

## Community Engagement Grant FY21 Award News

The Delaware Library Association (DLA) awarded three Community Engagement Grants in FY21. Six applications were received overall from a mixture of school, special, academic, and public libraries. It was a difficult deliberation from the grant review panel, as we wish we could fund all applications!

The DLA Community Engagement Grant is awarded annually and is open to any personal or institutional member of DLA. More information on the grant, including when the next grant cycle will open, can be found at <http://dla.lib.de.us/about-us/grant>.

### Congratulations to the University of Delaware Library!

The University of Delaware Library was awarded \$600.00 for their proposal; *A Celebration of Community: New London Road and School Hill*. This proposal was born from an idea to revisit an event that happened in 2017 with an African American community near the University. This very vibrant community has a strong involvement in churches and preserving their history, however visually the community has been nearly wiped out by University buildings. The University of Delaware (UD) Library, Museums and Press has partnered with them in the past and developed a digital collection on UDSpace (MSS-0784 Friends of School Hill Oral Histories and Images, May 2017) which provides a description of the school and surrounding community.



The FY21 project will bring together prominent members of Newark's African American community, Delaware history experts, and digital preservation professionals, to provide help for attendees researching the Black communities in Delaware using digital and physical resources, and help to preserve their historical documents and stories.

I had the opportunity to chat with Molly Olney-Zide from

UD on January 7<sup>th</sup> and asked her what was the inspiration behind this idea. Molly stated "One way to combat our racist history is to create anti-racist programs built collaboratively with the community". The project also ties into the library's strategic plan on building partnerships and collaborations. It is the library's mission to go out into the community and help build knowledge. The relationship between UD Library and this community is a growing relationship. The first event held with them was an oral history project in in 2004-2006. The second event was held in 2017, and this current project is slated to be held Spring 2021. Collaboratively revisiting this community every few years keeps building and strengthening the relationship. According to Molly, this project embodies community engagement by "communicating with people to help them preserve, remember, and celebrate".

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### Congratulations to the Dover Public Library!

The Dover Public Library was awarded \$450.00 for their proposal; *Story-Walk*. A story walk is an event where text and illustrations from a work of literature are enlarged and posted on yard stakes or other equipment. Sometimes scavenger hunts, or story questions are posted along the walk to encourage participant interaction.



The Dover Library plans to bring a story walk into select City of Dover parks. The library will plan a virtual author visit sometime over the Summer 2021. Community members can visit a park, read the story walk, and then have the opportunity to virtually talk to the author and ask questions.

I had the opportunity to chat with Rosie Mujica from Dover on January 5<sup>th</sup>. Rosie was able to attend a story walk webinar last year that was sponsored by the organization, Let's Move In Libraries. Through that training, Rosie was taught how to structure story walks, and to promote them through the library's Facebook page. Dover has done story walks in the past, and Ro-

sie saw a resurgence of the idea during the pandemic. The format of a story walk works well because it is generally set up outside, where people can be spaced out and enjoy the program without being indoors. The planned virtual author visit will be a safe alternative to an in-person event, and will allow more people to be able to participate.

According to Rosie, the Dover Library is in the process of rewriting their mission statement. Dover has a major focus on building their community and encouraging interaction with the community in their neighborhoods, and building up great authors in Delaware. By strategically placing the story walk in a local park, that will allow those who can't make it to the library to still participate. Rosie would like to see the story walk continue past the summer. She envisions a story walk around the library where stories would be switched out quarterly.

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### **Congratulations to the Lewes Public Library!**

The Lewes Public Library was awarded \$450.00 for their proposal, *Teen Essentials. The Roots and Shoots Club at the Lewes Public Library is a young environmentalist club and will be the group responsible for putting together the Teen Essentials kit. The club members are constantly looking for ways to give back to the community or help the environment. The idea for this project started from a conversation with a guidance counselor at the local high school. The counselor stated that hygiene is a major need for some teens. The hygiene products can be expensive and many family budgets are strained beyond breaking during the pandemic. The Roots and Shoots Club will pack the hygiene kits and give to the high school, where school guidance counselors will distribute them discreetly to teens in need.*

