



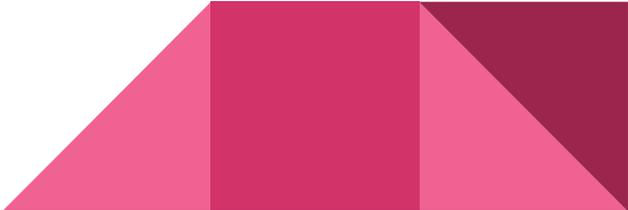
New York Botanical Gardens Luesther T. Mertz Library Needs Assessment

By: Theresa Delventhal

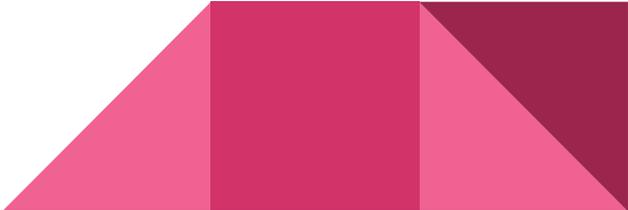
Community Analysis

- The **Luesther T Mertz Library** is located in the Bronx, New York which has a population of almost 1.4 million (“Bronx, NY,” 2007).
 - Persons under 18 25.5%
 - Persons over 65 11.2%
 - White (alone) 45.5%
 - Black or African American (alone) 43.5%
 - Asian (alone) 4.4%
 - Hispanic or Latino 54.8%
 - Foreign Born Persons 33.7%

(census.gov)



Community Analysis

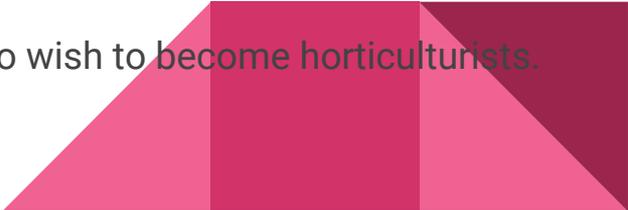
- The New York Botanical Gardens (NYBG) get more than 300,000 visitors a year through their hands on, curriculum based programming (nybg.org).
 - Nearly 90,000 of those visitors are children from underserved neighboring communities (nybg.org).
 - More than 3,000 visitors are teachers from New York City's public school system participating in professional development programs (nybg.org)
 - The Library serves the Garden staff, students, professionals, and the general public in all aspects of plant studies (NCCRS).
 - There are three colleges with at least one related program in a 10 mile radius of NYBG: CUNY Bronx Community College, Lehman College, Fordham University.
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Community Analysis

- The NYBG serves the School of Professional Horticulture (nybg.org).
- The NYBG is a nationally and internationally recognized research center (NCCRS).
- The Garden's LuEsther T. Mertz Library is one of the most comprehensive botanical and horticultural libraries in the world (NCCRS).



Academic Research & Adult Education

- The Humanities Institute is part of the LuEsther T. Mertz Library (nybg.org).
 - Institute sponsors year-long Mellon fellowships for pre- and post-doctoral researchers from around the world.
 - Visiting Scholars Program offers short-term residencies for established scholars seeking to advance their research in new directions.
 - The NYBG offers Certificate Programs in botanical art and illustration, landscape design, horticulture, floral design, botany, gardening, and horticultural therapy (nybg.org).
 - The School of Professional Horticulture is part of the NYBG (nybg.org)
 - It offers a two-year, full-time training program for students who wish to become horticulturists.
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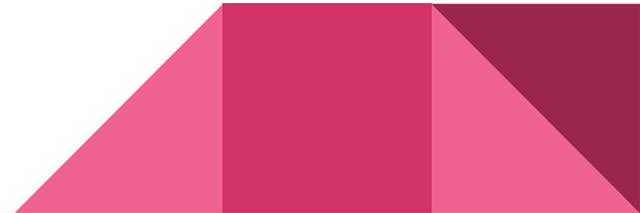
Youth Programs

The NYBG offers several education programs for children, families, and teachers (nybg.org):

- Edible Academy
 - Education, hands-on activities, and interactive programs to teach children, families, and teachers about growing and preparing fruits, vegetables, and herbs.
 - Children's Gardening Program
 - High School Explainer Program
 - Competitive internship program for ages 14-17
 - Students work as volunteer educators in Everett Children's Adventure Garden
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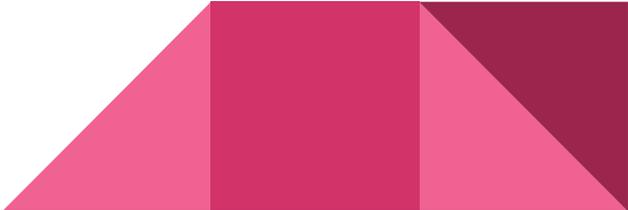
Youth Programs

