Today's Presenter

Susan McClellan
Executive Director,
Millvale Community Library (PA)
Small Library Innovation and Management

Susan McClellan
Executive Director,
Millvale Community Library
Millvale Community Library

- Innovating in our Unusual Space
- Connected to a tea shop with 3 apartments above the library
Our Mission

More than a library – an agent of positive change

Our Vision

We envision a happy, engaged community
Innovative Space

- 83 solar panels on our roof
- Community Gardens in back
- Rain Garden
- Makerspace in the Library

Photo by Millvale Community Library, used with permission
Millvale, PA

- 3,744 residents – 48 percent of children below poverty level
- Median Income – $30,000
Meeting Community Needs

- Community wide assessment via survey (2016)
- On-line and in house surveys
Community Needs

- Start with the top needs – food, water, and energy
- Living in a food desert
- Clean water
- Solar energy
Solar Panels

- The MCL’s 83 solar panels help generate more electricity than the Library uses over the year
- Duquesne Light actually pays us
- This helps us pay staff and create more community programming
- Carbon neutrality has never been sweeter
Community Focus: 3 Key Issues

- Food, Water, and Energy were identified
- EcoDistrict Leadership Team developed to ensure resident-supported implementation

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Community Needs

• Strategy #1 – Maximize partnerships
• Strategy #2 – Align your vision with the community
• Strategy #3 – Listen and ask questions
Meeting Community Needs

- What are your building blocks?
- Create a strategic plan
A Question for You

- What are your ways of identifying community needs?

Share in chat!
Identify Community Needs

• Attend or host business meet and greet

• Hang out where there is the most “conversation” - tea or coffee shop, store, etc.

• Attend council and business meetings
Tool Lending Library

- Over 350 Tools available for checkout
- Over 90 percent donated from patrons
- Bike, Masonry, Electrical, Plumbing…

Millvale Tool Lending Library

Open Tuesday, 6pm–8pm
Friday, 10am–12pm
Saturday, 10am–12pm
Lend out Unique Items

- Music Lending
- Radon Detectors
- Air Quality Monitors
- Share in chat, unique items you lend!
How do you get the Board “on board”?

• Make time to brainstorm
• Check in on your strategic plan frequently
• Bring possible answers to your question
Time to Innovate

• Brainstorming
• Partnering
• Outreach

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Making Time to Innovate

- If you don’t know, ask
- Don’t go to every meeting
- Experiment
- Collaboration and cooperation is key
What is your most innovative project?

Share in chat!
Time Management

- Delegate tasks
- Use volunteers wisely
- Seek out interns
- Break things into chunks of time
Making Time to Innovate

• How do YOU make time to Innovate?

Share in chat!
Volunteer Groups

- Colleges and School
- [AmeriCorps VISTA](http://www.americorps.gov) (Volunteers in Service to America)
- Organizations
- Day of Giving

Photo by Millvale Community Library, used with permission
Food Desert of Millvale

- No grocery store in town—where do you shop?
- Family Dollar, gas station, convenience store
Our Sustainability

**Rain Garden and Cistern:**
In the backyard, you’ll find a 500 gallon cistern that collects rain water from our rooftop, and through an underground pipe channels it into our rain garden.

Photo by Millvale Community Library, used with permission
Garden Sustainability

Rain Garden

Photo by Millvale Community Library, used with permission
**Growing Food:** Garden beds and fruit trees used to teach Millvale youth how to grow their own food.
Food Desert Response

Green Grocer Partnership: mobile farmer’s market that comes into town once a week for 2 hours.
Youth Food Sustainability

- Vista Volunteer started an Afterschool Program
- Partnered with 412 Food Rescue
- Gardens of Millvale
Raising Funds for Food Sustainability

- Fundraising
  - Art show with local gallery
  - Children’s comedy show
  - Poetry readings
  - Lobby campaign

Photo by Millvale Community Library, used with permission
Long Term Food Solutions

- More partnerships
- Seek long-term sponsor
You Too Can Innovate

- Move beyond gathering information
- See what other library and businesses are doing
- Don’t be afraid to try
- Embrace Innovation
Thank You!

Contact me!
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