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Gardner-Webb's Dover Library Receives \$3,000 Grant from American Library Association

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DOVER LIBRARY

Gardner-Webb's Dover Library Receives \$3,000 Grant from American Library Association

BY OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS ON APRIL 21, 2021



Funds will Begin Digitizing the Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Association Records

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—Gardner-Webb University's John R. Dover Memorial Library recently received a \$3,000 grant from the American Library Association (ALA) through its program, "Libraries Transforming Communities: Focus on Small & Rural Libraries." Grants were presented to 517 libraries in 48 states. On the list of seven North Carolina recipients, Gardner-Webb is the only university library.

Library Dean Dr. Pam Dennis said the grant will be used to begin digitizing the Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Association records. The Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Association was originally founded in Cleveland County, N.C., in 1889, with roots extending back to Shiloh Baptist Church in 1867, to support the growth and formation of African American churches and schools in the Foothills of North and South Carolina.

"Exactly half of those African-American churches are pastored by current or former students from our divinity programs," Dennis noted. "We will be working with the individual churches mostly in Cleveland and Rutherford counties to help them celebrate 100-year anniversaries."

The ALA distributed nearly \$1 million in funding for small and rural libraries through its grant program. The funding will enable libraries to lead community engagement efforts in small and rural communities on topics like the COVID pandemic, mental health, public land use, the climate crisis and Black history. Grant funds may be used to cover a range of expenses, including staff time and collections and technology purchases.



"Through community engagement, libraries are continuing their important work on literacy and access, while also working to fill gaps in other areas that may not have fallen to libraries in the past," said ALA President Julius C. Jefferson. "We are excited to provide the resources for hundreds of libraries to take on new challenges in their communities and look forward to seeing the great things they accomplish."

Besides the ALA grant, each library will receive online staff training in how to lead conversations, a skill vital to 21st-century librarianship. Since 2014, ALA's Libraries Transforming Communities initiative has re-imagined the role libraries play in supporting communities. Libraries of all types have utilized free dialogue and deliberation training and resources to lead community and campus forums; take part in anti-violence activities; provide a space for residents to come together and discuss challenging topics; and have productive conversations with civic leaders, library trustees and staff. The initiative is part of ALA's longtime commitment to preparing library workers for the expanding role of libraries.



Additionally, Dennis said, the library is waiting to hear from several other grant applications and has received a separate \$1,500 COVID relief grant that includes digital signage.

[Visit the John R. Dover Library Website.](#) >

About the American Library Association

The American Library Association (ALA) is the foremost national organization providing resources to inspire library and information professionals to transform their communities through essential programs and services. For more than 140 years, the ALA has been the trusted voice for academic, public, school, government and special libraries, advocating for the profession and the library's role in enhancing learning and ensuring access to information for all. For more information, visit www.ala.org.

About Gardner-Webb

Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university. Gardner-Webb emphasizes a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics to prepare students to become effective leaders within the global community. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.

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We welcome your suggestions and feedback, contact:

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