Community Partnerships:
Partnering with Libraries

Why Libraries?
Technology is changing the way public institutions and not for profit organizations serve the public. Libraries are one of these institutions. Building on the library’s traditional services of lending books and providing resources, libraries have been emerging as community centers. Today’s librarians are being asked to provide information on ever changing societal issues and on new and emerging problems/issues that seem overwhelming to library patrons. Individuals and families are turning to libraries looking for answers to life situations.

Why Social Work in Libraries?
Social workers respond to the constantly changing landscape of challenging issues on a daily basis. They are educated to engage and motivate individuals, groups and communities. The School of Social Welfare at Stony Brook University has partnered with a number of libraries to provide social work students to assist in specific, targeted areas that the community library has identified as needed. Furthermore, the SSW has networked with community based agencies to provide supervision to these students. The primary goal of all of these entities is to build a positive community. We have partnered in order to do just that.

“My experience working with the library has been very positive and inspiring. I find we complement each other with our unique knowledge and skills to serve our community. It makes sense that we collaborate so that we can utilize our limited resources more effectively to reach wider population.”- Heawon Hake LCSW, supervisor of our first social work student placed at a Library

“It was an amazing experience interning in the library, and so exciting because I was the first social work intern to ever work with Patchogue Medford Library. I learned so much during my time there. I never realized how many resources are sought out by patrons on a daily basis. In addition to reading material and other forms of entertainment, patrons often inquire about assistance with substance abuse issues, housing, and other social services. I look forward to helping many others and witnessing other interns integrate social work into a library setting. I’m so happy that I had the opportunity to work with the staff of the library and the amazing patrons that visit.” - Christie Flinter, graduate Social work Intern, Patchogue Medford Library (2014-15)

If you are interested in having a social work student at your library please contact Betty-Jean Wrase, Director, Field Education at betty-jean.wrase@stonybrook.edu or 631-444-3161.