

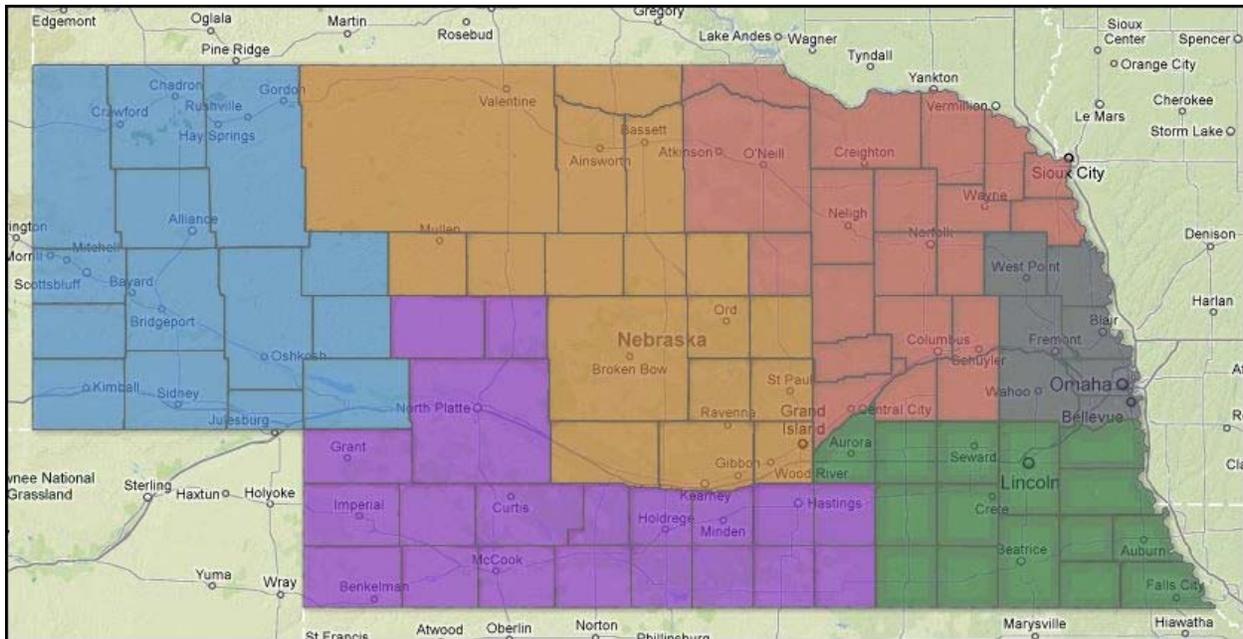
Nebraska Library Commission

# Evaluation of the 2008-2012 Library Services and Technology Act Plan

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Submitted  
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**Nebraska  
Library Commission**

*"Bringing together people and information"*



**INSTITUTE of  
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# Evaluation Summary

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the federal agency responsible for implementing the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), requires state grant recipients to conduct an independent evaluation of programs funded with grant funds as delineated in the 2008-2012 LSTA Five-Year Plan (Plan). The Nebraska Library Commission (Commission), the state administrative library agency that administers LSTA Program in Nebraska, engaged Commission staff John Felton, Planning & Data Services Coordinator, and Kathryn Brockmeier, Research Analyst, to conduct the Plan evaluation.

The Nebraska Library Commission is part of the executive branch of state government. Per state statute, the Commission is responsible for the statewide promotion, development and coordination of library services. In fulfilling these functions the Commission works with all types of libraries—public, school, college and university, special, and institutional libraries. A major resource assisting the Commission in working toward its mission is LSTA funding provided by IMLS.

## Research Questions

This Plan evaluation addresses all of the IMLS Retrospective, Process and Prospective questions and two additional research questions:

1. To what extent did the Commission's activities reach outcomes that meet the IMLS priorities?
2. To what extent did the grant activities meet the Goals in the Commission's State Plan?

We focused on LSTA-funded projects that served a statewide rather than local audience, that continued from year to year, and that contributed to the activities under the Goals of the Plan. The projects evaluated include:

- Bibliostat (Collect and Connect)
- Children and Young Adult Services
- Awareness of Commission Services
- Interlibrary Loan and Reference
- Lender Compensation
- Library Support Services
- LSTA Administration
- Nebraska Center for the Book (NCB)
- NebraskAccess
- Scholarship Program
- State Advisory Council on Libraries (SACL)
- Talking Book and Braille Service (TBBS)
- Technology Innovation
- Information Technology and Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP)
- Nebraska Regional Library Systems

## Methodology

In order to determine the outcomes and impact of the Commission's LSTA-funded activities from October 2007 to present and to answer the research questions, we engaged in five activities to gather information:

- Review of project reports
- Interviews with Commission staff
- Review of documentation related to all projects
- A survey of the library community
- Focus groups with the State Advisory Council on Libraries and Nebraska Library Commissioners

The Plan outlines Goals, Activities, Outputs, and Outcomes that address LSTA's priorities. Annex C provides a crosswalk of LSTA Priorities and the Goals and Activities in the Commission's Plan.

## Key Findings

### Responsiveness

The Commission was sensitive to the need for adaptation of Plan activities in order to better meet the Goals and Priorities. By continuously scanning the library community environment, cultural shifts, and stakeholder support, the Commission initiated innovative approaches to executing Plan activities. These changes were not reported as official written modifications to the Plan.

### Focus

Commission services, projects and programs were planned, executed, and modified to meet the objectives of the activities listed under the State goals. Exceptional adherence includes the activities of NebraskaAccess, Interlibrary Loan & Reference Services, Regional Library Systems, and Children & Young Adult Services.

### Synergy

Each Regional Library System acted as an essential and valuable connector between the Commission's initiatives and the local libraries' needs. This was efficient use of Commission resources to achieve the goals and purposes of the Plan.

## Recommendations

### Separate Five-Year Plan from Agency Strategic Plan

The Library Services and Technology Act Plan should include only LSTA-funded activities. We recommend that this form the basis of a total NLC strategic plan, containing LSTA, State, and grant fund budgets.

## Identify measurable outputs and outcomes

Measuring the impact of several activities described in the Plan proved to be difficult due to the ambiguity and complexity of the outputs or outcomes specified. Outputs and outcomes proposed for each activity need to be achievable and measurable. Decisions should be made during the Plan development about exactly how each output and outcome will be assessed

## Improve adherence to the Plan

The LSTA 5-year Plan needs to be a working tool. Constructing a Logic Model for inclusion in the Plan will facilitate a smoother process of data collection, evaluation, and reporting. NLC staff should collect and report on output and outcome data on each LSTA-funded activity on a regular schedule, organize the data in a standardized format, and make it readily accessible by keeping it in a specified folder on the agency's shared network drive. Having a designated Commission staff member to monitor this process will assure compliance. The Plan should allow for an outside evaluator to perform the final evaluation of the Plan.

## Require accountability from funding recipients

Outside of the LSTA sub-grants, the Commission has awarded \$957,809 to date to the Regional Library Systems but required no formal reporting from them. Reports are received by the Commission by attending annual system board meetings where the year's services, programs, and finances are reviewed, but we recommend that the Commission require quarterly and annual reports of activities and budget expenditures from each system showing how they addressed LSTA priorities and State goals. It was difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of Regional System services without a long-range plan that includes goals, objectives, activities, and measurable outputs and outcomes. Therefore, we recommend that the system administrators and their governing boards embark on a project to develop a strategic plan based on an Outcomes Based Planning and Evaluation (OBPE) model.

To date, NLC has awarded \$391,238 in sub-grants to Nebraska libraries and consortiums. We recommend that the Commission establish rigorous guidelines for grantees to track and report outcome and output data.

## Plan for innovation

As process evaluation occurs, the Commission should modify the Plan to reflect continuous quality improvement. This may be achieved through reporting to stakeholders on the current state of the Plan, obtaining feedback, and making official requests to IMLS to make changes to the activities, outputs, and outcomes.

# Evaluation Report

## Background of the Study

The Nebraska Library Commission's Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) 2008-2012 Five-Year Plan (Plan) is a shared federal/state effort. Activities in the plan are funded with a combination of state and federal monies with state funds used to fulfill the Nebraska Library Commission's statutory mandates and for match and maintenance of effort of federal State Program funds. Some programs were funded entirely with state funds or grants from private funding sources. LSTA funding was used as appropriate in meeting the six purposes of the LSTA Grants to States Program. Therefore, in this evaluation, only activities funded partially or fully with LSTA funds will be considered for review.

The purpose of this evaluation is to measure the Commission's progress toward meeting the Goals projected in their 2008-2012 LSTA Five-Year Plan by:

- Highlighting effective past practices ("Retrospective Questions");
- Identifying processes at work in the current Plan, including the use of performance-based measures in planning, policy making and administration ("Process Questions"); and,
- Developing key findings and recommendations to inform the next five-year plan ("Prospective Questions").

Intended users of this report include the Nebraska Library Commissioners, the State Advisory Council on Libraries, the Commission's Director, Commission employees, and the Nebraska library community.

## Evaluation Questions and Issues

This evaluation addresses all of the IMLS Retrospective, Process and Prospective questions:

### Retrospective Questions

1. Did the activities undertaken through the state's LSTA plan achieve results related to priorities identified in the Act?
2. To what extent were these results due to choices made in the selection of strategies?
3. To what extent did these results relate to subsequent implementation?
4. To what extent did programs and services benefit targeted individuals and groups?

### Process Questions

1. Were modifications made to the SLAA's plan? If so, please specify the modifications and if they were informed by outcome-based data?
2. If modifications were made to the SLAA's plan, how were performance metrics used in guiding those decisions?
3. How have performance metrics been used to guide policy and managerial decisions affecting the SLAA's LSTA supported programs and services?

4. What have been important challenges to using outcome-based data to guide policy and managerial decisions over the past five years?

Prospective Questions

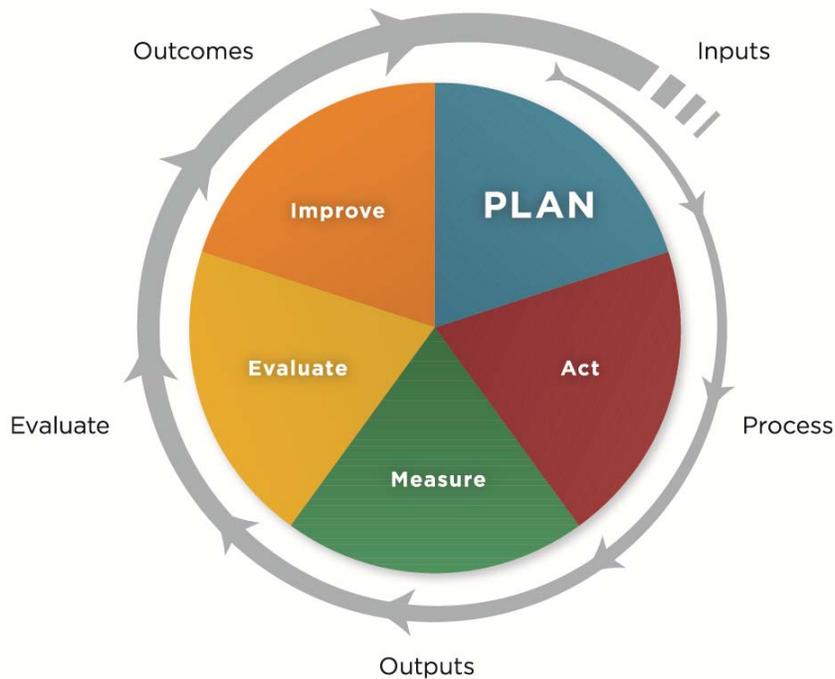
1. How does the SLAA plan to share performance metrics and other evaluation-related information within and outside of the SLAA to inform policy and administrative decisions during the next five years?
2. How can the performance data collected and analyzed to date be used to identify benchmarks in the upcoming five-year plan?
3. What key lessons has the SLAA learned about using outcome-based evaluation that other states could benefit from knowing? Include what worked and what should be changed.

This evaluation addresses two additional research questions:

1. To what extent did the Commission’s activities reach outcomes that meet the IMLS priorities?
2. To what extent did the grant activities meet the Goals in the Commission’s State Plan?

We referred to the Management-Measurement Cycle model in conducting our research:

## The Management - Measurement Cycle



Source: Matthews, J.R. (2005). *Strategic Planning and Management for Library Managers*. Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.

Staff members responsible for LSTA-funded programs and services were asked to submit reports addressing the following questions:

- What formal and informal decisions were made from year to year to improve services? How were these decisions made? Lessons learned? Impact on planning future activities?
- What have you done along the way to evaluate your activities?
- How were participation, outputs and outcomes tracked? Do you have any data to support the intended outcomes and outputs outlined in the plan?
- What reports were disseminated along the way?

To assess the efficacy of the activities outlined in the Plan, we employed the following criteria:

- Did the activity address the purpose of the corresponding Goal? Did the activity address LSTA priorities?
- To what extent did investigation and data collection (anecdotal information, outputs, outcomes, feedback) occur?
- Did reflection occur? Were the results of the investigation reported?
- Did the project directors respond to the results of their program evaluation? Were changes or modifications made to the activity, outcomes, outputs to improve the intention of meeting the corresponding Goal and LSTA priorities?

The online survey of Nebraska library personnel contained the following principal questions:

- Please rate the LSTA-funded programs and services your library has used or participated in during the past four years. (Choices from “Not at all valuable” to “Very valuable.”)
- Please rank five programs/services in which you’ve participated that have had the greatest impact on your library.
- Among the LSTA program priorities are: 1) Library technology, connectivity, and services 2) services for lifelong learning 3) services to patrons having difficulty using libraries 4) library services from qualified personnel. Please share any examples/stories that you have from your library that indicate that these kinds of activities are happening as the result of the services/initiatives that the Nebraska Library Commission has undertaken using LSTA funds.
- In your opinion, which of the following services or initiatives have the greatest potential for improving library services statewide in the next five years?

The Nebraska Library Commissioners (Commissioners) and members of SACL were asked to re-address questions they had considered in the needs assessment prior to the writing of the Plan. The questions were employed during focus groups conducted during a SACL meeting. The questions were distributed in advance to the Commissioners and members of SACL via an online survey.

- The public desires ease of use, convenience and availability. What did the Nebraska Library Commission do to support your type of library’s efforts to better address these expectations?
- What did the Nebraska Library Commission do right to help your type of library improve satisfaction with library space and customer service? What else could the Nebraska Library Commission have done?
- In the past five years, how did the Nebraska Library Commission assist your type of library in remaining relevant?

- In the past five years, how did the Nebraska Library Commission assist your type of library in obtaining funding support?

## Values and Principles of Evaluation

The Nebraska Library Commission did not have sufficient funding to hire an outside evaluator, so current staff members who were not involved in preparing the 2008-2012 LSTA Plan were appointed to perform the evaluation. Despite being Commission staff members, they made every effort to adhere to the American Evaluation Association's *Guiding Principles for Evaluators*. They were careful to remain neutral during the collection and analysis of data. To insure confidentiality, we designed survey instruments so that the identity of individual participants could not be determined. We trained the staff who conducted the focus group with SACL and the Library Commissioners, but did not personally attend the exercise, so we could not distinguish the responses of individuals.

## Methodology

### Evaluation process

Three types of evaluation were folded into this final evaluation:

1. Goals-based
2. Process-based
3. Outcomes-based

We first reviewed the 2008-2012 Plan, separating LSTA-funded activities from State-funded activities. We then created a crosswalk of Priorities, Goals, Activities, Outputs, and Outcomes (Annex B). With the help of Commission administration, we determined which LSTA-funded projects contributed to the activities of the Plan. Next, we conducted interviews, reviewed Commission documents, and collected data. Then we created a survey, disseminated it, and collected the data. Following that, we designed focus group questions and trained the facilitators. Finally, we analyzed the data and information collected from the interviews, documents, database, survey, and focus groups to address the retrospective and process questions. From there we appraised the efficacy of LSTA-funded activities, outcomes, and outputs proposed to meet State Goals and LSTA priorities. We constructed a progress summary of activities in meeting objectives (Annex I). In response to the prospective questions, we concluded with recommendations for consideration when formulating the next five-year plan.

### Reliability and validity

Every effort was made to ensure reliability and validity of our assessment of the Plan. In order to obtain a broad and accurate picture of the Plan's performance, we employed a variety of research methods to collect data, including document review, data mining, interviews, a survey, and focus groups. We reviewed documents and investigated topics addressed within the scope of the Plan. The content of the survey and focus group questions focused on LSTA-funded activities, State Goals, and LSTA priorities. Careful attention was made in selection of questions, construction of the instrument, selection of respondents, and analysis

of results of the survey. Careful attention was also made in the selection of focus groups questions, training of facilitators, collection of data, and analysis of results.

## Participation

Key Commission staff were interviewed. Librarians of all library types (public, school, academic, special, community college, institutional) participated in the survey. SACL members and Commissioners participated in the survey and participated in the focus groups. The Commission Director reviewed the Evaluation.

## Transparency

Upon submission to and approval by IMLS, the Commission will publish a link to the evaluation report on the Commission website. Availability of the report will be announced via the Commission blog, Facebook page, and listservs. Results from pertinent sections will be shared with stakeholders who have a vested interest in particular programs and services offered by the Commission.

## Tools and methods

### Document review

Quantitative and qualitative methods were employed to inform us of outputs and outcomes, as well as the presence of continuous quality improvement. Document sources included:

- Activity mini-reports which we solicited from department heads (Annex H)
- Talking Book and Braille Service TBBS Federal report (Annex G)
- Annual and Biennial reports from the Commission to the State (on file)
- Nebraska Libraries Future Search Conference report (on file)
- Annual State Program reports to IMLS (on file)

### Data mining

We requested and obtained a tabulation of Continuing Education participants—annual totals and sums of new participants—from the Commission Continuing Education database.

### Interviews

We interviewed Commission staff (Annex C) whose responsibility it was to conduct Plan activities. We used this information to inform our evaluation strategy.

### Survey

We surveyed members of the Nebraska library community via SurveyMonkey to obtain opinions about the value and impact of LSTA-funded services and programs (Survey Results and Instrument, Annex D). Questions were constructed to assess familiarity with and perceptions of the services and programs. Descriptive statistics were run on the data collected.

Focus groups

We designed and directed the focus groups with SACL members and the Commissioners (Annex C) to revisit the needs assessment questions used in formulating the Plan (Focus Group Questions and Responses, Annex E). We scanned the responses for trends and general impressions.

## Strengths and weaknesses of the methodology

We took a systematic approach to evaluating the Plan. Employing mixed methods was a strength of this project. Our response rate to the survey of the library community was satisfactory and we believe the respondents were representative of the library community's knowledgeable about LSTA-funded projects as a whole. We the evaluators were unavailable to facilitate the focus groups and instead trained other staff to conduct the focus groups. It would have been our preference to conduct the focus groups ourselves. Although we were unable to solicit participation directly from library customers in any of our evaluation efforts, we gleaned their feedback about LSTA-funded activities and services via Library Improvement grant reports and Regional Library System newsletters. It was difficult to assess long-term outcomes and impact of activities implemented in the latter years of the Plan.

## Data Discovery and Analysis (Findings)

**State Goal 1** All Nebraskans will have improved access to enhanced library and information services, provided and facilitated by qualified library personnel, boards, and supporters with the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes necessary to provide excellent library and information services.

**LSTA Purpose 1:** Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages;

**LSTA Purpose 2:** Developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks;

**LSTA Purpose 3:** Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries;

**LSTA Purpose 5:** Targeting library services to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills; and

**LSTA Purpose 6:** Targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth through age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with 42 USC Sec. 9902 (2) applicable to a family of the size involved.

## Activities

**1A.** The Nebraska Library Commission’s improved Library Training Web Portal will continue to serve the Nebraska library community, assisting them in finding information about education and training to facilitate offering improved library services to their customers.

**This activity was completely funded by the State of Nebraska**

**1B.** The Nebraska Library Commission will improve Web functionality related to training and continuing education, including exploring a course notification system and development of individualized education plans.

**This activity was completely funded by the State of Nebraska**

**1C.** The Nebraska Library Commission will revise Basic Skills classes to complement the Western Council of State Libraries (Western Council) and the American Library Association (ALA) core competencies projects. The Library Commission will become a provider for the Western Council education project by designing at least two courses that are accepted by that organization.

**This activity was completely funded by the State of Nebraska**

**1D.** The Nebraska Library Commission will evaluate and revise the scholarship program administered as part of the IMLS grant, “Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the movies,” the Now hiring @ your library® recruitment and retention project.

## Intended Outputs and Outcomes

1. Scholarship program will better meet the needs of students.

The purpose of the 2004-2008 IMLS-funded project, “Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the Movies,” was to increase the number of qualified professionals and recruit future librarians for employment in Nebraska libraries. This project was designed to use marketing, scholarships, internships, and mentoring to attract promising high school and college students to the profession.

Distribution of scholarships was very different than originally anticipated. The high demand for undergraduate scholarships did not materialize, partially due to the disorganization and lack of marketing on the part of the educational institutions offering the Library Technical Assistant degree. Together with the community colleges, we learned that greater central coordination was needed to improve this educational offering.

By the end of the grant program, NLC planned to continue to recruit at all levels of the career ladder and to search for sources of funds to support this work. The large number of continuing requests for scholarships and internships demonstrated the continuing need for these resources and motivated us to continue to seek funding for these activities.

In 2009, a 21st Century Librarian grant application was prepared and submitted to IMLS at the pre-professional level. This grant was awarded in June 2010 and runs November 2010 to October 2013. “Cultivating Rural Librarians’ Technology Skills” fosters recruitment, education, and 21st century skills development in at least 165 pre-professional and professional students through scholarships, internships, and stipends. We add value to students’ formal educational experiences through social and face-to-face

networking opportunities and through technology skills training. The project ensures that Nebraskans receive library services provided by librarians with the knowledge, skills and abilities to handle the complexity of meeting customer needs in a digital world. The Associate of Arts degree in LIS was added as a scholarship level in order to provide funds for library coursework as well as general education requirements, in response to needs expressed by first-grant LIS certificate students such as this one: "I was grateful for the help from the scholarship monies however I wish there was money to apply for to take my generals. I am stuck at that point now."

A stipend program was added in in planning this second grant program in order to enhance students' formal education. Funds are available for reimbursement of the purchase of laptop computers, professional organization membership, and attendance at professional conferences. Project participants, as well as the project team and other interested practitioners, participate in periodic Webinars and other online and in-person programs designed to improve awareness of technology tools and their application in libraries and to answer questions that arise in library practice in Nebraska libraries.

Summary of Scholarships Awarded November 1, 2010 – October 31, 2011: 35 scholarship applications were received and 34 were awarded to people pursuing education in library studies. From November 1, 2010, through October 31, 2011, 41 stipends applications were received and 37 were awarded to scholarship recipients. In December 2011, three scholarship students attained degrees, one with an MEd certificate and two with an MLIS degree.

**Stipends awarded November 1, 2010 – October 31, 2011**

Type	Number awarded
<b>Laptop</b>	26
<b>Association dues</b>	8
<b>Conference</b>	3
<b>YEAR 1 TOTAL</b>	<b>37</b>

Students described the impact the purchase of a laptop computer had on their coursework. For example:

"My laptop just arrived yesterday, but I've scarcely had a second to more than open the box and see that it is indeed in there. I'm traveling for a week now--and then will get some software and get the thing running so I can use it! It is going to be so great for Reference class this semester because I need to spend so much time exploring databases and reading the NLC's STAR Manual. I'll be mobile!"

2. Scholarship recipients will provide feedback on the impact of the financial support and the education they received with that support.

Among the four who have left the program and received stipends, all responded in the exit survey how the way they spent their stipends impacted their coursework, their educational or career aspirations, and/or their library work:

"I was able to 'retire' my 4+ year old hand-me-down laptop. It gave me the ability to take classes online, which allowed me the flexibility I needed with my current job."

"It was great having a computer that worked consistently."

"I have become very attached to my laptop. It was invaluable to me during my coursework, because I could keep everything on one computer rather than use a flash drive or Google docs which I wasn't familiar with at the time. It is also nice to have my own to bring to workshops for note-taking."

“I was able to obtain an iPad 2 which helped me with physical ability to take a laptop to conferences, trainings and classes. The smaller device was more functional for me and did all the work a laptop can do.”

Scholarship recipients expressed their gratitude for the scholarships and stipends:

“When I started looking at going back, I found out there really aren’t very many scholarships for non-traditional students, so when I was notified that I had received this scholarship, I was ecstatic. ... I just wanted you to know that receiving this scholarship was truly one of the happiest moments of my life.”

“I am very appreciative of this opportunity, because I would have had to postpone finishing my degree without this financial assistance.”

## Appraisal

- Activity 1D thoroughly addressed the purpose of state goal number 1 in its attempt to better prepare Nebraska’s future librarians through a more effective scholarship program. The summative evaluation of the first scholarship program, the needs assessment prepared for the second scholarship program, and the second program’s process evaluation meet the intent of LSTA priority 1.
- Both scholarship grant programs designed goals and objectives to support this activity, and both continuously collected data in the form of appropriate outputs and outcomes to correspond to the Plan activity.
- Results of evaluation and revision of the programs have been disseminated appropriately, primarily via periodic reports to IMLS.
- It is apparent that lessons learned from the first scholarship program led to revisions and improvements in designing the second scholarship program. It is also apparent that lessons learned in the first year of the second scholarship program have resulted in changes to improve program activities in order to continue to contribute to State Goal 1 and LSTA Priority 1.

**1E. The Nebraska Library Commission will offer increased online educational opportunities, promoting these through a variety of multi-format communication efforts.**

## Intended Outputs and Outcomes

*1. Public librarian certification participants will participate in and evaluate online education opportunities.*

From courses taught face-to-face in six different areas of the state every six months, we have moved to courses being taught via the software Moodle, all year long. From a typical 110 participants each year, the most recent year has seen 440 participants. Most importantly, there is a better guarantee of consistency of content and its delivery, with courses developed to meet specified outcomes and competencies, and improved chances of Nebraskans having improved library services.

Students in the Nebraska Library Commission’s Basic Skills classes were the first librarians to study at *NCampus*, the newest addition to the Commission’s Web-based services and tools for Nebraska librarians. *NCampus* offers interactive online education using Moodle open source learning management software. Moodle keeps track of participant progress and encourages social learning by offering personal profiles so participants can get to know one another. The software presents written materials and links

to audio and video files. It facilitates class discussion through forums and blogs, and handles traditional written assignments and quizzes. *NCampus* allows the Nebraska Library Commission to offer high quality, structured continuing education classes via the Web to librarians who have difficulty traveling or finding time to attend classes.

2. *Skills and information from these education opportunities will be incorporated into the programs and services of Nebraska libraries.*

As the result of training efforts by NLC, 39% of Nebraska libraries now connect with their customers through social media networks such as Twitter, Facebook, and blogs. Almost 42% of these libraries now provide downloadable e-books and digital audio books to their constituents. Programs offered to the public increased by almost 22% over a five-year period and attendance at those programs rose by 28%. More innovative and creative marketing efforts have been employed in Nebraska libraries. There was an increase in the number of libraries installing new or upgraded integrated library systems as a result of NLC classes on management and organization. There was also an increase in the number of professional weeding projects initiated in Nebraska libraries.

## Appraisal

- Overall activity 1E as defined clearly addresses the objectives of state goal one and of LSTA purpose number one. The outcomes developed to measure this activity, however, were not achieved due to the lack of efforts to survey the experience of participants in the educational programs.
- Information about the number of certification program participants and their opinions about educational opportunities was inadequate or unavailable. There is little data to illustrate whether skills attained in training were subsequently applied in library services.
- NLC staff monitored the number of students who registered for classes and produced reports about the progress made via annual and biennial reports. There is only anecdotal evidence about the effect of educational opportunities.
- Modifications were made to the manner in which “Basic Skills” classes were delivered and the frequency of course offerings.

## **1F. The Nebraska Library Commission will revise the 2006 edition of The Nebraska Library Board Manual.**

### Intended Outputs and Outcomes

1. *Library boards will access the revised manual from the Library Commission Web site and use it for guidance and reference in library planning, policy development and administration.*

This activity as described was not accomplished during the plan period, as the focus was changed to fostering trustee education. To that end, NLC provided funding for library board members in the state to attend courses through the *Trustee Academy* developed by the *Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations (ALTAFF)*. The number of library trustees across the state who attended these classes totaled 288. The Commission also paid membership in ALTAFF for all Nebraska libraries, so that trustees would have access to resources available to members.

## Appraisal

- Activity 1F addresses the aims of Goal 1 by dealing with information for library boards. In the same way it is related to LSTA purpose number one. The outcome was not achieved, as the manual was not revised.
- Data collection was limited to tracking the number of library board members who attended online trustee classes.
- No evaluation or reporting occurred.
- The activity changed course completely when it was decided that the current trustee manual would not be revised and education for board members was substituted.

### **1G. The Nebraska Library Commission will provide access to and promote use of subscription databases (NebraskAccess), NEBASE services, and cooperative purchasing and licensing agreements.**

*Note: NEBASE was the OCLC network for the state of Nebraska, but due to changes OCLC made in their Partner Program for networks, NEBASE could not survive financially and was discontinued as of July 1, 2009. It was funded through membership fees.*

NebraskAccess provides Nebraska residents with free 24/7 access to premium content consisting of thousands of full-text magazine, journal, and newspaper articles, biographical and business information, genealogical resources, and more. These resources are available at no cost to Nebraska residents through funding from both the State of Nebraska and the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services. In FY 2010, LSTA funds provided 42% of the project cost.

Responses to our survey about the value of NLC services resulted in a high percentage regarding NebraskAccess as an important service as shown below:

**Question 3. Please rate the LSTA funded programs and services your library has used or participated in during the last four years.**

<b>NebraskAccess</b>		
Did not participate or use this program/service	13	5.31%
Not at all valuable	2	0.82%
Not very valuable	2	0.82%
Somewhat valuable	12	4.90%
Valuable	53	21.63%
Very valuable	161	65.71%
(blank)		0.00%
No response	2	0.82%
Grand Total	245	100.00%

Responses to our survey about the value of NLC services resulted in a high percentage regarding NebraskAccess an important service as shown below:

## Intended Outputs and Outcomes

### 1. Personal and business success stories and testimonials will demonstrate the impact of database resource use.

The survey of Nebraska library personnel indicated that 93% of the 230 respondents who had used the databases provided by the NLC rated this service as either “valuable” or “very valuable.”

Following are comments from library personnel that were shared with the NLC:

“We use First Search all the time, but I introduce people in the business community to the full text journal databases during an annual class I teach on Market Research.”

“I have a patron who has researched both sides of her parent’s families and has filled 2 binders with the information she found. She used HeritageQuest Online nearly every time the library was open, and then used it at home as well through NebraskAccess.”

“I have a priest working on a biography of Father Flanagan and he is doing extensive research. Using WorldCat we are finding all kinds of materials for him.”

“Recently a patron was trying to track down DVDs of the old George Reeves "Superman" TV series from the 1950's. These were easily found through WorldCat and obtained via Interlibrary Loan.”

### 2. Improved student achievement will be facilitated through the use of education and information resources.

Testimonials from librarians assisting their student customers with database use demonstrate that this outcome has been met.

“A college student was home during the summer working and was doing an online class. He came in looking for some articles to finish a report that was due in the morning. We did not have the magazines that he needed and was worried about his grade if he did not get the report in on time. I explained about NebraskAccess and how he could find articles with it. He had never heard of it before and was so happy as he could go home and finish his report with his computer. He worked through the night on the paper and was able to finish the report on time. He called me the next day to thank me for being so helpful and for having the databases available for the public. Since then he has used it a lot for this college classes.”

“Our students use Biographies Plus for completing many assignments across the curriculum, including art, science, social studies, speech and literature classes. It is my "go to" resource for biographical information.”

“My seniors in college prep English use the H.W. Wilson's Omnifile Full Text Select in researching the term paper topics. Their topics usually are so current that I cannot meet the needs or attempt to guess what their topics might be to purchase in advance. The access to journals sparks many to request further materials through inter library loan. They also use Books in Print.”

### 3. Public awareness and use of NebraskAccess subscription databases will increase.

One indicator of public awareness is the newspaper articles from around the state that appear from time to time touting resources in NebraskAccess. These are often written by someone connected to a local genealogy group who wants to share the fact the HeritageQuest Online is available at the library.

4. The number of statewide subscription databases and downloadable resources will increase.

While NLC has not increased the number of subscription databases, they have worked with a consortium to provide downloadable resources through OverDrive.

5. Nebraska libraries participating in cooperative purchasing will realize significant cost savings.

The total cost of subscription databases offered without cost to Nebraska libraries ranged from \$1,822,157 in 2008 to \$2,264,399 in 2012. If individual libraries had purchased these databases themselves, it would have cost them 10 to 20% more than purchasing them through the Nebraska Library Commission. As it is, they didn't have to spend anything from their budgets to obtain access to 20 unique online databases for use by their customers and staff.

6. Participation in consortia database purchasing will increase.

In FY 2008, there were 25 public libraries in the Overdrive Consortium, which purchases digital audiobooks and ebooks for its members. The number of libraries participating in this cooperative purchasing group increased to 107 in 2012.

7. Ninety-five percent of Nebraska libraries with Internet access will be registered for statewide subscription databases.

Statistics indicate that 100% of each type of library in Nebraska has registered for the statewide databases offered through NLC.

## Appraisal

- The provision of online database access in activity 1G corresponds to the objectives of Goal 1. This activity also meets the objectives of LSTA purposes 1 and 2.
- Measurement of the outputs and outcomes was not performed systematically or uniformly. The outcome concerning student achievement was unrealistic and difficult to assess.
- Evaluation of database use occurred regularly and resulted in a core collection of subscriptions. NLC annual State Program Reports included an account of NebraskAccess activities.
- The program was modified as needed to respond to contract negotiations, budget concerns, vendor acquisitions, and the needs of libraries and their customers.

**1H.** The Nebraska Library Commission will identify, facilitate, and implement statewide digitization initiatives.

**This activity was completely funded by the State of Nebraska**

**1I.** The Nebraska Library Commission will administer the Public Library Accreditation program (revised and fully implemented in 2006).

