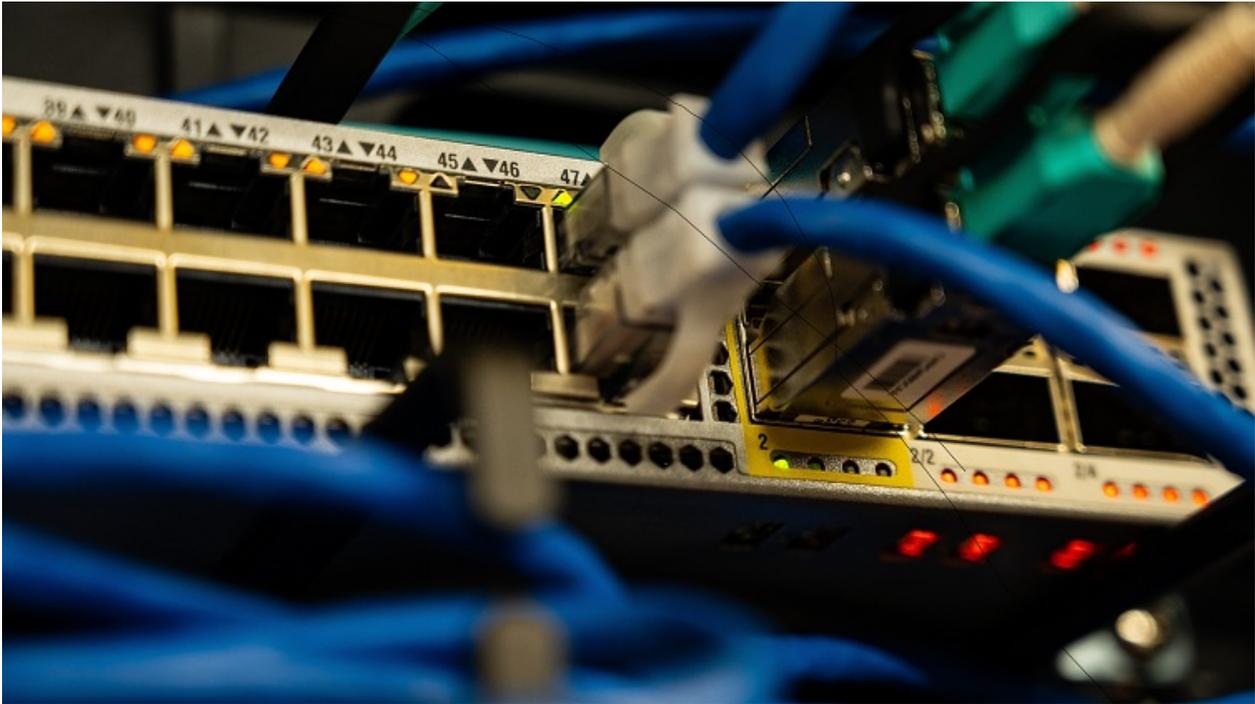




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A Note From Our Agency Director- Moving Broadband Forward

A couple of weeks ago, our family took a short drive to Saluda, South Carolina, to do some research as part of a family genealogical project. We visited cemeteries and drove around town, trying to determine where relatives had once lived. My family and I enjoy visiting South Carolina towns and exploring their history and character - and, of course,

checking out the local library. It was Labor Day afternoon when we visited Saluda. Main Street was a ghost town, with one notable exception.

In front, behind, and against the side of the library building at 101 S. Main St., right behind the picturesque courthouse, were scattered groups of children, each on a device of some kind - laptop, tablet, or phone - using the library's free internet.

On one hand, it is always encouraging to get visual confirmation of what we already know - libraries are the heart and soul of local communities across South Carolina. Libraries provide much-needed access points to essential services. I am extremely proud that the South Carolina State Library has been a leader in extending broadband infrastructure to secure connectivity for every county library system in our state. We were doing this well before the pandemic hit. We created the recent wave of much-needed attention to the problems our rural areas face in being underserved by broadband carriers.

On the other hand, the sight was a dramatic reminder that in rural South Carolina, reliable, affordable internet access is still a significant challenge for many. Without sound broadband infrastructure, equal access to education, resources, and economic prosperity, do not exist. Internet connectivity is a requirement necessary to being successful educationally, professionally, and personally. We cannot afford to leave anyone behind in South Carolina; the stakes are too high. This is an issue of equity.

This summer, South Carolina received \$30 million from the CARES Act to address issues related to COVID-19 in our state. These funds were used to expand and, in some instances, create broadband infrastructure. Approved projects had to be completed by December 30, 2020, to qualify for CARES Act funding. I have been impressed with the commitment of the General Assembly, the hard work that the Office of Regulatory Staff has put in to see these projects through, and the teamwork among public and private sector groups to address our broadband issues. However, the cost of extending broadband access to all unserved areas has been conservatively estimated at \$600 million. There are currently no state funds allocated to any state agency to address the broadband needs of our state.

There is much work left to do. The funding of that work is a serious issue for our state that has yet to be solved. The proposed legislation has been introduced to create and fund a new state Office of Broadband

Development; however, both would require Legislature approval and support.

