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**Sustainable  
Libraries  
Initiative**

January 2025



**Sustainable  
Libraries  
Initiative**

## SLI Newsletter

The latest news and updates from  
the Sustainable Libraries Initiative

### Issue Contents:

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- Member Spotlight
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# Congratulations!



*Pictured: Alex Blend, SLI Sustainability Coordinator and Kelsey LaPort, Sunrise Drive Elementary School Librarian.*

**Kelsey LaPort**

**Sunrise Drive Elementary School Librarian**

**Sayville, NY**

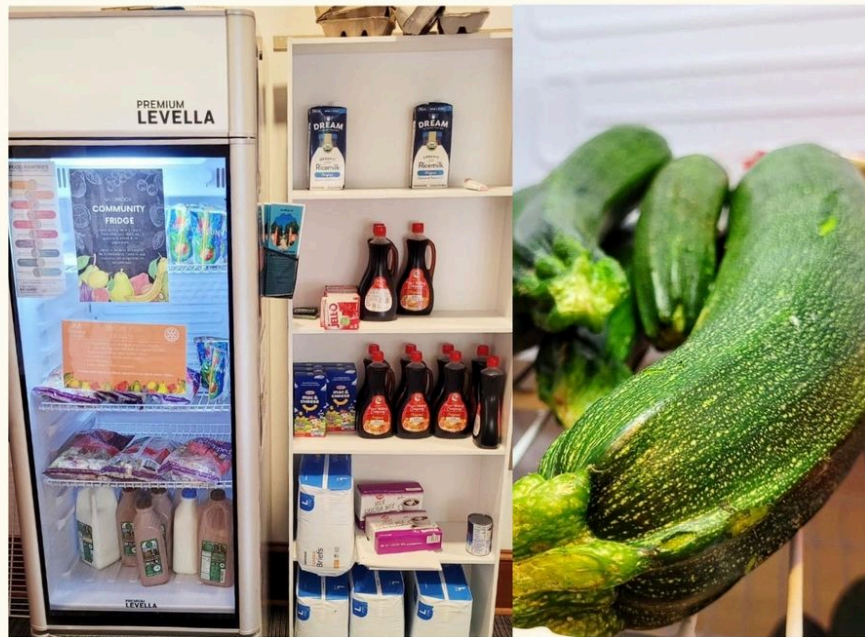
on becoming **certified sustainable!** We commend you for your  
commitment and achievement. Learn more with the links below!

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

**Name:** Millbrook Library

**Location:** Millbrook, New York

**Membership:** SLCP Public Library



Embodying the practices of social, financial, and environmental sustainability all in one project, the Millbrook Library provides a refrigerator for community members to exchange goods: reducing food waste and enabling access to free meals.

Working with support from local businesses and community donations, the fridge and adjacent pantry shelves are stocked with a rotating variety of goods to aid individuals and families that may struggle with food insecurity, need a home cooked meal for the soul, or have grown more in their gardens than they know what to do with.



**Food is provided for those in need.**

Every person has the right to basic healthy food – fruits, vegetables, seed, nuts, and grains – for free. No one should ever go hungry.

**The community grows stronger!**

Community fridges are an example of what is called “mutual aid,” a term that simply means people voluntarily help each other and share resources.

**We prevent food waste.**

Wasting food wastes the water and energy it took to produce it, and generates greenhouse gases. Food that sits in landfills also produces nitrogen pollution.

**We Accept:**

- Fruits and vegetables.
- Water, juice, and non-alcoholic drinks.
- Ready-to-eat meals—many people need food that can be eaten as-is.
- Single-serve containers (preferably microwave-safe) / mason jars.
- Bread and baked goods.
- Commercially packaged meals
- Dairy and dairy alternatives.
- Plant-based meat alternatives.
- Home-Cooked Meals (labeled)

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**All ingredients and allergens must be labeled.**  
**All items must be labeled with an expiration date.**  
**No opened or partially eaten items.**  
**No medicines.**  
**No alcohol or illicit substances.**



*“The Millbrook Library, in collaboration with the Millbrook Rotary Club, launched an exciting initiative to support the community: a Community Fridge. Located at the library, the fridge is designed to reduce food waste while providing free access to food for those in need,*

*The concept is simple: community members can donate fresh produce, unopened pantry staples, and other food items, while others are welcome to take what they need—no questions asked. This project reflects a shared commitment to sustainability and mutual care within the Millbrook community.”*

*Millbrook Library Director Courtney Tsahalís*

Anybody interested in learning more is encouraged to visit the links below.

