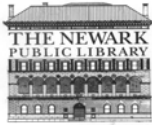


THE NEWARK PUBLIC LIBRARY
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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Newark Teens Invited to Create Comic Poster for Newark Public Library

Calling all teens!

The Newark Public Library is calling all teenagers, asking them to create a poster for a public service campaign that reminds patrons to return books and other items borrowed from the library.

For many years, public libraries across the country have suffered the impact of loss and theft of library materials. "We would like to involve our very talented teenagers in this public relations campaign to remind our patrons that lost, forgotten, or stolen books impact all patrons and cost the library a lot of money," said Library Director Wilma J. Grey. "When items are not returned, the library must make a choice between buying replacements of popular items or using funds for new materials. We can't always afford to do both."

The contest is open to youth between the ages of 12 and 18, and runs through July 7. The contest theme is "It's not cool to steal from the library." Librarians chose a comic format for the contest because of the immense popularity of graphic novels and manga, especially for teens.

"Not only do our graphic novels circulate heavily, but our books on how to draw comics are extremely popular with young people. We want to encourage them to use their creativity and take ownership of this campaign," said supervising librarian Michele Cappetta, who also is in charge of youth programming. "Their artistry and personal approach to this problem will make a much more interesting and compelling statement to the community than an old-fashioned library poster reminding patrons to return their library books."

To convey the message, teens are invited to try their hand at any comic style: American superheroes, Asian manga and manwha, traditional comic panels, or single panel cartoon illustrations.

Budding artists must use an official library poster page (available at all library locations in the children's rooms and at the reference desks). "We kept the format simple so the teens would have as much flexibility as possible in creating their posters," said Cappetta. The posters can be funny, dramatic, or have any other mood, as long as they convey the message that it's not cool to steal from the library.

The winning poster will be reproduced and may be displayed at any or all library locations. It may be used in library publications, on the Web site, and in publicity materials. The winners—and their parents if they are minors—must sign a release allowing the library to use the poster as a promotional tool. There will be no monetary compensation beyond the contest prizes for the poster's use. The artist will be credited in any use of the poster.

Librarians will judge the entries. One grand-prize winner and one runner-up will be chosen by July 30, 2009. The grand prize is a sketchbook and a choice of either Manga Studio or Anime Studio software, or a \$50 gift certificate for books or music. The runner-up will also receive a sketchbook and a \$25 gift certificate for books or music.

For more information, please call the Newark Public Library at 973-733-5642 or visit the library's Web site at kidsplace.npl.org.