

Why?

We think that a more **collaborative** relationship and process with the Board of Selectmen will allow us both to achieve goals that will serve the residents of Stratham.

The library, with the support of the BOS, took a good step last year, bringing our part-time positions up to about the state average for similar work/position. We have set our salary goals because we have a high-performing and valuable team; Ultimately, we hope to be able to compensate equitably based on performance and value of work to the community. Moving these positions' compensation to at least the state average will create a more appropriate foundation.

Salary Goals:

1. Full-time positions: Achieve parity with comparable libraries state average (8.9 – 13.2% higher than Stratham) and/or market comparison (equal to – 15.8% higher than Stratham). Consider internal consistency of increases.
2. Part-time positions: Maintain parity with state average (achieved in 2017 – many thanks to the BOS!) and/or market comparison.
3. Substitute position: Maintain parity with market.

Impact:

- We estimate that it would cost approximately **\$22,000** to achieve state averages in 2018; not necessarily market rate for every position. For other positions, to maintain parity and/or for COLA, we estimate an additional **\$7,000**.
- **\$9.45** on average tax bill in town or **\$3.87** per capita.
- Library budget is 6.8% of overall town budget (Library = \$439612 Town = \$6430681)
- 2.5% increase on a pay rate of \$16.20 is \$0.40/hour, \$1607/year (total for 4 positions).
2.5% increase on pay rate of \$10.71 is \$0.27/hour, \$404/year (total for 2 positions).
13.7% increase on salary of \$1619 is \$2.77/hour, \$17,248/year (total for 3 positions).
2% - 7.6% for remaining positions: \$0.35 - \$2.28/hour, \$9,100/year (total for 4 positions).

Questions:

1. **What does the Board of Selectmen see as useful and actionable information in their salary and other operational budget determinations?**

Follow-up questions:

- *What is the Board's preference for how and when information is presented/distributed?
- *Would the Board entertain having earlier or separate salary conversations with departments?
- *What is the expectation for the budget advisory committee's role in salary determinations?

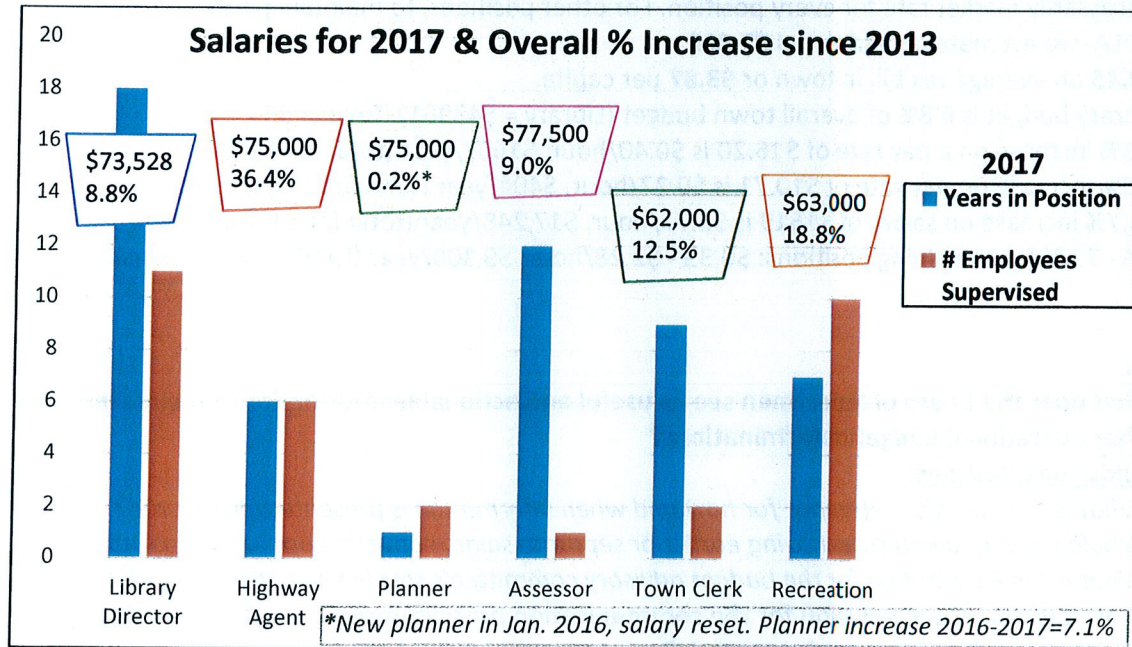
2. **What does the Board envision for the communication process once salary and operational budget determinations have been made?**

Merit:

- Combined 121 years of experience and excellent performance [documented in appraisals].
- Nominated by Congresswoman Carol Shea-Porter for IMLS National Medal for Museum and Library Services 2017/2018. [letters of support and narrative in information packet]
- Awards:
 - NH Library Trustees Association: Library of the Year, 2-time Trustee of the Year, 2-time Library Director of the Year.
 - NH Library Association: Children's Librarian of the Year.
 - SAU 16 Champions for Children.