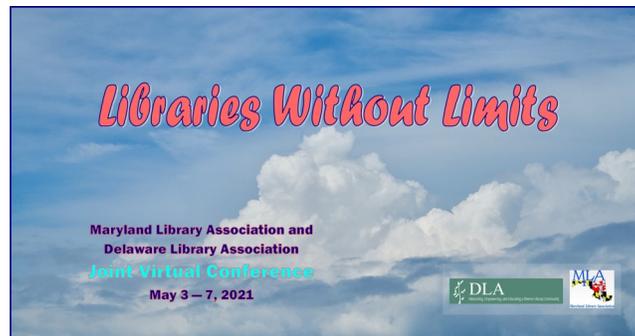
I had the opportunity to chat with Emily Ellinger from Lewes on December 30<sup>th</sup>. Emily is proud of the teens at Lewes who listened to needs and wanted to get involved and do something about the problem. While this is a pilot project, Emily hopes the program continues. She sees the program helping to build leadership skills in the Club participants by asking them in the future to write grant solicitations for hygiene supplies. According to Emily the project will start immediately.

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## **MLA/DLA Conference**

Registration for the 2021 MLA/DLA Joint Conference has begun! Join us for our second virtual gathering as we explore Libraries Without Limits, including no limit on how many programs you can attend! Like this past year, most presentations will be recorded, so they all are available with one conference price. Don't miss the thirteen DLA sponsored programs covering topics such as disaster preparedness, social justice, homeschooling, open education resources, and more. Our keynote

speaker is the fantastic author Dhonielle Clayton. Check out all the program offerings and register at <https://www.mladacon.com/>.



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## **Sussex County Employee of the Year**

Assistant Director/Reference Librarian Kristin Cooper has been named the 2020 Employee of the Year for the Sussex County Government. Ms. Cooper was awarded a certificate on Jan. 5<sup>th</sup> by the Sussex County Council, honoring her extraordinary efforts in the past year, keeping patrons connected to the library through virtual resources and programs.



She is an invaluable resource to staff as well, helping them through the virtual "hurdles" posed by the pandemic, from teaching others to host Zoom meetings to streaming piano recitals for patrons. County Administrator Todd Lawson

commended Ms. Cooper for her dedicated service to the County, stating that her dedication, commitment, and pride in her work were evident during the challenging times of 2020. Staff celebrated with a small, socially-distant party and cake. Because there's always cake at the South Coastal Library, even with a pandemic. Congratulations Kristin, for a well-deserved award!

## Legislative Action Update

As 2020 comes to a close I'm sure you've read many messages talking about the challenges of the year, and yes, admittedly there have been plenty. In one of the catalogs I received, there was a t-shirt for sale with the slogan "I miss precedented times". That one made me laugh, for how many times over the past 9 months have we heard that we're living in unprecedented times.

At times it has felt that the very foundation of our society and everything we know is shaking. One of the things that has made me feel hopeful during this time are libraries. The existence of libraries, their very essence, gives me hope and reminds me of our potential, as individuals, as communities, and as a country, to be and do better. Libraries help grow our potential to understand each other by providing access to many perspectives and ideas. Libraries offer the promise of a better future by offering the stories and spaces to grow into our potential. Instead of harsh words and fast (often inaccurate) news, librarians offer quiet encouragement to explore your passions, your ideas that matter most to you, as well as the opportunity to encounter other points of view that might challenge us.

I've also been encouraged by the work of the Social Justice committee, and the professional development opportunities offered through the Division of Libraries and DLA. I don't want to suggest that libraries aren't plagued by human biases and faults. Sure libraries have problems, but I want to convey that libraries provide a vision of what is possible when humans aspire to greater things. Equal access to all should not be just a tagline, but the main bedrock of all libraries. Our collections should reflect lots of different stories from lots of different characters and lots of different perspectives. Libraries make me feel hopeful because they are the one institution that helps us all see our potential. But for that to happen we ALL have a responsibility to ensure that libraries are a priority in our communities and with our legislators.

Thank you for joining us for our DLA Library Legislative Day Lite virtual event. The dates were January 26 – 28, 2021. There were keynote speakers and virtual meetings with legislators scheduled over the course of three days. Your time is valuable and we're all sick of Zoom, so sessions were planned to last no more than 2 hours per day.

The Legislative Action Committee needs your voice and your story. Please consider becoming a member in 2021. Advocacy happens everyday.

With appreciation and thanks for all the hardworking library workers. Your work matters to many.

