Embedded Librarianship and Public Libraries

By Jayme Bosio, Government Research Services Librarian
Palm Beach County Library System
Learning objectives:

- What is Embedded Librarianship?
- Why the program was implemented
- How the program was implemented
- Challenges and Benefits
What is Embedded?

“What Embedded librarianship is a distinctive innovation that moves the librarians out of libraries and creates a new model of library and information work. It emphasizes the importance of forming a strong working relationship between the librarian and a group or team of people who need the librarian’s information expertise.”

Embedded ≠ Outreach
Embedded librarianship is about getting the librarian out from behind the desk, where they are passively waiting for a question, and having them actively go out into the community and ask, “What information do you need to accomplish your goals?”

Why embedded?

Literature review:

- Number of questions ↓
- Type of questions changed over time

Check out “Leaving Fort Ref” at WebJunction:
http://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction/Leaving_Fort_Ref_Frontiers_of_Embedded_Librarianship.html
15 of 30 county departments responded to the advertisement stating they were interested in the program.
Departments
Project examples

● What are the pros and cons of using turf grass in parks?
● How effective are Batterer Intervention Programs?
● What practices can individuals and businesses implement to become more environmentally sustainable?
● What are the best practices for streamlining the Request for Submittal process?
Legislative Affairs

- What is the impact of enhanced lighting in areas of high crime?
- What are the pros and cons of lifting the Cuba embargo?
- What incentives do other cities and states employ to attract the film and entertainment industry?
- What is the viability of having a third political party in the United States?

Enhanced Lighting and its Effect on Crime
Prepared by Julie Kishan

Summary:
There are two common beliefs as to why enhanced lighting may reduce crime. The first being that increased lighting will deter criminals with the fear of a greater probability of arrest due to increased surveillance and visibility by both police and the public. The second belief is that increased lighting demonstrates a greater community investment and will lead to a sense of community pride.

These are few studies with conclusive data that have been conducted on the effects of enhanced lighting on crime. The biggest study in the U.S. was done in the 1970s and reviewed several cities. This study showed that overall the lighting had little to no effect on crime rate. There have been additional studies conducted in more recent years which support the U.S. findings on lighting and crime. A recent trend that has led to considerable positive results is Crime Prevention through Environmental Design, or CPTED, which examines the overall design of buildings and surrounding space to eliminate opportunities whose crime may occur.

- A U.S. Dept of Justice study from the 1970s found that improved lighting was not an effective means of preventing crime while a more recent study conducted in the UK found the opposite to be true with significant reductions in crime both in day and nighttime. A separate review combined the results of these U.S. and UK studies to find that the improved lighting led to an overall 21 percent decrease in crime (Clarke, 2008).

- The general authority on lighting, IESNA (Illuminating Engineering Society of North America) does not generally support the fact that increased lighting leads to a safer environment based on the results from previous case studies. However, they do state that there are certain locations and circumstances where enhanced lighting may be needed such as in an area where there is known to be higher crime or there have been previous attacks. Here, they recommend not just increasing lighting but the proper placement and consideration of lighting guidelines such as consistent vertical luminance, uniformity, and glare to help ensure enhanced security (Rothman, 2009).

- New York State Energy Research and Development Authority found that simply increasing the light will not make an area seem safer due to glare from high levels of light that make it more difficult to see and therefore increase fear (Clarke, 2003).

- In 2002, there were 25 vehicle thefts on Gray Street in the United Kingdom. Police believed this to be partially due to poor lighting and organized a campaign for the installation of new lighting in December of 2003. In 2004 only 6 thefts were reported and residents reported that they felt safer (Clarke, 2008).
Environmental Resources Management
By the numbers...

Pilot project duration: 6.5 months
Average hrs./mo. = 4.5
Challenges
Since 2015...

● 16 librarians have participated
● 32 projects have been completed
● 3 presentations at conferences
● 2 awards have been received
Best advice given to me...

Find the project where **YOU** can have the greatest impact!
Questions?

bosioj@pbclibrary.org
561-233-2777