Market Considerations:

- Regional Market
- Comparable NH Libraries
- Recent Independent Salary Surveys
- Library comments: Greenland (can't attract candidates for cataloging or programming librarian due to salaries), Kingston (4 directors, 3 children's librarians, 3 adult services librarians in the past 5 years), in the most recent professional searches at WML 3 qualified candidates withdrew citing salary (and salary trends) and cost of living in area.

Internal Consistency:**Data Sources:** [excerpts, copies, and/or links to full reports in information packet]

- ✓ NH State Library/Federal Report, 2016 [https://www.nh.gov/nhsl/lds/public_library_stats.html]
- ✓ Thornton Associates salary surveys for Rye and New London
- ✓ Regional data collected from individual libraries for 2017

COMPARISONS

Usage & Budget

SUMMARY

Using 2016 Public Library Stats

Seacoast (Labor Market)

	Population	Annual Circ/Cap	ProgAtt/ Capita	Visits/ Capita	TOTAL Use/Cap	Per Capita Approp.	Local Approp.	Approp./ Usage	
Stratham	7334	11.46	1.08	7.58	\$ 20.12	\$ 50.57	\$ 370,848	\$ 2.51	
AVERAGE	7207	9.97	1.01	6.47	\$ 17.45	\$ 56.49	\$ 383,138	\$ 3.47	Average
% from Avg	2%	15%	8%	17%	15%	-10%	-3%	-28%	% from Avg

Most Similar Libraries (population, geography, usage, income --> match 2 or 3 out of 4, with geography weighted)

	Population	Annual Circ/Cap	ProgAtt/ Capita	Visits/ Capita	TOTAL Use/Cap	Per Capita Approp.	Local Approp.	Approp./ Usage	
Stratham	7334	11.46	1.08	7.58	20.12	\$ 50.57	\$ 370,848	\$ 2.51	
AVERAGE	7438	9.76	0.92	6.15	16.82	\$ 52.02	\$ 369,958	\$ 3.41	Average
% from Avg	-1%	17%	18%	23%	20%	-3%	0%	-26%	% from Avg

NHSL Population 6,000-9,999

2016 wages

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Stratham	\$ 22.80	
Average	\$ 25.25	9.7% higher than Stratham
Median	\$ 24.57	7.2% higher than Stratham

NHSL Seacoast

2016 wages

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Stratham	\$ 22.80	
Average	\$ 25.15	10.3% higher than Stratham
Median	\$ 22.80	Equal to Stratham

CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN / TEEN LIBRARIAN

Stratham	\$ 19.38	
Average	\$ 21.29	8.9% higher than Stratham
Median	\$ 19.76	1.9% higher than Stratham

CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN / TEEN LIBRARIAN

Stratham	\$ 19.38	
Average	\$ 21.14	8.3% higher than Stratham
Median	\$ 19.70	1.6% higher than Stratham

LIBRARY TECHNICIAN / ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Stratham	\$ 16.20	
Average	\$ 18.67	13.2% higher than Stratham
Median	\$ 17.48	7.3% higher than Stratham

LIBRARY TECHNICIAN / ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Stratham	\$ 16.20	
Average	\$ 19.80	18.1% higher than Stratham
Median	\$ 19.26	15.8% higher than Stratham

DIRECTOR

Stratham	34.38	
Average	33.89	1.4% lower than Stratham
Median	34.13	0.7% lower than Stratham

DIRECTOR

Stratham	\$ 34.38	
Average	\$ 33.08	3.9% lower than Stratham
Median	\$ 29.95	14.7% lower than Stratham

