Engaging and Assisting Community Members in the Pursuit of African American Heritage

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Conversation Starter #1: Who are you, and why are you here?

Conversation Starter #2: Spotlight on opportunities for programming and partnerships

**Benefits of Programming**

**INDIVIDUALS WILL BENEFIT**
Library programs are opportunities for continuing education and lifelong learning. They serve residents of all ages and income levels. They serve a community’s diversity through engaging entertainment, enrichment, and opportunities to encounter new ideas and learn new skills.

**COMMUNITIES WILL BENEFIT**
Programming helps develop a community voice and can support civic dialogues. It helps foster community networks, introduces residents, invites newcomers, and allows exploration of ideas in a safe environment. Programming opens doors to new partnerships that can extend the community identity.

**LIBRARIES WILL BENEFIT**
Cultural programs build awareness of the library and its value within the community, drawing increased attention to many important services the library provides. Program audiences are likely to return to the library to use collections and access electronic resources. They are also likely to communicate the value of the library to others.


Conversation Starter #3: Resources and strategies for assisting family historians

Conversation Starter #4: Tapping into the resources of colleges and universities

“The Newberry has been awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Community Conversations Grant for its project “Chicago Reflects on the 1919 Race Riots.” Developed in partnership with 10 other Chicago-based cultural organizations and designed to commemorate the 100th anniversary of a week-long period of racial violence in the city, the grant will support a broad range of city-wide programs—from film premieres and youth poetry slams to public conversations and bike tours—and engage audiences in an ongoing dialogue about the riots’ impact on Chicago’s past and present.”
Conversation Starter #5: Resource & Idea sharing

Library Programming Competencies

**Organizational Skills**
Works toward managing time and projects efficiently and effectively at multiple levels: individually, institutionally, and in collaboration with outside organizations and agencies.

**Knowledge of the Community**
Works toward understanding the communities for which programs are developed, including their particular needs and interests; building respectful, reciprocal relationships with community members and organizations; and ensuring access to a wide variety of programs for all community members, especially those who have historically been underserved or face other challenges to access.

**Interpersonal Skills**
Works toward communicating effectively and appropriately with all stakeholders and audiences to provide consultation, mediation, and guidance during programs and in other contexts relating to programs.

**Event Planning**
Works toward planning, managing, and implementing events that are both developmentally and culturally appropriate for their intended audiences.

**Creativity**
Responds to challenges and problems with inventiveness, flexibility, and creativity to resolve them.

**Outreach & Marketing**
Works toward communicating information about programs to all community members who could potentially attend or benefit, using a variety of digital and analog channels in ways that are culturally and developmentally appropriate.

**Content Knowledge**
Works toward sufficient knowledge of program content to deliver, manage, or evaluate programs, according to role.

**Financial Skills**
Works toward budgeting, seeking funding for, and managing the finances of a program or suite of programs, often in collaboration with external partners.

**Evaluation**
Works toward using statistical and qualitative tools to measure program effectiveness and impact on all community audiences, including those that have historically been un- and underserved; and using this information to iteratively improve the development and delivery of programs.