

 POSTED TO HPLandmarkDaily.com 1 DAY AGO


PRESENTED BY 22ND CENTURY MEDIA

SPONSORED BY



Come check out a variety of day camps,
overnight camps and local businesses!

**NORTH SHORE
CAMP EXPO
SATURDAY,
FEB. 22
10 A.M.-2 P.M.
NORTHBROOK COURT
LOWER-LEVEL**

- Art Camps
 - Day Camps
 - Educational Camps
 - Overnight Camps
 - Sports Camps
- AND MORE TO COME!**

22NDCENTURYMEDIA.COM/CAMP

Highwood library offers new opportunities for residents

ERIN YARNALL, Editor

Carmen Patlan, the executive director for the Highwood Public Library, came into the job last year with a wealth of experience.

While working for the Waukegan Public Library, Patlan and her team applied for and won the Institute of Museums and Library Services (IMLS) National Gold Medal, presented to them by First Lady Michelle Obama in 2014.

This was for her work making the library relevant to the needs of the surrounding community, something Patlan hopes to continue throughout her work in Highwood.

“That’s my trajectory and my plan, to really understand how we, as a library, could be that asset to this community,” Patlan said. “Highwood is in the middle of affluence, right? We have Highland Park, Deerfield and Lake Forest, but there’s this little niche of people and pocket of people who are working very, very hard and need to increase their skills for the sake of their children.”

One of the ways she’s working toward the goal of meeting the needs of the community is by offering GED classes at the library. GED, which stands for general educational de-

velopment, tests on four subjects, and when passed it shows that the test taker has the academic skills of a high school graduate.

The Highwood Public Library is offering a tutoring program to help prospective test takers pass the test. The library is one of the only locations locally to offer the program in Spanish.

“I started recruiting volunteers to help jump-start a Spanish GED program, which no one in the community is offering,” Patlan said. “The first week we had six students, the second week we had 14, the third week we had 25 students.”

The library does not conduct any of the testing, which is done at the College of Lake County, but will provide tutoring until students feel ready to take on the test.

Patlan said that she sees similarities between Highwood and Waukegan, and her experience making the library relevant to the Waukegan community will help connect her with Highwood residents and help make the library a more useful place for them.

“In Waukegan, the library was similar to Highwood,” Patlan said. “It was older, and the community in Waukegan is also very

similar to Highwood. It’s an immigrant population.”

She said that many members of the community felt as if the library was irrelevant to them.

“In their country of origin, many of them do not have access to a library system like we have here,” Patlan said, adding that in many Latin American countries, library systems are organized in large cities and are used for academic purposes.

So she’s reaching out to find out how to be helpful to the community, including personally reaching out to people in the library and finding out how she can get them to return.

“I spoke to eight children, seventh and eighth graders,” Patlan said. “They were hanging out in the library because they had access to free WiFi.”

She asked them what they would like to see at the library. When they said they wanted to see video game options, Patlan set about trying to raise money to start a collection of video games at the library.

She then asked them about their homework, and encouraged the students to go to tutoring at the library.

“As a library, I feel we can be an asset for these families,” Patlan said.

TRAINING

From Page 10

lice Department continues to actively engage with the community to better understand community needs, strengthen relationships to maintain trust, and

enhance public safety.

Thus far in 2019, the Police Department coordinated and participated in dozens of community events and initiatives including Cop on a Rooftop, Coffee with a Cop, National Night Out, Sweet Tick-

et Campaign, Kindness Walk, HP150 Bike Tours, Welcome Back to School Pencil Day, Dodgeball at Northwood and Edgewood Middle Schools, High-Five Fridays, and, most recently, the Police Beat Coordinator Program.