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[Jacob Botros – NC Congressional District 9](#)

Jacob is from Waxhaw, North Carolina and is an 11th grader at North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics. His riveting video tells his personal story of how libraries helped him and then proceeds to share profound thoughts from many people across the state. [View More](#)

Marlisha Blakeney
Student Library Ambassador

A North Carolinian's Library Experience

With the increase in technology and decrease in public funding, are libraries still important? This question may seem easy to answer, but it requires a search deep within your heart and history reflection to answer honestly. As I think about the true importance of a building filled with books, pamphlets, computers, and great information for all people, I began to appreciate all that such an amazing place has to offer me and my community. The library is well known for building communities, educating, building art centers, and empowering the youth.

The library serves as a community center for diverse populations, as they reach out to immigrants, lesbians, gay, males, females, minorities, the majority, youth, elderly, etc. Libraries have all types of books for all people with various interests. Not only are libraries the bridge to building diverse communities, but they provide a place where new immigrants and residents can connect with resources, learn various skills, and interact with new people. The library is a place where new people can learn about their new town, community, and government. Libraries provide information and support for different genders and the questioning outsiders who are ignorant about lesbians, gay, bisexual, transgender, and much more. Libraries even provide information and support for the disabled, developing programs with the American Sign Language program and others. The library isn't a place for just one type of people, as it is diverse and increases our knowledge and decreases ignorance.

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[Marlisha Blakeney - NC Congressional District 9](#)

"As I think about the true importance of a building filled with books, pamphlets, computers, and great information for all people, I begin to appreciate all that such an amazing place has to offer me and my community. The library is well known for building communities, educating, building art centers, and empowering the youth."

Marlisha is from Monroe, North Carolina and is a 12th grader at the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics. Her essay delves expertly into the various ways quality libraries are interwoven into the fabric of modern day society. [View More](#)



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[Alex Blumenthal – NC Congressional District 5](#)

Alex is from Salisbury, North Carolina and is a 5th grader at Overton Elementary School. His video details the essential value of libraries to him and all of North Carolina. [View More](#)

For as long as I can remember, Caroline Burnette is a part of my life. From Mother & Baby Story-Times, to Preschool Reading Programs, to the magnanimous event that is Summer Reading, my mother had me involved in libraries from the start. It was thanks to her education and the fun environment of our local library in Canton, NC that I developed a love for reading.

By the time I was four, I knew I wanted to be a writer, and when I wasn't pouring over my favorite books in my tree-house, I was scribbling stories of my own. Since then, I've gone on to win multiple writing contests, write a novel, and, for five years, have my own column in a local newspaper.

When my family and I moved to Oklahoma several years ago, we searched first for the

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[Caroline Burnette - NC Congressional District 10](#)

"When I was younger, I was told that, "Reading is the magic key to take you where want to be," and I'm inclined to agree with that statement."

Caroline is from Shelby, North Carolina and is an 11th grader at Carolina Pines Academy. Her essay describes how libraries have been a significant part of her life since early childhood. [View More](#)



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[Samuel Kostiuk – NC Congressional District 10](#)

Sam is from Cherryville, North Carolina and is a 5th grader at WB Beam Intermediate School. His video does an excellent job talking about the value of libraries for him and his friend Winnie the Pooh. [View More](#)



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[Benjamin Warlick - NC Congressional District 10](#)

Ben is from Black Mountain, North Carolina and is a 9th grader at Charles D. Owen High School. His website has excellent design and content and most impressively direct input from his fellow students about the importance of libraries. [View More](#)

James David Simmons, Jr.

It might be more persuasive to tell you that I had never been in a library until I began school, but it wouldn't be true. My Mother took me to weekly "Times for Two" at our public library for as long as I can remember until I progressed to the youth Summer activities where I hunted reptiles, like an anaconda that was 15 feet long, and tie-dyed t-shirts. However, in the rural county where I live, many of my classmates did not get a chance to enjoy a book until they began school. Their families do not have the means to visit public libraries and a school library is all they've ever known. Libraries are an invaluable resource for anyone wanting to learn.