**This activity was completely funded by the State of Nebraska**

## **1J. The Nebraska Library Commission will develop and promote library and information services for children and young adults.**

Children and Young Adult services from the Nebraska Library Commission were ranked among the top four services with the most impact on local libraries. When asked to indicate the value of this program, participants in our survey provided these results:

<b>Children &amp; Young Adult Services</b>		
Did not participate or use this program/service	54	22.04%
Not very valuable	2	0.82%
Somewhat valuable	13	5.31%
Valuable	83	33.88%
Very valuable	90	36.73%
(blank)		0.00%
No response	3	1.22%
Grand Total	245	100.00%

### **Intended Outputs and Outcomes**

- 1. Library personnel will demonstrate improved knowledge and skills in providing library and information services to children and youth*

#### **Library Services to Children and Youth Basic Skills course**

A two-week course was developed as one of the elective courses offered to Nebraska librarians in the Basic Skills classes for those working to earn Public Librarian Certification. Librarians who have not completed any college coursework in the field of library science can take these online courses offered by the Nebraska Library Commission to provide them with basic library skills.

This course introduced librarians to the need to plan; both a story time plan and a plan for a teen program were required. It also required a look at early childhood language development, Books in Print, the many book awards for children and teen titles, and the development of the teen brain.

The Coordinator of Children and Young Adult Library Services at the Commission spent 201.5 hours developing, adjusting, and monitoring the course. Two sessions have been offered to date, one in September of 2011 and one in January of 2012. A total of 58 individuals have successfully completed the course at this time.

One student recently noted that she is new to children's services and this class helped her become more familiar with tools she will use, gave her some good background and provided her with information she will use regularly.

#### **Collection Development presentations**

Approximately ten presentations were given per year by the Coordinator of Children and Young Adult Library Services in order to provide direction to children and teen librarians in the development of their collections. These presentations include those given at the annual Nebraska Library Association/Nebraska Educational Media Association conference as well as regional summer reading workshops throughout the state. These presentations reached approximately 450 library professional attendees per year.

**NCompass Live Presentations**

**“Great Reads with Sally Snyder” (and similar)**, presented 11/25/2009, 5/5/2010, 11/10/2010, 12/21/2011. Sally Snyder, the NLC’s Coordinator of Children and Young Adult Library Services, reviews recent best books for children and teens.

**“Summer Reading Programs: Who Chooses the Theme?”** Date: 4/1/2009  
Sally Snyder, the NLC’s Coordinator of Children and Young Adult Library Services, and the current Collaborative Summer Library Program President, will describe how the CSLP works.

**“One Book for Nebraska Kids & One Book for Nebraska Teens”** Date: 5/6/2009. Sally Snyder, the NLC’s Coordinator of Children and Young Adult Library Services, talks about One Book for Nebraska Kids and One Book for Nebraska Teens.

**“NASA Space Science Workshop: Explore! Jupiter’s Family Secrets”** Date: 5/18/2011. NASA and the Lunar and Planetary Institute presented a 2-day workshop in February about NASA’s Explore! module about Jupiter and upcoming Juno mission that will launch in August to explore Jupiter. Librarians and teachers were provided with hands-on activities and demonstrations developed specifically for children and teens. Sally Snyder, Coordinator of Children and Young Adult Library Services - Nebraska Library Commission share highlights of the workshop and Sandy Wallick, Gere Branch – Lincoln City Libraries, describes the Summer Reading Program events they have planned using ideas from the workshop.

2. Use of library and information services by Nebraska children and young adults will increase.

Statistics from the *Public Libraries Survey* for which data is available indicates an overall increase in the number of programs offered by public libraries and an even greater increase in attendance at these sessions. Libraries only began tracking young adult programming in the 2009 fiscal year, so some of the increase shown may be due to improved record-keeping in the second year. Still, the two-year increase is impressive. Circulation of children’s materials increased only 2.65%, but circulation in general seems to leveling off, so this figure is in line with the trend.

Fiscal Year	Children's Programs	Children's Attendance	YA Programs	YA Attendance	Children's Circulation
FY2007	16,183	422,502	Not measured	Not measured	5,660,623
FY2008	16,870	464,902	Not measured	Not measured	5,640,543
FY2009	17,518	484,390	2,062	29,609	5,771,554
FY2010	17,249	503,994	2,427	33,662	5,810,653
<b>Change</b>	<b>+ 6.59%</b>	<b>+ 19.29%</b>	<b>+ 17.70%</b>	<b>+ 13.69%</b>	<b>+ 2.65%</b>

3. Testimonials and anecdotes will indicate successful and beneficial use of library services and resources.

Responses from youth during author tours were overwhelmingly positive:

“Thank you for funding Ellen Klages visit to Hastings. It was fun for me to hear an author speak. I never thought I would meet the author of an award winning book speak to a group or have my copy of the book signed. Thank you very much.”

“Thank you for everything and coming to talk about your book and I’m planning on reading your Next Book. Thank you ... for paying for the author to come and talk to us about her book.”

“He kept writing even though his first two books weren't published. He showed us how to find unique ideas and put things together in a different way.”

“I am so excited to read his books because he is a different author than the others. He writes amazing books.”

Feedback from professionals indicated an increase in use of library services and resources:

“Thank you so much for bringing Ellen and joining us for this special event! Just wanted you to know that the principal told me today that one of our students who visits the office frequently due to his poor behavior was very well behaved during the program. She then heard from his mother that he talked about it at home and really enjoyed listening to Ellen’s presentation. These are the kinds of comments that make you realize it is so worthwhile. We never know who or how students will be impacted in a new learning environment, but it’s our job to give them the opportunity. Thank you to the NLC and NE Humanities Council and other organizations for making this possible!”

“[W]e extend our appreciation for the opportunities provided by the Nebraska Library Commission and the Nebraska Humanities Council. Ellen Klages’ visit was well received and students are excited about the sequel, *White Sands, Red Menace*. An author visit inspires students in reading and writing! Ms. Klages had a positive impact on her audience. We feel very fortunate to have been selected as a presentation site. Thank you.”

“Can you believe we are still circulating interlibrary loan copies of *White Sands, Red Menace* and they are reading the book within a week? Again—thank the powers that be—I think that is one of the best situations I’ve been involved with the library. I know a good share of the credit has to go to Mrs. Montgomery for having the students prepared.”

“The author interacted so well with the students. The only downside was that we were rushed timewise since it took awhile to get everyone out of the auditorium and gathered in the classroom. The kids were willing to skip lunch to keep working with him. That's a testimonial to how much they were interested. They had so much fun interacting with the author as they learned how to build their ideas into a plot for a unique story. We feel so fortunate to have had this experience at our school!”

4. Children identified within the Spanish Language Outreach program, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation will receive increased and improved library and information services.

Hispanics/Latinos are the largest minority group in the United States and are the fastest-growing segment of the population. The Nebraska Library Commission, the Gates Foundation, and WebJunction offered workshops for librarians, board members, and interested community members in nine locations across Nebraska a three month period in 2008. The workshops were part of a nationwide outreach effort.

Participants learned how to take the first steps toward bringing these potential library users into the library and how to serve them better. Participants learned why there is a need for outreach and why Latinos and, in particular, recent immigrants, may not visit the library.

## Appraisal

- Activity 1J readily meets the objectives of Goal 1 and also meets LSTA purposes 1 and 6.
- Much of the information gathering was necessarily subjective due to the description of the outcomes. The only quantitative measure involved counts of program attendance and borrowing activity, which were obtained through the annual Public Libraries Survey. Collecting evidence of

improved knowledge and skills of training participants and enhanced library services is problematic. No initiatives to gather such evidence were undertaken.

- Training was aimed at improving the ability of library personnel to provide improved services to youth, but since the effectiveness of the training was not measured, evaluation was not possible.
- The addition of the “One Book, One Nebraska Kids,” and “One Book for Nebraska Teens” programs constituted a modification in the original plan. Author tours were added because grant applications for necessary funding were successful.

**1K. The Nebraska Library Commission will ensure that Nebraskans with a print-related disability will have access to regional books and magazines in an accessible format as well as to the Library of Congress talking book and Braille collection by:**

1. Distribution of talking book and Braille materials, playback equipment, and movies with audio description to eligible Nebraskans,
2. Identification and recording of materials of special interest to Nebraska borrowers.
3. Providing reader advisory services to assist eligible Nebraskans in initiating service, selecting materials, and in determining the quantity and materials,
4. Promoting talking book and Braille services, using a variety of approaches, such as contacts with eye care professionals and other care providers, librarians, support group leaders, and advertisements in publications of interest to Nebraska’s senior citizens, and
5. Recruiting volunteers to assist in audio production to supplement the efforts of paid staff.

## Intended Outputs and Outcomes

1. Testimonials from talking book borrowers will indicate successful and beneficial use of library services and resources.

“Thank you for all the help getting my brother started with talking books!!! What a wonderful way to help him learn when reading is so difficult for him!!! You all are wonderful! I wish you could see the smile on his face each time he finishes a book and tells me, “It was great!!!”

“Thank you for adding my name to the request list for digital players and for the magazines. Books on cassettes help me normalize my life so I do not feel so limited or isolated.”

“What good service. I talked to you about the player on Wednesday. Sent it in on Thursday, and Saturday I received a replacement. Thank you so much for such good service.”

“I am so thankful to be able to get to listen to all these wonderful tapes...Evenings and nights when I can’t sleep is great listening times.”

“The service has increased my enjoyment of life.”

“You don’t realize what these books mean to my wife. She is one that just buries herself into a book.”

2. The Nebraska talking book collection will increase.

The recording studios made steady contributions to the Nebraska Talking Book collection, first on cassettes, then on cassettes as well as cartridges, and finally on cartridges only. A committee including the

Director, Readers Services Coordinator, and Studio Manager reviewed new books about the Midwest or by Nebraska authors for possible recording in the TBBS studios. To supplement the braille offerings, Readers Advisors ordered the newest Seedlings twin-vision books for very young children.

Additions to the Nebraska TBBS Collection				
From the TBBS Recording Studios			Purchases	
	Books	Magazine Issues	Twin Reader Books	Descriptive Videos
FY 2008	37	143 *	17	30
FY 2009	36	138 *	119	39
FY 2010	26	135	0	2
FY 2011	22	137	36	19

\* State fiscal year stats

3. Sources of referrals for talking book borrowers will increase.

Referrals in sample months were tabulated from individual application forms. Counselors for the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired provided between 20% and 55% of the referrals for each of the sample months. MDs provided between 10% and 27% of the referrals. Specialists, doctors, and other medical staff were also active referral sources. The Assistant Coordinator at *Weigel Williamson Center for Visual Rehabilitation* is an especially important partner. Other active sources of referrals were care facility activity directors and administrators and teachers.

Some of the sources for referrals did not appear directly on the application forms. If an individual heard about TBBS from a support group for a specific disability, someone in the support group may not have the authority to sign the form. The individual would need to go to a professional for a signature.

*READS*, the circulation program for TBBS, does not have a category to note the referral of a new borrower, and a field cannot be added. Referrals would need a separate program. TBBS will experiment with methods of tracking of all arriving referrals.

4. Skills of studio volunteers will improve.

Improving the skills of individual studio volunteers was a continual process. Several diverse methods were used:

- Monitors provided ongoing feedback and coaching. Because digital mastering was more sensitive to ambient sound, narrators were coached on making quiet page turns, avoiding microphone bumps, breath control and phrasing, consistent pronunciation of formal names, research to master difficult phrases, and maintaining consistent distance from microphone.
- Producers were coached on consistent volume levels, backing up files, and using standard methods for describing graphic tables and charts.
- Reviewers were coached to check for conformance to standard formats for tables of content and side changes, volume, ambient background sounds, adherence to original text, and consistent pronunciations.

- In addition, the area coordinators decided that the audition selection committee would be the studio team instead of representatives from other areas of TBBS. With their training and studio experience, they would be able to choose new narrators who would have higher narration skills.
- The area coordinators also decided that the recording quality would be higher and more uniform if more staff time was invested in monitoring. The number of volunteer monitors would decline through attrition.
- The decision to implement a book review process resulted in higher quality of Nebraska books because of the edits made.
- The studio staff began to supplement the print copies of *the Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness* with the internet version. In this version, the tables and figures are written out, making them much easier to narrate.
- The database of the University of Nebraska athletes' names gave the narrators quicker, more accurate access to pronunciations for *Big Red Report*

## Appraisal

- The TBBS activity meets both Goal 1 and LSTA priorities 5 and 6.
- Some data collection efforts were successful, such as the number of materials recorded and purchased. It is clear that many actions were initiated to improve the skills of narrators, but measurement of their success was not a realistic outcome, so no data is available to support their effect. The computer application used for TBBS services does not track the source of referrals, so there is no count of actual change in this activity
- Evaluation of this program occurs regularly and reports are made to IMLS, the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), and disseminated in the NLC-produced newsletter, Interchange.
- The primary purpose of this activity was not modified, but it became apparent that more forms of data collection and review need to occur as the service goes forward.

## **1L. The Nebraska Library Commission will promote and support library and information services for English Language Learners (ELL).**

### Intended Outputs and Outcomes

1. Nebraska participants in WebJunction's outreach program for library services to Spanish-speaking populations will provide feedback on activities for program development and future initiatives.

In FY2008, the NLC co-sponsored workshops across the state in which participants learned how to take the first steps toward bringing Hispanics/Latinos into the library and how to serve them more effectively. No feedback was collected from participants, however.

2. *Library use and reading skills will increase due to the Prime Time Family Reading program, provided through a Library Commission partnership with the Nebraska Humanities Council.*

The Prime Time Family Reading program was designed to help strengthen interest and skills in reading for Spanish- and English-speaking parents and their children. The program was presented at the Omaha Public Library, Grand Island Public Library, Lincoln City Libraries, South Sioux City Public Library, Scottsbluff Guadalupe Recreation Center, The Lincoln Elementary School in Norfolk, and the Grandview Elementary School in Alliance.

A 2009 survey of more than 85 Nebraska families who participated in Prime Time, indicated that 88 percent said they spend more time reading now as a family, 91 percent said the program improved the way they read and discuss books together, and 76 percent improved their attitude toward the library.

In a recent survey of North Omaha parents who participated in Prime Time, 77 percent said they read more often with their children than they did before Prime Time, and 100 percent showed interest in participating again in Prime Time or similar family reading and educational programs. When asked how Prime Time benefited their family, 60 percent of responding parents said it was quality family time. One said, "It has given us something positive to do on Saturdays."

In a survey of Lincoln families who participated in Prime Time, 91 percent indicated that the program changed the way they read and discussed books together, 91 percent improved their attitude toward the library, and 100 percent showed interest in participating again in Prime Time or similar family reading and educational programs. Participants said that they enjoyed spending more time as a family reading and comparing stories with real life.

3. *ELL needs will be better addressed by local library personnel, through access to existing models of library and information services to meet local ELL needs and through grants to support library and information services.*

The NLC awarded an LSTA sub-grant to the Baright Public Library in 2008 to improve their ELL services. The grant paid for purchase of the twelve-volume set, *Inglés sin Barreras*. Each volume contains a DVD with English lessons, a CD with vocabulary review exercises, and two books with written support for the DVD and exercises.

Another grant was awarded to the Keene Memorial Library in 2010 which was designed to augment their bilingual program for Spanish-speaking children. The project featured an Early Literacy Station with bilingual programs for children 2 – 10 years of age.

The NLC awarded a grant to the Omaha Public Library in 2010 to develop welcoming videos in numerous languages. A simple, brief *Welcome to Your Public Library* video was produced in nine different languages for the expanding number of refugees living in Omaha.

4. *Children and adults who speak English as a learned language will report that library service promotional efforts resulted in greater awareness and library use.*

No feedback on the effectiveness of these marketing efforts was collected from those affected.

## Appraisal

- Activity 1L meets the purpose of Goal number 1 by providing information services to English Language Learners in Nebraska. This activity also relates to LSTA priorities 1, 5 and 6 by providing

expended library services, by serving individuals with limited functional literacy and individuals who have difficulty using a library.

- The collection of data to support the designated outcomes was not performed systematically. Periodic surveys of user experiences would have provided necessary information to perform ongoing evaluation of the programs.
- The only reporting came as a result of the evaluation of the Prime Time Family Read Time program.
- Surveys of user opinions could have been initiated to better support the specified outcome measures.

## **1M. The Nebraska Library Commission will provide statewide reference, interlibrary loan and government information services.**

### Intended Outputs and Outcomes

#### 1. Library personnel will report improved ability to provide effective reference, interlibrary loan and government information services.

The Library Commission's mediated Interlibrary Loan service was provided to every county in Nebraska except Kimball and McPherson. All Nebraska Legislative Districts have school or public libraries that received Interlibrary Loan services. To encourage and support the sharing of materials between Nebraska libraries, the Nebraska Library Commission provides quarterly compensation to Nebraska libraries lending materials to other Nebraska libraries through the OCLC Interlibrary Loan system. The amount per item varies by quarter depending on available funds. In a survey of Nebraska libraries, 99% of the 95 respondents who participated in the lender compensation program rated it as a valuable service.

Many comments from libraries indicate that the Interlibrary Loan program enabled them to provide improved services to their patrons:

"Thank you! The student who requested this for his research paper got an appointment to the Naval Academy!"

"Thank YOU for the help! I work at a very small school district, and so I don't have access to these journals."

"Thanks so much for the use of these books. They helped the student get an "A" on her research paper."

The Nebraska Library Commission maintains a library of reference materials and provides research services to Nebraska libraries and state agency personnel. Libraries can now contact the Reference staff for assistance through online chat (*Ask a Librarian*), email, or text message, as well as by telephone. Library personnel have indicated that the NLC Information Service is invaluable in their efforts to provide effective service.

"Thanks again. This is the first time I've used the Ask a Librarian chat, and it proved to be a wonderful resource."

"Thank you for allowing my students to contact you with their reference questions via chat and e-mail. Everyone that tried these methods was very impressed with the service and information they received. I greatly appreciate your help."

"Thank you for helping me do my job and look extra smart to the citizens of Greenwood."

“My Curriculum Coordinator and one of our tech guys have been very impressed with your service! One of them thought I knew librarians all over the world! I told them it’s our NE Library Commission! So you all have made me look good! Thanks so very much!”

In the survey we sent to Nebraska library personnel, among the respondents who had used these services 91.5% indicated they were “Valuable” or “Very valuable” as shown below.

<b>Interlibrary Loan and Reference Services</b>		
Did not participate or use this program/service	32	13.06%
Not very valuable	2	0.82%
Somewhat valuable	16	6.53%
Valuable	60	24.49%
Very valuable	135	55.10%
Grand Total	245	100.00%

## 2. Nebraskans will have enhanced access to state and federal government information in a variety of formats.

Since 1996 the Nebraska Library Commission has linked to publications posted on Nebraska state agency Websites via the State Publications Online Website. Special attention is paid to annual reports, statistics, and major reports. Increasing demand for and concern about continued accessibility of online Nebraska government publications led to a new initiative. The Library Commission discontinued microfiche distribution of key state agency publications to depository libraries and switched to an electronic archiving program. These publications continue to be systematically downloaded from state agency Websites or scanned from print copies and stored on a Library Commission server. NLC is committed to providing permanent storage and access via stable URLs so that key state agency publications will remain available to citizens and researchers into the future. The NLC collection includes state and federal government material, available to all Nebraska citizens.

## Appraisal

- It is clear that Activity 1M meets the purpose of Goal number 1 by providing information services to all Nebraskans. This activity also relates to LSTA priorities 1 and 2 by making educational resources available in many formats.
- The collection of data to support the designated outcomes was not performed effectively. Periodic surveys of user experiences would have provided necessary information to perform ongoing evaluation of the programs.
- Reports were completed as part of the annual IMLS State Program Reports.
- This activity could have been modified to include a quantitative output to measure effectiveness in addition to the proposed outcomes. Surveys of user opinions could have been initiated to better support the specified outcome measures.

## **1N. The Nebraska Library Commission will promote reading by providing support for and promotion of the Nebraska Center for the Book (NCB).**

### Intended Outputs and Outcomes

#### 1. Public awareness of books written by Nebraska writers or books published in Nebraska will increase.

Project promotion was successful and effective to a significant extent. A variety of promotional strategies and activities were carried out to inform the public and targeted audiences. These included the *NCB News*, news releases and stories that are distributed broadly, the NCB Website and Facebook pages, events like governor's proclamations and related publicity, promotion through partner organizations (notably the Nebraska Humanities Council), awards programs and Nebraska Book Festival promoting Nebraska writers and publishers. News releases were issued to and through multiple media outlets; information was sent via e-mail lists; posted on websites; published and distributed through partner organizations' media; and through other social media channels.

#### 2. Public participation in author programs and book discussion groups will increase.

The Nebraska Book Festival brings together people interested in books, writing, and publishing with a focus on Nebraska related books. In 2008, audience members from the public numbered 70. There was no festival in 2009. In 2010, audience members from the public numbered 256. Similarly, the NCB's One Book One Nebraska program has resulted in interest and participation across the state on the annual selection of a book with a Nebraska connection. The expanding distribution of book club kits, testimonials of participants and librarians, and Facebook comments have been a strong indication of the growing interest in books and book discussions.

#### 3. Public interest in reading and writing will increase, with particular focus on school age children and youth.

The Nebraska Center for the Book's participation in the Library of Congress' *Letters about Literature* competition reaches children and young adults, as does the selection and promotion of the *One Book for Nebraska Kids* and *One Book for Nebraska Teens* projects each year. These projects (which include promotional activities and materials, circulating book club kits, and author tours and other programs) encourage students all across Nebraska to read and talk about the same book. The Letters about Literature program focuses on children and young adults with promotion of reading and writing skills for elementary, middle school and high school age groups. There has been active participation in this program among Nebraska's youth throughout the evaluation period.

#### 4. Reading skills by children and youth will improve.

This outcome was not measured.

#### 5. Annual state participation in the National Book Festival will increase.

There has been continuing growth in book festival attendance and there has been significant effort in improving awareness and participation. The numbers have increased each year, as has participant satisfaction—both in the presentations and the writers' workshops.

### Appraisal

- Activity 1N thoroughly addressed the purpose of state goal number 1 in its attempt to improved access to enhanced library and information services. The activity meets the intent of LSTA priority

1 in its expansion of services for learning for individuals of all ages. The activity meets the intent of LSTA priority 4 in its partnership with the Nebraska Center for the Book, Nebraska Humanities Council, and Nebraska Arts Council.

- The Commission collected data from book club kit loans, One Book One Nebraska book discussion participation, author tour participation, state book festival participation, Letters About Literature applications. Change in reading skill levels was not tracked.
- Participation numbers from and evaluations of state book festivals were available from reports to festival funders. Outputs and outcomes in other NCB activities were not reported.
- The Commission decreased its staff involvement and financial support to NCB. The Commission assisted in grant seeking on its own behalf and the behalf of NCB to fund state book festival activities.

**10.** The Nebraska Library Commission will assist local libraries in improving library facilities and space for more effective customer service and enhanced hospitality.

**This activity was completely funded by the State of Nebraska**

**1P.** The Nebraska Library Commission will promote and improve awareness of the library and information services of the Library Commission and Nebraska libraries through a variety of multi-format communication methods.

## Intended Outputs and Outcomes

1. The Nebraska Library Commission and statewide local library personnel will report use of a variety of technologies and formats to communicate more efficiently and effectively their programs and services.

The NLC's communication efforts took several different formats, including the following:

- **Print publications**, including newsletters, brochures, flyers, ads, handouts, postcards, posters, rack cards, Annual/Biennial Reports, news releases, catalogs, certificates, premiums, etc.
- **Electronic communication efforts**, including Nebraska Library Commission Website, electronic delivery of news releases and newsletters, publicity efforts through electronic mailing lists, fax broadcasts to target customer markets, radio programming and podcasts, targeted Listserv blasts, blogs and Wikis, Facebook pages, Twitter, etc.
- **Exhibits and marketing demonstrations**, including the Nebraska Library Association (NLA) Convention, book festivals, conferences of government officials, special projects, educational exhibits, informational displays, etc.
- **Public Relations activities**, including legislative information activities, coordinated campaigns, book/DVD distribution, special projects (like the federal grant for Recruiting Librarians for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century), or nationally-instigated campaigns (like the @ your library<sup>®</sup> and READ<sup>®</sup> poster campaigns, adapted from the American Library Association [ALA]).

- **Collaborative partnership projects**, including marketing campaigns for specific products and events (like the Nebraska Center for the Book awards, celebrations, and festivals, One Book One Nebraska, Nebraska Summer Writers' Conference, Poetry Programming, *Saving Nebraska's Treasures* federal grant, *Ask a Design Professional* resources for libraries, *Prime Time Family Reading*<sup>®</sup>, *Librarians for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* [IMLS] grant, *Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities* [NTIA/BTOP/Gates] grant, etc.).

The Nebraska Library Commission initiated new communication methods by establishing a Facebook page; a Google+ membership, a Twitter account; a Flickr site; a YouTube account; wikis on topics like "Return on Investment" and book club kits; an online chat service for reference questions called *Ask a Librarian*; a new website for *NebraskAccess*, the portal for using the online subscription databases available to all Nebraskans; and the NCompass blog for disseminating news and announcements.

Many Nebraska libraries now have their own website and are using social media applications such as Facebook, Twitter, Delicious, LibraryThing, YouTube, and Flickr to stay in touch with their patrons. More libraries have also made their OPACs accessible through the internet.

2. A higher percentage of the Library Commission's communication products will be disseminated electronically.

At the beginning of the period covered by the plan, the NLC published two newsletters in print form that reported on Commission activities and services, *NLCommunicator*: A bimonthly publication with timely information from the Nebraska Library Commission and *NCompass*: A seasonal publication of the Nebraska Library Commission, highlighting library issues, activities, and continuing education efforts of the Nebraska Library Commission and other library groups. Each of the six regional library systems also published print versions of their periodic newsletters. *NLCommunicator* is now produced weekly as an e-mail that customers must sign up to receive and contains a compendium of NLC blog entries for the week. *NCompass* is now produced in print form only once per year as the Library Commission's annual or biennial report to the state.

The lack of periodic print publications has been addressed by a weekly online webinar series, called *NCompass Live*, and an updated website that features an active blog and feeds of library news from around the state. In addition, all regional system newsletters are now produced in electronic format.

3. Nebraskans will have increased awareness of library services as a result of statewide communication campaigns to increase participation in the Commission's statewide initiatives.

Some statewide communication campaigns included:

**READ<sup>®</sup> Poster Project**, including facilitating the development of materials to promote reading. Everyone is a celebrity when they READ<sup>®</sup>. The Nebraska Library Commission, in partnership with the Regional Library Systems, implemented a project to encourage Nebraska librarians to create unique local promotional materials. The Library Commission used the ALA READ<sup>®</sup> software to convert photographs into bookmarks, posters, and other promotional items. Sample photographs of local library customers, library board members, teachers, students, government officials, and local celebrities/decision-makers were made into READ<sup>®</sup> promotional materials. Local libraries and schools are using this example to develop their own local celebrity READ<sup>®</sup> promotional materials.

**Metro Marketing**, including facilitating staff training and the development of a campaign to promote Nebraska's metropolitan libraries. In partnership with the Omaha Public Library and Lincoln City Libraries, the Nebraska Library Commission developed a pilot marketing project to raise community awareness of the value of the local public library. Staffs were trained as sales agents, PSAs were produced and aired on local television, outreach programs for specific target audiences were implemented by library staffs, library

Websites were used for market research, and a billboard campaign was implemented, with banners at library locations reinforcing the billboards.

**Radio Programming**, including coordinating the live weekly radio program, BookTalk, on community radio. The program was aimed at “people who love to read and love to talk about what they read,” as well as encouraging reading in general by talking about the benefits of a broad spectrum of reading interests. BookTalkers include staff of the Library Commission and Lincoln City Libraries, along with other community members with an interest in books and reading. Sometimes local authors are interviewed and during this LSTA Plan period, hundreds of books were featured. On each program listeners were urged to visit their local library to find the books discussed on the show. Program recordings were made available to public libraries statewide, with permission to rebroadcast them, and encouragement to develop their own local programming. Booklists from each program and podcasts of sample shows are available on the Commission Website. During this LSTA Plan period, radio programming was suspended due to staff reductions.

**Newsletters:** In the beginning of the LSTA Plan period, the Nebraska Library Commission produced six major publications on a regular basis, publishing (in print and electronically) regular newsletters for specific target audiences to communicate activities, issues, policies, and services of the Commission. By the end of this period, print publications were dramatically reduced to address severe cutbacks in state and federal funds.

During this LSTA Plan period the following publications were available in print, as well as on the Library Commission Web site at [nlc.nebraska.gov](http://nlc.nebraska.gov).

- *NCompass*: A seasonal publication of the Nebraska Library Commission, highlighting library issues, activities, and continuing education efforts of the Nebraska Library Commission and other library groups (now produced only once per year).
- *NCB News*: A seasonal publication of the Nebraska Center for the Book, supported by the Nebraska Library Commission, highlighting the state’s readers, writers, booksellers, librarians, publishers, printers, educators, and scholars and helping to build the community of the book (now produced only twice per year).
- *Interchange*: A bimonthly publication from the Nebraska Library Commission Talking Book and Braille Service, sharing news and information for talking book customers and advocates for individuals with visual disabilities. Text, audio, and podcast versions of *Interchange* are available online (see [nlc.nebraska.gov/tbbs/interchangeoptions.aspx](http://nlc.nebraska.gov/tbbs/interchangeoptions.aspx)).
- *N<sup>3</sup>-Nebraska Library Commission Network Services News*: An electronic bimonthly publication from the Nebraska Library Commission Network Services, promoting and supporting libraries in their cooperative efforts to use information technology to share resources and information (discontinued).
- *What’s Up Doc*: An electronic bimonthly publication, highlighting new state and federal documents from the Nebraska Library Commission Nebraska Publications Clearinghouse/Government Information Services (now distributed primarily via electronic means).

## Appraisal

- Activity 1P thoroughly addressed the purpose of state goal number 1 in its attempt to expand awareness of the Commission’s and Nebraska libraries’ library and information services. The activity meets the intent of LSTA priority 1 in its expansion of formats of library and information services promotion.
- The Commission collected data from website analytics, tracked print issuance, print issue tracking. The Commission did not solicit analytical feedback about promotion or awareness from local

library personnel or from the general public. There is no baseline upon which to report change in awareness of library and information services attributed to various communication campaigns.

- The activities, outcomes, and outputs were informally reviewed to assess efficiency and effectiveness of communication delivery methods. Periodic reports were distributed internally and to SACL.
- In response to the increased availability and ease of use and access to electronic formats of communication, the Commission adopted new technologies to disseminate news and information. At the same time, the number of print publications and other traditional formats was reduced.

## **1Q. The Nebraska Library Commission will continue efforts to increase the number of qualified professionals and recruit future librarians for employment in Nebraska libraries.**

### Intended Outputs and Outcomes

#### 1. Numbers of qualified staff in Nebraska libraries and media centers will increase.

NLC maintains a Public Librarian Certification program in which every participant must fulfill a “Basic Skills” requirement, and must earn 45 continuing education credits each three-year certification period. The total number of participants in this program increased from 1,154 in FY 2008 to 1,412 in 2011, a 22% growth rate. During the same period, new certification applicants increased from 52 to 79.

NLC also increased education levels of current library staff and new recruits in rural Nebraska by awarding scholarships. As of December 31, 2011, three (3) scholarship recipients reported completion of their degree program. Two kept their current job and one found a job in a Nebraska library at the time of graduation. Another nineteen students (19) expect to graduate in 2012.

#### 2. Scholarship recipients will provide positive feedback on mentoring activities and scholarships received

##### **Mentees reported an increase in knowledge about the library profession and satisfaction with the guidance they received from mentors.**

Scholarship recipients were matched with mentors based on their interests, library type, and location. Mentors were asked to log their communication with assigned mentees through the mentor interaction system, which provided information to us about how well the relationships were working. In all, 27 mentors were matched with 36 mentees.

Fourteen (14) of the 21 mentees (67%) rated the 21st Century Librarian Mentoring Program as “Very useful” or “Somewhat useful”. During the follow-up survey, the mentoring participants were asked to explain overall whether they would say the mentoring program was a success:

“I enjoyed the mentoring program. I did not get to spend much time with my mentor as there were many miles between us.”

“It was for the time I was in the program. I was very unsure of myself, and with the end-of-semester papers that oftentimes were needed to be written, Kit was a huge help in proofreading them or to bounce ideas off of. She never once said she was ‘too busy’, and always made time to make me feel important; which is probably one of the reasons I became much more confident in my abilities!”

“Yes, having the mentoring program has been a success for my situation. I have gotten help and advice from my mentor regarding what classes to take, and general discussion about a future library career and goals.”

“I don't think the whole mentoring program was successful but my mentor and I had a great experience with the program. Most of the people in the LTA program didn't have a mentor or even know about the mentor program. I think most of the mentors were assigned to MLS students. I think that if you are going to continue this program that it is very important to focus on all students.”

“I did not use the mentoring program very much. I had a couple of chats with my mentor on-line and that is it. My mentor was nice and willing to help with anything I needed, however I am married and I have three kids and I just did not have any extra time to meet with her. Also, if I had any questions I asked my kids LMS.”

“Yes, I feel the mentoring program was a success and met all my expectations. My mentor was an incredible help in deciding which courses to take, editing papers, assisting me in topics to write about, and more.”

**The 21st Century Librarian Scholarship helped students further their careers.**

Example comments from those who responded to the follow-up survey question “Please tell us how the 21st Century Librarian Scholarship has helped you further your career”:

“It helped me focus on my studies, so that I could put in quality work, instead of worrying about how to finance my program. Especially now with student loans being more difficult to obtain, it removed the financial headache.”

“I believe it already has in that my supervisor saw how serious I am about my education and my dedication to wanting to become a better information provider - and that weighed heavily upon the decision for the promotion from clerk to specialist.”

“Thanks to the 21st Century Librarian Scholarship, I was able to continue taking classes to achieve my goal of becoming a school media specialist. During that time I was able to work part-time at Ralston Public Library, where I honed my library skills and gained valuable information and assistance from my colleagues in the public library field.”

“I am still in the same position but my performance and knowledge has definitely improved.”

“It has encouraged me to be more informed about library related subjects. I have found it applicable in my regular duties.”

During the follow-up survey, the program participants were asked to rate how satisfied or dissatisfied overall they were with the 21st Century Librarian Scholarship(s) they received from the Nebraska Library Commission.

