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## **Library Receives Grant to Provide Digital Skills Training**

**MONROE, N.C. (February 16, 2021)** – The American Library Association (ALA) selected the Union County Public Library to participate in the Libraries Lead with Digital Skills initiative. The initiative by the ALA and the Public Library Association (PLA) is sponsored by Grow With Google, the tech company's economic opportunity initiative. The library will use the \$1,000 grant to host a small business webinar and small business passport program to encourage community members to visit small businesses in Union County.

"During these difficult times, we want to help support our local small business owners," said Danielle Carlton, Community Engagement Librarian.

In conjunction with SCORE Charlotte and Grow With Google, the library will host a webinar February 23 at 6:00 p.m. to show small business owners how to reach more customers online. Following the webinar, the library will launch the small business passport program, running from March 1 through March 22. The program encourages community members to support local businesses by visiting participating small businesses and getting a passport stamped. Once completed, and returned to any of the four library branches by 5:00 p.m. on March 22, individuals will be entered into a drawing to win one of three gift baskets with items from small businesses.

"We are proud to offer several digital services programs, particularly throughout the pandemic," said Nina Chaffin, Director of the Union County Public Library. "This initiative is an excellent opportunity to bolster our digital services while directly helping local small business owners expand their digital presence. It's really a win-win for the small business owners, the library, and our local economy."

This program is funded by Libraries Lead with Digital Skills, which was created so that local libraries can combine their own program offerings with Grow with Google training materials to offer virtual community workshops or other activities aimed at empowering small businesses to grow online or assisting job seekers to prepare for and find work.

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