- *"I have been in many libraries on the Seacoast and you guys should offer a workshop in library management! Some libraries only get one person in all day – you have tons of people from octogenarians to babies all the time. Whatever you are doing, it's working."*
- *"The Wiggin Memorial Library is exceptional from its deceiving size, to its use of space, along with the many perks of being a patron. You guys are so progressive and innovative."*
- *"I get such a great sense of community in this library. This is my happy place!"*

-Quotes from community members

The Wiggin Memorial Library is a vibrant part of Stratham's quality of life and our mission is to inspire readers, enrich lives, and create community. In 2016, Steve Barker wrote an editorial in the Washington Post¹ arguing that local governments should focus on smaller libraries – that small libraries can better target collections and offerings to their specific constituents and that with more resources moving online, patrons relish the personalized, face-to-face interactions that come with a small library. We couldn't agree more – We help people get the information, stories, and community events they want and need to make their lives better. And, here in our small public library, we do it with a smile, and we get to know your name.

The Wiggin Memorial Library is successful from usage to impact. In the past 10 years, our collections and circulation have grown, programs have reached more people than ever, relationships with the community have deepened, and public support has exceeded all expectations. In 2009, the community voted yes for an expansion that doubled and renovated our space and the overwhelming response has been: WOW! The Wiggin Memorial Library is one of Stratham's most important social networks and the community has donated almost \$150,000 since 2009 to help us continue our mission.

This is not yesterday's library. Overall usage of our library has increased 15% in the past 10 years and 60% of Stratham residents have an active library card. Use this high makes the cost per use for our services more affordable. In fact, according to state statistics, our usage is 21% higher and our budget per usage output is 24% lower (\$2.46 vs. \$3.22) than the average of comparable libraries. We achieve all of this not only through careful use of tax dollars, but also through partnerships that allow us all to share the costs and the benefits.

Our staff and trustees who make such exceptional services possible have been recognized for their extraordinary work. We have won the New Hampshire Library Trustees Association Awards for Library of the Year, Trustee of the Year (twice), and Librarian of the Year (twice). We were awarded Children's Librarian of the Year by Children's Librarians of New Hampshire and named Champions for Children by the Stratham School Board.

Our strategic plan focuses on the specific needs and wants of the residents of Stratham. We seek out input and feedback from the whole community and put what we learn to use in our planning and everyday operations and it shows. We may have turned 100 in 2012 (though there have been organized libraries in Stratham since 1793), yet the core of our services – access for our community – has remained constant since 1912: We are still inspiring readers, enriching lives, and creating community.

¹ "A Library Where Everybody Knows Your Name," Washington Post. April 15, 2016.



NATIONAL MEDAL FOR MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICE

Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/sharer.php?u=https://www.ims.gov/issues/national-initiatives/national-medal-museum-and-library-service>)

Twitter (<https://twitter.com/share?url=https://www.ims.gov/issues/national-initiatives/national-medal-museum-and-library-service&text=National>)

Email ([mailto:?subject=National Medal for Museum and Library Service&body=https://www.ims.gov/issues/national-initiatives/national-medal-museum-and-library-service](mailto:?subject=National%20Medal%20for%20Museum%20and%20Library%20Service&body=https://www.ims.gov/issues/national-initiatives/national-medal-museum-and-library-service))

The National Medal for Museum and Library Service honors outstanding libraries and museums that contribute significantly to the wellbeing of their communities. Selected institutions demonstrate extraordinary and innovative approaches to public service, exceeding the expected levels of community outreach. The winners are honored at a National Medal award ceremony held in Washington, D.C.



Medal Winners and StoryCorps

Through a cooperative agreement, IMLS is working with StoryCorps, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to recording, preserving and sharing the stories of Americans from all backgrounds and beliefs. With visits to the Medal winning institutions, StoryCorps documents personal stories that demonstrate the ongoing impact of these award-winning institutions. [Read more](https://www.ims.gov/issues/national-initiatives/storycorps) (<https://www.ims.gov/issues/national-initiatives/storycorps>)

2017 National Medal Winners

[2017 National Medal for Museum and Library Service winners](https://www.ims.gov/issues/national-initiatives/national-medal-museum-and-library-service/2017-medals) (<https://www.ims.gov/issues/national-initiatives/national-medal-museum-and-library-service/2017-medals>)

Nominate Your Museum or Library

The deadline for the 2018 National Medals is October 2, 2017. **Deadline Extension:** October 23, 2017 for institutions eligible to request the extension in [federally declared hurricane disaster areas](https://www.fema.gov/disasters?field_dv2_state_territory_tribal_value_selective=All&field_dv2_incident_type_tid=All&field_dv2_declaration_type_value=All&field_dv2_incident) (https://www.fema.gov/disasters?field_dv2_state_territory_tribal_value_selective=All&field_dv2_incident_type_tid=All&field_dv2_declaration_type_value=All&field_dv2_incident (August 23 to October 2). To request an extension, email nationalmedals@ims.gov (<mailto:nationalmedals@ims.gov>) by 11:59 p.m. EST Oct. 2.

