NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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PREVENT SUICIDE PA AND PA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION COLLABORATE TO PROMOTE AWARENESS, EDUCATION AND RESOURCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS

Suicide prevention and awareness programs will be available at libraries; Demonstrates importance of health literacy and impacts for communities

Mechanicsburg, PA (May 17, 2018) – The PA Library Association (PaLA) is proud to announce Prevent Suicide PA as the latest PA Forward partner organization.

“Suicide claims the lives of more than 1,900 Pennsylvanians each year. This is an average of five lives a day,” said Govan Martin, chair Prevent Suicide PA’s Board of Directors. “Partnering with the Pennsylvania Library Association is a prime opportunity to connect with libraries and place resource information in the hands of those who need it and potentially, help to save someone’s life.”

Through PA Forward, academic, school, and public libraries throughout Pennsylvania empower residents and businesses alike with the necessary skills and knowledge needed to succeed in today’s ever-evolving society.

PA Forward works through five key literacies – Basic, Information, Civic & Social, Health and Financial – to assist all residents in enhancing their overall quality of life. The statewide program works to improve the literacy levels of Pennsylvanians by connecting them with the information, learning, and technology resources available at their local libraries. Working through each of the five literacies, the initiative aims to develop a better trained and more skilled workforce, which in turn grows Pennsylvania’s tax base, economy and population.

Staffs from both organizations met and realized some commonalities in relation to their goals and efforts to educate and assist Pennsylvanians.

“Libraries are not simply book repositories,” said Christi Buker, Pennsylvania Library Association Executive Director. “Libraries are pillars in our communities, offering a multitude of programs, resources and opportunities to help our patrons become more informed and more engaged in their local areas.

“We are honored to have Prevent Suicide PA join us as a partner through PA Forward. PA Forward is truly the framework that paints the picture of what all Pennsylvania’s libraries offer and helps us to tell the story of just how valuable libraries are to society’s greater good. Prevent Suicide PA has an
array of trainings and resource materials that can be made available through libraries. Their experts can speak to prevention, recognizing the signs of the suicide and how to discuss suicide with families. Prevent Suicide PA is a great addition to the work of PA Forward, extending the reach of our libraries.”

Prevent Suicide PA will work with the Association through the PA Forward Health Literacy Team. This committee is comprised of member librarians and partner organizations working with individuals to provide information and resources for them to make health decisions for themselves and/or their loved ones.

**About the Pennsylvania Library Association**
Founded in 1901, the Pennsylvania Library Association (PaLA) is the state’s oldest and most diverse professional library organization serving libraries, library employees, library trustees, and Friends of the Library groups. For more information, visit [www.palibraries.org](http://www.palibraries.org), facebook.com/PALibraries or @PALibraryAssoc on Twitter.

**About PA Forward**
The Pennsylvania Library Association’s PA Forward | Pennsylvania Libraries initiative was conceived to give voice to what the library community already knows, and what other states throughout the nation recognize – with the right support, libraries are ideally positioned to become the community centers of information, technology, and learning, fueling educational and economic opportunity for all citizens. For more information, visit [www.PAForward.org](http://www.PAForward.org), facebook.com/paforward or @PAForward5 on Twitter.

**About Prevent Suicide PA**
The mission of Prevent Suicide PA is to support those who are affected by suicide, provide education, awareness, and understanding by collaborating with the community to prevent suicide, and reduce the stigma associated with suicide. For more information about their work, visit [www.preventsuicidepa.org](http://www.preventsuicidepa.org). Prevent Suicide PA is a resource organization ONLY. It is not a hotline or counseling service/center. If anyone needs immediate assistance, they are encouraged to contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline number at 1-800-273-8255 (TALK) or Dial 911.

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