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Georgia Library Spotlight: The Landry Learning Lab at the Azalea Regional Library System

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The Landry Learning Lab at the Azalea Regional Library System



The opening of the Landry Learning Lab

Morgan County Library, part of the award-winning Azalea Regional Library System (ARLS), is home to the system's first makerspace. The Landry Learning Lab provides children with a place to learn about science, technology, architecture, engineering, robotics, and all the humanities in a fully immersive environment. The project was funded by a generous bequest from Mildred Owen-Landry, who was a longtime resident of Madison, GA. Mrs. Landry believed that the library played an important role in furthering literacy in the community and requested that her donation be used for the enhancement of programs and services for children. The Friends of the Morgan County Library also provided funds to purchase items needed to equip the space, including a SmartBoard to assist instructors during STEAM activities and after-school programs.

Since its completion last year, the concept lab has brought renewed attention to the library, as staff have seen an increase in visitors who previously weren't library users. Colby Hunter, manager for the Morgan County Library, explained:

Many parents found out about [the makerspace] through the school system and started bringing their children into the library after school to utilize the space. Students are able to create and learn while the adults have the opportunity to explore the library's collection and meet and talk with other parents.

The library has also seen an increase in participation and support for other programs and activities since opening the lab. Hunter stated there are plans for adding a 3D printer in the near future.

Accessible to all ages, the Landry Learning Lab serves as a safe and collaborative environment



Children enjoying the Landry Learning Lab



Children enjoying the Landry Learning Lab

for ideas to formulate and grow. Filled with tools for creativity and discovery, the makerspace contains items such as sewing machines, Legos, record players, science kits, a puppet theater, and even a collection of ukuleles. It is a place where imaginative learning, creativity, and interactive play thrives, all essential skill sets for young minds and often the key to unlocking a child's potential. Several

other ARLS libraries are currently planning to build makerspaces for their communities in Greene, Jasper, and Walton counties.

To learn more about the Azalea Regional Library System, please visit <https://azalealibraries.org/>.

Ashley Pearson is a member services librarian at Azalea Regional Library System