[Learn more about the nomination process](https://www.ims.gov/grants/available/national-medal-museum-and-library-service) (<https://www.ims.gov/grants/available/national-medal-museum-and-library-service>).

News Releases

[National Medal Deadline Extended for Institutions in Disaster Areas](/news-events/news-releases/national-medal-deadline-extended-institutions-disaster-areas) (</news-events/news-releases/national-medal-deadline-extended-institutions-disaster-areas>)

September 20 2017 Eastern

[IMLS Is Accepting Nominations for the 2018 National Medal](/news-events/news-releases/ims-accepting-nominations-2018-national-medal) (</news-events/news-releases/ims-accepting-nominations-2018-national-medal>)

July 24 2017 Eastern

[Nation's Best Selected for National Medal for Museum and Library Service](/news-events/news-releases/nations-best-selected-national-medal-museum-and-library-service) (</news-events/news-releases/nations-best-selected-national-medal-museum-and-library-service>)

May 15 2017 Eastern

[view more > \(/initiatives/982/press-releases\)](/initiatives/982/press-releases)

Blog Posts

[StoryCorps Interview from New York Hall of Science \(NYSCI\)](/news-events/upnext-blog/2016/05/storycorps-interview-new-york-hall-science-nysci) (</news-events/upnext-blog/2016/05/storycorps-interview-new-york-hall-science-nysci>)

Post date: May 02, 2016



State of New Hampshire

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

CONCORD

9 Tall Pines Drive
Stratham, NH 03885-2564

September 27, 2017

Dr. Kathryn K. Matthew, Director
Institute of Museum and Library Service
955 L'Enfant Plaza North, SW, Suite 4000
Washington, DC 20024

Dear Dr. Matthew:

I write to you as a State Representative representing Stratham in the NH House of Representatives and resident of Stratham for 33 years. I know the Wiggin Memorial Library well and the impact it has, and will continue to have, on Stratham being one of the best places to raise a family, not just in NH, but also in the country. I fully support the Wiggin Memorial Library being chosen to receive the National Medal for Museum and Library Services. As a four term representative, each two years I walk every street in town, as I seek reelection, talking to Stratham citizens about state and local issues. Let's just say I have the pulse on what the folks in town are thinking. When it comes to our library I have only heard rave reviews, usually unsolicited. Over the years I have gotten to know the library director, staff, board members and volunteers alike. They all exude the highest level of enthusiasm for what the library has become and the services it offers. Even though supporting a town of only 7,200, this library rivals any big city library when it comes to what it offers its citizens: young children, teenagers, and adults alike. When you review the application, please go to the library's website and you will get a sense of the breadth of services offered. Each months calendar is jam packed with classes, guest speakers, ongoing programs for children as well as teens, story times for all age groups, and so much more.

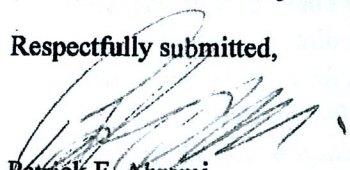
The library is very proactive and responds to the desires of the community. In many ways it reflects the community and has had a profound impact on most families in town. A great example of this is the school bus letting off students at the library after school. Parents view this as a safe and wholesome place for their children to go while their children wait for their mom or dad to come home from work. The students read and do homework in what can only be characterized as a learning environment. The library also hosts many interest groups such as the knitting group, book reading group, and many others. They support children of all academic abilities by championing tutoring activities. They are the only organization in town to sponsor a candidate night prior to elections. By popular demand, they also offer drop-in tech help sessions with open Q&A for tablets, phones, laptops, and online services. They collaborate with the Stratham Historical Society on programming, bringing in the best speakers on all things NH history. Each November's program is military themed.