**Have a great idea you're proud of? Fill out the form linked below to submit your idea for future editions of the newsletter!**

[Millbrook Library Sustainability Page](#)

[Millbrook Library Community Refrigerator](#)

[Form for Submissions](#)

# SLI UPDATES

## **Joseph F. Schubert Library Excellence Award Presented to the Suffolk Cooperative Library System at 2024's NYLA Conference**



*Pictured (left to right): Roger Reyes, SLI Treasurer and Assistant Director of SCLS; Alex Blend, SCLS/SLI Sustainability Coordinator; Sophia LoCascio, SCLS/SLI Sustainability Associate; Lisa Kropp, 2023-2024 NYLA President, SLI Advisory Board Member, and Director of Lindenhurst Memorial Library; and Kevin Verbese, Director of SCLS.*  
**Photo provided by Faiella Studios.**

The Suffolk Cooperative Library System (SCLS) in Bellport, New York was awarded with the Joseph F. Schubert Library Excellence Award at 2024's New York Library Association Annual Conference in November for their support of the Sustainable Libraries Initiative (SLI).

Given annually, the award recognizes the achievements of New York State libraries and library consortia of any size that have taken strides to improve the quality of library service in the last two years.

SCLS, designated in 2023 as the second library system to achieve certification through the Sustainable Library Certification Program, has supported the SLI for several years through the provision of office space, staff support, and financial assistance.

The generosity and contributions of the system have allowed the SLI to grow substantially. This support furthers the understanding of social, financial, and environmental sustainability for libraries across the globe and inspires library leaders to take action in pursuing a sustainable future for their communities.

The award is sponsored by the New York State Regents Advisory Council and is accompanied by a gift of \$1,000 supplied by the Friends of the New York State Library.



*Pictured: SCLS/SLI Sustainability Coordinator Alex Blend accepting the award on behalf of the Suffolk Cooperative Library System*  
**Photo provided by Faiella Studios**

## LibLearnX

The Sustainable Libraries Initiative is hosting a program at this year's LibLearnX conference in Phoenix, Arizona!



### **Harnessing the Power of Education for Climate Work: Libraries Chart a Path for the Future.**



Sunday, January 26 from 10:30-11:30 am



PCC West, Room 101 B C

#### Presenters:

- Matthew Bollerman, SLI Co-Founder and Vice President, CEO of Hauppauge Public Library
- Jennifer Ferris, SLI Advisory Board member and Assistant Director of Saratoga Springs Public Library
- Rene Tanner, Head of Research Services at Rollins College

Libraries are valued educational institutions available to everyone in a community. As such, they are the perfect place for community members to learn how to tackle local climate issues. Supporting climate resiliency means creating a thriving community while caring for our common good for a better tomorrow. This is why the American Library Association (ALA) partnered with the Sustainable Libraries Initiative (SLI) to launch the National Climate Action Strategy for Libraries (NCAS). Together we will work through the NCAS implementation guide and discuss practical strategies for climate change mitigation, adaptation, climate justice work, and community resilience. Participants will walk away from this session with fresh ideas and new connections.

See the original posting with the link below.

LibLearnX Program Information

## Upcoming Sustainability Webinars of Interest



### Introduction to Permaculture

- Hosted by the Vermont Sustainable Libraries Working Group
- Thursday, January 16 from 11:00 am -12:00 pm
- Zoom

Interested in improving your grounds or gardens, growing food, or learning about ecology and design? Join us for this casual and informative talk led by Karen Tuininga, who will provide an introduction and overview of permaculture principles and history, techniques for applying permaculture approaches to your daily life, and a discussion of using permaculture in your gardens and landscapes.

Permaculture is a practical and creative design system that you can apply to everything from your garden to your calendar. Based on age-old common-sense holistic approaches (think catching rainwater off the roof for later use), permaculture emphasizes multiple production benefits with minimal energy use or waste. The result is resource use which is sustainable, resilient and responsible ... characteristics much needed in today's world. These design principles work at any scale small or large, in home or commercial gardens, and in every facet of our lives and organizations.

[Introduction to Permaculture Registration Link](#)

## Library Greenscapes

Please see the graphic below for a potential webinar of interest by The Northeast Summit on Climate Adaptation. No registration link has yet been provided.



## Grant Opportunity: Climate Smart Communities Initiative

This grants program is focused on assisting communities on the front lines of the climate crisis in the United States. As detailed in the selection criteria, the community must be facing significant climate-related challenges, based on environmental as well as socioeconomic considerations. If the proposed work is local in scope, the population of the community should be less than 300,000 residents. If the proposed work is regional in scope, areas with up to 500,000 residents will be considered. The initiative will accept applications into March of 2025, and expects to announce the awards in the summer of 2025.

