

Middletown Township Public Library Makerspace

Building Community Through Creativity, Technology, and Making

AT A GLANCE



Library:

Middletown Township Public Library



Interviewed:

- **Kathryn Hammond**,
MLS, Library Director
- **Ebony Reeves**,
Makerspace Librarian, MLS
- **Samantha Van Rikxoort**,
Senior Library Assistant,
Makerspace

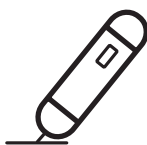
Featured Technologies



Cricut Maker 3,
Venture, Joy,
AutoPress
& Mug Press



xTool Laser
Engraver



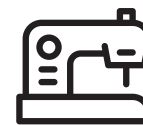
3Doodler



3D Printing



Sublimation
Printing



Embroidery
machines



The Challenge

During a library renovation, Middletown Township Public Library wanted to create a space that would:

- ✓ attract new visitors
- ✓ support lifelong learning
- ✓ provide access to technology that many residents could not afford

The original concept focused on supporting small businesses, but quickly evolved into a community makerspace open to everyone.



We wanted everybody in the community to be able to come in, learn different skills, and use equipment they might not otherwise have access to.



The Solution

The library created a makerspace featuring Cricut cutting systems, an xTool laser engraver, sublimation equipment, 3D printing, and hands-on training opportunities.

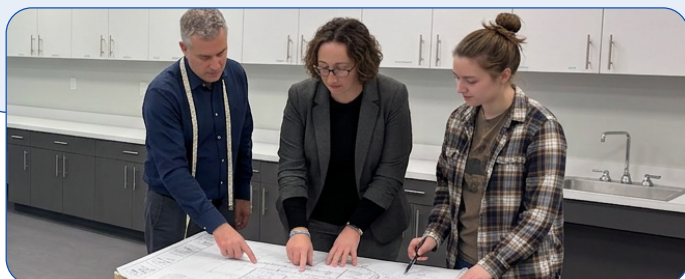
Rather than simply providing equipment, staff developed a support model that includes:

- ✓ Classes and workshops
- ✓ One-on-one appointments
- ✓ Equipment training
- ✓ Project guidance for beginners

The result is a space where patrons build confidence while learning practical skills.



People come in nervous to use a machine they've never touched before. By their second appointment, they're confident and creating things on their own.





Results & Impact



New Visitors

The makerspace has introduced many residents to the library who had not visited in years.

"We have people who haven't stepped foot in the library in ten years coming in because they heard about the makerspace."



Community Connections

Patrons regularly share ideas, collaborate on projects, and inspire one another's creativity.



Small Business Support

One local entrepreneur used the makerspace to produce more than 100 custom shirts for a convention, generating enough revenue to purchase her own equipment and expand her business.



Accessibility for All

The makerspace serves children, teens, adults, seniors, special needs groups, hobbyists, and entrepreneurs, creating opportunities for everyone to learn and create.



Lessons Learned

Listen First

Before opening the makerspace, the library surveyed residents to understand what tools and programs the community actually wanted.

Build for Growth

The team recommends:

- ✓ Visit other makerspaces before launching your own
- ✓ Plan for more space than you think you'll need
- ✓ Add more power and outlets than you expect
- ✓ Include portable tools for outreach events

Focus on Confidence

The equipment attracts visitors. The support and training keep them coming back.

"The reason our equipment gets used is because it's what the community asked for."



Looking Ahead

As demand continues to grow, the Middletown Township Public Library team remains focused on expanding opportunities for community members to learn, create, and connect.

"People love saying, 'I made this in the makerspace.'"



Learn More: Middletown Township Public Library Makerspace Information: www.mtpl.org/mtplmakerspace/

Teq Makerspace Supplies: www.teq.com
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