The library honors veterans and those who sacrificed on Veterans Day and Memorial Day by setting up displays of military items donated by residents with military backgrounds. The library has embraced the "Ask the Question NH initiative", which has the aim of creating a welcoming environment for service members and veterans as they seek referrals in the civilian world. The Pease Greeter organization meets every military flight at the Pease Air National Guard Base as they layover to refuel. The library has become the collection point for donations of items given to the troops on these flights. Thanks to the library the community awareness of this volunteer program has grown.

This is not your grandparent's library of old where you went to withdraw a book and hoped to return it in time without a fine being levied. The Wiggin Memorial Library is very much in the 21st century with all related technology in place to bring the knowledge of the world to the citizens of Stratham in any medium desired. The library has become a major cornerstone of our community where you are always greeted with a smile and a "how can I help you". All who want to take advantage of its services is welcome in a town who understands all are created equal and that knowledge leads to economic well-being. The programming offered is broad and deep which reflects the diverse interests of the town's citizens.

The board, director, and staff will never rest on their laurels. They are always seeking ways to innovate and be one step ahead in this fast changing world. I once again strongly suggest you consider the Wiggin Memorial Library for the National Medal for Museum and Library Services. Come take a visit to Stratham and see for yourself what can happen with the right leadership and community support that is unparalleled. By the way you can also simply go to our library and check out a book just like your grandparents use to do, just for the pleasure of reading.

Respectfully submitted,



Patrick F. Abrami
Stratham State Representative
Vice Chair, Ways and Means Committee

September 27, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

We are pleased and honored to be recommending Wiggin Memorial Library for the 2018 National Medal for Museum and Library Service, awarded by IMLS. As six year residents of Stratham, NH, we have come to know the library staff as a caring and committed group of professionals with an extraordinary dedication to community outreach.

My relationship with Wiggin Library began the summer prior to my children entering 1st and 3rd grade. As a new resident and stay at home mom, with a military husband deployed overseas, I was facing a long summer and was desperate to make connections in my new community. I enrolled my children in the Reading to Dogs program and immediately felt at home. The Children's Room was a welcoming and warm place to spend time with my children and enjoy all the programs they offered, such as Lego building workshops, magic shows and movie nights. As an added bonus, I met other moms, many of whom became good friends.

As my sons grew began to outgrow the Children's Room, I was thrilled to discover the Teen Room. Lucia Von Letkemann, the Teen Librarian, has an extraordinary gift of relating to middle school children. My older son noticed Lucia wearing a Dr. Who T-shirt one day and shyly asked her about it. She passionately swapped trivia facts and invited him to join the "Dr. Who" club. For the next year, he took the school bus to the library every Thursday afternoon to socialize with other kids, watch Dr. Who episodes, enjoy snacks, and even create TARDIS replicas – all under Lucia's fervent guidance.

Lucia also became a great resource to me when I served as the president of the elementary school's PTO. She helped to promote our community events and even agreed to co-host one particular event involving a guest speaker. The event was so well received by the community that Lucia arranged to purchase several of the speaker's audio tapes to be available at Wiggin Memorial Library for parents to further enjoy and learn from this speaker. I would be remiss if I didn't also mention her "Middle School Survival Kits" and program, an event to help ease the sometimes difficult transition from elementary to middle school. Both of my boys attended and still have parts of the kits in their bedrooms.

Over the years, I have been fortunate enough to get to know a few of the staff on a personal basis. Lesley Kimball, the library director, is always especially caring and friendly and (prior to his retirement) would often ask me about my husband's military happenings. I was impressed with the various veterans' stories and paraphernalia often on display at the library, and so when my husband (an Air National Guard KC-135 pilot) asked me if there was someone to whom I thought the 157th ARW should dedicate a flag flown over Afghanistan during Operation

Enduring Freedom, I immediately thought of Wiggin Memorial Library. We both felt strongly that Wiggin was deserving of this flag to be given in gratitude for services the library had provided while he was actively serving overseas. The framed flag hangs prominently across from the main entrance with a plaque reading, "This flag was flown over Afghanistan on 26 April 2014 in honor of the dedicated members of the town of Stratham NH, Wiggin Memorial Library."

