

Essex

Essex Library Number One In Public Service

Clubs & Organizations

Submitted by Jenny Tripp, The Essex Library, on 2009-12-01.

The Essex Library is proud to be the recipient of a 2010 Connecticut Award for Excellence in Public Library Service, conferred by The Connecticut State Library and the Connecticut Library Association. One of only two such prizes given each year, the Essex Library won in the population category of 15,000 and under for the Library's GirlZone program.

GirlZone, a self-esteem and life-skills course for adolescent girls, was made possible by a generous grant from the Middlesex County Community Foundation, as well as substantial donations of time and services made by several local businesses. The program series was presented by the Library's Head of Children's and Young Adult Services Judie McCann, and Children and Young Adult Services Assistant Jessica Branciforte, with the help of the Paul & Lisa Program Incorporated's Victoria Taylor who served as facilitator.



Photo by Essex Library

(Left to right) Jamie Gahran, Stephanie McCann, Chloe Lyons, and Mary MacNeil were among the participants in the award-winning GirlZone program offered by the Essex Library in 2009.

Utilizing the expertise of local business women and professionals, the eight-week course covered topics including healthy eating, job interview skills, internet safety, and skin care, and culminated in a graduation dinner hosted by the Saybrook Point Inn.

A panel of Librarians, Trustees and/or Friends from outside Connecticut reviewed the nominations. According to Mary Engels of the CLA Public Library Awards Committee, "The judges were incredibly impressed with the difference the Library is making in the lives of the girls. They also liked the community partnerships that were forged and the fact that this was accomplished with a very small budget."

The Essex Library's director Richard Conroy, Judie McCann, Jessica Branciforte, and Jenny Tripp will be featured speakers at the CLA Annual Conference in April at the Mohegan Sun Conference Center, where they will accept the award on the Library's behalf at the Awards Reception. The Essex Library staff will also contribute an article about the program for the Connecticut Libraries publication. An award reception will be held at the Essex Library Friday, Jan. 22 at 4 p.m. and the public is invited to attend.