



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

Harckham Announces \$11K in State Aid to Support Programming at the John C. Hart Memorial Library

PETE HARCKHAM July 3, 2025

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State Sen. Pete Harckham with (l-r) Hart Library's Head of Adult Services Allison Egan and Head of Young Adult Services Collin Russell, NYS Assemblymember Matt Slater, Hart Library Director Yvonne Cech and Library Trustee Cathleen Bahan

Shrub Oak, NY – New York State Senator Pete Harckham announced today that the John C. Hart Memorial Library has expanded its community programming through the purchase of new equipment made possible by \$11,000 in state funding he secured. Harckham recently visited the library during its Summer Reading Kickoff event to tour the space and view the

new additions that support the library's robust lineup of cooking, sewing, and digital media classes.

"Libraries are more than just places to borrow books—they are vibrant community hubs for learning, creativity, and connection," said Harckham. "I'm proud to have secured \$11,000 in State Senate grant funding to support the Hart Memorial Library's innovative programming. With the addition of cooking, sewing, and podcasting equipment, residents of all ages will have the opportunity to try new things, develop valuable skills, and engage with their community in exciting, hands-on ways."

The new cooking equipment includes an induction cooktop, two large toaster/air fryers, a portable sink, kitchen island, instant pot, full cookware sets, and utensils such as spoons, bowls, measuring cups, and cutting boards. The library also added a KitchenAid mixer with a pasta-making attachment, six sewing machines, an embroidery machine, a portable podcast studio setup, and a button maker. These additions enhance the library's makerspace offerings and expand access to high-quality, hands-on educational programming for patrons of all ages.

"We are deeply grateful to Senator Harckham for this generous grant which has allowed us to transform our programming capabilities," said Library Director Yvonne Cech. "We've been able to purchase a portable kitchen, sewing and embroidery machines, podcasting equipment, and more—tools that will empower our patrons to learn new skills, create, and connect with one another. This investment will enrich our workshops, inspire creativity, and foster lifelong learning in our community while also providing access to resources that some might not have had otherwise."

The equipment is already being put to use. Scheduled programming includes adult and teen cooking demonstrations with a professional chef, multigenerational introductory sewing

classes, and button-making activities across various events. The library is developing podcasting workshops and open makerspace sessions, giving patrons the opportunity to experiment with podcast production and embroidery equipment. More cooking demonstrations and hands-on educational sessions are also being planned.

The funding is part of \$575,000 in state aid that Senator Harckham secured last year. This discretionary funding is allocated by the State Legislature to support schools, libraries, and community organizations outside of the normal state budget process.