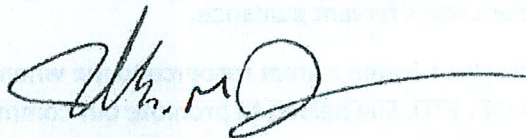
Most recently, my family has been supported by Wiggin Memorial Library in a charity project that we started several years ago and that is now sponsored by the Stratham Volunteer Fire Department. As a result of my son searching for a community service project for partial fulfillment of a Boy Scout merit badge, "Lights for Lives" was born. It's a community fundraiser where residents decorate their home for the holidays and enter a contest by making a donation to a chosen charity. Every year, Lesley, along with Tricia Ryden, the assistant director, help us to promote the event by highlighting it on the Wiggin website and having flyers available at the library check out desk. Voting boxes are housed in the library and the staff all help to promote the event and inform the community about the Open House celebration. We are hopeful that with Wiggin Memorial Library's help, our small project will grow each year and become a Stratham community tradition.

In closing, we can't recommend Wiggin Memorial Library and its staff enough for this award. As someone who grew up in a town where the library was just a place you borrowed books from, I am continuously impressed by and grateful for their commitment and dedication to our children, our schools, our military veterans, and the Stratham community.

Sincerely,



Geri Lakey Denton



Jeff Denton
Lt Col, USAF, Ret.

Patricia Hughes

11 Humes Court

Stratham, NH 03885

September 25, 2017

To the Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services,

I am writing to recommend the Wiggin Memorial Library of Stratham, NH for the 2018 National Medal of Museum and Library Services.

I began my 22 year relationship with the library within months of moving into Stratham. I always got a library card when I moved to a new town, but when I joined the Wiggin Memorial Library; my library joined me to my community and so much more. From my initial visit, I knew I had found something special. The entire staff, from the Library Director, Mike Sullivan to the Children's Librarian, Phyllis Danko, were interested in getting to know me as much as sharing themselves. They welcomed me into discussions of new books, town happenings and future plans for the library as well as introducing me to their lives. At first, I was only able to stop in on weekends or Friday nights for a few books and a video, but within the first year our first child was born and Phyllis invited me to the Children's programs. Three years later, and our second child was born and we had a new Library Director, Lesley Kimball who brought a new set of visions for our growing library and family. I was using the library for social gatherings for my children and adult connections for myself. I was at the library when the first plane crashed on 9/11/2001. I remember talking to a woman who had just joined the children's program. She said our programs were amazing; they had music, books, and interaction that accommodated the young ages of our children. They would cost a fortune in the city; her city, New York City. I left that day feeling blessed in so many ways and often think how different life in another place would be for my family. Would they have these connections with their library there? In my past 4 town libraries, I never did.

By the time our youngest was born in 2002 we were well established in the town and continued to use the library as a support and center of activity. We are all avid readers and borrow books regularly. Our children attended children room activities and overlapped into teen activities with several new faces along the way. Miss Jan took over the Children's room and we had a teen program with Mindy. Marcia and Ron who had worked the desk for years stayed on as more came in to cover our library's extended hours. The programs kept expanding as did the space we were using. Our children were being exposed to traveling science and magician shows and crafts and service projects. Every year there were more friends meeting at group activities to encourage learning, sharing, and connecting. From book clubs, to knitting classes, to musical performances, our library had something for everyone.

Years have passed, as they do, and our library thrived along with our family and our community. The public spaces accommodate students and their tutors, people with disabilities, quiet readers, and people needing technology that they may not have at home such as computers, tablets and printers. The teen room became a safe place to practice independence. Many children come directly from school and stay until their parents are able to pick them up after work. Our new Teen Librarian, Lucia Von Letkemann became a friend and mentor to our up and coming young adults. There are computers, words of encouragement, posters and of course, books; lots of books. Classics, comics, self-help and self-awareness line shelves with an

abundance of fiction and nonfiction, award winners and audio books. The room itself has a diner's booth to hang out at, a large work table to play board games or complete projects at, a full size dry erase board to doodle or brainstorm at, and a high top, cafe style corner with computers and beanbags! In other words, a teen's dream space; friends included. Tie dying t-shirts kick-off annual summer reading programs. There are contests to earn prizes, cooking classes that lead into dinner and movie nights, concerts, and the new yearly favorite, "the frozen t-shirt contest. In an age of social media replacing human interaction, our library has found a way to keep our kids connected in real life.

All three of our children have volunteered within the library as mentors and catchall helpers. While our girls were Girl Scouts they had meetings and gave time in cleanup activities at the library. All three have become certified babysitters and received CPR training there. They earned their passes into the town fair and earned the respect of the staff, who call on them regularly to lend a hand or share an experience with new members of our community. They went to the Middle School Survival programs until becoming one of the teens who mentors other students just starting out. Those same staff members are there with ideas for whatever they think our children would like. And they know what our children like, from books, to movies, to activities. Our librarians have suggested, borrowed and ordered whatever we didn't have on hand to accommodate the eagerness of our children and many others' reading appetites.

