



The Frank J. Basloe Library in Herkimer is a school district library, serving a population of approximately 10,000. About 29% of the population does not have access to the internet except through their phones. Many people come to the library to access email and social media, using them to maintain contact with friends and family. We have some immigrant families who keep in touch with their families across the globe.

I have seen our computers used to create resumes and search for jobs. I've heard patron success stories, claiming they couldn't have gotten the job without us. One patron came in almost daily for months and ended up with a major career advancement requiring relocation to California. We lost a patron, but he succeeded and gave us the credit for it.

We have an extensive genealogy collection and researchers come here from many places to access the information. We supply Ancestry.com and Heritage Quest for them, costly services many can't afford at home.

Other patrons have used our computers for renewing licenses and certifications, for finding directions, searching for lost family members, doing research for school or homeschooling. Girl Scouts work on their badges. I have seen people composing music, writing letters, printing out boarding passes or pay stubs, filing income tax returns, and much more. The internet is almost limitless and so are the ways people use it.

In nice weather or when the library is closed, you will often see people on the benches outside, connecting to our network with their devices. And I'd be remiss not to mention those who use our wi-fi and equipment for purely recreational use. Not only do we see patrons playing video games on our computers, but often have gamers outside the building gathering for "raids".

By supplying wi-fi and computers to Herkimer, we are investing in the lives of our patrons. Receiving e-rate funding through the Mid York Library System has helped make it affordable.

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