	<b>Very satisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Neither Satisfied nor dissatisfied</b>	<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Very dissatisfied</b>
<b>LTA certificate</b> 14 responses	11	3	0	0	0
<b>Bachelor's</b> 10 responses	8	2	0	0	0
<b>Master's</b> 80 responses	78	2	0	0	0
<b>Total</b> 104 responses	97	7	0	0	0
	93.2%	6.8%	0%	0%	0%

3. Nebraska library staff will report positive experiences through Internships funded by the Library Commission.

The Nebraska Library Commission and Nebraska Library Association partnered to provide internship grants to public libraries in Nebraska. To date, 18 of 21 applicants have been awarded internships. In this reporting period, 23 internship grants of up to \$1,000 were awarded to 18 libraries, with a total of 28

interns participating. The 2011-2012 cycle is nearing completion. Interns and their supervisors completed follow-up surveys.

The internships helped match students pursuing educational opportunities at all levels of the career ladder with job training placements in libraries that are likely to have employment openings in the future and provide incentives to employers to hire trainees through stipends to students.

Reflection from one intern supervisor:

“[One of our interns] was a true success story for our library and, I believe, for her. She is in the process of working towards becoming a media specialist changing from her current teaching position. She came in with no library experience but with an open and interested attitude about the profession. She was surprised at the variety of jobs staff perform and how much goes on behind the scenes in a library. I will be looking for that kind of interest and enthusiasm in future interns and utilize their personal skills for special projects.”

Interns brought their technology skills to the forefront, much to the appreciation of the library staff, library customers, and community. The following experiences were reported by the supervisors:

“[The intern] used her tech skills to help the children manipulate photos of themselves using Fisheye software so they have Crazy/Weird pictures of themselves.”

“She introduced us to Animoto and created a promotional photo show for the website using photos of weekly programs. It was our first example of motion on our website!”

“Emily and I attended the Word Press website design class in Kearney and she was able to completely redesign our website using this program and information from the old website. [T]he library has a new beautifully designed easy to use and updated website which the community has expressed an appreciation for through personal comments and on our Facebook account too.

“Chip headed up a Nook Book Discussion for a group of middle school boys.”

“Emily helped the library set up their Facebook page. She wrote weekly entries on it also. She was also able to help patrons set up Facebook pages. She loved working with elderly patrons and their computer problems. These patrons visited the library every day Emily was here.”

“Over the last several months our blog had been dormant, but we had requests from the public that it resume. Amy was excited about blogging, so I made a post to make sure the software was working properly and the passwords were working. Then Amy and I alternated blog posts. She selected her topics and researched them, wrote and edited them, publishing five posts during her internship. So the \*\*\*\* Library blog was again active during the summer to the delight of our readers. As for Amy, she got experience researching, writing and editing a factual work-related blog, experience that she will be able to use for her resume.”

Other comments from library staff included the following:

“On behalf of myself, the O’Neill Public Library staff and patrons, I would like to report that our experience with a library intern was a very favorable one.”

“Thank you so much for the opportunity to have an intern this past year. Our intern, Amanda, was a great help especially with our summer reading program.”

“The \*\*\*\* Public Library strongly recommends this program and would certainly apply for intern funding again if offered.”

“We would not have been able to do many of these activities without the extra help.”

“Amanda B.’s service as an intern at our library was very successful from the library’s viewpoint.”

“The whole experience was good for both Aaron and me. It provided additional hands for tasks that needed to be done. It also helped Aaron see what the task of librarian entailed.”

4. Nebraskans will report increased awareness about the library profession and the opportunities in Nebraska libraries.

A recent evaluation analyzing input from seventy-five interns from 2006 to 2010, found that after participating in paid jobs through public libraries throughout Nebraska, interns are more likely to consider librarianship as a viable career and more likely to perceive librarians as interesting, cool, and young. For 67 interns (89.3%), their ideas about the work of librarians “changed a little bit” or “changed a lot.” The shift in their perceptions of librarians, for the most part, was positive. Before the internship, 53.3% of students wanted to work in a library. After the internship, 89.3% reported that they would consider working in a library in the future. Before their internship, 41.3% showed an interest in becoming a librarian. After the internship, 69.3% showed an interest in becoming a librarian. These internships may well have served as an effective recruiting tool, changing young people’s perspectives of library work and librarians:

“I really like the recruitment brochure because it looks so professionally done and gives a specialized authenticity to our pursuit to recruit another generation of librarians. The testimonials in the ‘Why Libraries?’ [section] are wonderful and give a feeling of how rewarding this profession can be. The many photos are intriguing and draw the viewer in for a closer look. Especially like the male presence in the photos to get away from the stereotypical female role that has plagued the profession.”

The librarian who staffed a Hastings Nebraska career fair had this to report, “Even though Hastings College is small, it is a liberal arts college and a number of the students seemed legitimately interested in pursuing advanced degrees and the library was something they did think about.”

One of the interns in the PrimeTime project had this to say: “The fact that Librarians shelve books, work at the desk, etc., is true, but I realized that it is not even one-quarter of their job. Librarians do amazing work for the community by providing information to those who need it and for helping thousands of people on a daily basis.

## Appraisal

- Activity 1Q thoroughly addressed the purpose of state goal number 1 in its attempt to recruit and better prepare Nebraska’s current and future librarians through a more effective scholarship, internship, mentorship, and recruitment (“scholarship”) program and the increased popularity of the Public Librarian Certification program. The summative evaluation of the first scholarship program; the needs assessment prepared for the second scholarship program, and the second program’s process evaluation meet the intent of LSTA priority 1. Data regarding Public Librarian Certification program participant numbers reflect the intent of LSTA priority 1.
- The Commission supported this activity by applying for a second scholarship program grant. Both scholarship programs designed goals and objectives to support this activity, and both continuously collected data in the form of appropriate outputs and outcomes to correspond to the Plan activity. Public Librarian Certification program participation is tracked in the Commission database and reflects the Commission’s effort to support this activity. No other data is readily available at this time.
- Results of evaluation and revision of the scholarship programs have been disseminated appropriately, primarily via periodic reports to IMLS. Results of Certification program participation have been disseminated appropriately.

- It is apparent that lessons learned from the first scholarship program led to revisions and improvements in designing the second scholarship program. It is also apparent that lessons learned in the first year of the second scholarship program have resulted in changes to improve program activities in order to continue to contribute to State Goal 1 and LSTA Priority 1. Evidence of formative evaluation of the Public Librarian Certification program was not available for review.

**State Goal 2** Nebraska libraries will have appropriate technology to access and deliver online library and information services.

**LSTA Purpose 1** Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages;

**LSTA Purpose 2** Developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks;

**LSTA Purpose 3** Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries;

**LSTA Purpose 4** Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations; and

**LSTA Purpose 6** Targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth through age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with 42 USC Sec. 9902 (2) applicable to a family of the size involved.

## Activities

**2A.** The Nebraska Library Commission will administer grants to public libraries and library consortia for planning, selection, and implementation of technology for access to library and information services.

Modifications in how the administration of the Library Improvement Grants was handled resulted from our annual consideration of grant applications. Each year the review team would discuss the specific grant requests, but it would do so within the context of past years' grants, trends in the library world, and the various backgrounds and expertise they each brought to the process. In addition, the instructions to grant writers were changed each year to reflect any trends, areas of emphasis, etc. appropriate to what the Commission wished to accomplish. Some of the decisions made included:

- Emphasizing the need to sustain any technology acquired, not counting on being able to find grant funding in the future for services, etc. that are vital to a library's operation. Requesting libraries needed to make a case for how this was going to be done.

- Deciding to grant funding to more consortia activities rather than individual, stand-alone technology solutions (while retaining the flexibility of make individual grants if the requesting library made a compelling case).
- Becoming much more intentional in viewing these grants as one piece of a comprehensive approach to library improvement. For example, our agency's Broadband Technology Opportunity Program gave us additional ammunition to improve technology that is available on the local level by providing upgraded and improved equipment, software, and broadband access to 147 of our public libraries. But it also gave us another tool we could use to encourage greater improvements than would have been possible with just one source of funding and one method of influencing local change.

Decisions on these matters emerged from discussions during grant team evaluations and from dialog with library directors and regional System administrators as well as through observations made by staff.

## Intended Outputs and Outcomes

### 1. Local support will continue to be demonstrated through local matching funds for grant awards.

LSTA sub-grants require a 20% match from the local level, of which at least 10% must be a cash match. This has been required all five years for these grants. The Nebraska Library Commission awarded 72 sub-grants to 50 libraries, systems, and consortia during the period covered by the plan. The \$582,611 in grant funds awarded was matched by \$302,629 in local contributions of cash and in-kind services. These matching funds accounted for 34% of the total cost of grant projects.

### 2. Libraries will increase the number and types of technologies available to provide access to materials and other resources.

It is obvious there is strong and sustained interest in acquiring technology by libraries to improve their services. The percentage of grants related to technology over the last five years (80%, 81%, 87%, 100% and 100%) attest to this. And the number and types of technology acquired with these grants show that libraries have truly recognized the need to acquire such technology in order to remain relevant to their communities. The technology-related grants made during this period include:

- RFID
- Updating computer equipment (19 libraries)
- Automated circulation system (13 libraries)
- Self-checkout unit
- Digital microform reader/printer
- Web design
- Disc repair machine
- Membership in multi-library open source consortium
- Computer presentation equipment
- WiFi access
- Gaming software
- DVD consortium
- Digitization/preservation project
- Volunteer management software
- Authority file update
- Computer use and print management software
- Portable computer lab
- ADA accessible desk
- Young adult audio book collection
- Internet-ready computer for local correctional institution
- Early bilingual literacy, stand-alone computer station
- Multi-language welcoming video for refugee populations
- E-reader demonstration project
- V-screen production studio

## Appraisal

- Activity 2A thoroughly addressed the purpose of state goal number 2 and met the intent of LSTA priority 2.
- Data collection was accomplished by reviewing each grant and determining whether they met financial requirements and specified objectives. Applications were analyzed and evaluated for compliance with state goals.
- Staff described the grants in the State Program Reports and in state annual and biennial reports.
- The impressions of staff who met to review annual sub-grant applications resulted in alterations to the application instructions and the criteria for approving grants in subsequent years.

**2B.** The Nebraska Library Commission will review and adopt appropriate standards and protocols for hardware, software, Internet connectivity, and access to broadband services. Grant criteria and guidelines will be developed that apply these standards and protocols.

**This activity was completely funded by the State of Nebraska.**

**2C.** The Nebraska Library Commission will offer equipment, software, and support for connect charges to public libraries with inadequate Internet access.

**This activity was completely funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.**

**2D.** The Nebraska Library Commission will facilitate improved public Internet access through libraries by participation in the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation U.S. Libraries Program.

**This activity was completely funded by the Bill and Melinda Foundation.**

**2E.** The Nebraska Library Commission will promote participation in the Universal Service Fund's E-rate program through provision of educational/promotional materials, training, consultation, and technical plan review. A group application for E-rate participation will be explored to increase participation and reduce the burden on libraries in applying for E-rate telecommunication services discounts.

## Intended Outputs and Outcomes

1. The number of public libraries participating in the Universal Service Fund's E-rate program will increase.

Nebraska schools and libraries received \$21.2 million in discounts on telecommunications costs during Fiscal Years 2009 and 2010 (July 1, 2008-June 30, 2010) through the Universal Service Fund (E-rate) program. Schools and libraries in the state submitted 1,650 applications for 3,278 requests. Nebraska libraries were awarded \$590,405 in discounts. Discounts ranged from 20 to 90 percent, with 107 of the

state's public libraries participating, including the Nebraska Library Commission and Regional Library Systems. All received telecommunications discounts, and 53 of these libraries also received discounts on Internet services. 86 of the 107 libraries participating in the E-rate program had 60 to 70 percent discounts on their telecommunications and/or Internet access bills.

*2. Public libraries will apply for funding for a broader base of eligible E-rate services.*

Efforts were made to encourage libraries to apply for E-rate discounts on internet access costs as well as for the usual telephone service charges. These efforts included E-rate training workshops across the state, telephone and email contacts, and a two-day *Technology Planning Summer Camp* that included presentations by library directors who had successfully expanded their E-rate discounts to include internet access charges. There were 177 attendees at this conference. In 2011, almost half of the libraries applying for E-rate discounts included internet costs in their applications.

*3. Library personnel will report increased knowledge of telecommunication costs and issues.*

Comments received about the training mentioned above partially illustrate that library personnel learned about the topics discussed.

"I enjoyed the technology planning and TechAtlas for Libraries because it is pertinent to our library right now. Very helpful & useful. The potential for accurate replacement and planning will be beneficial for budgeting purposes as well as (for) future directors. A good platform to maintain so quality services will always be available."

"A lot of information - it was very good & helpful. Thanks for the flash drive with the info for later use. Thought multiple sites was successful!!"

*4. An increased number of public libraries will apply for E-rate discounts for telephone service only (POTS) through a consortium application process, to be explored by the Nebraska Library Commission.*

A consortium application for all Nebraska libraries was studied and also investigated with the Nebraska Office of the Chief Information Officer. The complexity of initiating such an application given the large number of small telecommunications providers serving libraries in the state proved to be infeasible.

*5. An increased number of public libraries will explore other options for receiving telecommunications services free of charge or at reduced rates.*

The Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) grant team worked with the participating libraries and the Nebraska Office of the Chief Information Officer to pursue favorable bids for telecommunications services. As a result, as of January 2012, 41% of the libraries in the project were able to increase their telecommunications speed and obtain reasonable, sustainable rates for these services.

## Appraisal

- Activity 2E met the state goal obliquely in the sense that encouraging libraries to obtain telecommunications discounts could ultimately provide them with the financial means to improve their level of technology. It indirectly addresses LSTA purpose number 2, since obtaining discounts on internet access costs might assist libraries in providing adequate network access to patrons.
- While output data was collected on the number of e-rate applications and their resulting status, other projected outcomes were not measured adequately. Part of this failure was due to the design of the outcomes, which were difficult to measure. In addition, few attempts were made to systematically collect feedback from libraries about their actions regarding e-rate applications.
- Staff did evaluate the effectiveness of e-rate training and reported on the number and status of e-rate applications in annual reports and in articles on the NLC website.
- Staff determined through research and consultation with libraries that a statewide e-rate application was not feasible, so this effort was terminated in favor of assisting individual libraries with their applications. As a result, additional training workshops were initiated.

### **2F. The Nebraska Library Commission will participate in statewide information technology strategic planning and management initiatives, including the Nebraska Information Technology Commission's Network Nebraska initiative, Community and State Government Councils, and Technologies across Nebraska.**

#### 1. Libraries will report access to and participate in a unified statewide telecommunications infrastructure.

Nebraska legislation established *Network Nebraska*, a multipurpose, high capacity, statewide, telecommunication network created to meet the needs of state agencies, local governments, and educational entities. NLC staff attended numerous meetings with the Administrative Manager of the Nebraska Information Technology Commission (NITC) to discuss the possibility of public libraries becoming partners in *Network Nebraska*. Current participants in the network as of February 2012 include 84% of the state's school districts, 62% of Nebraska's college, but only one public library. It was determined that most public libraries cannot afford either the startup costs or the ongoing expense of joining the network at this time. As the network expands and adds additional nodes, it is possible that participation may become more affordable for public libraries in the future.

#### 2. Libraries will explore grant funding options for library technology projects.

Nearly all of the public libraries in Nebraska that were eligible agreed to participate in the NLC's Broadband Technology Opportunities Program grant to improve internet access and upgrade public access computer equipment.

Public libraries have applied for LSTA sub-grants through the NLC primarily to fund technology projects, such as: converting to an RFID system, installing or upgrading automated library systems, upgrading computer equipment, developing or redesigning a library website, installing wireless internet access, and

installing self-checkout systems.

3. Libraries will participate in statewide telecommunications collaborative initiatives.

In 2010, the NLC was awarded a \$2,416,403 grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce to fund Nebraska's public computer center project, *Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities*. The grant is part of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP), funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). In addition to the grant from the federal government, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is providing \$1,251,786 in matching funds. The total project budget is \$3,668,189.

The project was designed to upgrade public computing resources in libraries, expand broadband capacity, and advance access to employment, learning, health information, and E-Government services. The 140 participating libraries (147 library buildings) demonstrated eligibility based on local median income, ethnic population, and local broadband penetration. These 140 libraries completed the required surveys to indicate their commitment to participate, reported their specific situations regarding current and future needs/plans for broadband, equipment, access and training, and provided letters of support.

4. Libraries will be represented in state level information technology planning and policy organizations.

The Director of the Nebraska Library Commission is a member of the State Government Council, an advisory committee of the Nebraska Information Technology Commission. The mission of this commission is to "...make the State of Nebraska's information technology infrastructure more accessible and responsive to the needs of its citizens..." He represents the interests of libraries in that capacity.

5. Libraries will participate in statewide technology assessments.

The Nebraska Public Service Commission received a broadband mapping project grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration. Working with the University of Nebraska, they held eight forums across the state in 2011 to gather input into broadband access development. Staff from the Nebraska Library Commission and library personnel from across the state participated in these forums and provided information about their involvement in fostering broadband access in local communities.

## Appraisal

- Certain aspects of Activity 2F relate directly to Goal 2 of the Plan, particularly the desired outcome that libraries would explore grant funding for technology projects. It is more difficult to identify such a connection in the other anticipated outcomes. This activity does correlate with LSTA purpose number 4, since it proposes NLC cooperation with other technology-related agencies.
- There seemed to be little data collection with this activity.
- Aside from the evaluation and reports performed as a requirement of the NTIA broadband grant, insufficient reporting was accomplished for this activity.

- Meetings with key personnel involved in the statewide network and reviews performed by a telecommunications consultant firm resulted in a reassessment of the ability of most libraries to participate in *Network Nebraska*.

## **2G. The Nebraska Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service will implement new technologies to deliver digital talking books, as proposed by the Library of Congress.**

### Intended Outputs and Outcomes

#### 1. The Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service customers will receive and report satisfaction with Nebraska books on flash memory.

In a 2010 survey, 80 borrowers responded to a question concerning the new Library of Congress digital player. 87.5% are using the player and enjoying it. 7.5% were using the player but have some questions about its operation. 2.5% were not using the new player but wanted to learn more about it; and 2.5% were not interested in having the new player.

Personal comments about the digital technology included:

- This is the first time I have found it easy to understand a female reader of talking books. The digital recording is a great improvement over cassettes.
- I really appreciate this tape (sic). I have macular degeneration and this helped me understand more. I do appreciate digital tape (sic) I can hear so much better.
- Thank you so much for the use of the digital reader (sic). Its (sic) so simple and works great!
- I don't have to carry four or five cassettes around all the time to enjoy a book. I really like it, especially the clarity. It is crystal clear.
- I'm in love. The unit is lighter to carry around. It is smaller and easier to handle. I can't wait to take it with me on a trip. I don't have all those tapes. And the tone is infinitely better.
- I love it. It is so easy to start and stop again. It tells me how much time I have left on the battery and on the book. And the voice is clearer.
- I received my new tape player a few weeks ago. I'm really enjoying listening to the digital tapes...voices are so clear and not muffled like some of the old tapes were getting to be. I especially enjoy the sleep button. Now I can just set the timer and not worry about falling asleep and missing the end of the books.
- This machine and tape (sic) are very nice. Has much better tone etc. and easier to use. Machine worked great, easy to operate, and a nice clear tone to understand

### Appraisal

- Activity 2G relates directly to the state goal, as converting to digital technology for talking books enhances the delivery of services to TBBS clients. It also meets the objective of LSTA priority number 5 by targeting individuals with disabilities.
- Considerable data was gathered from clients on the use of and satisfaction with the new digital technology.

- TBBS staff continuously evaluated the acceptance of digital cartridges by their customers. Reports on their progress were made to various stakeholders.
- Adjustments were made as needed in the production and distribution of digital cartridges.

## **2H. The Nebraska Library Commission will offer increased educational opportunities to ensure that library personnel, boards, and supporters have the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes necessary to provide appropriate technology access and to deliver online library and information services.**

The Nebraska Library Commission continued its commitment to support improved library service in the state by providing numerous continuing education opportunities for library personnel. Included were Basic Skills classes aimed at library personnel who wish to participate in NLC's certification program. NLC sponsored a day-long Library Camp, an "unconference" where librarians came together and discussed matters of interest to them, including using Web 2.0 tools for marketing and "cheap and free technology." The Library Commission again negotiated a statewide license for Nebraska library staff to participate in the College of DuPage satellite teleconferences free of charge.

Other highlights of continuing education activities provided by the Library Commission included: Ten Database Roadshows at five locations around the state with hands-on practice, featuring enhancements and upgrades to the new NebraskaAccess Website, eLibrary interface, Wilson databases, and new databases added to FirstSearch. Workshops at four locations on using Return on Investment (ROI) information as a communication and development tool. Colloquium events were focused on Librarian 2.0 and "Asking the Right Questions," coordinated and arranged for by the Eastern and Southeast Library Systems. There were four daylong sessions across Nebraska on WebJunction and Technology Planning overview sessions for public libraries. Workshops were held on assigning Library of Congress call numbers, MARC 21 bibliographic records, cataloging sound recordings, summer reading program, automation vendors, and library governance.

The six Regional Library Systems, which are funded through the Nebraska Library Commission, increased their educational programming by offering a number of training workshops. During the plan period, they co-sponsored the biennial *Library Leadership Institute*, a four-day institute for 30 librarians from across the state who are given the opportunity to examine their own leadership styles, gain knowledge and skills needed for effective leadership, identify professional and personal goals, develop a network of professional peers, and interact with outstanding library leaders who serve as mentors. They also offered sessions on trustee training and board development, library ethics, intellectual freedom, government documents and websites, customer service, grant writing, book repair, cataloging in the digital age, serving teens, and others.

## **Intended Outputs and Outcomes**

### **1. Technology training participation will increase.**

Many of the mini-training sessions offered through the Nebraska Library Commission's *NCompass Live* webinars deal with technology topics. Attendance at these virtual sessions has increased continually since they began in January, 2009. The number of real-time attendees from January 2009 until March 2012 totaled 2,862. These webinars are also recorded so that they can be viewed later by those weren't able to

attend at the scheduled time. The number of people viewing these recorded sessions has usually been twice the count of the synchronous attendees.

In November 2009, the NLC Technology Innovation Librarian suggested to Christa, the host of NCompass Live, that he'd like to do a monthly episode titled "Tech Talk with Michael Sauers". The format was to generally be an interview with someone in the technology world along with a short closing bit that included important technology news of the month and/or some new tools or tips regarding technology. They agreed that it sounded like a good idea and they decided that the episode on the last Wednesday of each month (more or less) would be set aside for Tech Talk.

Since then there have been 26 Tech Talk episodes with topics ranging from Google+, to eReaders, to Technology Planning, to QR codes and much more. Several episodes have even been panel discussions broadcast live from both the Computers in Libraries and Internet Librarians Conferences.

As with all NCompass Live episodes, Tech Talk episodes have been recorded and are posted as videos on YouTube and also turned into audio-only podcasts for anyone to watch and/or listen to at a later time.

In the spring of 2012, the Nebraska Library Commission's Technology Innovation Librarian and the Continuing Education Coordinator organized and hosted a one-day, free online conference called, "Big Talk from Small Libraries." The topics included: Helping Your Patrons E-Read, Community Partnerships, Developing a Read/Write Culture in Your Library, Combined School/City Libraries, Helping the Public Learn Technology, and Working in the Cloud. The total number of registrations for the conference totaled 444.

Classes were held on Web 2.0 topics, including creating web pages with XHTML, cascading style sheets, blogging, and RSS. The Nebraska Library Commission introduced the *Nebraska Learns 2.0* online learning program in October 2008 to encourage participants to experiment with new technologies that are reshaping the way people and libraries access information and communicate with each other.

2. Library programs and services offered through Nebraska libraries will improve through the improved skills and information gained by training participants.

In May 2010, the Nebraska Library Commission initiated a program called *Nebraska Libraries on the Web* to offer website design and hosting services for public libraries, using *WordPress* software as the platform. Throughout 2010 five groups of librarians attended live training on how to design and maintain a website using *WordPress*. In January 2011 training was moved online and a series of videos were created covering all of the material presented in the live workshops. This training is self-paced with the NLC Technology Innovation Librarian continuing to offer technical support for all participating libraries. As of February 2012, 43 public libraries have created Web sites through the *Nebraska Libraries on the Web* program.

Some comments received about the NLC *Tech Talk* series show that library personnel has used this training to improve services in their libraries:

"I just listened to your broadcast about giving presentations (you along with 3 others) and I wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed listening to that. I got lots of tips."

“We have a website here at school and use freewebs.com. I was unable to attend the inservice [sic] to set it up. Michael webinar was wonderful. I will watch the training videos that are available and look at what the other libraries are doing. I set up the webpage for the library but was really unsure of what I was doing. I know what widgets, plugins are now. I can see the use in the blogging also. I will be able to use all this to work on my webpage. Thank you for doing this lecture!!!!”

“Since the Valentine Public Library offers a free online WiFi connection to everyone, I felt this broadcast was very important in the aspect of helping keep library customers’ information that may be available to all protected by setting a password within the router. My next step will be to do just that. I also enjoyed the QR Code information and thought there is great potential there for library use.”

Feedback from the *Big Talk from Small Libraries* conference indicated that participants gained knowledge about how to manage their small libraries.

“I found every single session useful and look forward to sharing and or viewing them again. I found useful information in every session.”

“What a great webinar. I learned many valuable tools to use in the future of our small library.”

“I found all the topics and presenters interesting and informative. I learned something in each session that I can use in my job right now.”

“I have over 22 pages of notes from this webinar, acquired a lot of new knowledge that I can use in my library.”

In early 2008, the NLC initiated a program to increase wireless internet access in public libraries. Nebraska’s public libraries were surveyed to see which libraries that didn’t already provide WiFi access to the public would be interested in participating. In the end 49 libraries agreed to participate in the program. Each participating library was supplied with a WiFi router laptop computer. All of the computers were set up, including the creation of staff and public accounts, Windows updates, and anti-virus software and sent to the libraries along with the WiFi router. Instructions for setting up, and future updating of the equipment, along with guidelines for a public access WiFi policy were also sent to the libraries.

“Since we have just received the WiFi Connectivity Grant my new favorite thing is WiFi and the laptop computer. We get calls occasionally asking if we have WiFi (mostly from people visiting in Wilber) so now we can tell them "YES".”

## Appraisal

- Knowledge about the technology being utilized to deliver library services is crucial to its successful use, so Activity 2H relates closely to the state goal. It also corresponds to LSTA purpose number one by expanding services for learning and access to information.
- Data was collected and maintained on the number of real-time participants in training sessions, but statistics on the number of people viewing recorded sessions were gathered inconsistently.
- Ongoing evaluation of training programs was performed, but could have been more informative if feedback from participants about individual sessions had been collected regularly. There was no

effort to actively measure whether the training provided resulted in improved services and programs in libraries.

- The subjects of training programs changed in response to new technologies and the needs expressed by library personnel.

## **2I. The Nebraska Library Commission will explore the feasibility of a shared statewide online catalog for Nebraska libraries.**

### Intended Outputs and Outcomes

#### *1. Library staff will report increased knowledge of options for and benefits of statewide integrated library systems.*

NLC organized a 2008 Statewide Open Source ILS Symposium with presentations from Equinox Software, LibLime and Koha, the Georgia Pines System, the Michigan Library Consortium's Evergreen system, and the Central Kansas Library System's Pathfinder project. A sub-grant was awarded to the Pioneer Consortium in 2009 for developing an open source integrated library system (ILS) in Nebraska with a shared catalog for all participants. The group selected the Koha software and initiated development by contracting with a support company. Sub-grants were awarded to individual libraries so they could join the Pioneer Consortium to upgrade their ILS and participate in the shared online catalog. There are now 16 members of the Pioneer Consortium representing every regional system except the Panhandle Library System.

### Appraisal

- The endeavor of Activity 2I complied with state goal two by fostering shared online services for customers statewide. It clearly met LSTA priority 3 since the intent was to develop links among libraries in Nebraska.
- Except for tracking the number of libraries participating in the project, there was little opportunity for data gathering.
- Staff attended all meetings of the group and reported internally on installation progress and new developments. NLC staff carefully reviewed grant applications from libraries that needed start-up funds to join the consortium.
- The number of libraries interested in joining the consortium influenced the decision to give preferred status to sub-grants to fund Pioneer membership.

**Annex A**

## Acronyms and Definitions

<b>BTOP</b>	Broadband Technology Opportunities Program
<b>Commission</b>	Nebraska Library Commission
<b>Commissioners</b>	Nebraska Library Commissioners
<b>Goals</b>	State goals
<b>ILL</b>	Interlibrary Loan
<b>IMLS</b>	Institute of Museum and Library Services
<b>LSTA</b>	Library Services and Technology Act
<b>NCB</b>	Nebraska Center for the Book
<b>OPAC</b>	Online Public Access Catalog
<b>Plan</b>	2008-2012 LSTA Five-Year Plan
<b>SACL</b>	State Advisory Council on Libraries
<b>SLAA</b>	State Library Administrative Agency
<b>Systems</b>	Nebraska Regional Library Systems
<b>TBBS</b>	Talking Book and Braille Service
<b>YA</b>	Young Adult

## Annex B

# Crosswalk of State Goals & Activities with IMLS Priorities

## LSTA Purposes

1. Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages;
2. Developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks;
3. Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries;
4. Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations;
5. Targeting library services to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills; and
6. Targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth through age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with 42 USC Sec. 9902 (2) applicable to a family of the size involved.

State Goals and Activities	IMLS Purpose
<b>Goal 1: All Nebraskans will have improved access to enhanced library and information services, provided and facilitated by qualified library personnel, boards, and supporters with the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes necessary to provide excellent library and information services.</b>	<b>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6</b>
<b>Activity 1A.</b> Funded by State of Nebraska	
<b>Activity 1B.</b> Funded by State of Nebraska	
<b>Activity 1C.</b> Funded by State of Nebraska	
<b>Activity 1D.</b> The Nebraska Library Commission will evaluate and revise the scholarship program administered as part of the IMLS grant, "Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the movies," the Now hiring @ your library® recruitment and retention project.	<b>1</b>
<b>Activity 1E.</b> The Nebraska Library Commission will offer increased online educational opportunities, promoting these through a variety of multi-format communication efforts.	<b>1</b>
<b>Activity 1F.</b> The Nebraska Library Commission will revise the 2006 edition of <i>The Nebraska Library Board Manual</i> .	<b>1</b>
<b>Activity 1G.</b> The Nebraska Library Commission will provide access to and promote use of subscription databases (NebraskAccess), NEBASE services, and cooperative purchasing and licensing agreements.	<b>1, 2, 3</b>
<b>Activity 1H.</b> Funded by State of Nebraska	
<b>Activity 1I.</b> Funded by State of Nebraska	

<b>State Goals and Activities</b>	<b>IMLS Purpose</b>
<b>Activity 1J.</b> The Nebraska Library Commission will develop and promote library and information services for children and young adults.	<b>1, 6</b>
<b>Activity 1K.</b> The Nebraska Library Commission will ensure that Nebraskans with a print-related disability will have access to regional books and magazines in an accessible format as well as to the Library of Congress talking book and Braille collection.	<b>5</b>
<b>Activity 1L.</b> The Nebraska Library Commission will promote and support library and information services for English Language Learners (ELL).	<b>5</b>
<b>Activity 1M.</b> The Nebraska Library Commission will provide statewide reference, interlibrary loan and government information services.	<b>1, 2</b>
<b>Activity 1N.</b> The Nebraska Library Commission will promote reading by providing support for and promotion of the Nebraska Center for the Book.	<b>1, 4</b>
<b>Activity 1O.</b> Funded by State of Nebraska	
<b>Activity 1P.</b> The Nebraska Library Commission will promote and improve awareness of the library and information services of the Library Commission and Nebraska libraries through a variety of multi-format communication methods.	<b>2</b>
<b>Activity 1Q.</b> The Nebraska Library Commission will continue efforts to increase the number of qualified professionals and recruit future librarians for employment in Nebraska libraries.	<b>1</b>
<b>Goal 2: Nebraska libraries will have appropriate technology to access and deliver online library and information services</b>	<b>1,2, 3, 4, 5</b>
<b>Activity 2A.</b> The Nebraska Library Commission will administer grants to public libraries and library consortia for planning, selection, and implementation of technology for access to library and information services.	<b>1, 2</b>
<b>Activity 2B.</b> Funded by State of Nebraska	
<b>Activity 2C.</b> Funded by State of Nebraska	
<b>Activity 2D.</b> Funded by State of Nebraska	
<b>Activity 2E.</b> Funded by State of Nebraska	
<b>Activity 2F.</b> The Nebraska Library Commission will participate in statewide information technology strategic planning and management initiatives, including the Nebraska Information Technology Commission's Network Nebraska initiative, Community and State Government Councils, and Technologies across Nebraska.	<b>4</b>
<b>Activity 2G.</b> The Nebraska Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service will implement new technologies to deliver digital talking books, as proposed by the Library of Congress.	<b>5</b>
<b>Activity 2H.</b> The Nebraska Library Commission will offer increased educational opportunities to ensure that library personnel, boards, and supporters have the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes necessary to provide appropriate technology access and to deliver online library and information services.	<b>1, 2</b>
<b>Activity 2I.</b> The Nebraska Library Commission will explore the feasibility of a shared statewide online catalog for Nebraska libraries.	<b>3</b>

**Annex C**

# Interviewees

## Nebraska Library Commissioners

**Steve Batty - Vice-Chair**

McCook, NE

Term expires: June 2012

**Sherry R. Crow**

Kearney, NE

Term expires: June, 2013

**Diane Boyd**

South Sioux City, NE

Term expires: June 2012

**John Dale - Chair**

Lincoln, NE

Term expires: June 2012

**Charles Gordon**

Fremont, NE

Term expires: June 2013

**Patricia Gross**

Bayard, NE

Term expires: June 2013

## State Advisory Council on Libraries Members

**Pat Leach - Chair**

Lincoln City Libraries

**Robin Bernstein**

Freeman-Lozier Library

Bellevue University

**Kate Borchman Hassebrook**

Lyons, NE

**Francine Canfield**

Baright Public Library, Ralston

**Deb Carlson**

Scottsbluff Public Library

**Ceri Daniels**

Cline, Williams, Wright, Johnson and Oldfather, LLP, Lincoln

**Beth Falla**

Imperial Public Library

**Steve Fosselman**

Grand Island Public Library

**Denise Harders**

Republican Valley Library System

**Jayne Hlavac**

Schuyler Central High School

**Sherry Houston**

Papillion, NE

**Trine McBride**

Wayne, NE

**Betty Meyer (NEMA Liaison)**

Thayer Central Community Schools

**Vickie Retzlaff**

Grant County Library

**Janet Stoeger Wilke**

UNK-Calvin T. Library

**Christine Walsh (NLA Liaison)**

Kearney Public Library

**Ellen Weed**

Norfolk Regional Center

**Kara Welch**

Ainsworth Community Schools

**Merrillene Wood**

Library-Learning Resource Center  
Western Nebraska Community College-Sidney

**Frank Zimmerman**

Auburn, NE

## **Nebraska Library Commission Staff**

### **Administrative Services**

- **Wagner, Rod**, Library Commission Director, 402-471-4001
- **Biltoft, Sue**, Business Manager, 402-471-4007

### **Information Services**

- **Kelly, Lisa**, Information Services Director, 402-471-4015

### **Library Development Services**

- **Miller, Richard**, Library Development Director, 402-471-3175
- **Snyder, Sally**, Coordinator of Children and Young Adult Library Services, 402-471-4003
- **Johnson, Laura**, Continuing Education Coordinator, 402-471-2694

### **Public Information and Communication**

- **Ryan, Mary Jo**, Communications Coordinator, 402-471-3434

### **Talking Book & Braille Service**

- **Oertli, David**, Talking Book & Braille Service Director, 402-471-4005
- **Hall, Annette**, Talking Book & Braille Service Volunteer Services Coordinator, 402-471-4033

### **Technology & Access Services**

- **Dragos, Devra**, Technology & Access Services Director, 402-471-4335
- **Sauers, Michael**, Technology Innovation Librarian, 402-471-3106

## Annex D

# Survey Results and Instrument

## “Evaluation of the 2008-2012 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Plan”

In February 2012 an invitation to complete the online survey in SurveyMonkey was emailed by the evaluators to all librarians subscribed to the Commission’s System Listserv. A blog post also announced the availability of the survey.