For me, libraries are a calming place to be in because of their quiet atmosphere and comfortable settings. They are amazing places that I enjoy being in. They are amazing for one simple reason - it accommodates all types of people and no one is exactly the same. There are different books, people, and reasons a person will go to a library. All ages go to libraries and it's inevitable that you will learn. Some people go to libraries to read and do research. Some people go to relax, others go to read for fun or need to be taken to another place for the time being.

Libraries are most important to me because I love to read. Four years ago, my father, David Simmons Sr., was critically injured in a rollover utility vehicle accident. He was working at his alma mater, West Wilkes High School, as a school resource officer for the Wilkes County Sheriff's Department just before the homecoming football game. He was put into the intensive

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[David Simmons, Jr. - NC Congressional District 5](#)

"For me, libraries are a calming place to be in because of their quiet atmosphere and comfortable settings. They are amazing places that I enjoy being in. They are amazing for one simple reason - it accommodates all types of people and no one is exactly the same."

David is from Wilkesboro, North Carolina and an 8th grader at West Wilkes Middle School. His outstanding essay details a poignant story of how libraries were there for him and his family during hard times. [View More](#)



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[Brenna Loendorf - NC Congressional District 10](#)

Brenna is from Stanley, North Carolina and is an 11th grader at the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics. Her excellent video interviews users of her public library and they share why libraries are important to them. [View More](#)

Jessica Slattery

The library is a study place, a social gathering, and a research field for me....

like and connection to community through volunteer activities. But it hasn't always been that way. Reading was never a pleasurable experience when I was younger. No matter what my parents tried, without fail, I would end up in tears. My family put more emphasis on other activities such as sports and hands on learning. We did not spend a lot of time in the library. Reading had become such a dark, painful experience that when we did visit the library, I found it dull and stressful. However, the library eventually helped me overcome my anxiety toward reading when I was introduced to the animal books in the children's section. It became my goal to read all of the animal books on the second floor; I never finished; however, I learned more about animals and how to read in a few years than ever before.

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[Jessica Slattery - NC Congressional District 9](#)

"...the library eventually helped me overcome my anxiety toward reading when I was introduced to the animal books in the children's section."

Jessica is from Morrisville, North Carolina and is an 11th grade homeschooler whose outstanding essay talks about how her relationship with libraries went from a place of fear and anxiety of reading to a place of discovery and window to the world as a homeschool student. [View More](#)

Andrew Killebrew
"Libraries helped me develop a love and passion for reading when I was younger...."

There was a large foundation of my knowledge and education, including my learning and personality from a young age. Coming to many parts of school, I consider books to be a vital educational choice at an age of young professional. Luckily, there are still a few more that show there is an incredible source of knowledge and fun.

Libraries helped me develop a love and passion for reading when I was younger, a love I consider to be vital to learning and growing intellectually. Without them, I don't think I would have succeeded to the extent of today that we consider to be mine. They were my starting point as a student. As a result, I continue to bring to public and private libraries a strong belief that there is no other way to learn. I grew to appreciate them and started bringing writing as a young child. In addition, I volunteered twice a week to work in my library's children's department.

Through the work, I was able to develop an appreciation for the inner workings of the library and what it does for people looking for reading books.

In my eyes, libraries are incredibly important to educate the future leaders of North Carolina. As a child of a librarian, there is a firm belief that a love of reading at an early age can permanently leave a child with an appreciation for learning, which is a valuable trait for someone to be successful. With that in mind, I bring to you the idea that the best way to learn through the library, the idea, is the best for the state.

In my fifteen years of life, the library has been an important part of my childhood and development. When coming to the local library, I have found that the best way to learn is through the library. I will work with my education and mental resources to a love of reading, both in part by being involved with the local library. I think there are many ways that will help a child to be a better reader and writer. I will be sure to do so for my life.

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[Andy Killebrew - NC Congressional District 8](#)

"In my eyes, libraries are incredibly important to educate the future leaders of North Carolina. As a child of a librarian, I have a firm belief that a love of reading at an early age can permanently leave a child with an appreciation for learning, which is a valuable trait for someone to be successful."

