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**EXECUTIVE OFFICE**

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NEWS RELEASE



**The Friends of Newark Free Library and New Castle County announce M&T Bank Grant to establish the New Castle County Young Writers Workshop**

The Friends of Newark Free Library and New Castle County's Department of Community Services announced plans to leverage their vast literary and art experiences, with M&T Bank's support, to create the New Castle County Young Writer's Workshop.

"The Workshop is a transformative youth writing initiative for at-risk children in grades Kindergarten to eight," County Executive Thomas P. Gordon stated.

The generous grant from the M&T Bank will support this new initiative. Under the tutelage of staff from the Department of Community Services and a team of skilled advisers, forty children in New Castle County will collaborate in teams to illustrate and compose eight books. The creative process of working in teams helps provide a natural environment to practice the skill of fine art, writing, editing, and to develop the communication skills necessary for future success.

The eight books will be entered in the national "Kids Are Authors" competition, offered by Scholastic Books. Additionally, all participants will have the opportunity to share their literary work while on a formal book tour at libraries throughout New Castle County.

Peg Saenger, Co-President of the Friends of the Newark Free Library stated, "Our Friends group was established to promote reading, knowledge and proficiency. This initiative addresses those very objectives."

The goal of the Youth Writer's Workshop is to create a meaningful literary program that allows the students to participate in a team development process. Sophia Hanson, General Manager for the Department of Community Services, describes the program as, "a Writer's Workshop that will create a real opportunity for the County's youth to experience the phenomenon of earned and celebrated literary success."

The Writers Workshop kickoff event is scheduled for December 1, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. at the Newark Free Library.

The sites participating in the Young Writers Workshop are:

Absalom Jones Community Center

Appoquinimink Library

Edgemoor Revitalization Cooperative

Newark Library

North Market Street Library

Rose Hill Community Center

Sparrow Run Resource Center

West End Neighborhood House

New Castle County Council will be briefed on this program at its Community Services Committee meeting Tuesday afternoon.