



Sustainable Libraries Initiative

For Immediate Release
February 2, 2023



Montauk Library is Certified Sustainable

The Sustainable Libraries Initiative recognizes Montauk Library as a leader in sustainability.

Suffolk County, New York – February 2, 2023 – Montauk Library, in Montauk, New York has been officially designated a “Certified Sustainable” library through the Sustainable Libraries Initiative’s award-winning Sustainable Library Certification Program. They are the ninth library in Suffolk County, New York to reach this designation. “From the construction of their beautiful new facility to their dynamic service programs, Montauk Library has demonstrated a commitment to excellence,” stated Kevin Verbesey, Director, Suffolk Cooperative Library System (SCLS). SCLS Member libraries have been enthusiastic in their commitment to sustainability and support for the Sustainable Libraries Initiative. There are currently 22 SCLS Member libraries in the certification program.

Environmental sustainability was already an important consideration for the library’s recent renovation and expansion, having obtained a sustainability assessment and energy audit. Their decision to enroll in the SLCP was a way to combine this environmental focus with their attention to community engagement and partnerships.

“The Montauk Library benefitted from undergoing the certification process by realizing that we could now define our efforts as triple bottom line accomplishments,” states Montauk Library Director, Denise DiPaolo. “In addition to creating a sustainable building, we adopted new policies, updated some others, and fine-tuned many procedures and practices that supported our overall sustainable operations.”

Working through the certification program, Montauk Library joins a growing community of practice that is sharing their ideas and resources while amplifying the message to promote sustainable thinking in the library profession. Over seventy public libraries nationwide are currently enrolled in the SLCP. Additionally, SLI Membership includes a growing number of members through partnerships with professional organizations such as the New Jersey Library Association. These libraries are finding the resources and support they need to demonstrate best practices and inform their communities about the actions that can be taken to combat climate change. Reflecting on the accomplishments of Montauk Library, their mentor and Lindenhurst Memorial Library Director, Lisa Kropp, states:

"I'm thrilled to see Montauk Library achieve such an important milestone that cements their commitment to the local community, and the impact of climate change, in particular, to a coastal community. Their dedicated actions to water conservation and water quality, are wonderful examples of how a public library's decisions and actions can benefit the entire community. And incorporating sustainable design practices and actions like adding a rooftop garden area, solar panels, and LED lighting during their recent renovation and expansion project further shows the library's dedication to sustainable actions."

Montauk Library's certification and the increasing interest in the SLI and SLCP demonstrate that libraries can effectively take action on a local level to address the risks of climate change with community-driven solutions.

International Impact

Montauk Library is part of a growing number of libraries nationwide participating in the Sustainable Libraries Certification Program, the first of its kind in the world. This benchmarking program was developed to assist libraries of all kinds - public, academic, and individual school librarians - to create opportunities to make better choices on behalf of the local and global community. The program has been recognized by the International Federation of Library Associations at their 2019 World Congress in Athens, Greece, becoming the first program in the United States to be honored through their "Green Libraries" Award.

Comprehensive Approach

With categories of actions focusing on each of the three pillars of triple bottom line sustainability such as Energy, Indoor Spaces, Social Cohesion, and Resilience Planning, this comprehensive process leads a library toward institutional change that shifts the rationale for every decision to consider the local and global impacts. Through this program, libraries work

with their communities to listen and learn, allowing local needs to be identified and addressed. Strengthening the relationship between the library and the community they serve builds resilience through stronger connections with many organizations and increased access to information. The path to certification through the Sustainable Libraries Certification Program is flexible for libraries of different types, sizes, and budgets and guided by the communities they serve. Each library that completes the program will select the benchmarks that best fit the needs of their library and community, resulting in a uniquely sustainable organization.

The Sustainable Libraries Initiative is a nationwide organization with over seventy public libraries currently enrolled in the Sustainable Libraries Certification Program. For more information, see the [Sustainable Libraries Initiative](#) website, [Congratulations, Montauk Library!](#) page or contact: sliadmin@suffolknet.org.

For more information, please contact:
Annemarie Gordon, Sustainability Coordinator
Sustainable Libraries Initiative
Suffolk Cooperative Library System
631-286-1600 x1355
sliadmin@suffolknet.org