There were 290 responses and 245 valid surveys. The evaluators ran descriptive statistics.

### Question 1. Please tell us the name of your library.

Type of library was assigned based on the name of the library provided in Question 1.

Library Type		
Academic	11	4.49%
Community		
College	4	1.63%
Public	163	66.53%
School	60	24.49%
Special	7	2.86%
(blank)		0.00%
Grand Total	245	100.00%

### Question 2. Now please tell us which position you hold in your library:

Position (of any library type)		
Assistant Director	5	2.04%
Branch Manager	2	0.82%
Children's Librarian	3	1.22%
Director	152	62.04%
IT Staff	1	0.41%
Library Aide	1	0.41%
Library Assistant	3	1.22%
Other (please specify)	17	6.94%
Reference Librarian	1	0.41%
School Librarian	58	23.67%
Technical Services Librarian	2	0.82%
(blank)		0.00%
Grand Total	245	100.00%

**Question 3. Please rate the LSTA-funded programs and services your library has used or participated in in the last four years.**

<b>Bibliostat Collect</b>		
Very valuable	44	17.96%
Valuable	64	26.12%
Somewhat valuable	31	12.65%
Not very valuable	12	4.90%
Did not participate or use this program/service	87	35.51%
(blank)		0.00%
No response	7	2.86%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>Children &amp; Young Adult Services</b>		
Did not participate or use this program/service	54	22.04%
Not very valuable	2	0.82%
Somewhat valuable	13	5.31%
Valuable	83	33.88%
Very valuable	90	36.73%
(blank)		0.00%
No response	3	1.22%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>Interlibrary Loan and Reference Services</b>		
Did not participate or use this program/service	32	13.06%
Not very valuable	2	0.82%
Somewhat valuable	16	6.53%
Valuable	60	24.49%
Very valuable	135	55.10%
(blank)		0.00%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>Lender Compensation</b>		
Did not participate or use this program/service	148	60.41%
Not at all valuable	1	0.41%
Somewhat valuable	11	4.49%
Valuable	37	15.10%
Very valuable	46	18.78%
(blank)		0.00%
No response	2	0.82%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Question 3, continued**

<b>Library Leadership Institute</b>		
Did not participate or use this program/service	174	71.02%
Not at all valuable	1	0.41%
Not very valuable	2	0.82%
Somewhat valuable	11	4.49%
Valuable	23	9.39%
Very valuable	26	10.61%
(blank)		0.00%
No response	8	3.27%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>Library Development Services</b>		
Did not participate or use this program/service	55	22.45%
Not at all valuable	1	0.41%
Not very valuable	1	0.41%
Somewhat valuable	22	8.98%
Valuable	66	26.94%
Very valuable	99	40.41%
(blank)		0.00%
No response	1	0.41%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>LSTA Library Improvement Grants</b>		
Did not participate or use this program/service	145	59.18%
Not at all valuable	1	0.41%
Not very valuable	2	0.82%
Somewhat valuable	9	3.67%
Valuable	28	11.43%
Very valuable	56	22.86%
(blank)		0.00%
No response	4	1.63%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>Nebraska Center for the Book</b>		
Did not participate or use this program/service	89	36.33%
Not at all valuable	4	1.63%
Not very valuable	15	6.12%
Somewhat valuable	46	18.78%
Valuable	68	27.76%
Very valuable	19	7.76%
(blank)		0.00%
No response	4	1.63%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Question 3, continued**

<b>NebraskAccess</b>		
Did not participate or use this program/service	13	5.31%
Not at all valuable	2	0.82%
Not very valuable	2	0.82%
Somewhat valuable	12	4.90%
Valuable	53	21.63%
Very valuable	161	65.71%
(blank)		0.00%
No response	2	0.82%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>Regional Library Systems</b>		
Did not participate or use this program/service	40	16.33%
Not at all valuable	3	1.22%
Not very valuable	4	1.63%
Somewhat valuable	15	6.12%
Valuable	46	18.78%
Very valuable	133	54.29%
(blank)		0.00%
No response	4	1.63%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>Talking Book and Braille Service</b>		
Did not participate or use this program/service	129	52.65%
Not at all valuable	2	0.82%
Not very valuable	4	1.63%
Somewhat valuable	10	4.08%
Valuable	56	22.86%
Very valuable	41	16.73%
(blank)		0.00%
No response	3	1.22%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>Technology Innovation</b>		
Did not participate or use this program/service	54	22.04%
Not at all valuable	3	1.22%
Not very valuable	7	2.86%
Somewhat valuable	30	12.24%
Valuable	66	26.94%
Very valuable	81	33.06%
(blank)		0.00%
No response	4	1.63%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

[Exit this survey](#)

# Nebraska Library Commission

*“Bringing together people and information”*

## Evaluation of NE 2007-2012 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Plan

### Introduction

The Nebraska Library Commission Five-Year Plan for 2008-2012, as part of the Library Services & Technology Act (LSTA), is approaching the end of its intended term. The Library Commission is now charged with evaluating the plan's activities in a report to the Institute of Museum & Library Services (IMLS). As a beneficiary of NLC's programs & services, we need your assistance in the evaluation process. **Your feedback is an important element in assessing our past activities and identifying the benchmarks for the upcoming 2013-2017 LSTA Plan.** Your involvement is crucial. Please help us by completing the following survey. Thank you!

The survey itself contains six (6) questions. The first two are easy! The other four will require some thought and consideration. The amount of time to complete this survey will depend on your responses.

All answers are confidential and only summary results will be used.

Click NEXT to proceed.

[Next](#)

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Create your own [free online survey](#) now!

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### Evaluation of NE 2007-2012 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Plan

**\* 1. Please tell us the name of your library.**

**\* 2. Now please tell us which position you hold in your library:**

- Director
- School Librarian
- Assistant Director
- Branch Manager
- Children's Librarian
- Reference Librarian
- Technical Services Librarian
- IT Staff
- Library Assistant
- Library Aide
- Other (please specify)

Prev

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Exit this survey



Evaluation of NE 2007-2012 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Plan

3. Please rate the LSTA-funded programs and services your library has used or participated in the last FOUR YEARS (at any time from 10/1/2007 to today).

	Very valuable	Valuable	Somewhat valuable	Not very valuable	Not at all valuable	Did not participate or use this program/service
<b>Collection of annual public library statistics through <i>Bibliostat Collect</i>.</b>	---	---	---	---	---	---
<b>Children &amp; Young Adult Services</b> (Consultations, presentations, workshops, Collaborative Summer Library Program, Youth Grants for Excellence, work with annual book awards, One Book for Nebraska Kids/Teens, etc.)	---	---	---	---	---	---
<b>Interlibrary Loan and Reference Services</b> (Book club kits, coordinating library resource sharing, loaning of material from the NLC collection, answering reference questions.)	---	---	---	---	---	---
<b>Lender Compensation</b> (Partial reimbursement to libraries for loaning resources to other Nebraska libraries.)	---	---	---	---	---	---
<b>Library Leadership Institute</b> (Five-day intensive program for Nebraska librarians designed to provide information, ideas, exercises and activity-based learning for development of leadership skills.)	---	---	---	---	---	---
<b>Library Development Services</b> (Provides information, advice and assistance to library personnel, library trustees, and community officials, administers library accreditation guidelines, provides Basic Skills classes,	---	---	---	---	---	---

Very Valuable Somewhat Valuable Not very Valuable Not at all Valuable Did not participate or use this program/service

and opportunities to earn continuing education credits, coordinates the Librarian Certification Program and the Board Certification Program)

**LSTA Administration of Library Improvement Grants (NLC**

administers the annual competitive grant process to distribute federal LSTA funds through these grants.)

**Nebraska Center for the Book (NLC** provides staff support for NCB

activities. The NCB publishes a newsletter, provides Nebraska sponsorship for the national Letters About Literature program, hosts the annual Nebraska Book Festival, awards programs, and the statewide One Book One Nebraska program.)

**NebraskaAccess** (NLC licenses online databases for access through libraries, schools, and home use. The databases are provided at no cost for Nebraska residents.)

**Regional Library Systems** (Six Regional Library Systems were funded in part with LSTA funds. Funds are used to support services for libraries of all types. LSTA-funded services include consulting, continuing education opportunities, materials for a professional collection, newsletters, book club kits, and cooperative purchasing and leasing opportunities for system member libraries.)

**Talking Book and Braille Service** (The Talking Book and Braille Service provided free books and magazines on digital cartridges, cassette, online, and in Braille to individuals with a visual or physical condition or a reading disability which limits use of regular print.)

**Technology Innovation** (NLC created a Technology Innovation Librarian position to introduce library workers and representatives to new and useful technologies in order to improve library services by increasing the skills, knowledge, abilities, and self-reliance of libraries when dealing with

Very Valuable Somewhat Not very Not at all Did not  
 valuable valuable valuable valuable participate or  
 use this  
 program/service

technology-related issues and challenges. Programs and services include Tech Talks , NE Libraries on the Web WordPress workshops and training provided by the Technology Innovation Librarian, NLC Wi-Fi grant, Big Talk from Small Libraries online conference.)

Prev

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Evaluation of NE 2007-2012 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Plan

4. Please rank five program/services in which you've participated that have had the greatest impact on your library.

	Children & YA Services	ILL & Reference Services	Lender Compensation	Library Leadership Institute	Library Development Services	Library Improvement Grants	Nebraska Center for the Book	Nebraska Access Library Systems	Regional Talking Book & Technology	Nebraska Braille Innovation Memories Service
1st	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
2nd	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
3rd	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
4th	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
5th	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

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Evaluation of NE 2007-2012 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Plan

5. Among the LSTA program priorities are:

- 1) library technology, connectivity, and services;
- 2) services for lifelong learning;
- 3) services to persons having difficulty using libraries;
- 4) library services from qualified personnel.

Please share any examples/stories that you have from your library that indicate that these kinds of activities are happening as a result of the services/initiatives that the Nebraska Library Commission has undertaken using LSTA funds.

Prev

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# Nebraska Library Commission

*“Bringing together people and information”*

## Evaluation of NE 2007-2012 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Plan

**6. In your opinion, which of the following services or initiatives have the greatest potential for improving library services statewide in the next five years? (Check all that apply.) Please write in your own preference if not covered by available options.**

- Providing basic skills instruction for library staff
- Providing expert information research services for Nebraska library personnel
- Promotion of state and national reading projects for youth, including active involvement in the Collaborative Summer Library Program
- Organizing and managing the Nebraska OverDrive Libraries Group to make e-books and digital audiobooks affordable to libraries that might not otherwise be able to provide these materials, through cost-sharing between members and financial support from the Nebraska Library Commission.
- Maintenance of a Nebraska librarian certification program
- Ensuring that Nebraskans with a print-related disability will have access to regional books and magazines in an accessible format as well as to the Library of Congress Talking Book and Braille collection
- Assisting libraries with applications for e-rate discounts on telecommunications services
- Administration of the Nebraska Public Library Accreditation program
- Coordinating an interlibrary loan service for state-wide resource sharing
- Maintaining a collection of professional library resources for use by Nebraska library staff
- Offering online educational opportunities on topical library issues (ex. NCompass Live)
- Offering professional consulting services in library operations and governance for directors, trustees, and community officials
- Offering and administering competitive grants for services to youth
-

Reimbursing libraries for loaning materials to other Nebraska libraries

- Developing and coordinating state-wide library promotion initiatives
- Providing professional consulting in services to children and young adults
- Collecting and loaning book club kits for use in local library reading promotions
- Collecting and using library statistical data as part of the national Public Libraries Survey program in partnership with other state library agencies and the Institute of Museum & Library Services (IMLS).
- Providing unrestricted access to online subscription databases to all Nebraska libraries and citizens
- Administration of federal Library Improvement Grants to facilitate growth and development of library programs and services in Nebraska public and institutional libraries by supplementing local funding with federal funds designated for these purposes
- Offering increased educational opportunities to ensure that library personnel can acquire the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to deal with technology-related issues and challenges.
- Assisting libraries with efforts to market and promote their services and programs
- Managing the Nebraska Memories project to digitize Nebraska-related historical and cultural heritage materials and make them available via the Internet.

Other (please list)

Prev

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## Annex E

# Focus Group Questions and Responses

**LSTA Evaluation Exercise  
Joint Meeting of the  
State Advisory Council on Libraries and Nebraska Library Commissioners  
March 9, 2012**

## Focus Group #1

**1. The public desires ease of use, convenience and availability. What did the Nebraska Library Commission do to support your type of library's efforts to better address these expectations?**

- Help with building plan
- NebraskaAccess
- Overdrive – ebooks
- Supporting areas with no library service
- Databases
- Scholarships
- Consultants – service and tech support
- Direct support by Commission staff at conferences. Visibility overall in library community

**2. What did the Nebraska Library Commission do right to help your type of library improve satisfaction with library space and customer service? What else could the Nebraska Library Commission have done?**

- Realigning future, i.e. Pioneer, Overdrive
- Building planning
- Grants for tech services workshops
- Less on fundamentals – more on new trends
- BTOP program
- Handicapped accessible station – training
- Collaboration
- Packaging need for e-resources as an element of state funding
- Build advocates
- LSTA grants
- Library improvement
- Youth grants
- Direction and training for summer reading workshops
- Book talks – conferences
- The following suggestions for future:

- Technology audits
- Overdrive advantage
- More input from school library re: database selection
- System board training

**3. In the past five years, how did the Nebraska Library Commission assist your type of library in remaining relevant?**

- Overdrive
- BTOP
- Book club kits
- Multi-state consortium re: prices of children material
- Help in publicizing services to special populations – blind, homebound
- Keeps NE library community informed re: other states/state gov./fed. Gov
- Pioneer state-wide resource sharing
- Motion picture license
- ILL

**4. In the past five years, how did the Nebraska Library Commission assist your type of library in obtaining funding support?**

- BTOP
- Scholarships
- Automation
- Grants
- Seed money to pursue matching donations
- Big picture of library world and library “interconnectedness” connections across all types of libraries across the state for ex. Advocacy Day
- Commission employees become visible to city officials

## **Focus Group #2**

**1. The public desires ease of use, convenience and availability. What did the Nebraska Library Commission do to support your type of library’s efforts to better address these expectations?**

- NEAccess
- Talking Books (TBBS)
- Overdrive
- Redesign of website
- Grants
- ILL
- Training – tech
  - o Summer camp
  - o Tech rodeo

**2. What did the Nebraska Library Commission do right to help your type of library improve satisfaction with library space and customer service? What else could the Nebraska Library Commission have done?**

- BTOP equipment
  - o Cornhusker Industries furniture
- BTOP – public access learning center
  - o Remodeled as a result with donations; local pride; “guilt as a motivator:
- Customer service
- Add. To library – providing answers to space questions
- Basic skills training for untrained libr.
- Promote Ncompass Live archives more(help teachers know how to use to help students)

**3. In the past five years, how did the Nebraska Library Commission assist your type of library in remaining relevant?**

- Keeping up with technology (over last 5 years)
- E-books – cost issue
- Marketing piece of BTOP grants – moving to new “brand” – not just “a roomful of books” – a community place
  - o Need to “sell” library services
- Library as an “anchor” institution – no matter type of inst.
- Keeping the history of the locale – local newspapers; genealogy
- NLC encouraged use of computers and computer resources

**4. In the past five years, how did the Nebraska Library Commission assist your type of library in obtaining funding support?**

- “Turning the Page” conf. – great. Advocacy training by NLC; how to request \$; partnership – how to do “the ask”
- Ncompass Live – partnership – for matching
- Grants – Youth Services; CE
- LSTA \$, matching requirement, to buy things we cannot afford – genealogy material
- Gates Opp. Onlind Hardware – matching requirement
- (Sc) help advocate for sustaining budget

### **Focus Group #3**

**1. The public desires ease of use, convenience and availability. What did the Nebraska Library Commission do to support your type of library’s efforts to better address these expectations?**

- Academic & school & public Avail.
- Consortium Databases and discounts
- Would be difficult to convince school admin. to purchase (Suggestion for expansion: not providing databases for K-8)

- Participate in commission funded allows to stretch local funding so much farther
- E-books and grants for e-books
  - o Could never have afforded to do with local funding
- Movie Licensing for public libraries
- ILL huge for special libraries
- Librarian consulting (circ/cat)
- Talking Book Service and machine exchange (public) – “even though used infrequently, the public appreciates”
- Huge BTOP impact and continued support
- Online training essential and appreciated since travel barriers (gas, get off work)
- LSTA grants allow imagination and others get ideas from them and can provide services that would never be able to do/or start. Ex. Digitization project

**2. What did the Nebraska Library Commission do right to help your type of library improve satisfaction with library space and customer service? What else could the Nebraska Library Commission have done?**

- One Book One Lincoln book choice not available and TBBS recorded
- Teen Space (LSTA grant) mini grant computers used and appreciated
- AWE (grant/group purchase) used and appreciated – “Our library preferred by kids with a choice of libraries because of AWE computer purchase”
- Students respond positively to ILL (can’t purchase everything/need reimb.)
- Customers need to fill in services = ILL
- Book club bags thru ILL
- Keep kids engaged in libraries
- Many success stories of how libraries share/need more sharing
- Something like snapshot day would help – share the great work that libraries are doing
- Bringing in someone like Jamie LaRue to remind us all to tell our library story and other library stories
- Improved website and library Buzz and library photos, especially

**3. In the past five years, how did the Nebraska Library Commission assist your type of library in remaining relevant?**

- Training – ex: e-book/e-reader training
- Always reminding us of the trends/promotion of agenda
- Idea feed from Regional Library Systems
- Training - word press website “staff member taking word press training to make website more customer oriented – easier to keep up to date – disperse responsibility”
- Regional meetings and networking
  - o hear what other libraries are doing to serve their customers
- person-to-person/face-to-face – some people really miss the people interaction

**4. In the past five years, how did the Nebraska Library Commission assist your type of library in obtaining funding support?**

- Accreditation Standards bolster funding request from city
- Statistical reporting forces us to keep track and allows us to take the information and repackage it in ways that help get \$
  - o “if you don’t measure it it’s only a hobby”
  - o Use in applying for grant funding
  - o Good advocacy tool
  - o Makes librarian more informed
  - o “when asked at budget time – how many people use \_\_\_\_\_, we get answers from the stats we collect”
- If one of our comparable libraries doesn’t report, it is a huge gap
- Academic funding pretty much comes from elsewhere, but databases and ILL and grants (cut in amt. of ILL reimbursement really hurt)
- ILL \$ used to buy 20 playaways and the parents and teachers really loved them (along with the kids)
  - o Use it as an example then the community is willing to fund more!
- Scholarships = learning and networking + networking + mentorship + inspiration
- Grants require match and that raises local recognition awareness when we seek local support (enhances standing in community) for the match (local foundation)
- NLC = state level presence
- “Library Commission” name dropping
- Relevance in community is based on help of library community
- Summer reading program access and affordability and materials make library look good to local funders....”don’t you want to be part of this?... everyone else in the state is doing it”
- Politicians love to know that we are working together
- Author tour is easy to sell to local funders

**Annex F**

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**Nebraska Library Commission  
Talking Book and Braille Service  
Lincoln, Nebraska  
April 13 – 15, 2011  
Vickie Collins, Network Consultant**

**Introduction**

This report is based on observations at the Nebraska regional library (RL) on April 13-15, 2011, and on documents supplied by the RL. It updates information, findings, and recommendations of the NLS consultant report of March 5-7, 2007, and uses the American Library Association's *Revised Standards and Guidelines of Service for the Library of Congress Network of Libraries for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, 2005* as the basis for its findings and recommendations.

As of September 30, 2010, the RL reported serving 2,924 individual patrons and 222 institutions in Nebraska. The RL is the machine-lending agency (MLA). Readership by format is broken out as follows:

	<b>Individuals</b>	<b>Institutions</b>
Braille	103	9
Digital Book	1,752	25
Recorded Cassette	2,326	160
Web Braille	74	6
Descriptive Videos	32	3
NEWSLINE <sup>®</sup>	94	2

Circulation by format follows:

	<b>Individuals</b>	<b>Institutions</b>
BR	604	287
DB	24,721	132
RC	89,538	5,239
DVS	372	5

In fiscal year 2010, 454 patrons established service and 577 patrons discontinued service.

The RL contracts with the Utah State Library to provide its braille readers with braille books. However, the RL does maintain a browsing collection of young adult and children's magazine and book titles.

The following report breaks down the types of materials distributed by the regional library:

	<b>LP</b>	<b>BR</b>	<b>RC</b>
<i>TBT</i>	1,800	2	60
<i>BBR</i>	0	2	0
NLS Catalogs	1,200	0	0
NLS Bibliographies	20	0	0
Network Catalogs	800	0	0
Network Newsletters	12,802	72	1,191
Sample NLS Magazines	0		260
Cassette/Digital Magazines	0	0	30,994

There are no subregional libraries in the state, and the RL is the machine-lending agency for Nebraska.

The narrative of this report describes the standards being met by the library. The recommendations fall into several categories: those regarding compliance with the standards, others relating to streamlining RL's operation and still others supporting NLS policies and procedures.

### **Provision of Services**

The regional library and machine-lending agency does register patrons in compliance with P.L. 89-522 (Pratt-Smoot Act as amended and extended). The RL does maintain patron information needed to meet NLS requirements and to provide service. Within three business days of receiving an application for service, the RL does verify that the application is complete, initiate contact for additional information, or return the application for proper certification. Once a completed application is verified, the library does initiate service within two business days.

The RL has developed a relationship with specialized schools to ensure that all eligible children are registered for NLS services. The RL sends out a memorandum to resume service at the beginning of each school year and a memorandum concerning outstanding machines and materials at the end of

each school year. The RL recently conducted an outreach mailing to the school media center specialists. This is commendable.

The RL does ensure the confidentiality of patron records following the guidelines presented in the ALA policy on confidentiality of patron records.

The MLA does comply with the MLA agreement by keeping and maintaining a procedures manual provided by NLS and providing playback equipment and accessories within two business days.

The library does maintain book circulation and machine-lending functions electronically using READS software for its circulation system. The RL's expertise in the READS database policies and procedures is commendable. There is an established loan period of six weeks for reading materials from the national collection. Patrons are informed of the loan period when service is initiated and that loans can be extended by contacting the library. The RL sends out overdue notices once a month. No fines are levied for overdue materials from the national collection.

The library has an appropriate loan policy for material not in the national collection: descriptive videos are loaned for two weeks.

Hours of public service, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. weekdays, are determined by the state library, with which the RL shares a building.

The RL does set up patron profiles and revise them as necessary. Patrons are also encouraged to request specific titles. The RL does provide reader advisors who assist patrons in identifying specific materials in their areas of interest by title, author, subject or genre. The reader advisors contact new borrowers to initiate service and maintain ongoing contacts with them. Reader advisors continuously adjust reading profiles.

The RL does provide languages other than English. The RL receives intermasters of *Buena Vida* from the Florida regional library. The RL has federal, state, and local titles in Spanish, and a local title with Lakota phrases. The RL recorded Willa Cather's *My Antonia* in Korean.

The library corresponds with patrons in braille, audio, large print and e-mail.

The RL has procedures in place to ensure that the library staff responds to patron requests for contact by the next business day and processes *TBT/BBR* request within three business days. This is commendable.

Patrons can call the RL on toll-free voice and TDD/TTY lines, during public hours and can leave to voice mail during hours the library is closed. They can send e-mail messages twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

The RL does serve walk-in patrons. The Reader Services counter is located on the first floor of the state library which is accessible from the sidewalk to the counter by automatic doors. The library is near all downtown bus routes.

The RL processes all returned materials within two business days, and following NLS guidelines, each item is inspected upon return from circulation. The RL's circulation staff report to their supervisor when all mailing cards are not processed the day they are received. Inspection staff process all books returned daily. The supervisor monitors activities to ensure that all materials are handled on a daily basis.

The reader advisors have access to a collection of materials, resources and directories to respond to patron inquiries. The librarians and the public accessing the RL's website can find the location of related services throughout the state. The library does provide enough full-time equivalents of reader advisors. The state library's Reference Service is located across the aisle from the RL's reader services, and they are called upon for in depth reference needs. Reference requests are completed within five business days but frequently are completed on the same day.

The library informs patrons of services offered by public libraries through articles in Nebraska Library Commission's newsletter "NCompass," posting announcements at the RL, and on their website. The library uses twenty-six public libraries as "cassette machine exchange sites," and borrowers are encouraged to use them. The RL staff works with other local libraries and network libraries as needed.

The RL's newsletter, "Interchange" is available in large print, e-mail, braille and audio formats, MP3 audio files, as a Podcast, and available on the RL's website; it is produced six times per year. The state library's newsletter, "NCompass" features updates about libraries in Nebraska and is also recorded by the RL. This is commendable.

The RL has electronic access provided through the world-wide-web, e-mail, and telephone access, with voice mail available after hours. The RL uses READS as its circulation system and an OPAC is not available at this time. An online link to the NLS union catalog is available on the RL's website.

The RL does review all information and links on their website to ensure information is current and correct. Online locally-produced catalogs are available on the library's website. Policies, the biennium report and publications are scheduled to be added to the newly designed Talking Book and Braille Services homepage.

The RL includes supplemental information relevant to their patrons such as links to consumer groups, service agencies, other libraries and their websites.

The RL works to ensure that web-based virtual reference services are fully accessible. The RL's homepage features downloadable application forms, procedures to establish services for individuals and information about the facilities and services. The Talking Book and Braille Service homepage offers a link for "Ask a Question." The state library agency offers "Ask a Librarian."

The RL provides information about national, state, and local reading programs, book discussion groups, and facilitates patron participation in them. The RL provides the materials for the state summer reading program.

The "Golden Sower" children's books and other award-winning children's books are distributed by the RL to school media specialists and to library science students. The RL promotes "One Book, One Nebraska" and "One Book-One Lincoln."

The RL provides access to the annual Great Decisions Briefing Book. Theme-based bibliographies are featured in the library's newsletter. Schools depend on the RL for the loan of children's braille board books. The Fremont and Wayne public libraries receive bulk loan of children's braille; both also have deposit collections of children's braille titles.

The RL forwards requests for titles not available in the national collection to the NLS collection development section for consideration.

The RL uses the NLS union catalog, Voyager, to identify materials and to request them on interlibrary loan from the multistate centers, and other network libraries to meet the reading needs of their patrons.

### **Resource Development and Management**

The RL does produce reading materials to supplement the national collection. The materials are recorded in digital format using Sound Forge. The library has established a workstation for digital downloading. Numerous locally-

produced magazine subscriptions are being produced on cartridges. This is commendable. The RL does share locally-produced materials with other network libraries. The library does submit cataloging on locally-produced material to the Bibliographic Control Section for inclusion in the NLS union catalog. The library has submitted items for review and critique by the MSCE Quality Assurance program.

The library has the capacity to reproduce accessible formats for the national collection according to NLS quality-control standards.

The RL does maintain non-circulating masters of all locally-produced materials. The library does maintain access to collections of sufficient quantity and condition to meet patron demand in a timely and responsive manner.

The collection development librarian selects the number of copies of each new title produced for the national collection through copy allotment.

The RL does retain in each format it circulates, a minimum of one copy of each title distributed by NLS.

The RL uses the READS circulation system. The system does have the capability of downloading bibliographic data from the NLS network library website.

The library's collection development policy does provide for systematic review and weeding of the collections and disposal of excess copies in accordance with NLS procedures. The RL regularly reviews and shifts its collection.

The RL does have a collection of professional materials and resources that supports the development and provision of this library service. There is a collection of standard reference works and reader advisory reference materials.

The RL does maintain information about national, state, and local organizations and programs concerned with services to eligible users. The library provides information about the Radio Talking Book Network, American Council of the Blind, National Federation of the Blind, Tape Ministries NW, Recordings for Recovery, Aurora Ministries, RFB&D (now Learning Ally), Nebraska Assistive Technology Project, Hadley School for the Blind, NFB, AFB, and the League of Human Dignity.

The RL does maintain sufficient inventories of audio playback equipment and accessories to ensure provision within two business days of a patron application or request for a replacement.

### **Public Education**

The RL has developed and implemented a coordinated public awareness program for use in its service area and has shared a copy with NLS.

The RL does perform activities that promote a climate of public opinion and awareness favorable to the development, expansion, and improvement of this library service.

The RL has placed paid ads in *Living Well* and in *Nebraska Life* magazines. Articles about the library have been used in library system newsletters. Packets have been mailed to nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and optometrists who specialize in low vision. Booths have been used at health fairs throughout the state. Presentations have been made to consumer groups and to veteran county service officers.

The RL has conducted outreach at the Learning Disabilities Association of Nebraska, ACB and NFB conventions, Exploratorium sessions at the Nebraska Library Association, the Veterans of Foreign Wars Annual Council and numerous other events and programs. The library has made presentations and sent mailings to eye care professionals, senior facilities, and occupational therapists. The RL is working to identify additional specialized groups for mailings to increase awareness of its services.

### **Consulting Services**

NLS does provide two full-time consultants to advise and assist network libraries. The NLS consultant does prepare and submit a final written report of observations and recommendations and does send a copy to the visited regional library and its administering agency. The RL does prepare a written response within three months of receiving the consultant report and does send a copy to their administering agency and the consultant.

The RL does advise and assist libraries and agencies in the development of services in their geographic area. Nebraska does not have subregional libraries. With no subregional libraries, the RL makes an extra effort to maintain contact with the public libraries throughout the state to provide and promote talking book service and to encourage the librarians to contact the RL for information and referrals for the service.

The regional librarian does participate in peer consulting through NLS, the Western Conference, and the Nebraska Library Association.

## **Volunteers**

The RL does utilize volunteers to assist in the performance of activities that supplement its basic program of services. The volunteer program is managed in accordance with administering agency policy and procedure guidelines. The library has developed and implemented an organizational structure for its volunteer program. Volunteers are not used in the place of paid staff, nor have any staff members been replaced by volunteers.

There are approximately 50 volunteers each month, and 104 were active during the year assisting the RL with recording, circulation, duplication and outreach packet preparation for new readers and/or specific groups. Volunteers with a variety of different skill levels are recruited by the volunteer coordinator.

The *Outreach Handbook* on the library's website encourages volunteers to assist with public awareness of the program. It provides information about the background, eligibility criteria, certification and services. This handbook can also be used by educators, activity directors, and others working with the visually impaired population.

Volunteers are recognized periodically for their efforts. One form of recognition is a certificate making the volunteer an "Admiral" in the Great Navy of the State of Nebraska. Volunteers receive recognition during National Volunteer Week and, at that event, volunteers receive length-of-service awards. The library participates in the Give-a-Day, Get-a-Day program sponsored by Disney.

## **Administration/Organization**

The RL does have the responsibility for the machine-lending function as described in the MLA Service Agreement. The MLA has no designated SLAs.

The library does comply with laws and regulations pertaining to rights of and services for persons with disabilities. The RL does ensure the confidentiality of patron records.

The state library is responsible for the development and coordination of the regional library directly through its administration and budget. The RL does provide a means of rapid communication with cooperating units. The RL has established deposit collections and demonstration collections to extend its services. Deposit collections are monitored through the circulation system to identify any that are inactive. The establishment of deposit collections has

continued to be slow during this reporting period due to funding and travel restrictions.

These standards are applied appropriately to all network cooperating units, including contractors, institutional borrowers, and all others who perform services and functions covered in the standards.

The RL does encourage advice and input from a full spectrum of patrons and patron constituency groups through its Advisory Committee. The minutes of the Advisory Committee are posted online. Also, correspondence with consumers is routinely sent in large print and in braille if requested. The library's newsletter is also used to solicit feedback. The library director meets regularly with public library directors. The RL does not have an established Friends group.

### **Budget and Funding**

The federal and state governments do contribute funds, resources, and services to ensure the provision of this library service to eligible residents of Nebraska.

Funds intended for seed funds, demonstration projects, and similar grants are being used to fund long-term ongoing operations. LSTA funds currently augment the RL's operating budget. The library provides NLS-mandated and supplemental services to patrons such as descriptive videos at no charge. The RL offers studio, tape duplication, and braille embossing services to government agencies and non-profit organization on a fee basis.

The administering agency does commit resources to enable the RL to administer and facilitate services as defined by these standards except where noted by the recommendations.

The regional librarian does have primary responsibility for planning and administering the budget as well as presenting it to appropriate groups within the administering agency. The administering agency does consult with the head of the regional library before any action is taken affecting the finances of the RL. The RL does work with the administering agency to obtain outside funding to enhance services.

### **Planning and Evaluation**

There is a comprehensive long-range plan designed to develop, coordinate, maintain, and improve services and to make optimum use of resources. The plan was developed in cooperation with appropriate constituencies, patrons, the administering agency, and associated network libraries.

