



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*Editor: Please do not edit out ALA credit in the last paragraph.*

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### **The Garnet A. Wilson Public Library RECEIVES NATIONAL GRANT FOR SMALL AND RURAL LIBRARIES**

WAVERLY — The Garnet A. Wilson Public Library has been selected as one of 310 libraries to participate in round two of Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities, an American Library Association (ALA) initiative that provides community engagement and accessibility resources to small and rural libraries to help them better serve people with disabilities.

The competitive award comes with a \$10,000 grant that will help the library install automatic door openers at both the Piketon Branch and Eastern Branch Libraries.

“We are so proud to be chosen for this amazing opportunity,” said Library Director Natosha Massie “This grant will allow us improve our services to ensure this population feels welcome and comfortable in our space. We are able to install automatic door openers at two locations with this round of funding, but we are planning to install them at our Western Branch in the future.”

As part of the grant, the library will host an in-person conversation with local residents about how the library can better serve those with disabilities and discuss the intended use of the grant funds. This event will be held at the Piketon Branch Library on Wednesday, July 17<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm.

“Many people find it difficult to even get inside our library branches because we do not have automatic doors,” Massie said. “It is crucial for our library to adequately serve people with disabilities and uphold our duty of being inclusive and accessible to all.” By implementing accommodations such as automatic door openers, the library ensures that all community members can more fully engage with our resources and services. Providing accessible spaces fosters equal opportunity for learning and participation and promotes an enriched community environment where everyone feels valued and empowered to explore knowledge and culture freely.

If you are interested in getting involved or taking part in the in-person conversation, please contact Jennifer Wright at (740) 947-4921.

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.

*“Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities is an initiative of the American Library Association (ALA) in collaboration with the Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL).”*