

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 25, 2018

Dr. Kathryn K. Matthew
Director
Institute of Museum and Library Services
955 L'Enfant Plaza North, SW
Suite 4000
Washington, DC 20024

To Dr. Matthew,

I write to express my support for the application from the Keene Public Library for a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Support from IMLS will help the Library implement its 'Little Makers: Library STEM and Maker Activities for Young Learners' program, a venture designed to meet a rising demand for quality science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programming for early learners.

I have always believed that a community library is more than just a building housing rows of books. Rather, it is an outlet to new information, enriching education and community-building recreation. The Keene Public Library's offering of books, multimedia, meeting spaces and programming connects a small city like Keene to a much larger world of discovery and wonder. From children settling down for story time to students participating in lively summer reading programs to adults attending vibrant discussions, a library like Keene's has much to offer to the people of all ages that it serves.

The Library's 'Little Makers' initiative will cater its programming to early learners ages 2 to 6 and their families. Recent research shows that young children are capable of engaging in science and STEM activities and developing resilience and executive function skills through inquiry-based STEM play. Partnering with community members like Keene State College and the Cheshire Children's Museum, library staff will craft early learning activities that will cultivate important STEM skills and habits of mind from everyday play. Furthermore, this project will produce a toolkit and provide training to other librarians so they can learn how to introduce very young children to STEM activities in the public library.

I strongly support this grant application and the focus on early STEM, tinkering, and making activities with families. If you have any questions or if I can do anything further to support the library's application, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator

CC: Keene Public Library