don’t be afraid of leaving the library
- Customize selections based on audience
Thanks!

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CREDITS: This presentation template was created by Slidesgo, and includes icons by Flaticon, and infographics & images by Freepik