As for me, I go to the library multiple times a week for myself. I still read children's books along with my adult authors. The displays in all the rooms draw me in and give me insight into what younger people have available to read that I know didn't exist when I was their ages. I learned how to garden from the books there and how to paint with watercolors from a class there. My husband and I have attended political forums and informational talks there. I have found time to attend creative classes, topics of discussion, book sales and an occasional bake day. I use the library's die cut system for lots of my volunteering and personal creative activities. I am welcomed by everyone with a warm hello even when I know they are busy doing their jobs. Without fail, there is always a chance for a conversation and a check in on the wellbeing of me or one of the staff. We have shared sadness at the loss of members of the community and family members as well as joy at the growth and successes of our own families. I have helped create the spaces that are used and had my input heard and valued. It has been, and is still one of the best places I know to go and spend time at.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Patricia Hughes", written in a cursive style.

Patricia Hughes

Victoria Su
11 Doe Run Lane
Stratham, NH 03885

September 27, 2017

Kathryn K. Matthew, Director of IMLS

Dear Ms. Matthew ;

It is my honor and privilege to highly recommend the Wiggin Memorial Library in Stratham, New Hampshire for the 2018 National Medal for Museum and Library Services.

Our love for the Wiggin all started with Doctor Who.

Or perhaps it began a little before that, but Doctor Who certainly influenced our very deep regard for the library. I, along with my husband and two teenage children, have been regular and frequent patrons of the Wiggin Memorial Library since we moved to Stratham in 2013. Having raised my children to be avid readers and I hope engaged citizens, we may have initially been concerned that the library in a much smaller town than from which we had come would seem limiting both in circulation materials and programming. We quickly had our fears alleviated as we found a vibrant, flourishing, and cutting edge institution where we could seek comfort and knowledge - a wonderful vantage point to discover our new hometown.

We started using the library strickly for the circulation materials (we are one of those families that checks out an embarrassingly large stack of books at every visit) and we were blown away by the variety and quality of books and media. The children's and teen rooms always have the most recent, popular, and even slightly obscure books that my children are looking for including a wonderfully curated graphic novel selection for children, teens, and adults. I am also impressed with the non-fiction books in the teen room that highlight a range of topical subjects including current events, emotional health, college information, and LGBTQ issues. It is amazing how a well thought out book display can offer volumes of quiet support and understanding.

It was in that teen room under the amazing direction of the BEST-TEEN-LIBRARIAN-EVER that my children-especially my daughter-really came into their own in their new town. We are a bit of a geeky bunch and my daughter was completely blown away when she learned that the library hosted an Doctor Who club after school for middle and high school students. This was when she was in fifth grade and she waited with baited breath until she could join the club when she started sixth grade. They would gather, have Doctor Who themed snacks, and watch an episode or two. It was a place to just be herself and love what she loves with other local kids who felt the same. For a somewhat shy and reserved girl, this was nirvana - and nirvana was the library!

A few years later the library introduced a Girls Who Code program and my daughter joined without hesitation. We were so surprised as she usually takes a bit of convincing. But of course, this is where she got to geek out on Doctor Who so obviously it was the perfect place to geek out on coding, too. Safe and supportive and full of kids like her (and kids not like her who also find a voice through the library). Going into its third year, Girls Who Code is a place where she feels empowered to be a smart girl who likes computers, math, and all things STEM when that is not always considered typical among her peers. She is now a 15 year old who knows her mind, reads everything and anything, is committed to exploring STEM subjects, is not afraid to be passionate about what she likes, and knows she has a place - at the library and in her community, now and in the future.

I could say so much more about the amazing and thoughtful staff, the creative programming, and the community support at the Wiggin Memorial Library. I, a life long library user, truly find our library to be second to none. But really, it was that moment when we learned they had a Doctor Who Club that we realized how special the library truly is and knew we had found the perfect new home and community for us.

Thank you so much for considering the the Wiggin Memorial Library for the 2018 National Medal for Museum and Library Services. It is an institution very much worthy of the honor. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss this gem of a library further.

