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**HERITAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY RECEIVES NATIONAL GRANT FOR SMALL AND RURAL LIBRARIES
\$3,000 Grant Will Help the Library Work with Residents to Improve Science Literacy in Our Community**

NEW KENT AND CHARLES CITY, VIRGINIA— Heritage Public Library has been selected as one of 300 libraries to participate in Libraries Transforming Communities: Focus on Small and Rural Libraries, an American Library Association (ALA) initiative that helps library workers better serve their small and rural communities.

The competitive award comes with a \$3,000 grant that will help the library improve science literacy in our community by purchasing much-needed citizen science equipment for all ages to use at the library.

“We are so proud to be chosen for this amazing opportunity,” said Library Director Chandra McPherson. “This grant will allow our library to get to know our residents better and help us find out what our community wants us to do to support their science literacy needs.”

As part of the grant, Heritage Public Library staff will take an online course in how to lead conversations, a skill vital to library work today. Staff will then host a hybrid virtual and in-person conversation with residents about how to interest preschoolers, students, and adults in science, with the working title of “Let’s Spark Science Exploration.” With the input from the community, the library will use the grant funds to purchase some needed citizen science books and equipment such as a telescope, binoculars, and bird feeders. Science literacy is necessary to understand health information, particularly in the rapidly changing time of COVID-19. Science is also the foundation for many of the fastest growing jobs.

If you are interested in getting involved or taking part in the conversation, please contact Jan Marry at jmarry@heritagepubliclibrary.org, or visit <https://heritagepubliclibrary.org/> for more information.

Since 2014, ALA’s Libraries Transforming Communities initiative has re-imagined the role libraries play in supporting communities. Libraries of all types have utilized free dialogue and deliberation training and resources to lead community and campus forums; take part in anti-violence activities; provide a space for residents to come together and discuss challenging topics; and have productive conversations with civic leaders, library trustees and staff.

“Libraries Transforming Communities: Focus on Small and Rural Libraries is an initiative of the American Library Association (ALA) in collaboration with the Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL).”

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