The long-range plan does include measurable objectives and a timetable for accomplishments. Progress is reviewed regularly and the plan is revised at least annually. The RL is in the process of reviewing its long-range plan. The plan was developed in accordance with P.L. 89-522 (Pratt-Smoot Act as amended and extended) and P.L. 101-336 (Americans with Disabilities Act) as well as other appropriate statutes and codes.

The long-range plan is produced in accessible formats: braille, audio, large-print, and electronic format and made available to patrons upon request. The long-range plan is also on the RL's website.

The RL has adopted and implemented methods for evaluating patron satisfaction. The RL uses a customer satisfaction survey of patron satisfaction at least every three years. Based on patron response the RL modifies and refines the way the service is offered. The RL has held borrower receptions and hosts sessions at the statewide Visually Impaired Peer Support (V.I.P.S). conference run by the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Presentations to consumer groups always include time for comments from participants. The RL uses borrower input in the "Helpful Hints" column in its newsletter. Borrower suggestions impact the magazine collection and have influenced the information the RL presents in new books it records.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- ▶ Share a copy of the long-range plan with NLS.

### **Policies and Procedures**

The RL does have written policies and procedures for library operations designed to meet service goals. The library has written statements of policy for collection development and maintenance, materials selection, reproduction of materials in accessible formats, and interlibrary loan. The library has written statements of policy for service provision to patrons including patron confidentiality, patron behavior and library usage. The RL does make service policies and procedures available in accessible formats on request, and they

are now available on an accessible website. The RL does communicate any changes in policies, procedures or services offered to other libraries and units affected by the change in a timely manner. The library does review policies and procedures biennially. Changes will be needed to update existing policies to add digital services. New policies regarding BARD are needed. The RL consults with NLS on development and review as necessary.

The RL does provide staff and cooperating units with an up-to-date manual that includes policies and procedures. The library has policies online and procedures are developed and maintained within work areas.

The library has developed and made available instructional materials in accessible formats to assist patrons in the use of this library service.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- ▶ Work to update policies and procedures to reflect digital services.
- ▶ Develop a BARD institutional policy.

#### **Reports, Statistical and Narrative**

The library does maintain current and accurate statistical records to document use, services, and acquisitions to meet the requirements of the administering agency and NLS, and to generate information for planning purposes. With the transition to digital and the network administration of BARD, it is especially important to complete a CMLS reconciliation every other year. Nebraska last performed this reconciliation in September 2004.

The RL does prepare an annual narrative and statistical report and makes it available to the administering agency, the funding agency, patrons, NLS, and other interested parties. The report is published in the administering agency's newsletter *NCompass*. The format of this report relates to the business aspects of the library's operation. The RL does publish information pertinent to patrons, such as readership, circulation, and titles of volunteer recorded books, in its newsletter. E-mail and the LBPH list serve have been used to communicate the status of a magazine that goes out as an intermaster or that it is now on cartridge.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- ▶ Perform a CMLS reconciliation biennially.

## **Personnel**

The library operates under an affirmative action plan and is committed to cultural diversity in staffing and services. The RL makes every effort to advertise, to solicit applications from, and employ qualified persons with disabilities. Each employee has a position description, and the state library is reviewing all descriptions as part of its “managing for results” program. The library has prepared an organizational chart describing clear lines of authority. The RL does maintain a position description for each title or each category of position.

The library and its administrative agency, at a minimum once every five years, does jointly review and determine staffing patterns and requirements based on, but not limited to the following, long-range plans, demographics of service population, geography, services provided, physical facility, use of technologies, support provided by the administrative agency, and the guidelines included in these standards.

The regional librarian holds an MLS degree and is on the same administrative level as comparable unit heads within the agency.

The RL has a staffing level of 8 FTEs and three part time employees.

The library meets the standards requirements for orientation, training, and professional involvement for staff. The RL does encourage and support relevant continuing education activities for staff at all levels of the organization. The library does encourage and support staff participation in professional organizations, site visits and exchanges to other libraries, computer system user groups, and meeting of patron organizations.

The library sent appropriate staff to the Western conference in Golden, Colorado in 2011 and should send staff to the NLS Conference in Newport, Rhode Island in May 2012.

## **Research and Development**

The RL tests, evaluates, and uses new technologies, equipment, services, and materials to improve access to information and library services as well as to improve library services and operations. The library has upgraded its digital microphones, Sound Forge, and experimented with editing plug-ins. The RL was the first network library to acquire an EDAT. The RL is commended for using digital cartridges for selected locally-produced magazines. The RL does

use compatibility with national and local systems as a criterion in evaluating new systems and technologies.

### **Physical Facilities**

The regional library's facility has not changed. The RL, the library commission, and other state agencies occupy a seven-floor building in downtown Lincoln. The main entrance has electronic doors as does the RL. On entering the RL, the left side of the room is a small children's braille collection and the regional librarian's office and the volunteer coordinator's office. Around the corner is the machine room with work stations for volunteers. Just beyond this room is the mail room which leads to the freight elevator and the loading dock. Across the hall is the adaptive technology room.

Straight ahead from the entrance and on the left are the reader advisors. On the right is a counter for the state library's reference staff. Behind this area are the shelves for the audio collection and a stairway leading downstairs to the RL's collection area. The collection area has the freight elevator at one end, as well as the book sorting and inspection area adjacent to the duplication area. On the back wall are work areas for the coordinator of book circulation and the recording studios. There are four small soundproof booths—two for monitors and two for narrators.

### **Machine-Lending Agency**

The RL is the machine-lending agency for the state. The MLA does have a copy of the NLS *Machine-Lending Agency Procedures Manual*, the online *Multistate Center Supplies Catalog*, and the *Network Library Manual* section on machine-lending. The machine-lending agent has copies of NLS Machines and Accessories Reports and network bulletins that apply to equipment lending and inventory control. They are distributed as appropriate.

The MLA's files are automated and are part of the RL's circulation system. Machines can be checked by individual patron or by model and serial number of each machine. The MLA submits its reports in a timely manner.

The MLA has written internal procedures for machine and accessory accountability and control. The MLA does issue new and replacement equipment to readers within three working days. Three attempts are also made to retrieve equipment from inactive patrons.

The MLA has a readily retrievable copy of the last federal machine audit. The RL annually mails letters to a third of their readers to determine if the serial number of their playback equipment matches the MLA records. As a result, every three years all patrons are queried about their machine's serial number. NLS commends the MLA for this continuing effort.

The MLA has not conducted a reconciliation with the BPHICS file for NE9 within the last two years. This should be done on a biennial basis to ensure the accuracy between the MLA's machine files and the BPHICS file for NE9.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- ▶ Perform a reconciliation with BPHICS on a biennial basis to ensure accuracy between the MLA's machine files and the BPHICS NE9 file.
- ▶ Continue to perform a self-audit biennially.

Attachments: Summary of Recommendations, 4/13-15/11  
Summary of Recommendations, 3/5-7/07

**Summary of Recommendations  
Nebraska Library Commission  
Talking Book and Braille Service  
Visit of April 13 – 15, 2011**

**Planning and Evaluation**

- ▶ Share a copy of the long-range plan with NLS.

**Policies and Procedures**

- ▶ Work to update policies and procedures to reflect digital services.
- ▶ Develop a BARD institutional policy.

**Reports, Statistical and Narrative**

- ▶ Perform a CMLS reconciliation biennially.

**Machine-Lending Agency**

- ▶ Perform a reconciliation with BPHICS on a biennial basis to ensure accuracy between the MLA's machine files and the BPHICS NE9 file.
- ▶ Continue to perform a self-audit biennially.

**Summary of Recommendations  
Nebraska Library Commission  
Talking Book and Braille Service  
Visit of March 5 – 7, 2007**

1. Share a copy of the long-range plan with NLS.

**Action:** This will be done.

2. Notify NLS when policies and procedures are available on the accessible web.

**Action:** This has been done.

3. Continue to perform a reconciliation with BPHICS on a biennial basis to ensure accuracy between the MLA's machine files and the BPHICS NE9 file.

**Action:** This is planned.

4. Continue to perform a self-audit biennially.

**Action:** This has been done.

**Annex H**

# **Activity Mini-Reports**

Submitted February and March 2012 to John Felton and Kathryn Brockmeier by Commission staff

**Bibliostat (Collect and Connect)**

**Children and Young Adult Services**

**Awareness of Commission Services**

**Interlibrary Loan and Reference**

**Lender Compensation**

**Library Support Services**

**LSTA Administration**

**Nebraska Center for the Book (NCB)**

**NebraskAccess**

**Scholarship Program**

**State Advisory Council on Libraries (SACL)**

**Talking Book and Braille Service (TBBS)**

**Technology Innovation**

## **Project Title: Bibliostat (Collect and Connect) 2008 – 2012**

LSTA Purpose (Priority) Library technology, connectivity, and services

1. What formal and informal decisions were made from year to year to improve services? How were these decisions made? Lessons learned? Impact on planning future activities?

Collect. We decided to delay the release of the FY2008 survey so that we could use the new version of *Bibliostat Collect* that had just been made available and then produced an online training session to familiarize library directors about the changes and improvements. In subsequent years we also provided face-to-face training to librarians gathered for other meetings. The new interface proved to be easier for our clients to use as discovered through a formal survey, favorable comments received, and increased participation in the survey program.

We realized that some of the information being requested in the survey was actually data the Library Commission was receiving through other means, so the related questions were eliminated, making the survey easier to complete. Revisions made in the federal survey questions were initiated in our survey as soon as possible, so that respondents would quickly become familiar with the changes and institute procedures to collect the new data. More fields in the survey were pre-filled whenever possible, so that clients would not have to search for data when completing the report.

A series of methods were employed to encourage users to respond to the survey. These included advance notice of the survey, expanded instructions, tip sheets, “New Director” packets sent to those who hadn’t completed a survey in the past, individual instruction sessions, and automatic emails thanking each library director as they submitted a report.

We learned that while our clients appreciate the reminders and assistance, the response rate has remained steady for the past three years with the same core group of libraries regularly submitting a survey. We discovered that few new responders have been gained despite our efforts. As a result, we have been investigating the viability of some of these non-responding libraries and may have to redefine their status as public libraries. This might have the effect of changing the number of libraries to whom we target and promote our programs and services.

Connect. We conducted in-person, hands-on training sessions with library directors, teaching them to produce statistical reports using *Bibliostat Connect*. We also made online training sessions available to all libraries. Despite these efforts, this application was not utilized enough to justify the high cost of the annual license. We cancelled the subscription in 2009 and instructed our clients in the use of the IMLS *Compare Public Libraries* tool. We received no complaints from any libraries we serve about the decision to discontinue the service. The savings in our budget, however, was significant. As a result of this change, more libraries have utilized our expertise in statistical research by requesting peer comparison studies from Library Commission Data Services staff. This may lead us to emphasize and promote this service more actively in the future.

2. What have you done along the way to evaluate your activities?

A survey was sent to all public library directors asking for their input about how we can help them in completing and submitting the annual report. We also asked them to evaluate the latest version of the *Bibliostat Collect* interface. We also asked for comments after our online training session on the new survey format and after our on-site training workshops..

3. How were participation, outputs and outcomes tracked? Do you have any data to support the intended outcomes and outputs outlined in the plan?

Each year we track which libraries submit surveys to keep track of our response rate. Statistics from the survey are compiled and made available through our website in a variety of formats, including a spreadsheet, a summary “dashboard,” an interactive map, and an annual report of the state of libraries in Nebraska.

4. What reports were disseminated along the way?

The data from the survey was used to write reports for the Library Commission’s annual report to the State of Nebraska, for blog posts and articles. Contributed to the annual State Program Reports for IMLS. Used data to produce peer comparisons of individual libraries trend reports on key data elements year by year.

# **CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULT SERVICES**

## **LSTA Activity and Evaluation Report**

Submitted by: Sally Snyder, Coordinator of Children and Young Adult Library Services

This report addresses LSTA program-related activities occurring 10/1/2007 – 9/30/2012.

### **Goals, Activities, and Intended Outcomes and Outputs**

**Goal 1:** All Nebraskans will have improved access to enhanced library and information services, provided and facilitated by qualified library personnel, boards, and supporters with the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes necessary to provide excellent library and information services.

#### **Activities:**

**1J.** The Nebraska Library Commission will develop and promote library and information services for children and young adults.

#### **Intended Outcomes and Outputs were achieved in the following ways for the following activities and services:**

1. Library personnel will demonstrate improved knowledge and skills in providing library and information services to children and youth.

#### **Library Services to Children and Youth, Basic Skills course**

A two-week course was developed as one of the elective courses offered to Nebraska librarians as part of the Basic Skills set of courses for those working to earn Public Librarian Certification. Librarians who have not completed any college coursework in the field of library science can take these online courses offered by the Nebraska Library Commission to provide them with basic library information.

This course introduced librarians to the need to plan; both a story time plan and a plan for a teen program were required. It also required a look at early childhood language development, Books in Print, the many book awards for children and teen titles, and the development of the teen brain.

The Coordinator of Children and Young Adult Library Services at the Commission spent 201.5 hours developing, adjusting, and monitoring the course. Two sessions have been offered to date, one in September of 2011 and one in January of 2012. A total of 58 individuals have successfully completed the course at this time.

One student recently noted that she is new to children's services and this class helped her become more familiar with tools she will use, gave her some good background and

provided her with information she will use regularly.

### **Collection Development presentations**

Approximately ten presentations were given per year by the Coordinator of Children and Young Adult Library Services in order to provide direction to children and teen librarians in the development of their collections. These presentations include those given at the annual Nebraska Library Association/Nebraska Educational Media Association conference as well as regional summer reading workshops throughout the state. These presentations reached approximately 450 library professional attendees per year.

### **Webinar presentations**

#### **NCompass Live: NASA Space Science Workshop: Explore! Jupiter's Family Secrets**

Date: 5/18/2011

NASA and the Lunar and Planetary Institute presented a 2-day workshop in February about NASA's Explore! module about Jupiter and upcoming Juno mission that will launch in August to explore Jupiter. Librarians and teachers were provided with hands-on activities and demonstrations developed specifically for children and teens. Sally Snyder, Coordinator of Children and Young Adult Library Services - Nebraska Library Commission will share highlights of the workshop and Sandy Wallick, Gere Branch – Lincoln City Libraries, will tell about the Summer Reading Program events they have planned using ideas from the workshop.

#### **NCompass Live: One Book for Nebraska Kids & One Book for Nebraska Teens**

Date: 5/6/2009

Wouldn't it be great if kids all over Nebraska were talking about books? The Nebraska Library Commission & the Regional Library Systems have a program where kids can all read and discuss the same book. Join Sally Snyder, the NLC's Coordinator of Children and Young Adult Library Services, to learn all about One Book for Nebraska Kids and One Book for Nebraska Teens.

#### **NCompass Live: Summer Reading Programs: Who Chooses the Theme?**

Date: 4/1/2009

The Collaborative Summer Reading Program (CSLP) began in 1987 when ten Minnesota regional library systems developed a summer library program for children. It has grown to a consortium of 47 states working together to provide high-quality summer reading program materials for children at the lowest cost possible for their public libraries. Join Sally Snyder, the NLC's Coordinator of Children and Young Adult Library Services, and the current CSLP President, to learn all about how the CSLP works.

#### **NCompass Live: Great Reads with Sally Snyder (and similar)**

Dates: 11/25/2009, 5/5/2010, 11/10/2010, 12/21/2011

Sally Snyder, the NLC's Coordinator of Children and Young Adult Library Services, will review recent best books for children and teens.

2. Use of library and information services by Nebraska children and young adults will increase.

### **Circulation and program attendance**

Bibliostat results from year to year? Numbers from John??

### **One Book for Nebraska Kids and Teens programming and author tours**

Reports from librarians who conducted One Book for Nebraska Kids and Teens programming and hosted authors on their tours of Nebraska reported increase in circulation of the authors' book and an increase in enthusiasm for reading and writing.

3. Testimonials and anecdotes will indicate successful and beneficial use of library services and resources.

### **Summer reading programming**

### **One Book for Nebraska Kids and Teens programming and author tours**

Responses from youth during author tours were overwhelmingly positive:

*Thank you for funding Ellen Klages visit to Hastings. It was fun for me to hear an author speak. I never thought I would meet the author of an award winning book speak to a group or have my copy of the book signed. Thank you very much.*

*Thank you for everything and coming to talk about your book and I'm planning on reading your Next Book. Thank you ... for paying for the author to come and talk to us about her book.*

*He kept writing even though his first two books weren't published. He showed us how to find unique ideas and put things together in a different way.*

*I am so excited to read his books because he is a different author than the others. He writes amazing books.*

Feedback from professionals indicated an increase in use of library services and resources:

*Thank you so much for bringing Ellen and joining us for this special event! Just wanted you to know that the principal told me today that one of our students who visits the*

*office frequently due to his poor behavior was very well behaved during the program. She then heard from his mother that he talked about it at home and really enjoyed listening to Ellen's presentation. These are the kinds of comments that make you realize it is so worthwhile. We never know who or how students will be impacted in a new learning environment, but it's our job to give them the opportunity. Thank you to the NLC and NE Humanities Council and other organizations for making this possible!*

*[W]e extend our appreciation for the opportunities provided by the Nebraska Library Commission and the Nebraska Humanities Council. Ellen Klages' visit was well received and students are excited about the sequel, *White Sands, Red Menace*. An author visit inspires students in reading and writing! Ms. Klages had a positive impact on her audience. We feel very fortunate to have been selected as a presentation site. Thank you.*

*Can you believe we are still circulating interlibrary loan copies of *White Sands, Red Menace* and they are reading the book within a week! Again—thank the powers that be—I think that is one of the best situations I've been involved with the library. I know a good share of the credit has to go to Mrs. Montgomery for having the students prepared.*

*The author interacted so well with the students. The only downside was that we were rushed timewise since it took awhile to get everyone out of the auditorium and gathered in the classroom. The kids were willing to skip lunch to keep working with him. That's a testimonial to how much they were interested. They had so much fun interacting with the author as they learned how to build their ideas into a plot for a unique story. We feel so fortunate to have had this experience at our school!*

4. Children identified within the Spanish Language Outreach program, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, will receive increased and improved library and information services. [Coordinator of Children and Young Adult Library Services' time was used to coordinate this project for Nebraska.]

Nine workshops were held

Timeline of evaluation efforts

Annual library development team meetings

YAB meetings

Reports submitted to grant funders for author tours

NCompass annual reports

Evaluations from summer reading program libraries

Periodic library development team meetings

Discuss the annual budget

Administer Youth Grants for Excellence and analyze reports

## Communication and Promotion of Programs and Services

Goals, Activities, and Intended Outcomes and Outputs outlined in the LSTA plan that are related to **AWARENESS**

### Relationship to LSTA Purposes

1. Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages;
4. Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations;
5. Targeting library services to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills; and
6. Targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth through age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with 42 USC Sec. 9902 (2) applicable to a family of the size involved.

**Goal 1: All Nebraskans will have improved access to enhanced library and information services, provided and facilitated by qualified library personnel, boards, and supporters with the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes necessary to provide excellent library and information services.**

**1P.** The Nebraska Library Commission will promote and improve awareness of the library and information services of the Library Commission and Nebraska libraries through a variety of multi-format communication methods.

#### *Intended Outcomes and Outputs:*

1. The Nebraska Library Commission and statewide local library personnel will report use of a variety of technologies and formats to communicate more efficiently and effectively their programs and services.
2. A higher percentage of the Library Commission's communication products will be disseminated electronically.
3. Nebraskans will have increased awareness of library services as a result of statewide communication campaigns to increase participation in the Commission's statewide initiatives.

**What formal and informal decisions were made from year to year to improve services? How were these decisions made? Lessons learned? Impact on planning future activities?**

Public Information and Communication efforts are integral to the accomplishment of the Library Commission's statutory mission, "The mission of the Nebraska Library Commission is statewide promotion, development, and coordination of library and information services. As the state

library agency, the Commission is an advocate for the library and information service needs of all Nebraskans.” The responsibility for increasing awareness of library and information services available through the Nebraska Library Commission (as well as services available through other Nebraska libraries and media centers) is approached through communication efforts relying on print, electronic, and face-to-face communication.

Target customers for communication efforts are Nebraska librarians and other library staff (including school media specialists), Nebraska state agency employees, Nebraska citizens (as niche markets for government information services, Talking Book and Braille services, special product development efforts, etc.), intermediaries (especially individuals from Nebraska statewide organizations that promote the value of libraries and reading), and library personnel from other states.

All communication activities are subject to informal and formal formative evaluation. Teams that work on specific communication activities conduct these evaluation activities on a regular basis. One example is the Website team. The Nebraska Library Commission Website is a major communication vehicle for the agency and the Website team did extensive analysis of the site (both comparative and customer-based), and they redesigned the Website to address the feedback they received. Another example is Talking Book and Braille Service (TBBS). Throughout this 2008-12 LSTA Plan period, a small group (consisting of TBBS and Communications staff) have met and analyzed TBBS communication efforts—relying on informal input from TBBS customers and the TBBS Advisory Committee. Based on this analysis, several communication strategies were developed and tested, including paid ads, print promotion, video, audio, and Web-based activities.

The June 2008 Nebraska Libraries Future Search Conference had a communications focus as one of its major goals: “Educate library staff and boards, public officials, customers, and other stakeholders about library and information services in Nebraska.” Since the Nebraska Library Commission supports this goal, the information gathered at this June 2008 event was used to inform action planning to carry out the activities delineated in the *2008-2012 LSTA Five-Year Plan*. See below for specific Marketing Activities that were suggested through this event and implemented in later years of the LSTA Plan period.

The Nebraska Library Commission Director and the Communications Coordinator regularly review communications activities for performance, effectiveness, and customer reaction. One of these reports, *2007-2009 Analysis: Director and Communications Coordinator Communications Review*, dated 6/8/09, is attached (below) as an example. The scenario developed as part of this analysis was implemented, with the result of reducing print publications to address severe budget cutbacks.

### **What have you done along the way to evaluate your activities?**

Promotion and Communication projects and activities are planned and managed through interaction between Nebraska Library Commission staff, with input from the Nebraska State Advisory Council on Libraries (SACL). Those interactions are assessed on an on-going basis in light of the Nebraska Library Commission mission and on-going programs and projects. Each communication project and marketing campaign was assessed with the intent to determine

benefits, effectiveness, and improvements. Assessment is also accomplished through the interaction of with partner organizations and/or grant supporting agencies (e.g., Gates Foundation, IMLS, NTIA, etc.). Feedback is collected at events and displays, as well as electronic surveys and Facebook comments.

**How were participation, outputs and outcomes tracked? Do you have any data to support the intended outcomes and outputs outlined in the plan?**

**Outputs:**

Website use was tracked. Baseline information was collected in FY 2008 and FY 2010-2011 usage data provided evidence of decreased utilization of the Website.:

Hits on Homepage/Frontpage	Hits Entire Site	Pages per View	User/Visitor Sessions
<b>FY 2008</b>	127,880	7,650,510	4,018,882
<b>FY 2011</b>	111,070	5,926,525	2,102,922
			1,423,742
			866,821

On June 20, 2010, the Nebraska Library Commission launched the redesigned and updated Website to address customer service issues. We expect this to increase use and customer satisfaction.

Print communication pieces were also tracked. In this case, numbers also went down throughout the LSTA Plan period. But this was deliberate, as communication efforts shifted from print to electronic format.

**FY 2007-2008**

Number of Issues of Newsletters Published = 22

Number of Communications Pieces Published = 187

**FY 2010-2011**

Number of Issues of Newsletters Published = 7

Number of Communications Pieces Published = 65

**What reports were disseminated along the way?**

Printing and Postage Expenditure and Distribution Reports

Director and Communications Coordinator Communications Review Reports

Nebraska Libraries Future Search Conference Report

Periodic Reports to Nebraska Library Commission and Nebraska State Advisory Council on Libraries

**Activities:**

- **Print publications**, including newsletters, brochures, flyers, ads, handouts, postcards, posters, rack cards, Annual/Biennial Reports, news releases, catalogs, certificates, premiums, etc.
- **Electronic communication efforts**, including Nebraska Library Commission Website, electronic delivery of news releases and newsletters, publicity efforts through electronic mailing lists, fax broadcasts to target customer markets, radio programming and podcasts, targeted Blogs and Wikis, Facebook pages, Twitter, etc.

- **Exhibits and marketing demonstrations**, including the Nebraska Library Association (NLA) Convention, book festivals, conferences of government officials, special projects, educational exhibits, informational displays, etc.
- **Public Relations activities**, including legislative information activities, coordinated campaigns, book/DVD distribution, special projects (like the federal grant for Recruiting Librarians for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century), or nationally-instigated campaigns (like the @ **your library**<sup>®</sup> and READ<sup>®</sup> poster campaigns, adapted from the American Library Association [ALA]).
- **Collaborative partnership projects**, including marketing campaigns for specific products and events (like the Nebraska Center for the Book awards, celebrations, and festivals, One Book One Nebraska, Nebraska Summer Writers' Conference, Poetry Programming, *Saving Nebraska's Treasures* federal grant, *Ask a Design Professional* resources for libraries, *Prime Time Family Reading*<sup>®</sup>, *Librarians for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* [IMLS] grant, *Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities* [NTIA/BTOP/Gates] grant, etc.).

**Specific examples of Communications Activities include:**

**Librarians for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**, including supporting an advisory task force through SACL ; recruiting and training mentors; developing communication and marketing tools; providing library education scholarships/tuition reimbursement, internships (including *Prime Time Family Reading*<sup>®</sup> and grants to libraries), and stipends (including laptops, conference expenses, and membership in professional organizations for scholarship students), providing 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills development training; circulating recruitment kits and movie theatre promotional packets; developing a Website ([nowhiringatyourlibrary.org](http://nowhiringatyourlibrary.org)); and facilitating continuing education workshops (face-to-face and distance learning) and leadership retreats.

“The institute inspired me to be a leader where I am right now, not just in the future as I take on job positions with more authority. Since I returned from the institute, I have worked at developing my team and taking on more responsibility in my current position.”  
Participant in the 2007 Nebraska Library Leadership Institute

The purpose of the Librarians for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century project is to increase the number of qualified professionals and recruit future librarians available for employment in Nebraska libraries. This project, designed to attract promising high school and college students to the library profession, requires extensive communication efforts. The following testimonial describes the value of the Nebraska Library Commission internship program in recruiting young people into library careers.

“Thank you for the gift of the 2008 Student Internship Grant. I am looking forward to starting with our intern and having the opportunity to share with her the working knowledge of the library, along with my love of people and books.”

Linda Gutz,  
Osmond Public Library Director

**Nebraska Center for the Book**, including supporting partnership projects to promote reading and libraries through continuing education, literary festivals, writing contests, book awards, displays and exhibits, print and electronic media, and other activities. The Nebraska Center for the Book has been an affiliate of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress since 1990. There is a statewide Center for the Book in each state. The Nebraska Center for the Book brings together the state's readers, writers, booksellers, librarians, publishers, printers, educators, and scholars to build the community of the book through collaborative communication projects.

For example, the Nebraska Library Commission helps to support communication activities for the annual Nebraska Book Festival ([www.facebook.com/NebraskaBookFestival](http://www.facebook.com/NebraskaBookFestival), <http://bookfestival.nebraska.gov/2012/index.aspx>), Nebraska Book Awards (<http://centerforthebook.nebraska.gov/awards/nebookawards.html>), and the Letters about Literature Writing Contest (<http://centerforthebook.nebraska.gov/programs/LAL.html>). Each year, the governor signs a proclamation declaring National Library Week in Nebraska, celebrated with recognition of Nebraska's award winners in the Letters about Literature contest. A sample of these winning letters is seen below, as Andy Squires, of Lincoln, writes to Leonard Peltier:

“Through your work, I have personally been changed, and I have made promises to myself to be a more responsible citizen, to vote with care and knowledge, and to attempt to destroy oppression and racism wherever I see it. Next November I will be of legal age to vote, and I have begun to realize just how much responsibility comes with that right. I will do my research on the candidates and topics that are up for vote, and based on my newfound ideals I will vote with caution for those who are trying to make a change in our system.”

**One Book One Nebraska**, including providing marketing assistance, a Website and Facebook page (<http://onebook.nebraska.gov/2012/index.aspx>, <http://www.facebook.com/OneBookOneNebraska>) and support to a coalition of partner organizations and institutions, as well as distributing library discussion kits that included multiple copies (in multiple formats) of the book designated for the each year's statewide read, See list of books during this LSTA Plan period at <http://centerforthebook.nebraska.gov/programs/onebook.html>. When Nebraska library customers and librarians pointed out the importance of audio and large-print versions of the book in 2008, the Nebraska Library Commission negotiated with the University of Nebraska Press for permission for the Nebraska Library Commission to reproduce the book in audio CD and large-print manuscript formats. The author read the book for the recording at the Nebraska Library Commission TBBS studios. Communication pieces are developed to help libraries host book discussions, writing workshops, and programs across Nebraska. One example is the report from Ann Stephens, Director, Keene Memorial Library in Fremont, that their One Book activities were very well received. The library hosted a Memoir Writing Workshop on May 10, 2008. Twenty-seven people attended the presentation and participated in writing exercises and activities.

**CPB/IMLS Partnership for a Nation of Learners, *Saving Nebraska's Treasures***, including supporting Heirloom Health Clinics, NET television programming, DVD distribution to Nebraska libraries, teacher curriculum materials, and training delivered via distance learning to

help museum and library staff and volunteers preserve historic materials and provide access to them via the Nebraska Library Commission's *Nebraska Memories* project. This project ([www.netnebraska.org/extras/treasures/index.htm](http://www.netnebraska.org/extras/treasures/index.htm)), funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcast and the Institute of Museum and Library Services in partnership with Nebraska Educational Telecommunications (NET) and the Nebraska State Historical Society,) is increasing awareness and information about preservation, as well as boosting library and museum participation in the *Nebraska Memories* ([www.memories.ne.gov](http://www.memories.ne.gov)) digitization and access project.

**Health Information Partnerships**, including supporting the University of Nebraska Medical Center's McGoogan Library of Medicine Consumer Health Information Resource Service (CHIRS) *Go Local* initiative. Since CHIRS began in 1985, the Nebraska Library Commission has supported and promoted CHIRS as a health information resource library for the state of Nebraska. The service provides health information, free of charge, to residents across Nebraska. *Go Local* provides links to Nebraska health care resources and support groups directly from the National Library of Medicine's MedlinePlus health topic Web pages (see example at [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/cataract.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/cataract.html)).

"It is a project which brings valuable information to all Nebraska residents, expands upon the successful CHIRS program, and allows McGoogan to reach out across the state."

Nancy Woelfl, PhD  
Director, McGoogan Library of Medicine  
University of Nebraska Medical Center

The Library Commission also collaborated with the McGoogan Library of Medicine and the National Network of Libraries of Medicine to help create and train local health alliances—teams of local hospitals, other health organizations, and public libraries. Ten Nebraska community teams were formed and participated in joint marketing efforts and development of local community events, for example brochures have been developed and health fairs have been held. Other health information/education activities targeted to specific community groups include:

- *Healing Hearts Kits*, developed and distributed through the Omaha Public Library and the Ted E. Bear Hollow Center for grieving children.

"The real exciting part about this project is providing grieving families with valuable resources that will help them heal. Also, if our staff know the resources and techniques for doing good bibliotherapy—customer sensitivity, etc., it just makes us that much better at providing the information and resources that people need."

Stacey Aldrich,  
Omaha Public Library Assistant Director

- *Sexually Transmitted Disease Prevention*, materials developed and distributed through the Omaha Public Library and Douglas County Public Health Department.

**READ<sup>®</sup> Poster Project**, including facilitating the development of materials to promote reading. Everyone is a celebrity when they READ<sup>®</sup>. The Nebraska Library Commission, in partnership

with the Regional Library Systems, implemented a project to encourage Nebraska librarians to create unique local promotional materials. The Library Commission used the ALA READ<sup>®</sup> software to convert photographs into bookmarks, posters, and other promotional items. Sample photographs of local library customers, library board members, teachers, students, government officials, and local celebrities/decision-makers were made into READ<sup>®</sup> promotional materials. Local libraries and schools are using this example to develop their own local celebrity READ<sup>®</sup> promotional materials.

**Metro Marketing**, including facilitating staff training and the development of a campaign to promote Nebraska's metropolitan libraries. In partnership with the Omaha Public Library and Lincoln City Libraries, the Nebraska Library Commission developed a pilot marketing project to raise community awareness of the value of the local public library. Staff were trained as sales agents, PSAs were produced and aired on local television, outreach programs for specific target audiences were implemented by library staff, library Websites were used for market research, and a billboard campaign was implemented, with banners at library locations reinforcing the billboards.

**Radio Programming**, including coordinating the live weekly radio program, BookTalk, on community radio. The program is aimed at "people who love to read and love to talk about what they read," as well as encouraging reading in general by talking about the benefits of a broad spectrum of reading interests. BookTalkers include staff of the Library Commission and Lincoln City Libraries, along with other community members with an interest in books and reading. Sometimes local authors are interviewed and during this LSTA Plan period, hundreds of books were featured. On each program listeners were urged to visit their local library to find the books discussed on the show. Program recordings were made available to public libraries statewide, with permission to rebroadcast them, and encouragement to develop their own local programming. Booklists from each program and podcasts of sample shows are available on the Commission Website. At the end of this LSTA Plan period, radio programming has been suspended due to staff reductions.

**Newsletters:** In the beginning of the LSTA Plan period, the Nebraska Library Commission produced six major publications on a regular basis, publishing (in print and electronically) regular newsletters for specific target audiences to communicate activities, issues, policies, and services of the Commission. By the end of this period, print publications were dramatically reduced to address severe cutbacks in state and federal funds.

During this LSTA Plan period the following publications were available in print, as well as on the Library Commission Web site at [nlc.nebraska.gov](http://nlc.nebraska.gov).

- *NLCommunicator*: A bimonthly publication with timely information from the Nebraska Library Commission. (now produced weekly as an e-mail that customers must sign up to receive, *NLCommunicator E-Newslist* )
- *NCompass*: A seasonal publication of the Nebraska Library Commission, highlighting library issues, activities, and continuing education efforts of the Nebraska Library Commission and other library groups. (now produced only once per year)
- *NCB News*: A seasonal publication of the Nebraska Center for the Book, supported by the Nebraska Library Commission, highlighting the state's readers, writers, booksellers,

librarians, publishers, printers, educators, and scholars and helping to build the community of the book. (now produced only twice per year)

- *Interchange*: A bimonthly publication from the Nebraska Library Commission Talking Book and Braille Service, sharing news and information for talking book customers and advocates for individuals with visual disabilities. Text, [audio](#), and podcast versions of *Interchange* are available online (see [nlc.nebraska.gov/tbbs/interchangeoptions.aspx](http://nlc.nebraska.gov/tbbs/interchangeoptions.aspx)).
- *N<sup>3</sup>-Nebraska Library Commission Network Services News*: An electronic bimonthly publication from the Nebraska Library Commission Network Services, promoting and supporting libraries in their cooperative efforts to use information technology to share resources and information. (now discontinued)
- *What's Up Doc*: An electronic bimonthly publication, highlighting new state and federal documents from the Nebraska Library Commission Nebraska Publications Clearinghouse/Government Information Services. (now distributed primarily via electronic means)

### **Web Communication**

The Nebraska Library Commission Web site continues to grow in content and usage and is continually updated. Statistics on use are above in section on output tracking.