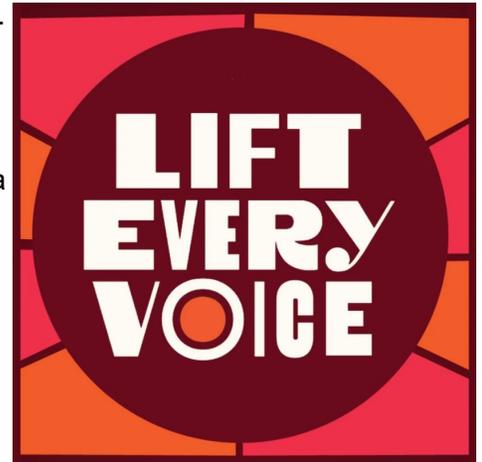
Submitted by  
Michelle Hughes,  
Legislative Action  
Chair



## Lift Every Voice: Celebrating African American Poetry at the University of Delaware

The UD Library, Museums and Press is one of fifty institutions around the country participating in Lift Every Voice, a nationwide celebration of 250 years of African American poetry. In January and February, UD Library is hosting a trio of virtual events to engage participants in exploring

the African American poetic tradition, the perspectives it offers on American history, and its imaginative response to the personal experiences of African Americans over three centuries. The Lift Every Voice virtual exhibition (<https://exhibitions.lib.udel.edu/lift-every-voice/>) highlights materials from the UD Library collections and encourages visitors to reflect upon the initiative's five intersecting themes: The Freedom Struggle, Black Identities (Assertion & Protection), Black Experience in History & Memory, Black Language & Music, and Family & Community. On February 16, poets Randal Horton and Yolanda Wisher will join readers from the community for the sixth annual African American Read-In. All are invited to celebrate the works of Black American authors by listening, by reading the work of Black American poets, or by reading your own work. On February 23, scholar Monet Lewis-Timmons and librarian Aimee Gee will lead a group in reading and discussing selected poems and themes from the Lift Every Voice reader (<https://www.africanamericanpoetry.org/reader>). These virtual events are free and open to the public. Please visit the events pages for more details and registration information: <https://library.udel.edu/events>



*The Sixth Annual  
African American Read-In*

## LIFT EVERY VOICE

Tuesday, February 16  
5-6:30 p.m. via Zoom

Registration is required.

To be placed on the list of scheduled readers, please email  
Aimee Gee ([gee@udel.edu](mailto:gee@udel.edu)) or Délice Williams ([diwill@udel.edu](mailto:diwill@udel.edu))

The graphic features a blue background with a circular inset showing a close-up of a microphone. The text is arranged in a clean, modern layout with a mix of white and yellow colors.

## Conversations on Social Justice in Libraries

Are you wondering what next steps you can take to honor your library's commitment to social justice? Join the DLA Social Justice Committee to explore actionable ways to apply your values in your daily library work. Help us kick off our monthly conversations starting on Thursday, February 18 at 1 PM, and continuing March 18 and April 22. Resources will be shared in advance to frame the conversation. Thursday, February 18 at 1 PM - Who Gets Access to Library Resources? Examining Library Card Policies in Delaware Thursday, March 18 at 1 PM - What Role do / should Police Play in Libraries? Thursday, April 22 at 1 PM - Social Justice Approaches to Metadata and Cataloging. Register [here](#).



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## News from the Dept. of Health and Social Services Library

Looking for books on diversity, equity and inclusion? As part of the Department of Health and Social Services Library's D.R.I.V.E book discussion group, our librarians curated a large list of diversity and racial inclusion titles available through the Delaware Library Catalog, Hoopla and Overdrive called D.R.I.V.E Book List to Drive on Your Own, [https://guides.lib.de.us/ld.php?content\\_id=58877550](https://guides.lib.de.us/ld.php?content_id=58877550). In addition to titles and authors, the list includes topics, format and access points. Links to free Spanish language health-related research databases and indexes are available at the Department of Health and Social Services Library's website at <https://guides.lib.de.us/dhssllibrary/spanishlanguageresources>. These include Medline Plus, the National Institutes of Health's website with free, up-to-date information on diseases, medications and wellness.



