

**JERSEY CITY FREE**



**PUBLIC LIBRARY**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Jersey City Free Public Library**

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**JERSEY CITY FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY TO WELCOME 2024 LIBRARIAN OF THE YEAR LISA VARGA**

Jersey City, New Jersey — March 26, 2025 — In celebration of National Library Week, Jersey City Free Public Library (JCFPL) is excited to welcome Library Journal's 2024 Librarian of the Year Lisa Varga to Priscilla Gardner Main Library for a conversation about her ongoing advocacy for intellectual freedom on Tuesday, April 8, from 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

During this event, Lisa Varga will join JCFPL Director Terry B. Hill as they discuss her career as a librarian, the challenges facing the profession today, and her fight for the freedom to read. As libraries face increasing pressure to restrict access to information, Varga will share her insights on the fight to protect readers' rights.

In anticipation of Lisa Varga's visit, Library Director Terry B. Hill remarked, "We are excited to welcome Lisa Varga to the Jersey City Free Public Library. Lisa is an inspiration to everyone who values intellectual freedom. She has worked tirelessly to fight against censorship and book bans, and I'm looking forward to hearing about her experiences and how she earned the nickname 'The Hammer'."

Lisa Varga is the Executive Director of the Virginia Library Association, a professional organization representing more than 5,000 librarians and library staff in Academic, Public, and Special libraries throughout the state of Virginia. In 2024, the Library Journal named her Librarian of the Year for her relentless advocacy against legislation threatening the First Amendment and for mobilizing fellow librarians to join the fight. Varga is the past Chair of the Virginia Beach Public Library Board and a member of the Virginia Society of Association

Executives and the American Library Association Policy Corps, working on the Unite Against Book Bans program.

Reflecting on the vital role of librarians in defending First Amendment rights, Lisa Varga remarked, “For decades, librarians and library workers have been protecting the First Amendment rights of our users. Sometimes that protection has been loud and obvious, other times it is more subtle. But fighting back against censorship is a primary goal of our profession. I grew up in New Jersey and my time there taught me to never back down from a fight, especially one that protects the rights of people we care about.”

As Executive Director of the VLA, Lisa Varga has been a driving force in advancing Lifelong Learning for libraries across Virginia. A dedicated champion of the freedom to read and the First Amendment, she has led efforts to oppose restrictive state legislation and defend access to information. Varga has spearheaded a coalition of Virginia library professionals to challenge book ban legislation, providing a vital framework to support colleagues in advocating for intellectual freedom statewide.

This free event is open to the public. Attendees are encouraged to hold their questions until the end of the discussion, which will follow a Q&A session.

### **About Jersey City Free Public Library**

The Jersey City Free Public Library (JCFPL) is the largest municipal library in the State of New Jersey, serving one of the most diverse cities in the country. The Library meets the needs of the community by providing a wide array of programming and resources, and access to a broad range of print, digital, and audiovisual collections. The Library has been a cornerstone of Jersey City’s growing and changing community for more than 120 years.