

JOE O'BRIEN

Public Librarian • Content Creator • Community Builder

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Innovative public librarian with a passion for storytelling, media, and inclusive programming. Proven success in building community through compelling content, engaging events, and culturally resonant initiatives. Adept at video/audio production, podcasting, zine publishing, and strategic outreach. Recognized nationally for leadership and creativity in library services.

EXPERIENCE

Livingston Public Library — Livingston, NJ

Adult Services & Acquisitions Librarian

January 2020 – Present

- Producing original video content and dynamic social media campaigns to promote library
- Hosting and editing monthly podcast series featuring interviews with local artists and community leaders
- Creating zines that highlight notable people & events from local history
- Organizing concerts, film screenings, author talks, and other community-focused programming
- Delivering research assistance, reference services, and personalized reader's advisory

Acting Head of Adult Services & Acquisitions Department

August 2025 - December 2025

- Organized work schedules, monitored spending, and supported programming for five-person department during department head's absence
- Trained / transitioned staff in working with new book vendors with minimal disruption after Baker & Taylor bankruptcy

- Compiled statistics and other library usage data for monthly reports to the library's Board of Trustees

Youth Services Library Assistant

October 2017 – January 2020

- Led a popular “Musical Storytime” program using music and storytelling to support early literacy
- Wrote / performed original skits and adapted book readings into multimedia formats
- Assisted in collection development and community outreach
- Delivered excellent customer service to a diverse population of families with young children

Flapperhouse Magazine — Brooklyn, NY

Founder & Managing Editor

October 2013 – December 2018

- Editing / overseeing print & digital production of quarterly literary publication, including content curation and management of distribution channels
- Managing editorial staff and accounting for writers' compensation
- Developing layout, content, and promotion of website / social media accounts, doubling web traffic in two years; copywriting internet & email advertisements
- Producing, promoting, and hosting monthly reading series in Brooklyn showcasing an eclectic & diverse array of emerging NYC-area writers & performers

EDUCATION

Rutgers University – School of Communication & Information

Master of Information

January 2020 – December 2022

New York University – Tisch School of the Arts

Bachelor of Fine Arts, Film & Television

September 1999 – May 2003

SKILLS

Community engagement, video production, podcasting, public speaking, storytelling, event programming, research / reference services, writing / editing

HONORS & AWARDS

Library Journal Movers & Shakers, 2025

Recognized as a community builder among the 50 people shaping the future of libraries

NJ Library Association Public Relations Award, 2024

For a podcast publicizing the intellectual and social benefits of the Livingston Library's English Language Learners program

NJ Library Association Innovative Program Award, 2021

For a Pride Month video series encouraging kids to embrace and celebrate what makes them different

PRESENTATIONS

NJLA / NJASL Joint Conference, February 2026, Atlantic City, NJ

“Local History for Modern Media: Cultivating Community Through Shared Stories”