Sincerely,



Victoria Su, Library Patron

victoriasu@gmail.com
603-568-8967

Institute of Museum and Library Services
955 L'Enfant Plaza North, SW,
Suite 4000
Washington, D.C. 20024-2135

September 27, 2017

Dear Dr. Kathryn K. Matthew,

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of support for the Wiggin Memorial Library for consideration for the **2018 National Medal for Museum and Library Service**. Wiggin Memorial is the glue of the Stratham community that provides support, guidance and unlimited opportunities for patrons of all ages. This building is so much more than our local library. Townspeople near and far come to the library and participate in the programs because of the warm, inclusive vibe community members feel once they walk through those doors.

My family and I have been involved with Wiggin Memorial since 2004. Our first child was born in December of 2003, and I can remember vividly how the library's baby lap sit program, along with fabulous children's librarians, Miss Jan and Miss Phyllis helped me survive that first winter with a new baby. Through the years, we have raised four children, attended all of the children's programs from baby lapsit to toddler and preschool storytimes, listening to short picture books, fun nursery rhymes, finger play and puppetry. We did some dancing, instrument play and the always fun and creative craft time. These memories of the early days at our library are precious to me.

As my children grew, they joined book trekkers, book clubs organized by grade level bands, allowing them to hear books organized around a particular theme or genre or participate in a literature circle style book discussion. This independent time at the library was invaluable for my children. The library has guided them to independence, supported them on their literacy path and given them an absolute love of reading. There have been an infinite number of programs and events attended over the years that have kept my kids interested, engaged and wanting to go back for more. Cooking classes tied with literature, led by the infamous Leslie Blaney, have always been at the top of the list.

My older two children have devoured many of the teen programs, led by Lucia von Letkemann such as the Middle School Survival Kit program, the Babysitting Course as well as the summer reading programs and incentives. My children view Wiggin

Memorial as a place where friends and families come together to learn, socialize, share thoughts and ideas and have fun together.

Our family was thrilled to hike Stratham Hill Park and read a favorite book along the "story walk" created by Sara Arnold, one of Wiggin's new children's librarians. We enjoyed seeing an extension of Wiggin Memorial at the park tying literacy to one of our favorite places in town to exercise and relax.

Our family has a very special place in our hearts for Wiggin Memorial Library. We visit as often as possible and it is a staple in our lives. We appreciate the abundance of resources, programs, activities and kind-hearted staff available to us each day making us feel as if we are visiting an extension of "home" where we are welcomed with love and support time after time.

Thank you for this opportunity to support Wiggin Memorial Library in this nomination for the National Medal for Museum and Library Services. I feel so very lucky to have this outstanding library as part of our community.

Sincerely,

Amy S. Woodard

Community member, Stratham, NH

September 27, 2017

Kathryn K. Matthew, Director

Institute of Museum and Library Services

Dear Madam,

I am writing to recommend the Wiggin Memorial Library in Stratham, NH for your organization's National Medal in 2018. This library has played a key part in my experience of moving to this small town and becoming involved in the community. Over time it has amazed me how many diverse and innovative programs they offer and this has been very special to my family and our entire community.

My family moved to the town of Stratham in the summertime when my children were 3 and almost 8 years old. The library afforded a wonderful welcome to our family, and one that was very special to us, as we did not know anyone in town. We were able to participate in the summer reading program, family events and make new friends with the help of the children's room staff. As time has gone on, we did not "age out" of library offerings as sometimes happens because our library continues to expand and evolve. We enjoy everything from magic shows, PJ story time and "dinner-and-a movie" in the teen room (where they actually learn to cook!).

As I became more involved in my children's school I have become even more closely tied to the Wiggin. For the past 2 years I have been the president of our school's Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) and we have been able to work together to the benefit of all. Whenever I have had new ideas and brought them to the library they are excited to try new things and collaborate together. With help from the Wiggin staff we were able to have child care at a speaker night for parents as well as to hold a story time over the summer in the new school garden (recently built in 2016). We are eagerly anticipating another summertime story series in the garden focused on food from diverse cultures around the world—with the plan of collecting recipes from our families and growing foods that tie in with the story books.

In conclusion, I am happy to recommend the Wiggin Memorial Library for your National Medal. It has made a big difference to my family and my experience joining the Stratham Community. It continues to be a place my family and I look forward to visiting time and time again. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or for more information.

Sincerely,

Andrea M Benson

24 Butterfield Lane

Stratham, NH 03885