### **June 2008 Nebraska Libraries Future Search Conference Report (Marketing Excerpt)**

The **Nebraska Libraries Future Search Conference** produced a number of Communications and Promotion suggestions. All were addressed during the LSTA Plan period. They are noted below:

- Surveys
- Blogs
- Focus Groups
- Listening Posts
- Communication Planning
- Online Town Meetings (note: accomplished as *NCompass Live* Webinars)
- Training
- ROI—Return on Investment
- Publicize Endowment Funding for Local Staff and Library Operations

### **2007-2009 Analysis: Director and Communications Coordinator Communications Review 6/8/2009**

Severe budget reductions necessitated an analysis of all printing projects for the 2007-2009 Biennium. The following issues and trends were identified:

- By far, the Talking Book and Braille Service does the most printing (although their overall costs are less since their postage is free, mostly). For example, 07-09 Biennium TBBS *Interchange* cost \$3,706.26 to print and *NLCommunicator* cost only \$1,952.97 (less editions, cheaper print runs). They have the opportunity to use private funds for printing and paid ads, but if those funds are not used for printing and ads, they could be used to offset federal/state funding shortfalls, in some cases.

- *NCompass* is our most expensive single communication piece. In the 07-09 Biennium, we spent \$6,433.48 to print it. But that does include one Annual Report edition and one Biennial Report edition. Regardless of what we do about electronic distribution, we still need to print annual and biennial reports. Biennial reports are a statutory mandate.
- *NLCommunicator* is a vehicle to drive our customers to our Website, Blog, and other electronic communication vehicles. Since the blog seems to have almost no interaction—serving only as a vehicle to electronically push information from the Nebraska Library Commission, it is questionable as to whether our target customers are using the blog (and whether *NLCommunicator* is a vehicle to drive our customers to our electronic communication vehicles).
- One scenario for dealing with the budget reduction, without losing touch with target customers is:
  - Reduce the number of *Interchange* per year to \_\_\_? 1 or 2 less?—we save \$500-600 for each edition we don't print
  - Reduce the number of *NCompass* per year to \_\_\_? 1 or 2 less?—we save 1,300-1,800 for each edition we don't print (+ \$300-500 for graphic design)
  - Discontinue printing *NLCommunicator* and send out a regular e-mail pointing our customers to our Website and Blog—we save \$300-400 for each edition we don't print.

## Reference and Interlibrary Loan Services

Interlibrary Loan (ILL) has become a foundational and basic service libraries provide to patrons. Through the benefit of a dedicated and cross trained staff, it runs smoothly and in very much the same vein from day to day. Hiccups occur with human error, software, and mechanical difficulties. Because of the pragmatic qualities surrounding this service, we don't often stop to evaluate as we tend to correct and mend irregularities when they occur as a matter of course to continue moving forward.

Decisions are occasionally made to change ILL and are done so on a case by case basis. We have made various adjustments to determine how best to continue serving all our customers in an equitable way that contains costs for all involved. Here are some examples. A Nebraska patron doing genealogy research used two different Nebraska public libraries for requests – public library #1 for the first round of requests and public library #2 for those items that weren't successful from the first. We called both libraries and addressed the situation and have created a system that works both for us and the patron. An academic librarian using ILL ordered many rare and expensive foreign language items for faculty research. After many conversations it was determined this library needed to be able to provide ILL independently. As a part of the newly designed Library Commission webpage, additional links and a new and improved request form for ILL was added and made more prominent. All of these decisions are made with team members and various staff.

We have 544 Customers made up of School Media Centers, Public Libraries, Academic Libraries and State Agencies that have received Interlibrary Loaned items.

256 School Media Centers

201 Public Libraries in villages, townships, small towns & cities.

76 State Agencies across the state

11 Academic Libraries

Our mediated Interlibrary Loan service was provided to every county in Nebraska except Kimball and McPherson. All Nebraska Legislative Districts have school or public libraries that received Interlibrary Loan services through the Nebraska Library Commission.

Informally, team members notice how well librarians are able to search WorldCat for their requests as a benefit of attending database training offered by the Library Commission. We follow through with the staff teaching those classes to let them know who is doing well and who might benefit from attending a class. Using WorldCat effectively speeds the entire ILL process for all involved.

Here are several emails from our patrons sharing how our services made a difference.

Thank YOU for the help! I work at a very small school district, and so I don't have access to these journals.

"...all your efforts will greatly facilitate our group discussion of the book and help us prepare for Bill's (Kloefkorn's) visit to our library in April. You've been great to work with on this...Thanks again!

"Thanks so much for the use of these books. They helped the student get an "A" on her research paper. She was so appreciative. You provide such a great service to us that we cannot possibly afford to buy all the wonderful books out there."

"Thank you! The student who requested this for his research paper got an appointment to the Naval Academy!"

"A big, huge thank you for all your help this past school year. You have been a huge blessing to LHS students and me!!"

"Thank you so much!!! You don't know how much I appreciate all of the help I get from the NLC Reference desk crew. I don't know what I would do without you."

"One of these days I feel you're going to send my request \*before\* I make it. ;-)"

"As always, the NLC Reference Desk (and its capable staff) is always a service I can rely on!"

"Thank you so much for finding the information I was seeking! As my grandmother would have said, your kindness "has put a star in your heavenly crown!" And having all the words restored to a beloved song will bring a smile to a senior citizen's face. As Miss Dickerson often tells me, people in Nebraska must indeed be "the nicest folks in the U.S.A!""

"You were right; I was asking for your personal experience and opinion and not cited data, and you gave me exactly what I needed. Thanks much for the time you took to answer! You have given me hope."

"The NLC reference desk librarians and ILL are one of our most valuable resources. I always appreciate your helpful attitude and patience."

"I really REALLY appreciate all your help, this is wonderful. I love that your state has this service (chat)! I wish Michigan did! Thank you so much"

"Thanks again. This is the first time I've used the Ask a Librarian chat, and it proved to be a wonderful resource."

"I am that student whom you helped a few weeks ago. I was writing the paper advocating for public library services to immigrants. I just wanted to say thank you. The half hour or so that I sat down with you was extremely fruitful, as I came away with five or six useful sources. As a library student I also enjoyed seeing a "real" librarian in action. Thanks again for your help."

"Thank you so much for your help. It gives me great confidence to know that those at the NLC can support media specialists and librarians across the state. I found the book for my teacher and it's ordered and all is well. Thanks again for your immediate support!"

“Human contact with a good answer--what a great day for me!! Thank you for your prompt reply!! “

“Thank you for allowing my students to contact you with their reference questions via chat and e-mail. Everyone that tried these methods was very impressed with the service and information they received. I greatly appreciate your help.”

“Thank you for your response to my question and providing me a good avenue to get my questions answered. I called Jan Baker; she answered the phone immediately and answered my questions thoughtfully and thoroughly. Thanks again.”

“Yes that makes complete sense. There are so many links on the State's website. It's hard to know where to start. Thanks for your help!!”

“Thank you so much for your effort and your expertise in finding the answer to my question. In trying to put together some trivia questions (for a yet undetermined end project), I have e-mailed several organizations for info confirmations. Most never reply (usually businesses -- regarding their own "history"), but some have taken the time and energy to help. The most capable are almost always "library" resources, and their people, like you.”

“Thank you for helping me do my job and look extra smart to the citizens of Greenwood.”

“You guys & gals should receive compliments EVERY day for the work you do for us out here. It's always a pleasure working with all of you!

“This is our last book that needs to be returned. Thank you for all your help this year. My seniors are always most impressed with my ability to get their requests. You make me look pretty darn good! I really do appreciate your time and effort.”

“You are a LIFE SAVER. I told the student we probably would not be able to get it.”

“This patron thinks interlibrary loans are the greatest.”

“You are why librarians are my favorite people.”

“Thanks for your help. In a very small town with 70% poverty rate, we really appreciate ILL and the NLC!”

“My Curriculum Coordinator and one of our tech guys have been very impressed with your service! One of them thought I knew librarians all over the world! I told them it's our NE Library Commission! So you all have made me look good! Thanks so very much!”

In this past year, a cut in state funding to NLC was proposed including funds that would be spent on Interlibrary Loan and Lender Compensation. Librarians and media specialists who had senators on the appropriations committee all contacted staff with their testimonies of what Interlibrary Loan and reference meant their schools, libraries, and communities.

Here are the annual numbers showing combined ILL and Reference data:

questions/requests answered or provided by year:

2008: 15093

2009: 15847

2010: 15810

2011: 15683

Even though the numbers don't appear to change significantly, staff involved at each location change fairly regularly so these numbers represent training new staff to make sure they know and understand how the service works and how to make it run smoothly. To date, we work with 256 school librarians, 201 public librarians, 76 state employees, and 11 academic librarians for a total of 544 ILL customers. Our mediated Interlibrary Loan service provides materials to every county in Nebraska except Kimball and McPherson. All Nebraska Legislative Districts have school or public libraries that received Interlibrary Loan services through the Nebraska Library Commission.

Reports and progress of ILL/Reference are discussed weekly at Management Meetings and high statistic months are noted. March 2011 was our busiest month ever with 1,849 requests. March consistently is our most hectic time largely due to school report assignments and continued traffic from public libraries.

LSTA purposes met:

1. *Expanding services for learning and access to information and education al resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages.*  
Interlibrary loan provides books, articles, videos, dvds, audio books and even cake pans to public, school, and state employees in Nebraska. No matter where you live in in this state, you have access to and the ability to borrow from library collections throughout the United States because of Interlibrary Loan.
2. *Developing library services that provide all users' access to Information through local, state, regional, national, and international electronic networks.*  
The only way ILL works is through the funding LSTA provides to pay for our OCLC services – which is the singular and only network that provides accessibility to every library's catalog in a searchable format with the ability to request a variety of materials for Nebraska citizens. Recently, a new feature of OCLC was provided to help deliver electronic documents and journal articles.

## **LENDER COMPENSATION for LSTA 5-year plan evaluation**

The Lender Compensation program distributes aid to Nebraska libraries that loan resources (books, periodicals, and other media) to other Nebraska libraries for the benefit of the public. Compensation provides a partial reimbursement to lending libraries and encourages their resource sharing activities. Lender Compensation is vital to assuring that people in smaller communities and rural areas have access to resources that their own or nearby libraries do not have. However, urban community residents also benefit from interlibrary loan services and the support provided by Lender Compensation payments. LSTA and state funds are used for payments.

Nebraska libraries are incredibly generous in lending materials to other libraries, inside Nebraska and out. However, with Lender Compensation per item decreasing over the past five years (from a high of \$5.75 to the current \$1.25) due to reductions in funding, library budgets becoming tighter and costs increasing, some libraries have found it necessary to restrict the number of items they loan. Although the number of loans in the past fiscal year was still over 50,000, the total number of in-state loans has dropped each year from the peak year of 2008-2009. During the five-year period, one library joined the program and two dropped out, leaving a total of 89 libraries participating in the program.

Lender Compensation is distributed on a quarterly basis. Libraries have the option of leaving the funds at the Library Commission to cover the cost of databases and other products that are purchased through the Commission at a discount, or to have the funds sent to them. In 2009, the State of Nebraska changed its policy on writing checks to a preference for electronic fund transfer whenever necessary. As most of the accounts set up to receive funds in this manner are in the local governing entity's name, this required Rod Wagner, the Commission Director, to compose a document for libraries to claim the funds from the local government fund.

Each quarter a report is sent to the directors of all libraries receiving Lender Compensation detailing the number of loans made and the resulting compensation; this switched from paper to email attachment in 2007-2008. Starting in 2008-2009, these reports are also posted to the Commission web site, <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/ILL/Lendercomp.aspx>, with other information about the Lender Compensation program. Starting in 2011-2012, a new billing system was implemented which provides a monthly statement to libraries reflecting the credit balances they have on account. The system also allows for immediate issuance of credit memos.

### ***Goals, Activities & Intended Outcomes and Outputs***

Goal 1. Yes

Activities: None of the activities specified are for lender compensation. 1M refers to ILL requests placed by the Commission for libraries that are not OCLC members.

### **LSTA Purposes met**

1. Expanding services for learning and access to information ...
  - a. Lender compensation helps Nebraska libraries to share their collections, as Nebraska residents of various ages and needs request items on many different topics and in a variety of formats.
2. Developing library services that provide all users access to information ...

- a. Encourages the use of the OCLC WorldCat database which provides access to the holdings in over 10,000 libraries worldwide.

## Library Support Services report for the LSTA Five-Year Plan Evaluation

**Technology-Related Grants:** For the five years of LSTA funding during this period, grants made responded to requests from libraries and regional library systems. These requests were, by and large, for technology-related projects, with no year falling below 80% of the projects granted for such projects. In fact the average for the five years was 89.6% of the projects being related closely to technology. Decisions on these grants were made by review of Commission staff as well as staff from our regional library Systems, with two System Administrators sitting in on the review process each year.

In the second year the name of the grants was changed to “Library Improvement Grants,” to encourage applicants to think beyond technology (or to think in terms of programs and services using technology), but this did not deter requests for technology. Lessons learned: Our libraries will continue to ask for help with technology for a number of reasons, first and foremost because they often are not able to afford such technology with the limited budgets they have, but, more importantly, because they have recognized that they need to move in this direction in order to be responsive to their communities. One of our Computer Team staff also develops an annual list of “Computer Hardware Purchasing Recommendations” that is used by libraries for decision making and which is referred to as we evaluate funding requests:

<http://nlc.nebraska.gov/planning/computers.aspx>

This same staff member also helped evaluate grants during several of these grant cycles.

In all future planning activities we need to emphasize the need for local communities to build sustainability into their planning. There will not always be grant funding available to provide and/or replace technology acquired through grant funds. The idea that local communities need to have such replacement costs built into their budgets is something that we continue to stress in our training to libraries.

The percentage of grants made (noted above) reflects the interest and the need for technology in providing local library services. In the last five years of LSTA/Library Improvement grants made, the percentages of grants related to technology were: 80%, 81%, 87%, 100%, and 100%.

**Basic Skills Training for Library Staff:** The outcome related to the complete revamping of the Basic Skills courses (required for certification of all public library directors without MLS degrees) is very clearly illustrated through the statistics. From courses taught face-to-face in six different areas of the state every six months, we have moved to courses being taught via the software Moodle, all year long. From a typical 110 participants each year, the most recent year has seen 440 participants. Most importantly, there is a better guarantee of consistency of content and its delivery, with courses developed to meet specified outcomes and competencies, and improved chances of Nebraskans having improved library services.

**English Language Learners (ELL):** Five projects addressed the need for improved services to the state’s foreign language speaking population. Omaha Public Library strengthened its bi-lingual book club (Los Clasicos Intergenerational Book Club). Baright Public Library in Ralston improved its ELL program, offering more learning options for its ELL patrons through its “Learn English with Engles Sin Barreras” program. Hooper Public Library offered Spanish lessons to local library users to increase awareness of new users of the library’s services. Keene Memorial

Library in Fremont augmented its bilingual, Spanish-speaking children by purchasing a stand-alone computer station with children's books and games. Finally Omaha Public Library designed and produced a welcoming video in numerous languages (including Sudanese-Nuer, Karen, Arabic, Somali, Swahili, and Spanish) introducing the library's services to various immigrant and refugee populations and mounting an active outreach program. (Omaha is a refugee resettlement city.)

**E-rate Program:** The Commission moved this program forward primarily by reassigning responsibility for it to a staff member who could devote more time to promoting participation and to following up with libraries. The number of libraries participating had remained relatively constant although activities using funding available through the Commission's Broadband Technology Opportunity Program (BTOP) grant has recently increased E-rate participation. A primary benefit of the BTOP grant is to increase available bandwidth, with E-rate there to help guarantee this bandwidth will be sustained. We decided – given the presence of additional funding through the BTOP grant – to attempt to entice libraries into the E-rate program through a combination of grants and training. We presented, at the first of our technology “summer camps” information on filtering (low cost; ease of use; etc.) and on how the BTOP monies could be used to subsidize costs related to significant bandwidth increases until the library had time to sign up for the E-rate program. This approach is consistent with our push for new technology sustainability in local libraries. The possibility of submitting a group application for E-rate discounts for POTS (plain old telephone service) was explored and rejected for several reasons. Costs for telephone service are minimal for most of our libraries; it is the Internet charge costs that are a challenge.

**Evaluation and Reporting:** Grant recipients are required to submit final reports for their grants. That helps in making decisions in subsequent years and in spotting trends that may be helpful to identify for both future grants and for staff planning. It also helps immeasurably to have the head of the agency sit in on the grant evaluation process because of the breadth of experience he has. Finally we also benefit from informal input from recipients, from System Administrators, and from Commission staff whose corporate memory benefits these processes.

Disseminated reports included the annual *NCompass* report compiled by the Commission's publications office, and the annual compilation on the Commission's Grant Recipients Database (<http://nlc.nebraska.gov/Grants/database/grants.asp>).

**LSTA Purposes Met:** Library Support Services activities helped meet several of the LSTA purposes. The significant improvement in the Basic Skills training courses responded to Purpose #1. The various technology-related programs funded under Library Improvement Grants (and the earlier LSTA grants) addressed #2 and #3. The five LSTA/Library Improvement Grant projects designed to reach new and diverse audiences (listed above) address LSTA Purposes #5 and #6.

## **LSTA Administration**

Note: LSTA requirements limit to 6% of the state's annual allotment to administration. Thus, the majority of LSTA administrative costs are covered by state funds.

### **Project relationship to LSTA Purposes:**

Administration supports the overall purposes of the LSTA and all the activities carried out in association with the Nebraska Library Commission's programs and services funded through the state's annual LSTA state programs allotment.

### **What formal and informal decisions were made from year to year to improve services? How were these decisions made? Lessons learned? Impact on planning future activities?**

Administrative activities provide for the policies, procedures, and decision-making for Library Commission programs, projects and services. Included are the administrative functions of planning, budgeting, personnel management, accounting, purchasing, and contracting. The Commission operates as an independent agency within the State of Nebraska's executive branch with an appointed board of six members and a staff of over 40 full-time equivalent staff.

Commission staff members are involved in continuous planning, execution and assessment of agency programs, projects and services. There is interaction among staff members and shared decision-making. Decisions are made by individuals within their roles and responsibilities and as part of agency teams. Commission members are involved in higher level decisions that set overall agency direction, priorities, and policies. Commission members are specifically involved in review and approval of the agency's long range plan and state biennium budget requests and budget allocations.

The Commission has continued its support for a State Advisory Council on Libraries. The Council includes eighteen appointed members and two liaison members. The Council meets three times each year and advises the Library Commission on trends, issues, needs and priorities.

The most challenging and difficult decisions during the five-year time period have been those involving budgeting. Significant state budget reductions that began with a special legislative session in November 2009 and continued through the 2011 state legislative session resulted in loss of staff positions and reduced support across several agency programs and services. Budget decisions were made within the priorities set in the Commission's biennium budget request documents.

### **What have you done along the way to evaluate your activities?**

There has been no formal assessment of the Commission's administrative actions. Assessment has been informal. The most noticeable actions have been those undertaken to reduce expenses in relation to budget reductions. State budget reductions have had an impact on the Commission's administration of the LSTA state program. That is due to the amount of state funding support directed to administration. Personnel expenses make up a significant portion of the Commission's budget and staff positions have been the casualty of reductions. The

Commission's strategy has been to assess staff position vacancies before re-hiring. A consequence is that some needed work is not performed, or performed less effectively.

**How were participation, outputs and outcomes tracked? Do you have any data to support the intended outcomes and outputs outlined in the plan?**

There are no specific data for the administrative component of the Commission's LSTA state program that were identified in the five-year plan (not that I can recall or readily identify).

**What reports were disseminated along the way?**

Program and project information are collected and reported annually and biennially, published and disseminated. A primary publication vehicle is NCompass, the agency newsletter, and the Commission's website. Program and project information are also compiled and assessed as part of the Commission's biennium budget requests submitted to the governor and legislature in even numbered years.

Reports are prepared and presented at bi-monthly Commission meetings and at State Advisory Council on Libraries meetings held three times per year.

**LSTA Administration report for the LSTA Five-Year Plan Evaluation  
(Specifically related to the LSTA/Library Improvement Grants)**

**What formal and informal decisions were made . . . Impact on planning future activities?**

Modifications in how the administration of the Library Improvement Grants was handled resulted from our annual consideration of grant applications. Each year the review team would discuss the specific grant requests, but it would do so within the context of past years' grants, trends in the library world, and the various backgrounds and expertise they each brought to the process. In addition, the instructions to grant writers were changed each year to reflect any trends, areas of emphasis, etc. appropriate to what the Commission wished to accomplish. Some of the decisions made included:

- Emphasizing the need to sustain any technology acquired, not counting on being able to find grant funding in the future for services, etc. that are vital to a library's operation. Requesting libraries needed to make a case for how this was going to be done.
- Deciding to grant funding to more consortia activities rather than individual, stand-alone technology solutions (while retaining the flexibility of make individual grants if the requesting library made a compelling case).
- Becoming much more intentional in viewing these grants as one piece of a comprehensive approach to library improvement. For example, our agency's Broadband Technology Opportunity Program gave us additional ammunition to improve technology that is available on the local level by providing upgraded and improved equipment, software, and broadband access to 147 of our public libraries. But it also gave us another tool we could use to encourage greater improvements than would have been possible with just one source of funding and one method of influencing local change.

Our decisions on these matters emerged from discussions during grant team evaluations and from dialog with library directors and regional System administrators as well as through observations made by staff.

**What have you done . . . to evaluate your activities?**

We have had informal discussions with our grant evaluation teams each year by sharing with them summaries of past years' grants. Invariably a larger context emerges as the grant requests are evaluated with questions such as, "Is this the best use of this grant money? What do we know from last year's – or the year before – as to how a similar request worked out for another library? Should we tell this library that it would be better to seek funding/support from another source or on the local level for this project? Would it be better to fund a more comprehensive project that would benefit more libraries rather than this stand-alone project?"

**How were participation . . . and outputs outlined in the plan?**

Library Improvement Grants require a 20% match from the local level, of which at least 10% must be a cash match. This has been required all five years for these grants. It is obvious there is strong and sustained interest in acquiring technology by libraries to improve their services. The percentage of grants related to technology over the last five years (80%, 81%, 87%, 100% and 100%) attest to this. And the number and types of technology acquired with these grants show that libraries have truly recognized the need to acquire such technology in order to remain relevant to their communities. The technology-related grants made during this period include:

- Updating computer equipment
- RFID

- Automated circulation system
- Self-checkout unit
- Digital microform reader/printer
- Web design
- Disc repair machine
- Membership in multi-library open source consortium
- Computer presentation equipment
- WiFi access
- Gaming software
- DVD consortium
- Digitization/preservation project
- Volunteer management software
- Authority file update
- Computer use and print management software
- Portable computer lab
- ADA accessible desk
- Young adult audio book collection
- Internet-ready computer for local correctional institution
- Early bilingual literacy, stand-alone computer station
- Multi-language welcoming video for refugee populations
- E-reader demonstration project
- V-screen production studio

**What reports were disseminated along the way?**

Reports included those to the Commission, our six-member governing board, and to the State Advisory Council on Libraries. Announcements of grant awards were made to the library community via our website, and more detailed reports were made in our annual *NCompass* report.

**Which of these LSTA purposes were met . . . ?**

LSTA purposes #2, #3, #5, and #6 were met because of LSTA ADMINISTRATION activities.

## **Nebraska Center for the Book**

### **Project relationship to LSTA Purposes:**

1. Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages;
4. Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations;
5. Targeting library services to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills; and
6. Targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth through age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with 42 USC Sec. 9902 (2) applicable to a family of the size involved.

### **What formal and informal decisions were made from year to year to improve services? How were these decisions made? Lessons learned? Impact on planning future activities?**

The Nebraska Center for the Book (NCB), a state affiliate of the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress, serves as a vehicle to promote literacy, reading, writing, publishing, libraries, education and other purposes. The NCB is supported by the Nebraska Library Commission as an extension of its statewide and statutory mission.

The Nebraska Center for the Book carried out five major programs or initiatives during the five-year plan period: Nebraska Book Festival, Awards (Bennett, Geske, and Book Awards), Letters about Literature, One Book One Nebraska, and Publicity/Promotion (e.g., newsletter, press releases, events promotion). Of these, the Nebraska Book Festival is the most significant public event and consumes the most resources in regard to time and expense. The Festival has undergone on-going formal and informal assessments. In part, the formal assessments have been done as required by grant supporting organizations. They have also been carried out to improve the festival and extend its reach for participation. Decisions were and are made with the involvement of the Nebraska Center for the Book primary partner organizations (Nebraska Center for the Book, Nebraska Library Commission, and Nebraska Humanities Council). Assessment has included input from festival participants, presenters, and vendors. A significant result is a better focused event, continuity in programming, organization, and promotion.

### **What have you done along the way to evaluate your activities?**

Nebraska Center for the Book (NCB) programs, projects and activities are planned and managed through interaction of the Nebraska Center for the Book board (board officers and members) and Nebraska Library Commission staff representatives. Those interactions are assessed on an on-going basis in light of the NCB's mission and on-going programs and projects. Each program and project has undergone assessment with the intent to determine benefits, effectiveness and improvements. For the most part, assessment is accomplished through the interaction of Nebraska Library Commission staff, Nebraska Center for the Book board officers and members,

and representatives of partner organizations and/or grant supporting agencies (e.g., Nebraska Humanities Council, Nebraska Arts Council).

**How were participation, outputs and outcomes tracked? Do you have any data to support the intended outcomes and outputs outlined in the plan?**

The Nebraska Book Festival is held annually, with one exception when the festival was moved from the fall to spring and resulted in a one year plus gap. Festival reporting included, in part, data on participation, and survey responses that were collected following each festival to pose and receive comments about the festival useful to assess participant views on a range of festival related activities. Input from those involved in the festival and from partner organizations informs the Nebraska Center for the Book board. Reflections on the festival include consideration of festival successes (what went well) and needs for improvements. Those assessments have been critical in plans and strategies for future festivals.

**What reports were disseminated along the way?**

Nebraska Center for the Book activities are reported through the NCB News (organizational newsletter), news releases, reports and updates at Commission and State Advisory Council on Libraries meetings, NCompass (Library Commission newsletter), Nebraska Center for the Book board meetings, Nebraska Center for the Book annual membership meeting and an annual Nebraska Center for the Book president's letter. The NCompass annual review and biennium in review editions also include reporting of Nebraska Center for the Book activities.

**Project Activities:**

Public awareness of books written by Nebraska writers or books published in Nebraska will increase.

**Comment:** Project promotion was successful and effective to a significant extent. A variety of promotional strategies and activities were carried out to inform the public and targeted audiences. These included the NCB News, news releases and stories that are distributed broadly, governor's proclamations and publicity, promotion through partner organizations (notably the Nebraska Humanities Council), the awards programs and festival promoting Nebraska writers and publishers. News releases were issued to and through multiple media outlets; information was sent via e-mail lists; posted on websites; published and distributed through partner organizations' media; and through other social media channels.

Public participation in author programs and book discussion groups will increase.

**Comment:** The Nebraska Book Festival brings together people interested in books, writing, and publishing with a focus on Nebraska related books. Similarly, the NCB's One Book One Nebraska program has resulted in interest and participation across the state on the annual selection of a book with a Nebraska connection. The distribution of book club kits, testimonials of participants and librarians has been a strong indication of the interest in books and book discussions.

Public interest in reading and writing will increase, with particular focus on school age children and youth.

**Comment:** The response to #2 above addresses this question, in part. In addition, the Nebraska Center for the Book's participation in the Letters about Literature reaches children and young adults, as does the selection and promotion of the One Book for Kids and One Book for Teens projects.

Reading skills by children and youth will improve.

**Comment:** Nebraska Center for the Book activities were directed primarily to adult audiences during the five-year period. The Letters about Literature program is one exception. Its focus is on children and young adults with promotion of reading and writing skills for elementary, middle school and high school age groups.

Annual state participation in the National Book Festival will increase.

**Comment:** There has been growth in book festival attendance and there has been significant effort in improving awareness and participation.

## **NEBRASKACCESS for LSTA 5-year plan evaluation**

The Nebraska Library Commission licenses online databases for access through libraries, schools, and home use. The databases are provided free of charge to Nebraska residents. State and LSTA funds are used to pay for the licenses. NebraskAccess currently provides online access to the following databases: EBSCO's (formerly H.W. Wilson's) OmniFile FT Select and Biography Reference Bank; ProQuest's eLibrary (not available at K-12 schools) and HeritageQuest Online; Bowker's Fiction and Nonfiction Connection and Books in Print; and OCLC FirstSearch Basic Database Package including OCLC WorldCat.

For the first three years of the reporting period, a subscription to The Kiplinger Letter was also provided, but it had to be dropped due to budget reductions. Access to the other databases has been retained through negotiations of no or very small renewal pricing increases, and in one case a steep reduction in renewal pricing.

At the beginning of this reporting period, the three access options to the databases through our authenticating web page led to confusion for patrons. A web team consisting of staff from three departments formed to review the Nebraska Library Commission's web site overall. The team reviewed the Commission's site, analyzed search logs and web server logs, attended web design workshops, looked at web design resources, and examined web sites of other state library agency and consortia offering electronic resources/virtual libraries. Their resulting decision was to create two web sites: one to provide a portal for public information research and one for library staff to access library-related resources.

In the new portal, access/authentication to the databases was greatly simplified. Help documentation for the databases was reviewed and updated. And in addition to the databases, the portal was designed to include access to a variety of web sites selected by librarians for their value to the general public, links to Nebraska government information and Nebraska Memories (the Commission's digital database), and FAQs for reference questions that the Commission's librarians were asked several times. An intern with experience in information architecture worked with the team on organization of the site.

The new NebraskAccess site launched on February 9, 2009. Based on comments from users and further analysis of search logs, the site continued to be tweaked. NebraskAccess continues to be promoted in a variety of ways: staff provide regular training sessions each year to highlight specific databases or explain changes in database interfaces, staff man booths and conduct sessions at conferences and workshops, and information is sent out on a mailing list.

Our Information Services staff placing interlibrary loan requests for our small libraries report that library staff have become more experienced in identifying materials through OCLC's WorldCat database. Two surveys of the database subscriptions indicate that access to the information content provided (full-text articles, biographical, genealogical, and collection development/readers' advisory resources) is of importance to all types of libraries. But, of course, they would like more.

### ***Goals, Activities & Intended Outcomes and Outputs***

Goal 1. Yes

Activities:

1G. NebraskAccess is one part of this goal.

Intended Outcomes and Outputs:

1. Personal and business success stories and testimonials will demonstrate the impact of database resource use.

"I have a patron who has researched both sides of her parent's families and has filled 2 binders with the information she found. She used HeritageQuest Online nearly every time the library was open, and then used it at home as well through NebraskAccess."

"I have a priest working on a biography of Father Flanagan and he is doing extensive research. Using WorldCat we are finding all kinds of materials for him."

"Patron was seeking a book for ILL and was thrilled about WorldCat."

"I have a patron who reads primarily one author (Mary Higgins Clark) so she likes suggestions for similar books by other authors."

"We use WorldCat all the time to see what titles in various formats (especially audio) are available for interlibrary loan. Since we have such a small library, we use ILL quite a lot."

"Recently a patron was trying to track down DVDs of the old George Reeves "Superman" TV series from the 1950's. These were easily found through WorldCat and obtained via Interlibrary Loan."

"We use First Search all the time, but I introduce people in the business community to the full text journal databases during an annual class I teach on Market Research."

"Books in Print helps me almost every time a patron is looking for books that are next in a sequel, or trilogy."

"A lady came in with the name of a character in a book. She understood it to be a series. With Fiction Connection, it was a snap to determine the author and continue on to find more books by that author."

2. Improved student achievement will be facilitated through the use of education and information resources.

"A patron used the eLibrary and Wilson Omnifile databases to access the effects of music in education for a paper she was doing for her master's degree. She got an A+ on the paper because we were able to find full-text articles that matched her interest and subject and she was very grateful."

"My seniors in college prep English use the H.W. Wilson's Omnifile Full Text Select in researching the term paper topics. Their topics usually are so current that I cannot meet the needs or attempt to guess what their topics might be to purchase in advance. The access to journals sparks many to request further materials through inter library loan. They also use Books in Print."

"The Wilson Omnifile Full Text is most useful to the students at my institution. I think the fact that it is made available to the students, staff and public is an outstanding use of taxpayer money. Many, many thanks."

"Our students use Biographies Plus for completing many assignments across the curriculum, including art, science, social studies, speech and literature classes. It is my "go to" resource for biographical information."

"We used HeritageQuest to help a student complete an assignment about her family history. She had very little knowledge of her family so we were able to confirm her information that she did have."

"Fiction Connection is a great way to introduce genre studies to students."

"Our student patrons use the Wilson Web and Biographies Plus the most. Last night I taught a class to use NebraskAccess and they found many articles for an assigned reading."

"Pre-Calc students use H.W.Wilson Biographies for their math papers on a mathematician. We are a small school and could not afford H.W.Wilson databases without the state's help. The database is a crucial component of student research for papers. It is especially important when sophomores are doing research for their state writing test. Students also need to research on databases in preparation for college."

"A college student was home during the summer working and was doing an online class. He came in looking for some articles to finish a report that was due in the morning. We did not have the magazines that he needed and was worried about his grade if he did not get the report in on time. I explained about NebraskAccess and how he could find articles with it. He had never heard of it before and was so happy as he could go home and finish his report with his computer. He worked through the night on the paper and was able to finish the report on time. He called me the next day to thank me for being so helpful and for having the databases available for the public. Since then he has used it a lot for this college classes."

"When steering high school students away from "surfing the Net" and teaching them about validity/authority of sources we would be lost if we did not have H. W. Wilson's Omnifile Full Text to use."

