



Library Innovation Award

“The Essentials” Employee Orientation Program, Geauga County Public Library Branch Managers

“The Essentials” program has quickly become a key component of staff orientation at the Geauga County Public Library (GCPL). While all libraries offer some type of employee orientation, GCPL’s program offers a consistent and systematic approach with an emphasis on the key concepts of librarianship.

“The Essentials” program brings staff from all branches together throughout their first year of employment. By focusing on key elements such as the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, Intellectual Freedom and the library’s collection development policy, the program creates a common ground and understanding among staff members, especially those working on the frontline of customer service.

It’s specifically designed to increase collaboration, boost camaraderie, and advance the mission of the library. Through the use of branch tours, consistent meetings, and real-life examples, new employees gain a better understanding of how their work affects library patrons, community partners, funding and public perceptions of libraries.

“The Essentials” program also serves as a team-building opportunity, allowing staff from different branches to come together on a regular basis. This promotes networking among participants and fosters the exchange of ideas. The result is a more knowledgeable and confident staff — and a strong set of advocates for libraries in Ohio.



Pictured from top left: Geauga County Public Library Branch Managers: Kevin Barton, Dani Hollar, Rachael Hartman and Judy Lasco (Eric Coulbourne not pictured)

“The Essentials” framework can be adapted to fit other libraries, regardless of their geographic location or size. It’s an innovative way to educate employees which delivers consistent support and guidance.

Ohio’s public libraries have the highest use per capita in the nation. This success is based on a history of hiring talented people and equipping them with the tools they need to provide exceptional library services. For creating a program that is timely and educates staff on the fundamental tenets of librarianship, the Geauga County Public Library is the recipient of this year’s Innovation Award.