



Lillian Marrero (1957-2005)

Lillian Marrero was a community activist and beloved librarian at the Lehigh Avenue Branch library in North Philadelphia. Lillian started working as a librarian at the Free Library of Philadelphia in 1991, and was known for her passion to help the underprivileged. While serving at the library, she became actively involved in the community activities, and developed various educational initiatives to assist low income people with their needs, including housing, job search, and English and computer technology learning. She formed partnerships with local community groups, especially the Latino community. Her efforts and dedication helped raise the funds for the renovation of the Lehigh Avenue Branch. She won the first Pride Awards of the Governor's Advisory Commission on Latino Affairs in 1997.

Lillian went beyond the call of duty and became a beacon of the community. She did not only spend much of her time helping people, but also swept the street and sidewalk outside the Lehigh Avenue branch, picked up litter on the grounds, and planted trees and flowers in the garden she maintained at her branch.

Although Lillian was born in France, she considered Puerto Rico her home. She married Hector Rios in 1986 in Puerto Rico, and had a daughter, Tanya. "She received a bachelor's degree from Puerto Rico University, then a master's in library science from New York State University at Albany, a master's in instructional design at Sacred Heart University in Puerto Rico." (Free Library of Philadelphia, Social Science and History Department). Lillian also completed a master's in educational technology at Temple University where she worked part-time as a librarian before joining the Free Library. Lillian held various leadership positions at the American Library Association, and was a longtime member of the REFORMA Northeast Chapter, as well as a member of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. In 2005, The Lehigh Avenue Branch Library was named after Lillian Marrero. In 2015, the REFORMA Northeast Scholarship was renamed in her honor.

Additional information may be found at the Free Library of Philadelphia at <http://libwww.freelibrary.org/PressRel/Pressrel.cfm?id=355> and <http://search.freelibrary.org/advSearch.cfm>.