"My principal asked me to find a particular article and we couldn't find our copy of that particular issue. I used one of the databases to find the article."

3. Public awareness and use of NebraskAccess subscription databases will increase.

One indicator of public awareness is the newspaper articles from around the state that appear from time to time touting resources in NebraskAccess. These are often written by someone connected to a local genealogy group who wants to share the fact the HeritageQuest Online is available at the library.

4. The number of statewide subscription databases and downloadable resources will increase.

We have not increased the number of subscription databases, but we have worked with a consortium to provide downloadable resources through OverDrive.

7. Ninety-five percent of Nebraska libraries with Internet access will be registered for statewide subscription databases.

*John—maybe you could crunch these numbers and determine the percentage?*

Libraries receiving passwords for NebraskAccess:

273 Public libraries  
34 Academic libraries  
20 Community college libraries  
819 K-12 school libraries  
22 Institutional libraries  
90 Special libraries  
1258

### **LSTA Purposes met**

1. Expanding services for learning and access to information ...
  - a. NebraskAccess provides authoritative resources to Nebraska residents of all ages with access from the public libraries, schools, work or home. Biographies, journals and magazines, genealogical materials and readers' advisory tools aid patrons in school work, business applications, family research, and recreational activities.
2. Developing library services that provide all users access to information ...
  - a. Databases available through NebraskAccess provide equal access to resources across the state, leveling the playing field by offering resources that would not otherwise be available to all Nebraska residents. (Could also answer #4. Targeting library services to individuals of diverse ...)
  - b. We encourage membership in OCLC to provide patrons more access to materials available in other Nebraska libraries as well as libraries around the world.

## **SCHOLARSHIP & INTERNSHIP GRANT PROGRAM REPORT**

### **LSTA 2008-2012 5-year Plan**

February 14, 2012

Submitted by: Mary Jo Ryan and Kathryn Brockmeier

**Goal 1:** All Nebraskans will have improved access to enhanced library and information services, provided and facilitated by qualified library personnel, boards, and supporters with the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes necessary to provide excellent library and information services.

**Activity 1D:** The Nebraska Library Commission will evaluate and revise the scholarship program administered as part of the IMLS grant, “Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the movies,” the Now hiring @ your library® recruitment and retention project.

**Activity 1Q:** The Nebraska Library Commission will continue efforts to increase the number of qualified professionals and recruit future librarians for employment in Nebraska libraries.

### **Planning & Evaluation: Methodology & Lessons Learned**

#### **2004-2008 IMLS grant: “Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the movies”**

The NLC’s Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Plan 2008–2012 was developed based on the Commission’s ongoing administration and evaluation of Nebraska’s LSTA program; emerging issues and trends; input from the public and library community, including the State Advisory Council on Libraries, Commission members and staff; and regional public planning meetings. The long-range plan identified *personnel* as a key issue facing Nebraska’s libraries. A priority need included the successful recruitment of talented library personnel.

The purpose of this 2004-2008 IMLS-funded project, “Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the Movies,” was to increase the number of qualified professionals and recruit future librarians for employment in Nebraska libraries. This project was designed to use marketing, scholarships, internships, and mentoring to attract promising high school and college students to the profession.

Through team meetings and consultation from scholarship students, the IMLS grant team continuously reviewed outputs and outcomes of the scholarship program to monitor for improvement. Case studies and exit surveys were conducted with scholarship students. Internship grant recipients submitted reports.

Lessons learned were folded into the project formative evaluation process and are listed below under the established goals and objectives:

#### **1. Raise awareness and identify prospects for library service careers**

In general, the marketing activities took much longer than projected—the lesson may be to plan for at least twice as much time as predicted. The Website development was hampered by contractor failure to perform. However, we learned that NLC staff could step into the gap to get the job done. Working with our in-house computer team facilitated better integration of the “Now Hiring” Website with the resources already available at the NLC Website. For example, the NLC blog was developed with a section for Now Hiring @ your library® ([http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/blogs/NLC/now\\_hiring\\_your\\_library](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/blogs/NLC/now_hiring_your_library)).

Contractor relationship was also a factor in the development of the movie trailer. Delivery was significantly delayed and market testing took much longer than anticipated. Additionally, local library supporters and recruiters contacting local theatre managers with requests to screen it were surprised that 21 of 34 theatre owners refused. The lesson may be that future grantees should plan to pay for placement, rather than expect 100% local partnership from commercial outlets. Another lesson related to our decision to maximize the investment in the movie trailer by airing it on television and radio. They did ask us to repackage it as 10/15/30-second versions, but they were quite willing to air the movie trailer and invite recruiters on local talk shows.

Another lesson came from the students in our focus groups, who strongly suggested that the most compelling message in communicating with the youth market is that money is available through the grant for scholarships and internships. We learned to focus our message accordingly. The assumption that print materials would need to be translated into Spanish was found to be mistaken. Nebraska's Hispanic students in the target audience are largely English-speaking or bilingual.

## **2. Recruitment**

It was assumed that local library partners would serve as both Mentors and Recruiters. However, Mentors were too busy with their Mentees to do large-scale recruiting. Additional local partners emerged from libraries, schools, and colleges to serve as Recruiters.

## **3. Educational Support**

Early in the project, the scholarship programs were adjusted to help students complete their degrees by allowing scholarship recipients to receive a second scholarship before a year had passed from their first scholarship award. Even with this adjustment, nearly 80% of the scholarship students had not yet completed their degrees at the end of the grant period. The lesson is that even though the students are very enthusiastic about the scholarships, four-years may not be enough time to recruit students and facilitate the education needed for them to advance on the career/education ladder. We may need more time to follow them.

Distribution of scholarships was very different than originally anticipated. The high demand for undergraduate scholarships did not materialize, partially due to the disorganization and lack of marketing on the part of the educational institutions offering the Library Technical Assistant degree. Together with the community colleges, we learned that greater central coordination was needed to improve this educational offering.

Since the demand for scholarships for master's level coursework in education was greater than anticipated, we learned that more funds needed to be allocated to master's level scholarships. With nearly 900 school libraries in Nebraska, we should have anticipated that a percentage of them would be replacing the school library media specialist or upgrading staff skills.

We also learned that offering Prime Time® internships was a fantastic way to achieve our diversity goals, reaching Spanish-speaking youth as a segment of our target population. In addition, we were pleasantly surprised by the high number of student interns who reported drastic attitude changes regarding their image of librarians and library service careers.

In general, the disruptive effect of turnover in partner volunteers and NLC staff was far more dramatic than initially anticipated. The lesson is that we could have built in more time for reorienting and training new participants to ensure timely completion of grant activities.

By the end of the grant program, NLC planned to continue to recruit at all levels of the career ladder and to search for sources of funds to support this work. The large number of continuing requests for scholarships and internships demonstrated the continuing need for these resources and motivated us to continue to seek funding for these activities.

### **2010-2013 IMLS grant: “Cultivating Rural Librarians’ Technology Skills”**

The success of our previous Librarians for the 21st Century grant demonstrated the strong need for scholarships and internships, with participants reporting the benefits to librarians and their library users.

Building on the success of the 2004-2008 IMLS grant and in an attempt to sustain the momentum built by that grant program, the Nebraska Library Commission applied for a second 21st Century Librarian grant from IMLS in 2008 at the Master’s level, which was not awarded.

An environmental scan and a needs assessment were conducted in 2009. Information was retrieved from the 2008 Nebraska Libraries Future Search Conference, 2008 Library Camp Nebraska, and personal interviews with current Nebraska librarians. National, regional, and state employment trends were reviewed. While most of these small communities do not have sufficient financial resources to support an MLS-educated librarian, it became apparent that they still needed well-trained personnel in their libraries who are capable of meeting the information needs of the residents. And, since reliable access to Internet-based resources is especially important in isolated areas, it was determined that the small town librarian must also possess the skills to assist customers with computer technology and maintain the computer/network equipment. Upon review, staff at the Nebraska Library Commission, in consultation with administration and professors at Nebraska educational institutions, as well as current Nebraska librarians, recognized the need to ensure that rural libraries throughout the state will have qualified staff with 21st century technology skills to serve their communities into the future.

A look at Census figures revealed that Nebraskans are an increasingly diverse population. For example, people of Hispanic origin became the largest minority group in Nebraska in 2000 (5.5%) and by 2007 comprised 7.5% of the state’s population. Census Bureau estimates indicated that the Hispanic population in Nebraska grew 41.7% from 2000 to 2007. The increase was quite widespread: of the 93 counties in Nebraska, the Hispanic population increased in all but six of them. NLC decided that ethnic diversity in public librarians would be needed in Nebraska in the coming years to adequately serve their communities. Special recruitment efforts for underrepresented groups would ensure a more representative pool of scholarship applicants in this grant program.

In 2009, a 21st Century Librarian grant application was prepared and submitted to IMLS at the pre-professional level. This grant was awarded in June 2010 and runs November 2010 to October 2013. “Cultivating Rural Librarians’ Technology Skills” fosters recruitment, education, and 21st century skills development in at least 165 preprofessional and professional students through scholarships, internships, and stipends. We add value to students’ formal educational experiences through social and face-to-face networking opportunities and through technology skills training. The project ensures that Nebraskans receive library services provided by librarians with the knowledge, skills and abilities to handle the complexity of meeting customer needs in a digital world. The Associate of Arts degree in LIS was added as a scholarship level in order to provide funds for library coursework as well as general education requirements, in response to needs expressed by first-grant LIS certificate students such as this one: “I was grateful for the help from the scholarship monies however I wish there was money to apply for to take my generals. I am stuck at that point now.”

While mentorship was not identified as a specific component of this second grant, mentorship is being fostered through the online community, the Nebraska Librarians Learning Together Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/NebraskaLibrarians>).

The stipend program was added in in planning this second grant program in order to enhance students’ formal education. Funds are available for reimbursement of the purchase of laptop computers, professional organization membership, and attendance at professional conferences.

Scholarship students, as well as the project team and other interested practitioners, participate in periodic Webinars and other online and in-person programs designed to improve awareness of technology tools and their application in libraries and to answer questions that arise in library practice in Nebraska libraries. The Forum of the Facebook page ([http://www.facebook.com/NebraskaLibrarians?sk=app\\_202980683107053](http://www.facebook.com/NebraskaLibrarians?sk=app_202980683107053)) has been a very effective tool for allowing students to report on their training experiences. Peers and other fans of the page read and comment on the posts, thereby multiplying the learning. As of October 31, 2011, 22 students had posted their feedback to trainings in the Forum and on the Wall. One student submitted training reports via e-mail due to privacy concerns stemming from posting on the Facebook page. Note: training opportunities and feedback posts were originally housed in the Discussion area of the Facebook page. This feature was removed by Facebook. A workaround was found through the Forum app and allowed us to export the discussion posts prior to their removal.

During the course of this grant, training opportunities have been expanded from online programming to face-to-face programming, most notably in-person, hands-on eReader trainings, as many in-person programs and events were found to offer educational benefits that fit the training component goal.

In order to enhance specialized and specific training in 21st Century skills, a 2-day residential seminar will be held for scholarship students and Nebraska library staff in July 2012. The seminar will emphasize technology, vision, planning, partnership development, and the ability to transfer the 21st Century skills to the community. Formative steps in planning the program for this seminar were taken in 2011 by a committee of the project team, headed by Michael Sauers and Laura Johnson. A student needs assessment will be conducted and objectives will be determined in early 2012. The leaders have secured a July 2012 date, a location, and are planning session topics and activities.

Marketing is a focus of the grant program. An expected result is that the NLC will receive continuous positive feedback regarding communications channels and recruitment. Marketing materials created, outreach efforts, and anecdotal communication (received by mail, e-mail, phone and in-person) will be documented in tracking system.

It remains important to recruit the next generation of librarians and to provide practice in library work to current students. Our past internship programs have been highly successful, with 65 grants to libraries awarded over four years through the previous IMLS grant and in partnership with the Nebraska Library Association.

Data is continuously collected by external evaluator Keith Curry Lance of RSL Research Group through the online scholarship recipient baseline survey, the online follow-up survey, in-depth interviews with current recipients, and anecdotal communication received via mail, e-mail and Facebook posts. Scholarship recipients provide feedback on the impact of the financial support and the education they have received with that support, as well as how training sessions and stipend use help enhance 21st Century skills.

The grant team meets quarterly to review issues which have arisen during the course of the grant. The grant program director submits periodic reports to the Commission and the NLC Steering Committee. Federal grant reports are submitted annually to IMLS.

#### **Additional Comments/Anecdotal Information** (submitted Nov. 1, 2011, to IMLS)

During the course of implementation as of October 31, 2011, timelines and activities were adjusted, as follows:

- The position of Business Manager, filled previously by Doreen Kuhlmann, was filled by Sue Biltoft on June 15, 2011. Her time spent on the project serves as a match for the grant. A request to authorize Sue Biltoft as financial officer for this grant was submitted to and received by IMLS in August 2011.
- While Project Manager Kathryn Brockmeier was on maternity leave (May to August 2011), NLC staff members divided her responsibilities and attempted to complete all necessary tasks, respond to student inquires, etc. However, since they continued to have responsibility for their own positions, a number of activities are being implemented on a revised schedule of completion.
- Scholarships and stipends awarded to date differ slightly (slightly more master's-level and less preprofessional) from those proposed in the grant proposal. NLC staff will increase recruitment efforts in the preprofessional category to ensure that targets are met in Years 2 and 3.
- It took more time than anticipated to get the scholarship and internship programs up and running.
- Diversity recruitment efforts were delayed. They are just underway and more are planned for Years 2 and 3.
- The curriculum planning session with Central Community College has been moved to Years 2 and 3.
- Storybank development is now planned for Years 2 and 3.
- Planning and implementation of 21st Century Skills Seminar programming will be conducted in Year 2.
- The discussion area of all Facebook pages was removed by Facebook. NLC found a Forum application to replace it and was able to export discussion posts and related threads to this new platform. Not all students were enthusiastic about participating in the Facebook page. Some were reluctant to create an account. One student felt her (non-library) job security was in jeopardy if she was seen posting to the group and submitted her training reports by e-mail. Consequently, some students have not participated in the social networking component of the project.
- Rather than forming a separate advisory team, the grant project administration staff used the Nebraska State Advisory Council on Libraries and an ad hoc group of key project partners to serve in advisory capacity. This group includes Dr. John Budd, Professor, University of Missouri; Dr. Sheryl Crow, Professor, University of Nebraska at Kearney; Marjorie Harrison, Panhandle Library System; Dr. Eric Jones and Dr. Dianna Parmley, Professors, Central Community College; Dr. Rebecca Pasco, Professor, University of Nebraska-Omaha; and Christine Walsh, 2011 President, Nebraska Library Association. They provided input from Nebraska libraries and library users in project design and execution.
- NLC proposes elimination of the third (last) application cycle in Year 3 due to delays in timing of transfer of funds to schools.
- Due to enormous demand, application for master's-level scholarship were temporarily suspended after 22 master's-level scholarships were awarded in the first two scholarship award periods. Applications will be again be accepted for master's-level scholarships in Year 2.
- The learning enhancement activities proposed in the grant proposal featured online and Web-based methods of delivery. Various opportunities arose in Year 1 to offer in-person training, and these opportunities were added to the list of approved training sessions, along with the online Web-based sessions. For example, NLC staff saw a need to put technology directly in the hands of the students and library professionals, so we designed the eBooks/eReaders training.

## LSTA 2008-2012 5-year Plan Scholarship/Internship Report

- Since the demand for Internship Grants was much greater than anticipated, the Project Manager worked with the Nebraska Library Association to solicit private foundation funding to support additional internships. This unanticipated financial support from the Nebraska foundation will be reported as private funding match for this grant in the next federal fiscal report.
- In Year 2 and 3, a greater cross-section of training opportunities will be offered to students in response to their unfamiliarity with some 21st Century learning skills, which they reported in the baseline survey. One example is that more than 25% of students reported unfamiliarity with financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy. NLC will solicit private funding to develop extensive training in this area—another potential source of unanticipated private match. A training needs assessment will be conducted in Year 2 to further inform programming.
- In keeping with the IMLS expectation, NLC will design a space on the Now Hiring @ your library<sup>®</sup> website to house information about the grant and to post reports.
- An informal mentoring component of the program has emerged and continues to build:
  - The Grant Manager, in the course of communicating with the recipients, is building relationships with the students. For example, she met with several students for lunch during the eBook/eReader training and introduced them to a current library professional.
  - The scholarship recipients who presented at the NLA/NEMA conference attended other sessions, which afforded them the opportunity to meet current Nebraska library professionals.
  - The Grant Manager facilitated a meet-up for scholarship students at the NLA/NEMA conference to introduce themselves to one another and to NLC staff.
  - Scholarship students who are attending a conference are being matched up with current Nebraska library professionals to enhance their experience at the conference.

*Oct. 22, 2011, e-mail from scholarship student who provided testimonial at our NLA/NEMA conference session:*

P. S. I really appreciated the session you held that we spoke at. The feedback from the audience was very encouraging!

*Oct. 31, 2011, e-mail from scholarship student who attended the NLA/NEMA conference:*

I attended the 2011 NLA/NEMA Conference at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln--and the tremendously interesting preconference at the state capitol. Wonderful, all of it! That includes the NLC booth and getting to visit with so many staff during the sessions and exhibit times.

Your support is really appreciated.

## Outcomes and Outputs 1D

### 1. Scholarship program will better meet the needs of students.

**2004-2008 IMLS grant: “Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the movies”**

LSTA 2008-2012 5-year Plan Scholarship/Internship Report

Early in the project, the scholarship programs were adjusted to help students complete their degrees by allowing scholarship recipients to receive a second scholarship before a year had passed from their first scholarship award. Of the 177 scholarships awarded, 57 were 2nd scholarships. During the follow-up survey, the program participants were asked to rate the 21st Century Librarian Scholarship recruitment process.

Opportunity to apply for a 2nd scholarship	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Doesn't apply (N/A)
LTA certificate 14 responses	12	0	1	0	1
Bachelor's 10 responses	8	2	0	0	0
Master's 78 responses	47	12	5	2	12
<b>Total 102 responses</b>	<b>67</b> 65.7%	<b>14</b> 13.7%	<b>6</b> 5.9%	<b>2</b> 2.0%	<b>13</b> 12.7%

With redistribution of funds to the master's level, 57 of the 177 scholarships (32%) were awarded at the MEd level, in response to the need for replacing school library media specialists or upgrading staff skills.

**2010-2013 IMLS grant: "Cultivating Rural Librarians' Technology Skills"**

The second scholarship program improved upon the first scholarship program in several ways: payment for general education coursework (preprofessional level) in addition to library science coursework; a stipend program—laptops for online coursework and multimedia homework, conference attendance, professional association membership; and value-added activities.

**SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED November 1, 2010 – October 31, 2011**

Level	Number awarded	Total amount awarded
Library and Information Services (LIS, formerly LTA) Professional Certificate	3	\$10,500
Associate of Arts or Science Degree in Library and Information Services (LIS, formerly LTA)	4	\$14,000
Bachelor of Arts or Science Degree with a major in Library and Information Science or Library Media	5	\$17,500
<b>PREPROFESSIONAL-LEVEL TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>\$42,000</b>
Master of Arts or Science Degree in Library and Information Science (MLS/MLIS)	14	\$35,000
Master of Arts or Science degree in Education (MEd) with a School Library Media Endorsement	4	\$10,000
Graduate-level School Library Media Endorsement	4	\$10,000
<b>MASTER'S-LEVEL TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>\$55,000</b>
<b>YEAR 1 TOTAL</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>\$97,000</b>

Summary of Scholarships Awarded November 1, 2010 – October 31, 2011: 35 scholarship applications were received and 34 were awarded to people pursuing education in library studies for a total of \$97,000. From November 1, 2010, through October 31, 2011, 41 stipends applications were received and 37 were awarded to scholarship recipients for a total of \$22,707.85. In December 2011, three scholarship students attained degrees, one with an MEd certificate and two with an MLIS degree.

LSTA 2008-2012 5-year Plan Scholarship/Internship Report

Of the 32 scholarship applicants who completed the statistical survey between November 1, 2010, and October 31, 2010, 78.1% were female, 46.9% were between the ages of 35 and 44 years old, none were of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin, and all were white. Demographics of applicants are not reflecting Nebraska’s changing landscape, but diversity recruitment efforts are just underway and more are planned for Years 2 and 3. Among the 32 who completed the survey, 25 were currently employed in a library. Nine applicants had never worked or volunteered in a library.

Recruitment efforts can sometimes take a long time to show results. A student that was awarded a scholarship in 2011 reported that she decided to explore returning to school to become a librarian after viewing our Public Service Announcement (PSA) in a movie theatre in 2008. This PSA was funded through a previous IMLS grant and we know we are fortunate to have IMLS funding to offer support to this student now that she is able to return to school to make her “dreams come true.”

**STIPENDS AWARDED** November 1, 2010 – October 31, 2011

Type	Number awarded	Total amount awarded
Laptop	26	\$18,200.00
Association dues	8	\$340.00
Conference	3	\$4,167.85
<b>YEAR 1 TOTAL</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>\$22,707.85</b>

Students described the impact the purchase of a laptop computer had on their coursework. For example:

*My laptop just arrived yesterday, but I've scarcely had a second to more than open the box and see that it is indeed in there. I'm traveling for a week now--and then will get some software and get the thing running so I can use it! It is going to be so great for Reference class this semester because I need to spend so much time exploring databases and reading the NLC's STAR Manual. I'll be mobile!*

Seven applications for conference attendance were received and three were awarded. From November 1, 2010, to October 31, 2011, two scholarship attended national conferences, both on stipends. No project mentors accompanied either of these students. However, NLC staff contacted Nebraska librarians attending one of the conferences and set up an informal mentorship by introducing the student to them prior to the conference via email. Other conference stipends have been awarded since November 1, 2011. For example, five students were awarded stipends to attend the Public Library Association conference in March 2012.

**ENHANCED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES** November 1, 2010 – October 31, 2011

Method	Topic	Number of project-related participants
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LSTA 2008-2012 5-year Plan Scholarship/Internship Report

<b>NLC-hosted online webinars (live and recorded) and learning modules</b>	NCompass Live sessions including Tech Talk with Michael Sauers; Nebraska Learns 2.0 (a version of 23 Things)	<b>17</b>
<b>NLC-hosted or sponsored face-to-face training</b>	Nebraska Library Leadership Institute, Introduction to eBooks and eReaders workshop, Technology Planning Summer Camp, Nebraska Libraries on the Web WordPress training	<b>10</b>
<b>Other online trainings (live and recorded)</b>	Mostly selected from the Free Webinars listing on <a href="http://nlc.nebraska.gov/CE/webinars.aspx">http://nlc.nebraska.gov/CE/webinars.aspx</a>	<b>6</b>
<b>Conferences</b>	Nebraska Library Association/Nebraska Educational Media Association Conference, OverDrive's Digipalooza, Library and Information Technology Association National Forum, American Association of School Librarians National Conference	<b>13</b>
<b>Online social networking</b>	Nebraska Librarians Learning Together: <a href="http://www.facebook.com/NebraskaLibrarians">www.facebook.com/NebraskaLibrarians</a>	<b>157 fans</b>

In the first grant year, 30 training opportunities were presented to the scholarship students. Technology planning, medical database resources, QR codes, instructional literacy, Twitter, Google+, and leadership were topics of interest to the students. Methods of delivery included live and recorded webcasts, online learning modules, camps, conference sessions, and hands-on training. About half of the opportunities were sponsored by NLC. As of October 31, 2011, 22 students had participated in scholarship program-related trainings.

The Forum of the Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/NebraskaLibrarians>) has been a very effective tool for allowing students to report on their training experiences. Peers and other fans of the page read and comment on the posts, thereby multiplying the learning. As of October 31, 2011, 22 students had posted their feedback to trainings in the Forum and on the Wall. As of March 21, 2012, 188 individuals have “liked” the Facebook page. The group is composed of all current scholarship recipients to date, Nebraska librarians (at least 100), former scholarship students from a previous IMLS grant, students who have expressed interest in the scholarship program, and other library professionals from across the United States.

Follow-up surveys have been distributed to just four individuals who either attained their degree or certificate, or left the program. Formalized aggregate data is unavailable at this time.

**2. Scholarship recipients will provide feedback on the impact of the financial support and the education they received with that support.**

**2004-2008 IMLS grant: “Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the movies”**

**Scholarships were an important factor in the timing of students’ decisions to pursue their degree.** Scholarships factored into students’ decisions to pursue their degree. When asked “How important was the availability of the 21st Century Librarian Scholarship in the timing of your decision to pursue [your] degree?” 75 of the 103 respondents (73%) said it was “Very important” and an additional 21 (20%) said it was “Somewhat important.” One recipient commented, “I probably wouldn’t have pursued the degree if a scholarship had not been available.” Another said, “I would not have been able to stay in school without it.”

**Scholarships helped students complete their degree faster than they might have otherwise.**

Scholarships did improve students' completion rate. When asked "Did the scholarship(s) help you in completing your degree faster than you might have otherwise?" 74 of the 101 respondents (73%) said "Yes."

Example comments from those who responded "Yes" are provided here:

- Because of the scholarship, I was able to continue working part-time at a public library while pursuing my degree.
- I would not have taken the courses without the scholarship.
- I am able to take 3 classes this semester, which I was unable to do before receiving the scholarship.
- Much faster! Without a lot of extra income, it would have taken at least a few years longer to finish my education.

**2010-2013 IMLS grant: "Cultivating Rural Librarians' Technology Skills"**

Among the four who have left the program and received stipends, all responded in the exit survey how the way they spent their stipends impacted their coursework, their educational or career aspirations, and/or their library work:

- I was able to "retire" my 4+ year old hand-me-down laptop. It gave me the ability to take classes online, which allowed me the flexibility I needed with my current job.
- It was great having a computer that worked consistently.
- I have become very attached to my laptop. It was invaluable to me during my coursework, because I could keep everything on one computer rather than use a flashdrive or googledocs which I wasn't familiar with at the time. It is also nice to have my own to bring to workshops for note-taking.
- I was able to obtain an iPad 2 which helped me with physical ability to take a laptop to conferences, trainings and classes. The smaller device was more functional for me and did all the work a laptop can do.

Stipend recipient Facebook post; October 1, 2011



Stipend recipient Facebook post; October 14, 2011



**Delilah Gillming**

Hi,

My name is Delilah Gillming. I currently work very part time for Meridian Library System and I'm taking working towards my Associates Degree in Library and Information Services through CCC. I didn't get a chance to go to NLA/NEMA Conference this year as I planned but hope to go next year. Thanks to 21st Century Library grant I get to go to PLA in March in Philadelphia.

Unlike · Comment · 15 hours ago ·

## Outcomes and Outputs 1Q

### **1. Numbers of qualified staff in Nebraska libraries and media centers will increase.**

#### **2004-2008 IMLS grant: “Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the movies”**

Twenty-eight (28) scholarship recipients reported completion of their degree program, and 22 of them reported graduating and working in Nebraska libraries. Another 34 recipients expected to graduate in 2009.

#### **2010-2013 IMLS grant: “Cultivating Rural Librarians’ Technology Skills”**

As of December 31, 2011, three (3) scholarship recipients reported completion of their degree program. Two kept their current job and one found a job in a Nebraska library at the time of graduation. Another nineteen students (19) expect to graduate in 2012.

### **2. Scholarship recipients will provide positive feedback on mentoring activities and scholarships received.**

#### **2004-2008 IMLS grant: “Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the movies”**

##### **Mentees reported an increase in knowledge about the library profession and satisfaction with the guidance they received from mentors.**

Scholarship recipients were matched with mentors based on their interests, library type, and location. Mentors were asked to log their communication with assigned mentees through the mentor interaction system, which provided information to us about how well the relationships were working. In all, 27 mentors were matched with 36 mentees.

Fourteen (14) of the 21 mentees (67%) rated the 21st Century Librarian Mentoring Program as “Very useful” or “Somewhat useful”. During the follow-up survey, the mentoring participants were asked to explain overall whether they would say the mentoring program was a success:

“I enjoyed the mentoring program. I did not get to spend much time with my mentor as there was many miles between us.”

“It was for the time I was in the program. I was very unsure of myself, and with the end-of-semester papers that oftentimes were needed to be written, Kit was a huge help in proofreading them or to bounce ideas off of. She never once said she was 'too busy', and always made time to make me feel important; which is probably one of the reasons I became much more confident in my abilities!”

“Yes, having the mentoring program has been a success for my situation. I have gotten help and advice from my mentor regarding what classes to take, and general discussion about a future library career and goals.”

“I don't think the whole mentoring program was successful but my mentor and I had a great experience with the program. Most of the people in the LTA program didn't have a mentor or even know about the mentor program. I think most of the mentors were assigned to MLS students. I think that if you are going to continue this program that it is very important to focus on all students.”

“I did not use the mentoring program very much. I had a couple of chats with my mentor on-line and that is it. My mentor was nice and willing to help with anything I needed, however I am married and I have three kids and I just did not have any extra time to meet with her. Also, if I had any questions I asked my kids LMS.”

“Yes, I feel the mentoring program was a success and met all my expectations. My mentor was an incredible help in deciding which courses to take, editing papers, assisting me in topics to write about, and more.”

The Now Hiring @ your library® Website served as an effective tool for job hunting and applying for scholarships and internship grants. The Mentoring section ([www.nlc.state.ne.us/NowHiring/Scholarships.asp](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/NowHiring/Scholarships.asp)) of the Now Hiring @ your library® Website showed dynamic movement after going live, with 3,057 hits.

**The 21st Century Librarian Scholarship helped students further their careers.**

Example comments from those who responded to the follow-up survey question “Please tell us how the 21st Century Librarian Scholarship has helped you further your career”:

- It helped me focus on my studies, so that I could put in quality work, instead of worrying about how to finance my program. Especially now with student loans being more difficult to obtain, it removed the financial headache.
- I believe it already has in that my supervisor saw how serious I am about my education and my dedication to wanting to become a better information provider - and that weighed heavily upon the decision for the promotion from clerk to specialist.
- Thanks to the 21st Century Librarian Scholarship, I was able to continue taking classes to achieve my goal of becoming a school media specialist. During that time I was able to work part-time at Ralston Public Library, where I honed my library skills and gained valuable information and assistance from my colleagues in the public library field.
- I am still in the same position but my performance and knowledge has definitely improved.
- It has encouraged me to be more informed about library related subjects. I have found it applicable in my regular duties.

During the follow-up survey, the program participants were asked to rate how satisfied or dissatisfied overall they were with the 21st Century Librarian Scholarship(s) they received from the Nebraska Library Commission.

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
<b>LTA certificate</b> 14 responses	11	3	0	0	0
<b>Bachelor's</b> 10 responses	8	2	0	0	0
<b>Master's</b> 80 responses	78	2	0	0	0
<b>Total</b> 104 responses	97 93.2%	7 6.8%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%

### **2010-2013 IMLS grant: “Cultivating Rural Librarians’ Technology Skills”**

Follow-up surveys have been distributed to just four scholarship students who either attained their degree or certificate, or left the program. Formalized aggregate data is unavailable at this time. Other feedback was obtained anecdotally through e-mails and Facebook posts.

#### **NLC increases education levels of current library staff and new recruits in rural Nebraska.**

Scholarship recipients expressed their gratitude for the scholarships and stipends:

*When I started looking at going back, I found out there really aren't very many scholarships for non-traditional students, so when I was notified that I had received this scholarship, I was ecstatic. ... I just wanted you to know that receiving this scholarship was truly one of the happiest moments of my life.*

*I am very appreciative of this opportunity, because I would have had to postpone finishing my degree without this financial assistance.*

#### **Project participants attend a national conference.**

Seven applications for conference attendance were received and three were awarded. From November 1, 2010, to October 31, 2011, two scholarship attended national conferences, both on stipends. No project mentors accompanied either of these students. However, NLC staff contacted Nebraska librarians attending one of the conferences and set up an informal mentorship by introducing the student to them prior to the conference via email. Other conference stipends have been awarded since November 1, 2011. For example, five students were awarded stipends to attend the Public Library Association conference in March 2012. Participants will present a program or write an article about their experiences and what they learned, thus multiplying the learning.

#### **The 21st Century Librarian Scholarship helps students further their careers.**

When asked “Had the 21st Century Librarian Scholarship not been available to you, how likely is it you would have been able to attain your career goals?” two respondents said it was “Very unlikely,” one respondent said it was “Somewhat unlikely,” and one respondent said it was “Very likely.” One recipient commented, “I would have had higher loan debt and no iPad to make it easier.”

#### **Project participants actively take part in Web-based programs designed to enhance the educational experience.**

Feedback from students about the training component of the scholarship program:

Hello. I wanted to let you know I just posted on the Facebook page for my final two trainings. I did the posts on two of the sessions I attended today. I am learning a lot and this experience is invaluable!



##### **Nebraska Librarians Learning Together**

This training opportunity lets you explore "how-to" video resources on the Web.

<http://www.facebook.com/topic.php?topic=369&uid=139298226089232>  
www.facebook.com

76 People Reached · 2 People Talking About This

Like · Comment · Share · September 13 at 11:14am ·

Teresa Hartman likes this.



**Rozy Tuttle** I have just started this training and I am so excited to get all the way through it!! I have set up my blog and I am ready to learn!!! :) I like this training because I can really use this information in my classes.....

September 15 at 6:03am · Like

Sample feedback about the eBooks/eReaders workshop:

*I knew quite a bit about ereaders from limited hands on and just a lot of reading about it, but it was great to be hands on with multiple devices and experiencing that with other librarians of different ereader confidence levels. ... The tutorial packets will be a helpful guide for creating guides for our own patrons.*

E-mail from scholarship recipient registered for an eReader training; October 30, 2011

I would like to register for the December 1st training in Bellevue. I almost didn't realize how important it was to learn these tools/resources (and quickly!) until I started this position as a library aide, where almost every third question is about eReaders. Thank you and the rest of NLC so much for providing this opportunity. I feel very lucky!

**Project participants engage in online social networking to enhance and encourage communication and learning.**

Nebraska Librarians Learning Together Wall posts are made by grant team members. Individual posts are made by scholarship students, current librarians, and students interested in the scholarship program.

