

TAG Team: Teen Services Collaboration between School and Public Libraries (& Librarians)

VLA Annual 2016: (P.E.A.R)

Promote



- **Initial Contact** - Using information gathered from the Office of Community engagement, Rosanne created a spreadsheet of all the librarians and library assistants in each geographic area of Prince William County (including the City of Manassas, and Manassas Park). At the beginning of the school year she sent an email to all the librarians introducing herself as the New Young Adult Librarian and pitched what she could do for them. In 2015 she heard more from the middle schools and only made contact with 3 of the six high schools. She looks to improve upon that stat in 2016.
- **Find Common goals and the right fit** - Rheetha and Rosanne's goals for combining teen services were very solid but still fluid enough to leave room for connecting with other teachers in the future. Rosanne's goal was to boost Teen attendance at her library programs. Since she didn't get to interact with many teens when they were using the library (working only one evening a week and some Saturdays), she thought, what better place to find teens than at their school, where they already are visiting the library? Her second goal was to make the public library a welcoming place for Teens so that once they came to a program they would feel encouraged to come back and use the space to study and socialize outside of school/home.
- **Develop a Plan** - During their initial meeting at the beginning of 2015, the librarians of OPHS invited Rosanne to no less than four separate events connecting her with multiple teachers. Right away, Carolyn invited her to attend OPHS' Back to School Open House to promote the public library. There Carolyn would introduce Rosanne to a Family Science teacher who wanted someone with knowledge of Preschoolers to come in and teach her "Future Teachers" club how to read to a daycare group that they host. Rheetha also invited Rosanne to attend her after school book club to talk about volunteer opportunities, and upcoming programs. These two events have proven a very successful to reaching teens and get them to come to library programs at the public library.
- **Small Steps → Big Impact** - By doing so many events back to back at the same high school, Rosanne's presence as a safe, trustworthy, yet cool librarian became cemented in the students' eyes. This paved the way for more collaboration and establishing a foundation for Rheetha and Rosanne's professional and collaborative relationship.

Rosanne North-Jack (rnorthjack@pwcgov.org)

Rheetha Lawlor (lawlorrl@pwcs.edu)

TAG Team: Teen Services Collaboration between School and Public Libraries (& Librarians)

Educate

- **Communication is Key**
- **Be prepared to fail** and to start over again
- **School visits are your lifeline** – You are the face of your library and your best marketing tool.
- **Don't reinvent the wheel** – Piggyback on pre-existing programs (like book clubs) and provide relevant resources and programs related to each month's program/theme.
- **Know your limits** - You can't do everything. Find a measurable goal for success and work towards it. Go from there once you reach it.
- **Patience is a Virtue**: Just because schools don't contact you right away, doesn't mean they don't want to work with you. In the spring of 2015 Rosanne had more schools contact me in a month than at the beginning of the year. It takes time to build a relationship.



Advocate

- Public Libraries are open longer hours, including evenings and weekends.
- Promote that Summer Reading Programs can prevent Summer Slide and also co-align with school's Summer Reading list and requirements.
- Many participants who don't use the library recognize the value of a tight relationship between public and school libraries and see this as necessary in their communities.
- Students feel comfortable with the public library.
- Students are able to get community service hours by volunteering at the library.
- Students see both libraries working together.
- Encourages student views of the library as more than just a warehouse of books.



Repeat

- Library is starting a strong TAG team with great ideas. (avg. 4-8 attendees)
- Students are signing up for more public library cards.
- Students learn more about the public library's resources.
- Students are taking flyers (located in school library) for public library programs.
- Public library receives feedback from students about programs and improving the teen space.



Rosanne North-Jack (rnorthjack@pwcgov.org)

Rheetha Lawlor (lawlorrl@pwcs.edu)