

**Steve Sumerford**

[Steve.sumerford@ci.greensboro.nc.us](mailto:Steve.sumerford@ci.greensboro.nc.us)

Steve Sumerford is the Assistant Director of the Greensboro Public Library. He oversees the library's extensive array of cultural, literary and educational programs.

Steve is a native North Carolinian. He received his BA at UNC-Chapel Hill and his Masters in Library and Information Science from North Carolina Central University.

After graduation from UNC-Chapel Hill in 1975, Steve spent several years doing community organizing around peace and justice issues with several nonprofit organizations throughout the Southeast. He then spent two years teaching English for the Time-Life Corporation in Nagoya, Japan. While in Japan, he made numerous trips to Hiroshima where he conducted oral history research with atomic bomb survivors and Japanese Peace Movement activists. When he returned to the U.S. in 1985, he taught English to migrant farmworkers in eastern N.C. for two years while attending graduate school at NC Central.

He was hired by the Greensboro Public Library in 1989 as the manager of the Vance Chavis Library, where he led an adult and family literacy initiative called the Community of Readers. He then went on to become the first director of the Glenwood Branch Library. During his tenure the Glenwood Branch, the library became well known throughout the city and the state for its innovative work with immigrants and refugees. The Glenwood Library won numerous grants and awards including the Peace Award from the N.C. Peace Corps Society.

Currently, in addition to his work as an Assistant Director, Steve is the project director for the library's two new literary festivals: "Poetry-Greensboro: Building Community Through Poetry", a city-wide, month-long poetry project that occurs every April and "One City, One Book," a biannual project to encourage reading and community-building.

Steve has received several awards including the Nancy Susan Reynolds Award for Community Building presented by the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, the North Carolina Library Association Literacy Award, the NAACP Community Service Award, the Public Librarian of the Year Award presented by the NC Library Association and an award from FaithAction International House for Outstanding Leadership in Building Multicultural Community.

He serves on the Board of Directors of the Moses Cone-Wesley Long Community Health Foundation, the United Arts Council, the Beloved Community Center, the local task force of the Greensboro Truth and Reconciliation Project and is active with several other community organizations.

Steve lives in Greensboro with his wife Evelyn Smith.