## Festival of Words Week 2021

After a small hiccup last year... the Festival of Words Delaware was cancelled. It was to occur one day after the world closed down. This year we were determined that the tradition continue. Like many other events, it has been reimagined as a virtual weeklong extravaganza rather than the in-person one day conference.

Festival of Words Delaware is a literary conference for young adult readers and the people who educate them. The goal is to expose students, teachers and librarians to diverse literature. Participants learn the tricks of the trade from published authors and other experts in the field.

FOW Delaware 2021 is featuring five young adult books. Four authors and one illustrator will be in attendance. Check out our virtual line-up.

Sunday, February 28, 2021 at 4:30pm EST

**Meet the Authors:** Jewell Parker Rhodes, Catherine Ryan Hyde, Karol Ruth Silverstein, Jordan Ifueko

Monday, March 1, 2021 at 4:30pm EST

Jewell Parker Rhodes ("Black Brother, Black Brother")

Tuesday, March 2, 2021 at 4:30pm EST

Catherine Ryan Hyde ("Have You Seen Luis Velez?")

Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at 4:30pm EST

Karol Ruth Silverstein ("Cursed" - DEBUT NOVELIST)

Thursday, March 4, 2021 at 4:30pm EST

Jordan Ifueko ("The Raybearer" - DEBUT AUTHOR)

Saturday, March 6, 2021 at 11:30am EST

Nathan Powell (the March trilogy - Illustrator)

Registration for each hour-long session will begin in February. For more information, please email: [festivalofwordsde@gmail.com](mailto:festivalofwordsde@gmail.com) or you can keep checking our website: [www.festivalofwordsde.com](http://www.festivalofwordsde.com). Participants may attend all sessions. There is no limit. We promise that you will not be sorry that you did.

BOOKS. AUTHORS. ARTISTS. YOU.



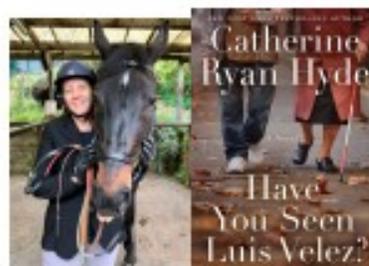
# Festival of Words Week

(February 28th 2021 - March 6th 2021)

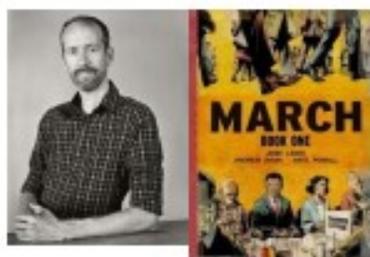
**Award Winning Author:**  
Jewell Parker Rhodes



**Award Winning Author:**  
Catherine Ryan Hyde



**Illustrator:**  
Nate Powell



**Debut Author:**  
Jordan Ifueko



**Debut Novelist:**  
Karol Ruth Silverstein

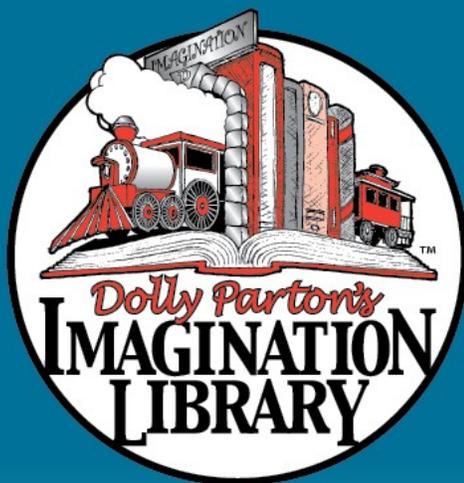


**Meet the Authors! Sunday, February 28th at 4:30pm**

We are kicking off the week with an Author Panel.  
Come and meet Jewell, Katherine, Jordan and Karol.

Festival of Words Delaware is an annual literacy conference for secondary students and the adults with whom they work. Sponsors include: Christiana Care and Delaware Library Association

For More Info: [WWW.FESTIVALOFWORDSDE.COM](http://WWW.FESTIVALOFWORDSDE.COM)



# Free books for children!

[delawarelibraries.org/imagination](http://delawarelibraries.org/imagination)



Dolly Parton's Imagination Library provides FREE books by mail for children from birth up to their 5th birthday!

[DelawareLibraries.org](http://DelawareLibraries.org)

