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## ***NASA @ My Library***

That there is intent nationally to enrich America's public libraries with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) is evident by the continuing collaboration of the American Library Association with NASA and associated federal entities. The 2021 *NASA @ My Library* (<https://www.ala.org/tools/programming/nasalibraries>) educational initiative is one such example. It is offered by the National Center for Interactive Learning at the Space Science Institute in partnership with the American Library Association (ALA) Public Programs Office, Lunar Planetary Institute, and Educational Development Center.

*NASA @ My Library* was created especially for STEM-underrepresented geographic areas and populations, including tribal populations, but it has value for all. Library staff get training and resources to implement NASA events and programming, access to university experts, and a \$1,600 programming stipend. According to the ALA, the project seeks to:

- Develop public library staff capacity for delivering Earth and space science programming, services, and outreach to learners of diverse racial/ethnic identities
- Increase public library patron access to exciting NASA science-focused learning opportunities
- Increase public library staff confidence and skills in utilizing NASA science resources for high-visibility Earth and space science events
- Support library staff in promoting patron awareness of skills, educational pathways, and careers relating to Earth and space science

If some of this sounds familiar to those of you who have benefited from Storytime STEM-packs™ programming at WLN libraries, especially as incorporated into children's Summer Reading Club activities, and safe, at-your-library viewing of the Solar Eclipse at Murrysville Community Library among others in August 2017, it should be. Some of our WLN libraries have been actively and continuously building and implementing STEM capacity among staff and projecting that capacity into programming. There is no better programming example than the Storytime STEM+C Adventures unit that uses Bee-Bot tabletop robots to instill in the youngest of patrons the concept of computer program coding, without ever using the word "coding."

Among Library Directors in the WLN who have been STEM leaders is Jamie Faló, Director at Murrysville Community Library until 2018, and presently Library Director at Greensburg Hempfield Area Library (GHAL). GHAL continues to offer Bee-Bot programming; one benefit of capacity-building under the recently concluded PAsmart grant is that each participating library received six Bee-Bot robots to keep.

But *NASA @ My Library* is a new opportunity, and the GHAL has chosen to apply for one of the 60 national awards to be granted later this summer. The application has been

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completed and filed, with Greensburg's Early Childhood Learning Center at the YMCA as lead collaborator. Hopefully it will be well received. Stay tuned, but for now don't let your kids miss out on those Bee-Bots. Murrysville Community Library also has them. What can be done with them is magic too!

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