



NEWS RELEASE FROM ASSEMBLYWOMAN DONNA LUPARDO

123rd Assembly District

Chair, Committee on Agriculture

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Assemblywoman Lupardo Announces Equipment Upgrades for GFJ Memorial Library's Tech Center *New laptops will be used to enhance programming*

(Endicott, NY) The George F. Johnson (GFJ) Memorial Library in Endicott received a boost as the result of funding secured by Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo in last year's state budget. The \$10,000 Assembly grant allowed for the purchase of nine new laptops for the Library's Tech Center. Lupardo was joined by representatives from the GFJ Memorial Library in making the announcement.

The library's Tech Center promotes digital literacy through free classes and resources that are open to all. The announcement comes ahead of the launch of Tech 360, along with their Digital Navigator Program. This is a partnership between GFJ Library and Mission: Ignite, a STEM-based program that began in Buffalo, NY.

With the help of the Community Foundation for South Central NY, the Tech Center will have an AmeriCorps member serving as a Digital Skills Trainer. They will provide Tech 360 computer training classes and one-on-one digital navigator support for the next year.

Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo said, "The GFJ Tech Center is an important community resource, providing important skills training to their patrons, in a safe and supportive environment. That's why it's important for them to have the most up to date equipment to assist them with their work to bridge the digital divide. I'm happy I was able to secure a library grant that will support their mission."

Seth Jacobus, Director, George F. Johnson Memorial Library, said, "Libraries aren't community centers, but they are the center of our communities. In upholding our mission to provide life-long learning opportunities to the community, these laptops will be used to teach digital literacy skills to our patrons and help us in our effort to close the digital divide in Endicott, NY."

Kenneth Roman, Head of Adult Services & Tech Center Manager, George F. Johnson Memorial Library, said, "Since I started running the Tech Center in 2016, I have seen many

patrons grow in their digital literacy skills. Whether it's learning basics on the computer, learning how to better use their cell phones, or learning how to protect themselves online from viruses and scams, the Tech Center has been there to assist and teach. With the introduction of Mission: Ignite's Tech 360 and Digital Navigator programs, funding from the Community Foundation for South Central New York, and Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo's generous grant to update our Tech Center laptops, we are able to continue these important services that the GFJ Library Tech Center offers to the community."

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