See the link below for the full posting or check out the new grant resource page on our website to explore other opportunities.

[Climate Smart Initiative Grant Opportunities](#)

[Sustainable Libraries Initiative Grant Resource Page](#)



# MEMBER NEWS

*We welcome our new members to the Sustainable Libraries Initiative! Thank you for your joining our community of practice, and demonstrating your commitment to making the world a better place. We're happy to have you!*

## Sustainable Library Certification Program Members:



East Hampton Library  
East Hampton, New York

## Sustainable Libraries Initiative Members:

### Public Libraries:

- Arlington Public Library                      Arlington, Virginia

### Academic Libraries:

- Anatolia College Bissell Library              Thessaloniki, Macedonia, Greece
- Colorado Mountain College                      Steamboat Springs, Colorado
- Queen's University                                  Kingston, Ontario, Canada
- University at Buffalo - Lockwood              Buffalo, New York
- University of Guelph                                Ontario, Canada
- University of Kansas                                Lawrence, Kansas
- University of Wisconsin-Madison              Madison, Wisconsin

### Personal Members:

- Emily Fendya    Flagstaff, Arizona



## Help Us Build Our Community!



The Sustainable Libraries Initiative is putting out a call for idea sharing from our members!

If you have any great **sustainable program ideas, sustainable vendors, policy examples, grant resources, or sustainable book recommendations**, please consider submitting your ideas to share with the SLI community.

As a community of practice, the SLI thrives on the diversity and dedication of our members to uplift and support each other down the same path. By sharing your ideas, you're helping out your peers and positioning yourself as an engaged member of the community.

Submissions are most needed by libraries/librarians located **outside of New York State, or in the school or academic setting**, but we welcome any and all suggestions.

The SLI also welcomes advocates interested in speaking at future SLCP meetups! Every month, the SLI hosts a meeting to discuss one broad aspect of sustainability. Although the meetups follow the pattern of the Sustainable Library Certification Program, all are welcome to join! To be eligible to speak, your library must be partaking in or have completed the SLCP. We are simply looking for volunteers to talk about their experience with the respective section and answer questions. Most presenters speak for 10-15 minutes and some like to provide a visual such as slides or pictures, but there are no strict guidelines: feel free to make it your own!

Thank you for your consideration!



Forms for submissions linked below (**you must be logged in to view them**) or email us at [sliadmin@suffolknet.org](mailto:sliadmin@suffolknet.org) to make your suggestion.

[Program Idea Suggestion Form](#)

[Sustainable Vendor Suggestion Form](#)

[Grant Resource Suggestion Form](#)

## SLCP Meetup Speaker Volunteer Form

All Other Suggestions: Email [sladmin@suffolknet.org](mailto:sladmin@suffolknet.org)

# FOR YOUR CALENDAR

### January 9

SLCP Meetup: Resilience Planning

1:00 pm EST

Join SLI staff and guest speakers in a group discussion on resilience planning: knowing how to best serve your community in an emergency and where to begin on the path to recovery. All are welcome! 🌍

REGISTER NOW



### January 21

An Intro to the SLI: for State Association Members

2:00 pm EST

During this webinar, we will introduce the Sustainable Libraries Initiative and the members-only resources available to you for the coming year as a member with one of our state association partners!

REGISTER NOW



### January 31

An Intro to the SLCP: for State Association Members

3:00 pm EST

During this webinar, you will learn about the Sustainable Library Certification Program! Hear firsthand from members who have completed the SLCP as they describe their journey and share their experiences.

REGISTER NOW



### February 6

SLCP Meetup: Financial Sustainability

1:00 pm EST

Join SLI staff and guest speakers in a group discussion on financial sustainability: a crucial component of the triple bottom line. All are welcome!

REGISTER NOW



January SLCP Meetup: Resilience Planning

Introduction to the SLI Webinar for State Association Partners

Introduction to the SLCP for State Association Partners

February SLCP Meetup: Financial Sustainability

PrintReleaf empowers SLCP members to offset the paper and fiber-based materials consumption of your library, in order to sustain and grow our global forestry system. SLCP members can [submit your paper purchases](#) here.



OFFICE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

Thanks to the SLI's partnership with CCP Solutions, Sustainable Library Certification Program members have collectively offset the equivalent of 21.53M letter pages of paper consumption by reforesting 2.58K trees!  
Keep up the good work!



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