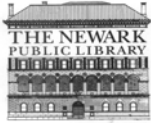


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P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Van Buren Branch to Host Meeting on Significant Cuts in Service at Newark Public Library

The Newark Public Library will host a community meeting at the Van Buren Branch, 140 Van Buren Street, at 6:00 pm on Wednesday, July 21, for residents interested in learning more about system-wide reductions in library services. A Spanish translator will be present at the meeting.

This is the third of four community meetings taking place throughout the city to discuss budget cuts and how they will impact the library services. Facing a historic financial crisis, the City of Newark is cutting funding to the Library by \$2.45 million. Although the numbers of visitors has been increasing in recent years, the Library's budget has been reduced nearly 45 percent since 2008. The cuts have forced the Library to scale back its hours, including shutting down all branches on Saturdays. The First Avenue and Madison branches will close permanently.

The Van Buren Branch will remain open; however, residents will see a vast reduction in services and hours of operation.

Nancy Zak, an Ironbound resident who is a frequent visitor at the Van Buren Branch, said the Library's resources are critical to helping Ironbound residents find jobs. Residents can research job opportunities, prepare their résumés, and complete online job applications using the Library's computer center.

"It is just wonderful to have access to books, but even more important for the community are many of the other services the Library offers," said Zak. "This is a community that does not have a lot of resources. There are a lot of homes that do not have computers in them, so having access to the computer is important."

Zak brought her daughter to the Library frequently when she was a child and now her daughter is volunteering because she realizes how vital the Library is to the community. "It is a safe haven for kids after school and during the summer," Zak said. "We realize the cuts are hitting the city, but this is just not a good solution."

Cynthia Mellon, an Ironbound resident and community organizer with the Ironbound Community Corporation, said, "The Library serves as an important anchor that draws together the various strands of the diverse neighborhood. The Van Buren Branch's

activities have opened up new doors for residents and have spawned other initiatives that improve the community, such as a community garden and cookbook.”

Mellon said the Library is especially critical in a city where there are new immigrants. “It serves the function of bringing literacy to kids,” she said. “For the Library to cut back its hours or, God forbid, be gone would be a terrible loss.”

The meeting is free and open to the public. For more information, please call (973) 733-7750.