- Professional development for teachers
 - Six-day Professional Development Institutes
 - Half- or full-day customizable workshops
- Class trip workshops and programs for grades pre-K-8
- Adventure Camps
 - Seasonally-themed camps for grades K-5 that take place during winter, spring, and summer breaks



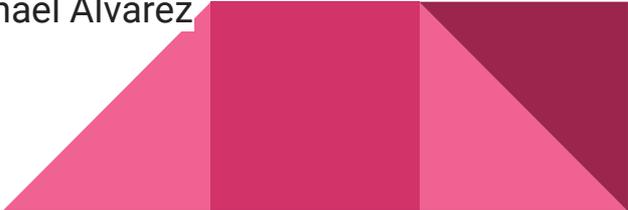
Community Survey

A focus group is decidedly the most applicable means of conducting a community survey for the Mertz Library:

- Mertz Library is a special library
 - While open to the public, the primary user population consists of students, teachers, and garden staff.
 - A focus group of professionals in the field can help to provide additional information that meets the specific needs of a special library.
 - A focus group can help the library to better understand where there are gaps.
 - Find out whose needs are not being met.
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Community Survey

Potential Participants:

1. CUNY Bronx Community College Earth Systems and Environmental Science, Department Chairperson - Professor Martin Fein
 2. Lehman College Department of Earth, Environmental, and Geospacial Sciences, Department Chair - Dr. Yuri Gorokhovich
 3. Fordham University Environmental Science, Program Directors - Mark Botton & Craig L. Frank
 4. NYBG School of Professional Horticulture Staff Member - Jamie Boyer (Stavros Niarchos Foundation Vice President for Children's Education)
 5. NYBG School of Professional Horticulture Advisory Board Member - Barbara Corcoran (Vice President for Continuing and Public Education)
 6. Bronx Library Center (Branch of NYPL System) Chief Librarian - Michael Alvarez
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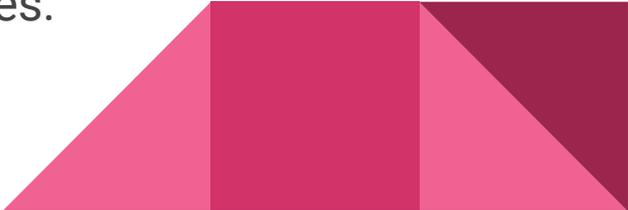
Community Survey

Focus Group Questions:

1. What are ways in which you've witnessed the Mertz library contributing to the public good, and what can it do to do more?
 2. What sorts of partnerships and collaborations exists for us to reach a broader scope of users?
 3. In what new ways can the Mertz library serve as a space for community engagement?
 4. What changes have you or your agency/organization noticed in the demographics of the community?
 5. What changes would you suggest to respond to these changes?
 6. Do you have any suggestions to increase our online presence?
 7. What gaps do you see in the services provided by the library?
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Suggestions

The following are some suggested additions to the Mertz library to fill gaps found throughout the needs assessment. For more in depth explanation of these suggestions please view the [Conclusions and Recommendations Document](#).

- Review requested research materials to add to the permanent collection.
 - Develop partnerships with the surrounding post secondary institutions.
 - Build and develop a collection of children's resources.
 - Form partnerships with the neighboring public libraries.
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References

- New York Botanical Gardens website: <http://www.nybg.org>
 - Adult Education: <http://www.nybg.org/adulted>
 - Edible Academy: <http://www.nybg.org/education/edible-academy/index.php>
 - Schools and Teachers: <http://www.nybg.org/edu/teacher>
 - Kids and Teens: <http://www.nybg.org/edu/kids-teens>
- LuEsther T. Mertz Library website: <http://www.nybg.org/library>
 - Collection Development: <http://www.nybg.org/library/acquisitions.php>
 - Humanities Institute: <http://www.nybg.org/education/mertz-library/humanities/index.php>
- Bronx, New York (NY) profile. (2007, July). Retrieved from <http://www.city-data.com/city/Bronx-New-York.html>
- National College Credit Recommendation Service. (n.d.). Retrieved from www.nationalccrs.org/organizations/new-york-botanical-garden

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- Pastore, E. (2009). The Future of Museums and Libraries: A Discussion Guide (IMLS-2009-RES-02). Institute of Museum and Library Services. Washington, D.C.