Andy is from Lexington, North Carolina and is a 9th grader at Central Davidson High School. His essay eloquently talks about how his relationship with libraries and love of reading has shaped the person that he is today. [View More](#)



Alea's NCLA Library Project

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[Alea Mitchell - NC Congressional District 5](#)

Alea is from Wilkesboro, North Carolina and is a 2nd grader at Millers Creek Elementary. Her video does an excellent job of detailing why she loves libraries and why they are fun places to do pretty much whatever she likes to you – especially read! [View More](#)

Alizdair Sebastien Ray
"I'm 10 years old and a home school 5th grader. There is not a day that we are not at the library."

When I was in kindergarten, I was the youngest child in the classroom. My mom and dad used to read to me every night. I was the only one who could read. I was the only one who could write. I was the only one who could do all the things that the other kids couldn't. I was the only one who could do all the things that the other kids couldn't. I was the only one who could do all the things that the other kids couldn't.

Personally, the libraries were the places that have helped me learn how to read and write. I have been reading since I was a young child. I have been writing since I was a young child. I have been reading and writing since I was a young child. I have been reading and writing since I was a young child. I have been reading and writing since I was a young child.

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[Alizdair Sebastien Ray - NC Congressional District 7](#)

"Because of early reading skills, I started writing for a children's newspaper at 6 years old. I'm still a contributing writer and it's 2014. Also, I started debating last year and really had a great time with it."

Alizdair is from Hope Mills, North Carolina and is a 5th grade home school student. His excellent essay talks about how he began learning how to read at an early age and how much of a positive impact this has had on him. [View More](#)

Ruth Ramirez

"Libraries are important to me because how i am a hispanic / latino i really don't know how to talk english .

Library Libraries always improving mine and lots of students grammar and test scores. Libraries aren't always libraries because there always technology. Libraries are important because they enable people to gain information that builds their personality and careers like me. They also enable us to appreciate and understand the world around us. Libraries are places to come know themselves and their community. Libraries play a big important part in the political life of a community. Libraries provide the immigrants like my family with helpful information and help them improve their language in english. In the libraries there is always something or someone that encourages reading. the best library for me would be in school because you feel like the library is your space. and make you part of your community. There is also computing because there is free internet, especially people looking for and applying into jobs, loans, and more so computers to do our homework because we could not afford computers or internet people without printers at home and go to the library and go print it out. There is a book courses. like job skills, english if it not your native language like me i speak Spanish but learn more english with books or spoken things like creating writing, art, and sports. You always learn new skills to read better.

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Ruth Ramirez - NC Congressional District 5

"Libraries play a big important part in the political life of a community. Libraries provide the immigrants like my family with helpful information and help them improved their language in English."

Ruth is from North Wilkesboro, North Carolina and is a 7th grader at West Wilkes Middle School. Her essay details how important libraries are to her and her family as an immigrant to our country.

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Samuel Chatley - NC Congressional District 13

Sam is from Youngsville, North Carolina and is a 2nd grade home school student. His video shows how important the library is for him and his family as a homeschooler and how much he likes both his library's books and programs. [View More](#)

Stacky Kostiuk

*"It's great to be here,
Surrounded by the books.
Libraries bring so much cheer
It's not always about the looks."*

Newspapers and computers
Provide sources.
Teachers and tutors,
they can take courses

My friends and I,
Find the library exciting.
We always hate to say goodbye
Even if we are tired of writing.

We can sit in YA
And read,
While our siblings play
And learn to lead.

[View Poem](#)

Stacy Kostiuk – NC Congressional District 10

*"I love it here,
I feel at home.
I feel no fear,
Free to roam."*

Stacy is from Cherryville, North Carolina and is an 8th grader at John Chavis Middle School. Her poem eloquently describes how important libraries are to her and our society in so many different ways – a place for books, a place to have fun, and place to find jobs, a place for solace, peace, and safety. [View More](#)