TOLERANCE LIBRARY TO BE ESTABLISHED

A library of tolerance-related books will be established for the Partners in Learning (PAL) mentoring program at Monmouth University. The library is the result of a lead donation from Bristol-Myers Squibb Company based in New York City, with additional support from WindMill Gourmet Fast Foods and C & M Auto Repairs of Long Branch.

Bristol-Myers Squibb Facilities and Engineering Group, based in Hopewell, New Jersey, provided the Power of Storytelling Project with a $300 donation, which was given to the PAL after school program. The donation from the BMS Facilities & Engineering Group was matched by their parent company, Bristol Myers Squibb Company, for a total of $600.

The PAL afterschool program is held weekly at Monmouth University. The goal of the program is to provide one-to-one friendship and support, as well as academic help, between a Monmouth University student and children between the ages 7 and 16 from local communities.

The Power of Storytelling is more than just reading to children. It entails acting out stories and is often followed by interactive demonstrations of what lessons the youngsters have learned. Young students may draw pictures representing a part of the story that made a particular impact on them or discuss what they learned or felt in general about the story. The children are also encouraged to share stories and experiences of their own that represent examples of tolerance and respect for diversity.

Part of the goal for this storytelling project is to utilize storytelling as the vehicle for the development of diverse multicultural and multidimensional learning activities in order to promote tolerance and the inherent value of diversity in our community as well as among the students.

Professors Kim Cuny and Claire Johnson of the Communication Department at Monmouth University spearheaded the program. It is part of the larger initiative Communication Common Ground, a cooperative effort between the National Communication Association, the Southern Poverty Law Center, Campus Compact, and the American Association for Higher Education.