



For Immediate Release

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The Syosset High School Library Learning Commons is Certified Sustainable

The Sustainable Libraries Initiative recognizes Trish Sergi, Sarah Wasser, and Kristina Holzweiss as leaders in sustainability.



Pictured left to right: Ms. Trish Sergi, Dr. Sarah Wasser, and Ms. Kristina Holzweiss

Suffolk County, NY – October 29, 2024 – School librarians Ms. Trish Sergi, Dr. Sarah Wasser, and Ms. Kristina Holzweiss of Syosset High School in Syosset, New York have earned the “Certified Sustainable” designation for the Syosset High School Library Learning Commons through the Sustainable Libraries Initiative’s award-winning Sustainable Library Certification Program (SLCP).

Embarking on the journey to certification together, the Syosset High School librarians demonstrated strength in collective action to bring sustainable practices to their school. With their growth mindset, value for student voice, and nurturing of student talents, the Syosset High School Library Learning Commons is an inspiring example for other libraries to follow.

As the most recent awardees of the American Association of School Libraries National School Library of the Year Award, the Syosset High School librarians are no strangers to success. Following the addition of

a “quick reads” collection and the completion of a “genrefication” project set to make library materials more accessible to their students, the library reports circulation has increased by 30% -- exceeding the number of books checked out by at least 100 more in any given month compared to last year.

"We are honored to have earned the Sustainable Library Certification recognition for the Syosset High School Library Learning Commons," shared the librarians. "This transformative process has redefined our vision for the future of our library program, and has compelled us to prioritize social equity, environmental sustainability, and economic viability. This certification is a testament to the collaboration among our innovative faculty, driven students, supportive administration, and Board of Education—who all share the belief that school libraries can and do change lives."

To promote a sense of unity and understanding, Book Day and Holocaust Remembrance Day stand as testaments to the belief that the library is the heart of the Syosset High School learning community. The mission of Book Day is to come together as a community of teachers, students, and administrators to discuss, select, and celebrate one book that becomes a confluence of identity, belonging, and narrative for our school community. Each year the entire 9th grade reads a book and is able to speak and interact with the author. To honor survivors of the Holocaust, 10th graders research particular survivors and create video about them. Finally, survivors and families of survivors are invited to the school to share their stories so they will never be forgotten.

"Trish, Sarah, and Kristina are visionary leaders in the field of librarianship, seamlessly embodying the legacy, contemporary vitality, and future innovation of the profession. Together, they form an extraordinary team with the ability to not only transform but also redefine the very essence of what it means to be a librarian. It was a privilege to collaborate with Kristina, Sarah, and Trish on this initiative." said Joanna McCloskey when asked about her experience as the group's mentor.

This accomplishment makes the librarians the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth school librarians to complete the Sustainable Library Certification Program: an award-winning community of practice designed to provide public libraries, academic libraries, library systems, and school librarians with exclusive resources and guidelines to shift towards a cleaner, greener, and more equitable future.

Completing the program is just one step on the Syosset High School librarian's path of continued development. Their ability to adapt to student needs, seamlessly reflect changes in their community, cultivate a culture of love for reading and learning, and acquire knowledge as new information emerges are commendable qualities that establish the Syosset High School Library Learning Commons as a keystone in their community.