Until that happens, South Carolina libraries will continue to be the bridge to equal access for everyone, especially in small towns and rural areas of our state.



Warm Regards,

Leesa
SCSL Agency Director

SC Libraries

Training Schedule

Fall into a new skill set with these informative webinars.

- [Programming and Policies that MATTER \(October 6\)](#) - Discover programming and policy options that can help you create a more equitable and sustainable library system to better serve the Black community.
- [Why Did I Make that Dumb Decision? Understanding Common Fallacies of Decision Making and How to Avoid Them \(October 7\)](#) - Gain a better understanding of how your mind works to make better decisions.
- [Basic American Sign Language for Library Staff \(October 8\)](#) - Learn how to improve service to deaf and hard-of-hearing patrons by familiarizing yourself with American Sign Language and Deaf Culture, as well as specific vocabulary for the library setting.





A Boost for SC Read Eat Grow

The National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NNLM) awarded us a second grant to purchase kitchen-in-

a-box kits for rural libraries. The kits enable us to offer health literacy and culinary training for library staff as part of the SC Read Eat Grow food literacy project. Participating libraries will work with a local health partner to create stronger connections between the library and health organizations. Chosen partners include county health departments, school nutritionists, and the Clyburn Center for Primary Care. Due to COVID-19, most libraries are not yet planning in-person programming. Our team works with various statewide partners to create virtual program options, printable handouts, and outdoor activities. [Check out our latest video](#) demonstrating how to use the fall's freshest apples to make homemade applesauce.

Keeping You Connected

Through the AccessSC Project, we provided Homework Help Center Broadband Expansion Grants to 29 Public Libraries across the state. Recipient

libraries received a supply of Kajeet SmartSpot® hotspot devices, Kajeet SmartBus® technology, and iPads or laptops. The goal is to help libraries expand digital network access, issue internet accessible devices, and offer technical support services. LSTA Grants are made possible by a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and administered by the South Carolina State Library.



State Employees

In Case You Missed It

After much delay because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we had the honor of presenting the [Notable State Documents Award](#) to the winning state agencies. The award recognizes the best of South Carolina agency



publications for 2019. If you were not able to attend, please enjoy watching [the recorded ceremony](#). Also, remember to [submit your entries](#) for the 2020 award before the December 31 deadline.

Grant You Assistance

Grants workshops for nonprofit organizations are among our most popular services. Since the State Library building is closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, our team is available to virtually help. [Visit our](#)

[grants page](#) to choose an appointment time and fill out the necessary background information. We will set up a meeting to search the [Foundation Directory Online](#) database and provide you with custom profile lists of matching funders. If you have grants questions that are outside the scope of the appointments, please send an email to grantspublic@statelibrary.sc.gov.



SC Residents



2020 TBS Art Gallery

Congratulations to the winners of the 2020 Talking Book Services Art Gallery Competition. This week we honored them with an awards ceremony showcasing their art. The competition ordinarily culminates in the spring before the end of the school year. However, the COVID-19

shutdown forced us to postpone the event. The virtual ceremony included a photo and a description of each piece. SCSL Director Leesa Aiken awarded the State Librarian award to Travis Kitchen for his three-

dimensional work entitled "Kracken Attack" (featured here).
Congratulations to all of our award winners.

1LT Clarence West of Charleston

First Lieutenant Clarence West accomplished a great deal before he was killed in action in Germany during World War II. One of eight children, West was an honor roll student at North Charleston High School before joining the military. In addition to his military service, he worked for the North State Lumber Corporation. He earned the Combat Infantry Badge before his death on November 5, 1944. First Lieutenant West was survived by his wife, Armistine, and daughter Emily. He is one of 14 soldiers we researched and found information on as part of our partnership with the *Faces of Margraten* project. For a list of the WW II soldiers who we are investigating, please [visit our website](#).



Exercise Your Right to Read

Banned Books Week concludes this Sunday. The annual event celebrating the freedom to read typically occurs during the last week of September.

The American Library Association recognizes Banned Books Week to spotlight current and historical attempts to censor books in libraries and schools. It brings together the entire book community - librarians, booksellers, publishers, journalists, teachers, and readers of all types - in shared support of the freedom to seek and to express ideas, even those some consider unorthodox or unpopular. Visit the [American Library Association website](#) to learn the top 10 most challenged books of 2019 and additional history about the event.

From Our Collection



We want to extend a special thank you to Dr. Dianne Johnson-Feelings, Professor of English at the University of South Carolina, for serving as our guest narrator at the 2020 National Book Festival. Typically held in Washington D.C., the event went virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Each year, the State Centers for the Book select a title to represent their region for the festival. South Carolina featured *This Is the Rope* by Jacqueline Woodson, which Dr. Johnson-Feelings was gracious enough to narrate. Woodson spent part of her childhood in South Carolina. The story traces her grandmother's journey to New York City during the Great Migration.

Want more information about SC and its libraries?

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For more information on the South Carolina State Library, and a list of our board members, please visit the [About Us](#) section on our website. Visit our Digital Collections to [view previous issues of More](#). ISSN 1554-5768

