

## SOUTHWORTH LIBRARY LEARNING COMMONS IS 2013 SHUBERT LIBRARY EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNER

The New York State Regents Advisory Council on Libraries is pleased to announce that the 2013 Joseph F. Shubert Library Excellence Award has been awarded to the *Southworth Library Learning Commons* at SUNY Canton for their transitioning to a learning commons model from a traditional academic library.

After a devastating revelation from their 2009 SUNY system-wide Student Opinion Survey that students rated their campus library last of seven in the technical colleges category and at the very bottom of all the 27 state-operated campus libraries surveyed, they determined to flip those standings by transitioning to a learning commons model from a traditional academic library.

The Library was able to expand its hours as well as stay open 24/7 during exam periods. The Library department combined with the Tutoring department to become one, library-based learning center for all students on campus. The collections expanded to include a range of technology to use within the library as well as an extensive collection of textbooks. The headcounts and service contacts continue to climb at Southworth Library Learning Commons and have doubled since 2010. They are now referred to as the “jewel” of the campus and see it celebrated in campus tours at all levels. Because their entire approach is progressive, they continue to search for ways to introduce new media and meet more patron needs, with an eye on staying ahead of the ever changing demand for resources and services.

The Runner Up for 2013 is the School Library Systems Association of New York State, Inc. (SLSA) with its consortium of school systems across NYS to create the SLS Consortium of Online Resources for Education (SCORE).

This group uses a web-based database system to collect data that is used in the negotiations to receive discounted pricing for online databases for school libraries across New York State. The Shubert Committee wishes to recognize the great savings of money, time and effort that this project provides.

Last year’s winner, the Greece Public Library, won for expanding their programming space. Bernadette Foster, Director of the Greece Public Library, said, “We needed to expand our program space, but we couldn’t afford to expand the library.” By taking advantage of tools from the Monroe County library system that keep track of which books and materials patrons are actually using, Greece library staff were able to scale down their collection of books and open up enough space to triple the size of the program room. “We were able to identify what people in this community wanted from their library collection and were able to delete a lot of things that were just sitting there not being used and we were able to buy things that people really want,” said Foster.

The award will be officially presented in September at the 2013 New York Library Association Conference in Niagara Falls. As the 2013 Shubert Award winner, the

Southworth Library Learning Commons will receive \$1,000, which is graciously donated by the Friends of the New York State Library, and a plaque. The runner-up, School Library Systems Association of New York State, will receive a plaque.

Members of the Regents Advisory Council on Libraries 2013 Shubert Award Committee are Mary Muller, Chair; Steve Manning and Sharon Orienter. The Committee was uniformly enthusiastic in its decision to honor the Southworth Library Learning Commons submission as an excellent example of the “spirit of the Shubert award”.

The Joseph F. Shubert Excellence Award is given annually to recognize the achievements of small, medium and large libraries and library consortia in New York State. The Award honors libraries or library consortia that have taken significant steps within the past two years to improve the quality of library service to users. For more information about the Joseph F. Shubert Library Excellence Award and the Regents Advisory Council on Libraries, visit:

<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/adviscns/rac/index.html> or contact the Office of the State Librarian at (518) 474-5930.