



**The Monmouth County Library is honored to be the recipient of the 2012 Circle of Excellence Award, given each year by the Greater Monmouth Chamber of Commerce. The Library received the award for the category "Public Service."**

The Circle of Excellence Award represents the Chamber's annual search for outstanding contributions to the community. The award is given in six categories and can be given to both individuals and organizations.

The Public Service award is designed to foster a public awareness of the wide range of services and programs offered to the community by the Monmouth County Library, according to the Chamber. The awards dinner will be held on Thursday, June 7 at the Battleground Country Club in Manalapan.

Accepting the award for the Library will be Renee B. Swartz, chair of the Monmouth County Library Commission, and Freeholder Lillian G. Burry, liaison to the Library.



Swartz has chaired the Library Commission since 1976, and also serves as chair of the New

Jersey Center for the Book (an affiliate of the U.S. Library of Congress). She was recently named the 2012 New Jersey Library Champion by the New Jersey State Library.

"It is with great pride that the Monmouth County Library accepts the Circle of Excellence Award for Public Service from the Greater Monmouth Chamber of Commerce," Swartz said. "The Library, as the community and cultural center of the county, has as its mission to enrich the quality of life of the residents here in our great county and is the resource that touches us all for lifelong learning, for information access and for recreation. Its doors are always open wide to afford us all the opportunity to reach the 'American Dream.'"

Freeholder Burry, a former Monmouth County Library Commissioner, has been the liaison to the Monmouth County Library System since she first began serving on the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders in 2006.

"I'd like to thank the Greater Monmouth Chamber of Commerce for recognizing the fine services that our Library and its staff members provide," Freeholder Burry said. "In these challenging times, the Library has increasingly become a vital part of the lives of Monmouth County residents. At the library you can find computer classes, help with your income tax preparation, English language instruction, seminars for first-time homeowners, workshops for SAT preparation, and resources for jobseekers, to name but a few. As we say, the Library is more than just books."

Swartz noted that from its modest beginnings in 1923 in the basement of the Hall of Records with 8,500 books, through the years of reliance on a bookmobile to circulate items, the Monmouth County Library has grown to encompass 13 branches and

14 member libraries.

"I am honored and pleased that the Greater Monmouth Chamber of Commerce has selected the Library for this award. We are proud of the work of our staff that has made the Headquarters building the busiest public library building in New Jersey," said Kenneth Sheinbaum, director of the Library.

"But even more, it is satisfying to see how the public has validated our venture in a new kind of library service, one that is apparent in both the design of the building and in our approach to service," Sheinbaum said. "Here we have an alliance between the circulation of materials, both print and non-print, and extensive reference in a successful relationship with large scale event programming. The combination has become more than the sum of its parts, and the Library has become more than storehouse. It is a place to realize potential, revitalize life, and restore balance in difficult times."

More than 230,000 residents currently hold Monmouth County Library cards, and in 2011, the Library logged approximately 3 million visits throughout its branches. In 2011, the Library circulated nearly 4 million items, and more than 155,000 people attended 6,829 programs held throughout the 13 Library branches.

"We can only guess what the new way to be a library will mean for us and our customers, but we will do our best to provide what they must have to prosper," Sheinbaum said. "We will evolve with our community, and I believe our ability to recognize need and to change and grow is really why the award has been made to this institution."

For more information on the Monmouth County Library, please visit our webpage at [www.monmouthcountylib.org](http://www.monmouthcountylib.org)