

NEWTON DAILY NEWS

LibraryExpress comes to Newton

By Ty Rushing Daily News Staff Writer
Created: Tuesday, April 2, 2013 11:36 a.m. CDT

Whether you are trying to get into college, earn a GED or looking for a new career path, the Newton Public Library's new service — LearningExpress Library — can guide you.

"It's a really great database," Newton librarian Nicole Lindstrom said. "If you're looking to recreate a résumé, create a new one from scratch, search for a job or get certified in anything, it has more than 800 tests and books. The great thing about the books is that you go onto the website, create an account and you can attach that book to your account and download it to your computer, print it out or keep it there for however long."

LearningExpress is absolutely free and will soon be widely available in all libraries in Iowa. The program is made possible thanks to legislation requiring Iowa Workforce Development to provide \$150,000 in funding "for the purpose of licensing an online resource which prepares persons to succeed in the workplace through programs which improved job skills and vocational test-taking abilities."

The program started in January statewide and just launched in Newton. This year is more of a trial run for the program and it will expire in December. Lindstrom is hoping the program will prove to be popular enough to be renewed.

"Right now, all the libraries are pushing for the state to renew it again for the following year," Lindstrom said.

Newton is doing its part to help the program succeed. Every Friday for the foreseeable future, the library will host LearningExpress classes from 8:30 to 10 a.m. Patrons can sign up at the information desk at the library or by visiting the library's website.

"Right now, we have three people signed up for our class on Friday," Lindstrom said. "That will be our first LearningExpress class. In the class, I will be teaching you how to set-up your account. Then, I will just be showing the people that are there how to start your resume, how to take a test, how to download one of the books so that they can use it again. Just the basics for the first time. Just how to use the database, how to login, how to get to it. Later on, we may offer more advanced classes."

LearningExpress will have more than 800 test preparation and skill building resource guides. Users will be able to take everything from ACT and SAT prep tests to GED prep tests. The career resource literature available contains practice tests on becoming an EMT, firefighter, police officer, postal worker, cosmetologist and various other career fields.

“There’s software tutorials, like for Microsoft Excel,” Lindstrom said. “And what’s awesome about them is when you take them, it will show you something and it will wait for you to finish that process before it will continue on. So while you’re actually watching a video, you are doing your own project in Excel or Word.”

Lindstrom encourages all citizens to take advantage of LearningExpress.

“One, it’s free,” Lindstrom said. “You can’t really get this service from many other places. A lot of other places will charge you for helping with your interviewing skills or help with your resume, whereas here it’s free and you can do it on your own time. A lot of the practice tests do not time out, so you can take as long as you want to learn those skills.”

“It just offers a wide-range of skills and education,” Lindstrom continued. “Anyone can find something in here that will add enrichment to their lives. They also (should) want to take advantage of it now, because it may not be here next year if the state doesn’t approve it again. So the more people we have accessing it now, the more likelihood it will be renewed so that more people can access it in the following year.”

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Original URL: <http://www.newtondailynews.com/2013/04/01/libraryexpress-comes-to-newton/am09ls0/?page=2>