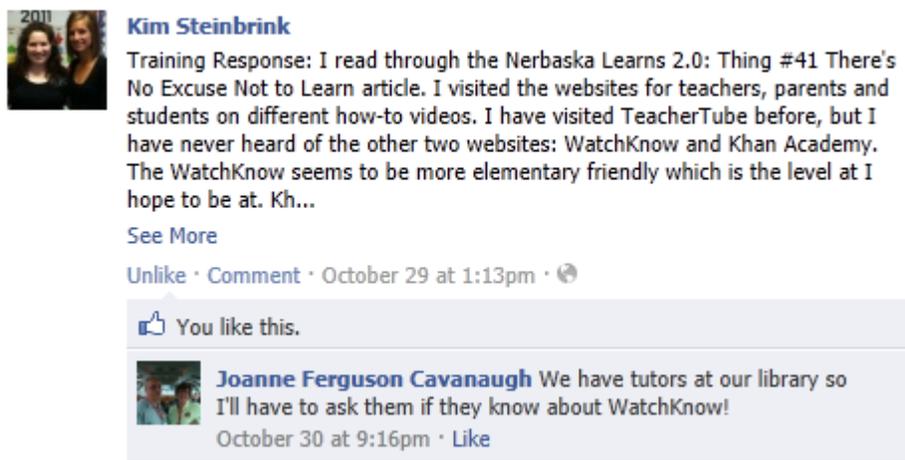
Feedback about the Facebook page Nebraska Librarians Learning Together, <http://www.facebook.com/NebraskaLibrarians>, via email:

Thank you so much for everything! I'm really enjoying all the networking (esp. via facebook) that this scholarship opportunity has provided thus far!

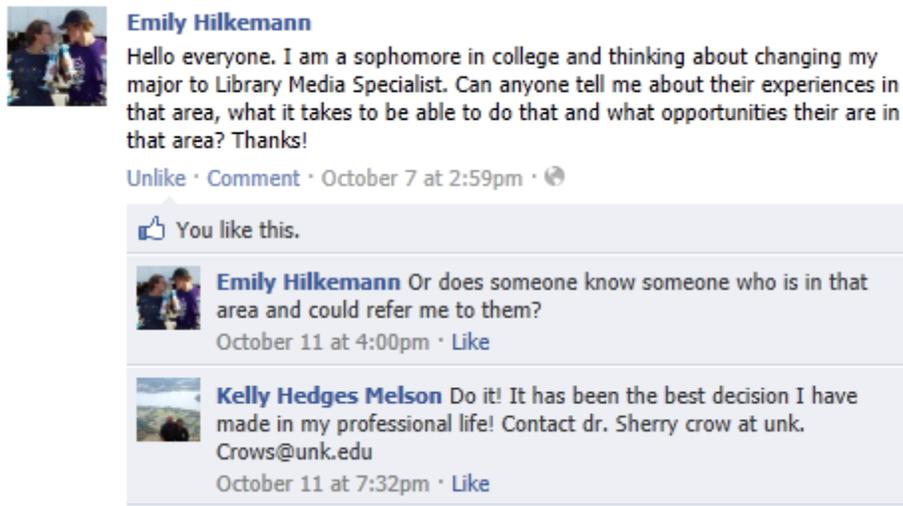
Post by Nebraska library professional:



Post by scholarship student with comment by current Nebraska library professional:



Post by intern and prospective library student and scholarship applicant, with comment by current Nebraska library professional:



### 3. Nebraska library staff reported positive experiences through Internships funded by the Library Commission.

#### 2004-2008 IMLS grant: “Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the movies”

The internships helped match students pursuing educational opportunities at all levels of the career ladder with job training placements in libraries that are likely to have employment openings in the future and provide incentives to employers to hire trainees through stipends to students.

Many supervisors submitted reports at the conclusion of the internships. The response was overwhelmingly positive, with remarks ranging from the additional help and fresh ideas they received to the desire to continue the program. Additional evidence of the positive outcome of the internships is seen in the continuing requests from local libraries to repeat the experience.

Sample comments:

On behalf of myself, the O’Neill Public Library staff and patrons, I would like to report that our experience with a library intern was a very favorable one.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to have an intern this past year. Our intern, Amanda, was a great help especially with our summer reading program.

The Rock County Public Library strongly recommends this program and would certainly apply for intern funding again if offered.

We would not have been able to do many of these activities without the extra help.

Amanda B.’s service as an intern at our library was very successful from the library’s viewpoint.

The whole experience was good for both Aaron and me. It provided additional hands for tasks that needed to be done. It also helped Aaron see what the task of librarian entailed.

**2010-2013 IMLS grant: “Cultivating Rural Librarians’ Technology Skills”**

The Nebraska Library Commission and Nebraska Library Association have partnered to provide internship grants to public libraries in Nebraska. To date, 18 of 21 applicants have been awarded internships. In this reporting period, 23 internship grants of up to \$1,000 were awarded to 18 libraries, with a total of 28 interns participating. The 2011-2012 cycle is nearing completion. Interns and their supervisors completed follow-up surveys.

Reflection from one intern supervisor:

*[One of our interns] was a true success story for our library and, I believe, for her. She is in the process of working towards becoming a media specialist changing from her current teaching position. She came in with no library experience but with an open and interested attitude about the profession. She was surprised at the variety of jobs staff perform and how much goes on behind the scenes in a library. I will be looking for that kind of interest and enthusiasm in future interns and utilize their personal skills for special projects.*

Interns brought their technology skills to the forefront, much to the appreciation of the library staff, library customers, and community. The following experiences were reported by the supervisors:

“[The intern] used her tech skills to help the children manipulate photos of themselves using Fisheye software so they have Crazy/Weird pictures of themselves.”

“She introduced us to Animoto and created a promotional photo show for the website using photos of weekly programs. It was our first example of motion on our website!”

“Emily and I attended the Word Press website design class in Kearney and she was able to completely redesign our website using this program and information from the old website. [T]he library has a new beautifully designed easy to use and updated website which the community has expressed an appreciation for through personal comments and on our Facebook account too.”

“Chip headed up a Nook Book Discussion for a group of middle school boys.”

“Emily helped the library set up their Facebook page. She wrote weekly entries on it also. She was also able to help patrons set up Facebook pages. She loved working with elderly patrons and their computer problems. These patrons visited the library every day Emily was here.”

“Over the last several months our blog had been dormant, but we had requests from the public that it resume. Amy was excited about blogging, so I made a post to make sure the software was working properly and the passwords were working. Then Amy and I alternated blog posts. She selected her topics and researched them, wrote and edited them, publishing five posts during her internship. So the Polley Music Library blog was again active during the summer to the delight of our readers. As for Amy, she got experience researching, writing and editing a factual work-related blog, experience that she will be able to use for her resume.”

#### **4. Nebraskans will report increased awareness about the library profession and the opportunities in Nebraska libraries.**

##### **2004-2008 IMLS grant: “Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the movies”**

###### **Raise awareness and identify prospects for library service careers**

The initial activity of the project was to embark on a statewide multi-media marketing campaign to change the image of library service work and to draw promising high school and college students to library service careers. A partnership with the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) to revise, print, promote and distribute communication materials about Nebraska library science educational options was followed by placing classified ads in Nebraska newspapers to attract students to library science courses. Work with The Advertising Company (later renamed Creative Crook), a student intern, and Reynold Peterson Design facilitated the marketing campaign.

Marketing materials incorporating images from the movie trailer included a poster and a point-of-purchase display and were available in theatre lobbies at the same time as the movie trailer was screened. Movie theatre owners agreed to show the trailer in conjunction with films geared to the target audience. Print and Web-based communication pieces, designed to coordinate with the movie trailer, were used in schools, libraries, community centers, movie theatres, and other venues. The materials were repackaged as recruitment kits for librarians, school media specialists, educators, and school guidance counselors and were used at career and job fairs, education programs, and exhibits.

The anchor of the marketing campaign was the production and dissemination of the movie trailer and coordinated print materials. In key informant sessions, the movie trailer was shown to 468 people in high school and college classrooms. A movie theater pre-test was viewed by 250 high school students and 225 college students and other members of the public. In focus groups and feedback sessions, the trailer was shown to more than 450 library professionals and library workers. Thirteen (13) theatres across Nebraska agreed to show the movie trailer and display the coordinated print materials. The movie trailer was posted to YouTube in 2006 and has yielded over 5,000 views in two years ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=jiVtTdHyC1g](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jiVtTdHyC1g)).

Another major output of this project is the Now Hiring @ your library® Website ([NowHiringAtYourLibrary.org/](http://NowHiringAtYourLibrary.org/)). The average number of hits per month to the start page for October 2006 through October 2008 is 1,534. Average monthly hits for the last two grant years the site was live trended upwards, denoting an increase in popularity (Year III average = 1,186, Year IV average = 1,993). The start page has consistently ranked as the fourth most popular page of all NLC Website pages. Throughout the grant cycle, scholarship applicants listed the NLC Website in general as a source for information about the scholarships 30 times. Once it went live, the “Now Hiring” section was also listed as a source an additional six (6) times.

###### **The movie trailer will improve the image of librarians.**

Testing the recruitment movie trailer had the associated benefit of informing students and other viewers about the library profession and the opportunities for scholarships, education, and jobs. While the movie trailer was still in pre-production, it was screened and pre-tested with the general public in our target age range. Reactions from these groups gave general feedback to the content of the trailer, but also provided positive insight into opinions about library work.

One college-age student commented that because the movie trailer made the job of a librarian look fast paced and fun, and because the main character portraying a librarian was young and appeared happy and engaged, that it did dispel the stereotypical image of a librarian. College-age students who participated in the same key informant session also thought that the movie trailer did a good job of showing the main character working with people, helping people, and being a part of a community.

These comments made on the YouTube version give a general indication about reactions as well: “the library is cool because the music is louder there!”...“libraries are hip”...“Nice attempt at retiring the ‘bun/half-glasses/sensible shoes’ stereotype. ‘Really cool!’ as your librarian might say.”...“LOVE their reaction when she says she works at the library, so true to life; what library worker hasn’t heard ‘you shelve books all day’?”... “This is heads and shoulders above most library videos. Stereotype-busting without falling into the trap of creating stereotypes!”

Due to the nature of this project, marketing and recruiting activities tended to overlap. More than 60 marketing kits were distributed to high school and college guidance counselors at their request. These same materials were used at 13 career fairs at high schools and colleges. Guidance counselors and advisors were often listed as a source for information among scholarship applicants. Mentoring training sessions reached at least 300 library professionals. By the end of the grant period, 27 mentors were matched with 36 mentees.

### **Recruit for diversity**

2006 Focus Groups with the Nebraska Library Association Diversity Committee and the Nebraska State Advisory Council helped to develop and refine the diversity recruitment component of this grant. NLC partnered with the Nebraska Humanities Council for Prime Time Family Reading Time® program student internships. Stipends were awarded to local young people to work in the library in conjunction with the Prime Time® project. These young people spoke Spanish and represented the Hispanic community. They helped with the planning and implementation of the Prime Time® activities held at local libraries. A Student Intern Job Description and Student Internship Contract were developed in partnership with Humanities Council staff, later implemented as part of the subsequent 21st Century Librarian internship program. Ten (10) internship grants were awarded to eight (8) public libraries through the Prime Time Family Reading Time® program. This activity to recruit Hispanic young adults led to the development of an additional 45 internship grant opportunities, which were awarded to 37 public libraries.

### **Interns will report positive experiences with their work assignments and increased interest in library careers.**

The internships helped match students pursuing educational opportunities at all levels of the career ladder with job training placements in libraries that are likely to have employment openings in the future and provide incentives to employers to hire trainees through stipends to students.

Exit surveys collected from the interns revealed positive patterns of experience:

- Content analysis revealed that, after their experiences, the majority of interns found there was more to library work than checking books in and out. One intern wrote, “I knew that librarians did many of the things I originally thought, but I have learned how much work is involved in this and how busy you can be. Our librarians do so much for our community and take on many activities and programs.”
- When asked, “After your internship, would you consider working at a library in the future?” 34 of 38 respondents (89%) replied affirmatively. Sixteen (16) of 38 respondents (42%) answered “I strongly agree” or “I kind of agree” to the statement “Before my internship, I was interested in

becoming a librarian.” An overall positive shift was noted in the next question. The number in agreement rose to 26 (68%) in response to the statement “After my internship, I am interested in becoming a librarian.” One college-age intern wrote, “I now possess a new understanding of how challenging working in the library can be. Additionally, the work I have performed for this internship has inspired to attend Graduate School to earn a Master’s Degree so that I may pursue a more advanced career in the library.”

It is interesting to note that at least one intern has gone on to become a paid library page, and another intern has continued in regular volunteer service. Exit survey results and comments are included as an attachment.

**Mentees will report an increase in knowledge about the library profession and satisfaction with the guidance they receive from mentors.**

Fourteen (14) of the 21 mentees (67%) rated the 21st Century Librarian Mentoring Program as “Very useful” or “Somewhat useful”. Ratings and comments from the survey and follow-up comments are attached.

Additionally, a mentee who participated in the Nebraska Leadership Institute provided this feedback:

“Just being selected for this institute and being identified as someone who has leadership abilities was a real boost. I have never thought of myself as much of a leader, but now I feel that is a role I can take on. I have always tried, since entering the library field, to do my best and be a contributor and team player. Now, I have aspirations to move up, hopefully to a position that will best utilize my talents.”

**2010-2013 IMLS grant: “Cultivating Rural Librarians’ Technology Skills”**

Follow-up surveys have been distributed to just four scholarship participants who either attained their degree or certificate, or left the program. Formalized aggregate data is unavailable at this time. Other feedback was obtained through e-mails and Facebook posts.

**Identify and recruit 40 current library staff and 30 new students.**

NLC continually conducts marketing and recruitment activities. Activities include announcements, distribution of materials, exhibits at career events, exhibits at library and educational events, and presentations.

NLC mailed recruitment packets out to 6 high school students, 54 preprofessional LIS students, and 154 library directors for whom preprofessional education would be appropriate. NLC mailed each-one-reach-one packets out to 6 preprofessional scholarship students and 142 library directors for them to distribute to prospective preprofessional students of library science and prospective scholarship students. During exhibit sessions, NLC reached out to 375 middle and high school students and 600 Nebraska librarians and library students. Announcements on the Facebook page have the potential to reach 154 fans.

Several attendees of the NLA/NEMA conference stated, after interaction with staff at the booth and after the informational session, that they felt encouraged to begin their education and/or apply for a scholarship. One individual commented: “Talking about this has given me the courage to apply.” Another individual went to the Central Community College exhibit booth and enrolled in the LIS program with the intent that she would then apply for a scholarship. One student, who attended the informational session at the conference, later joined the Facebook page and made the last comment posted below. She then became a scholarship applicant.

Facebook post by NLC, with comments by scholarship recipients and prospective scholarship applicant:



Recruitment efforts can sometimes take a long time to show results. A student that was awarded a scholarship in 2011 reported that she decided to explore returning to school to become a librarian after viewing our Public Service Announcement (PSA) in a movie theatre in **2008**. This PSA was funded through a previous IMLS grant and we know we are fortunate to have IMLS funding to offer support to this student now that she is able to return to school to make her “dreams come true.”

A **statistical survey** (Attachment 16)—optional, not required of the applicant—was presented at the beginning of the online scholarship application. In Year 1, 32 of the 35 applicants completed the survey.

- Among the 32 who completed the survey, 25 were currently employed in a library. Nine applicants had never worked or volunteered in a library.
- Among those who completed the statistical survey, the following number reported how they heard about the scholarship program (Table 1):

Table 1. Referral source of information about scholarship program

Source	Number of repondents
Nebraska Library Commission	11
Nebraska Library Commission website	12
Now Hiring at your library <sup>®</sup> website	8
Fellow student	4
Friend	4
Library	3
College counselor/advisor	9
Teacher	9
Other – Library System	2
Other – work e-mail	1
Other – library program newsletter	1

**Promote access by awarding 105 scholarships to selected candidates.**

These scholarships fulfill the requirements of the grant awarded to the Nebraska Library Commission by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to recruit and educate the next generation of librarians.

From November 1, 2010, through October 31, 2011, 35 scholarship applications were received and 34 were awarded to people pursuing education in library studies for a total of \$97,000. The one scholarship not awarded was due to an incomplete application.

**Increase awareness of careers in libraries by awarding 60 internships.**

Nebraska Library Commission/Nebraska Library Association Internship Grant Program

The 21st Century Librarian Internship Grants associated with this grant are now in place. These internship grants of up to \$1,000 are funded from the IMLS Librarians for the 21st Century grant with match from the Nebraska Library Association. These internship grants fulfill the requirements of the grant awarded to the Nebraska Library Commission by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to recruit and educate the next generation of librarians.

To date, 18 of 21 applicants have been awarded internships. In this reporting period, 23 internship grants of up to \$1,000 were awarded to 18 libraries, with a total of 28 interns participating. A total of \$22,750 was awarded in Year 1 of this grant. NLC contributed \$12,750 (13 grants); NLA contributed \$10,000 (10 grants), funded through a grant to them from an anonymous private Nebraska foundation.\* 13 of the 18 libraries were located in rural Nebraska.

Recruiting to library science education and to the profession

After the internship had concluded, when asked, “Based on your internship experience, how likely is it that you will pursue further education in the library field?” 21 of the 23 interns responding replied “Very likely” or “Somewhat likely.”

After the internship had concluded, when asked, “Based on your internship experience, how likely is it that you will apply for a library job within the next five years?” 19 of the 23 respondents replied “Very likely” or “Somewhat likely.”

Reflection from one intern supervisor:

[One of our interns] was a true success story for our library and, I believe, for her. She is in the process of working towards becoming a media specialist changing from her current teaching position. She came in with no library experience but with an open and interested attitude about the profession. She was surprised at the variety of jobs staff perform and how much goes on behind the scenes in a library. I will be looking for that kind of interest and enthusiasm in future interns and utilize their personal skills for special projects.

**Bring the demographic distribution of the population of librarians into closer alignment with the Nebraska population as a whole.**

Members of the scholarship team conducted conference calls with the Admissions Director for Central Community College (CCC) on the Grand Island campus and the diversity coordinator for CCC’s three campuses to determine effective routes for reaching current CCC students and future CCC students.

The diversity coordinator distributed a recruitment flyer (Attachment 8) to approximately 40 Hispanic high-school students at a career day in Grand Island.

A recruitment booth was set up at the Youth Leadership Diversity Workshop on the CCC Grand Island campus in October 2011. Along with the youth librarian from a local library, we personally made contact with 125 junior-high and high-school students of Hispanic heritage or race other than white from Grand Island and surrounding communities. Flyers and rack cards were distributed to these students.

A recruitment booth was also set up at the Future Educators Conference on the University of Nebraska Omaha (UNO) campus in October 2011. Along with a UNO school library faculty member, we personally made contact with 250 high school juniors and seniors of whom approximately 15% were of Hispanic descent or race other than white. Flyers and rack cards were distributed to these students.

Recruitment packets were sent out to seven Hispanic high school students who had filled out a career interest card at a career fair in western Nebraska.

Of the 32 scholarship applicants who completed the statistical survey between November 1, 2010, and October 31, 2010, 78.1% were female, 46.9% were between the ages of 35 and 44 years old, none were of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin, and all were white.

## **State Advisory Council on Libraries**

The Nebraska State Advisory Council on Libraries is established by the Nebraska Library Commission to advise the Commission on statewide library development and planning.

### **Project relationship to LSTA Purposes:**

Given the purpose of the State Advisory Council, the Council supports the Commission in relation to all the LSTA purposes.

### **What formal and informal decisions were made from year to year to improve services? How were these decisions made? Lessons learned? Impact on planning future activities?**

National, state, and local economies and trends influenced the work of the advisory council over the past four year period. Budget reductions at all levels resulted in the majority of libraries operating with less funding, fewer staff, and reduced services (service hours, acquisitions, technology, etc.). These factors influenced the trends and issues selected for the council's attention. The council chose customer service and marketing, and the "new normal" as themes for council deliberations during the past four year period. Those choices were made through mutual consideration by the Library Commission and Advisory Council. Council actions are determined during council meetings (held three times per year).

The council includes eighteen appointed members and two ex-officio members (representing the Nebraska Library Association and Nebraska Educational Media Association). The appointed members are chosen to represent types of libraries, library users, and geographical regions of Nebraska. This mix of representation contributes a broader perspective and reflects the diversity of libraries, library users, and library service needs.

The director of the Library Commission and the chair of the State Advisory Council on Libraries confer on council meetings, agendas, and topics throughout the year and in preparation for each of the three council meetings held per year.

The advisory council and the Nebraska Library Commission (six member state agency governing board) hold an annual joint meeting each year in March.

### **What have you done along the way to evaluate your activities?**

In anticipation of the Commission's five-year LSTA state program evaluation the Council has included discussions intended to inform decisions on statewide library service needs and development of plans for the state's next five-year plan.

### **How were participation, outputs and outcomes tracked? Do you have any data to support the intended outcomes and outputs outlined in the plan?**

Council meetings are documented. Meeting minutes are taken and serve as a record of meeting topics, presentations, discussions, and actions. Meetings include a roundtable which provides an opportunity for each person present to comment on a success and a challenge from their library,

organization, or community. Roundtable comments provide testimonials and insight helpful in assessing needs, opportunities, and possible strategies and actions.

The council's attention to the "new normal" of economic downturn and reduced public funding was followed with surveys initiated by the council to collect information from Nebraska libraries about local conditions. The surveys have been issued twice; the most recent this past year. The survey compilations add detail and confirmation of the effects of local budget reductions, along with reduced state funding. The surveys also confirm that in spite of budget reductions there is increased demand for services.

**What reports were disseminated along the way?**

State Advisory Council on Libraries activities are reported through the Nebraska Library Commission's newsletter, *NCompass*, and council information is posted on the Nebraska Library Commission website. The New Normal for Libraries was presented by State Advisory Council representatives at the annual joint conference of the Nebraska Library Association and Nebraska Educational Media Association.

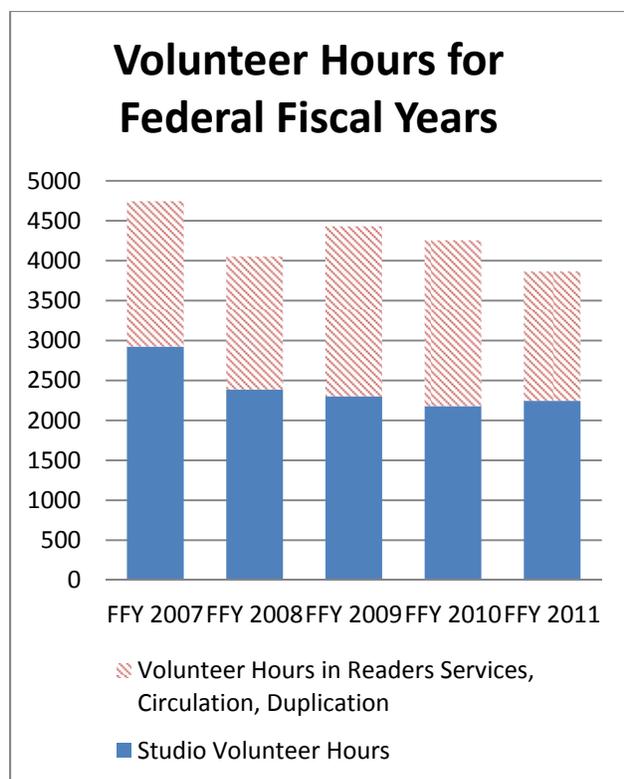
### 1K.1. Collection Management

TBBS's focus in 2009 was two-fold: to maintain an aging cassette book collection and to begin circulating audio books on cartridge for use with Library of Congress digital players which were starting to arrive in limited quantities. Setting priorities for collection management became important, since cassette books, while a large portion of the collection, represented a fading technology. On the other hand, the digital collection was much smaller but was poised to grow dramatically. As the conversion to digital continued into FY2010, more attention was being made to stack planning in order to make room for the larger numbers of incoming books on cartridge. By 2010, stack management concerns had clearly shifted to reducing the copies of cassette books, even as the numbers of incoming digital books were growing steadily.

Collection Management					
	Books Added				Books Withdrawn
	Cassette		Cartridge		Cassettes
	Titles	Volumes	Titles	Volumes	
FY 2010	2233	9148	1614	7196	23441
FY 2011	203	837	3521	16535	18258

Volunteers were recruited to support staff with the collection. A job support class provided manpower to card and bag books on cassette for XESS. One volunteer worked steadily, deleting XESS books from the records and compressing the collection. Volunteers from several agencies, universities, the public high school and a local company assisted in a big shift of the collection. These volunteers were joined by church groups and families to process the books that were arriving in both formats.

In FFY 2007, three volunteers were active in both studio and clerical work: In FFY 2008 there were two volunteers working in both; and in FFY 2009 there was one.



In Nebraska the most popular genres are romance, Christian fiction, mystery, western, and pioneer. Shelving space limits the number of copies ordered from NLS to eight, even for the most popular books. Because of less usage, three copies are ordered for each of the children’s books. One copy is ordered for each of the Spanish books.

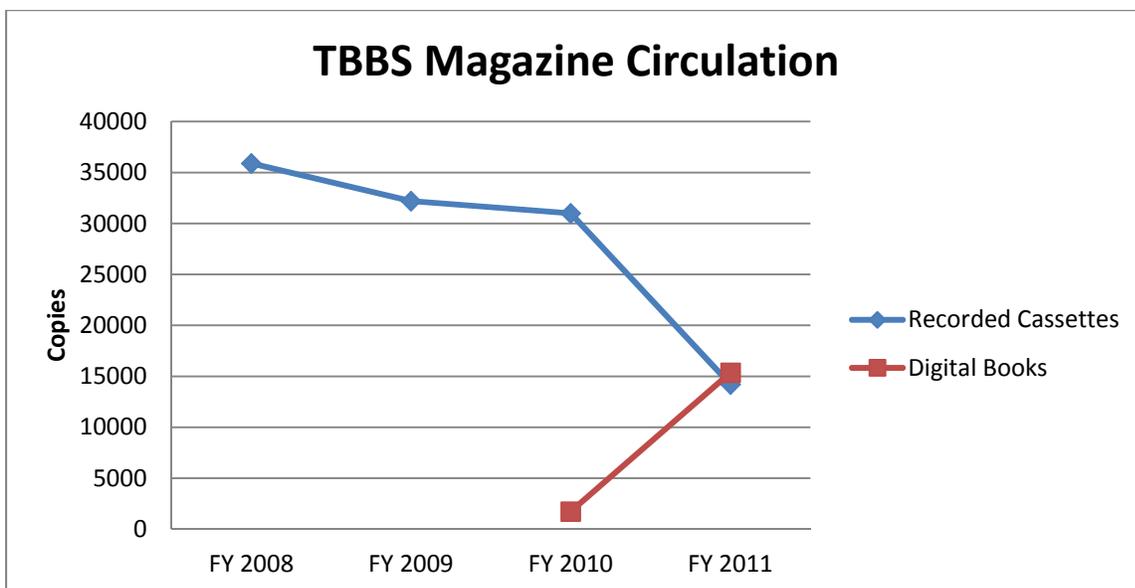
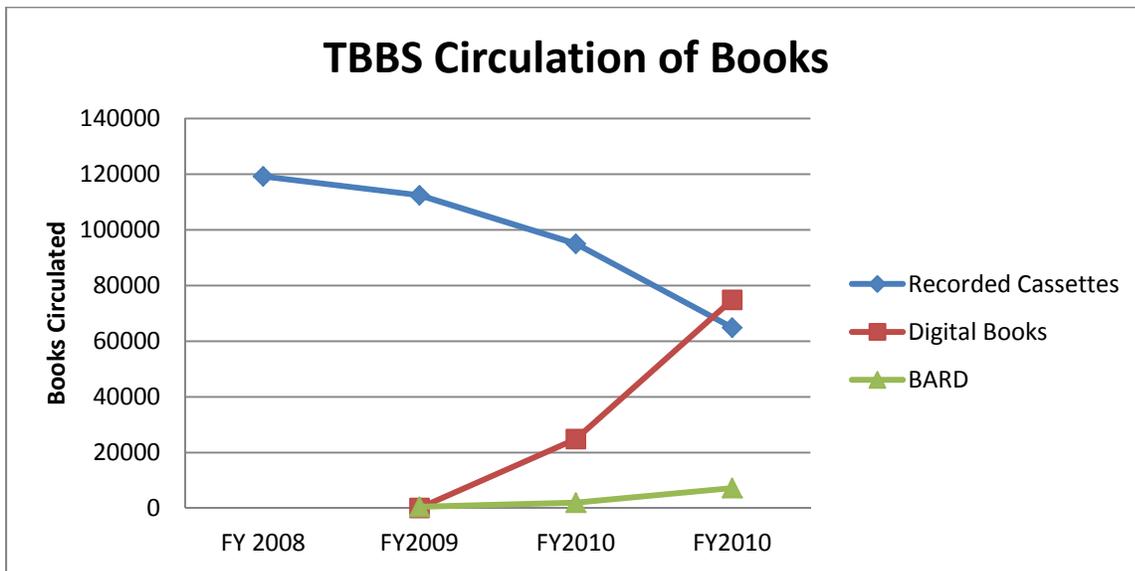
**Distribution**

To accommodate the new digital format, The Talking Book Advisory Committee helped to review library’s Loan Policy, Materials Selection Policy, and Collection Maintenance Policy. The decision to offer the new digital players and books first to veterans was determined by the Library of Congress in accordance with federal guidelines. After that, the priority was set by Readers Advisors who considered whether or not borrowers were in good standing, and were avid readers.

Veterans received letters about the new player. At least three follow-up calls were also made to individuals who had not responded. After veterans chose to try the digital player, one was shipped to them with a digital book from their request list. The same process was followed for borrowers who were not veterans. Later NLS postcards were sent to individuals and care facilities who did not have digital machines. As soon as BARD (Braille and Audio Reading Download) was available to schools, those who had been active were sent information with their renewal letter. New borrowers were set up with the digital player unless they refused it. When a borrower called in, if they did not have the digital player, the opportunity was used to encourage them to try it.

Increasing numbers of talking book borrowers began to access downloadable books through BARD in addition to receiving books through the mail from the Talking Book and Braille Service. Library staff developed strategies to promote BARD and assist borrowers in its use. A 2010 YouTube video, Recording a Nebraska Talking Book: From Farm to Fork, about the process of making a digital talking book was archived on the NLC blog. NCompass Live included a session, Now That Talking Books Are Digital: Talking Book Readers Describe a New Way of Reading.

The continued growth in circulation of books and magazines on cartridge coincided with a decline in circulation of materials on cassette.



FY 2011 brought the decision that the time had come to begin offering some Nebraska-based magazines on cartridge only and not on cassette. More effort was extended to contact reluctant borrowers who had not yet accepted the digital players.

### 1K.2. Special interest to Nebraska Borrowers

#### Nebraska Collection

The recording studios made steady contributions to the Nebraska Talking Book collection, first on cassettes, then on cassettes as well as cartridges, and finally on cartridges only. A committee including the Director, Readers Services Coordinator, and Studio Manager reviewed new books about the Midwest or by Nebraska authors for possible recording in the TBBS studios. To supplement the braille offerings, Readers Advisors ordered the newest Seedlings twin-vision books for very young children.

Additions to the TBBS Collection				
From the TBBS Recording Studios			Purchases	
	Books	Magazine Issues	Twin Reader Books	Descriptive Videos
FY 2008	37	143 *	17	30
FY 2009	36	138 *	119	39
FY 2010	26	135	0	2
FY 2011	22	137	36	19

\* state fiscal year stats

Table note: In addition to new locally produced books, previously recorded books were transferred to cartridge.



*Nebraska Life*, a relatively short magazine with straightforward organization of content, was chosen as the first digital magazine produced by TBBS. It was completed in May of 2010. As proficiency in production increased, other Nebraska digital magazines were gradually added to the offerings. Both the complexity of the magazine and the readership were factors in deciding which magazine to add to the digital collection. The Area Coordinators chose to follow the NLS book formatting schedule: magazines were produced in both formats until January 1, 2012, and production of magazines in cassette format for interlibrary loan will cease after April 1, 2012.

In 2009, Heart of a Husker by Mike Babcock was the first Nebraska book to be duplicated on cartridge. From then on, books were produced in cassette and cartridge as they came out of the studios and finished post-production. Since print copies were still immediately available, the audio files for these books were easier to input navigation markers prior to duplication onto cartridge. In planning the next stage for transferring the existing Nebraska collection onto digital, a list of Nebraska books was made that showed which ones had circulated most frequently. This list was supplemented with feedback from Readers Advisors concerning high-demand authors and genres.

Four catalogs were updated in 2009: Nebraska Magazines on Cassette, Westerns and Pioneer, Books for Young People, and the online Descriptive Video Collection. Catalogs for Nebraska digital books and magazines were continually updated.

Talking Book and Braille Service conducted a survey of its borrowers. The results were published in August 2011 in its *Interchange* newsletter. 66 borrowers told us their reading preferences for Nebraska books. 51.5% enjoy both Nebraska fiction and nonfiction. 32% prefer nonfiction; while 12% prefer fiction. And 4.5% don't care for Nebraska books of any kind.

TBBS, I Am a Man by Joel Starita, on production fast track. It was the 2011 choice for One Book One Lincoln. The Area Coordinators decided that TBBS would be responsive to other organizations' book awards but not dictated by those lists.

### **1K.3**

TBBS tracked the number of new applications for service on a monthly basis. Book circulation figures are tracked on a daily and monthly basis as well. We receive ongoing feedback from borrowers and their family members concerning service issues on a daily basis.

Talking Book and Braille Service conducted a survey of its borrowers. The results were published in August 2011 in its *Interchange* newsletter:

#### **Borrowers Respond to Survey**

A two-part survey, which appeared in the February and April editions of *Interchange*, drew scores of responses from borrowers. 64 borrowers responded to a question concerning access to the Internet for downloadable books. 61% indicated they did not have Internet access and did not anticipate having access within the next few years. 28% currently have access to the Internet; and 11% expect to have access within a few years.

76 borrowers responded to whether or not there was a lag between when they first qualified for talking books and when they actually signed up. 50.5% indicated they signed up as soon as they were ready and that no care provider failed to tell them. 14% would have signed up sooner but their eye doctor didn't tell them. 8% indicated their primary care doctor didn't tell them; and 8% indicated a librarian didn't tell them. 6.5% felt they would have signed up sooner but a rehab counselor didn't tell them. Also, 6.5% felt some other service provider didn't tell them; and 6.5% felt another talking book borrower didn't tell them.

66 borrowers told us their reading preferences for Nebraska books. 51.5% enjoy both Nebraska fiction and nonfiction. 32% prefer nonfiction; while 12% prefer fiction. And 4.5% don't care for Nebraska books of any kind.

84 borrowers responded to a question about what they experience when they telephone the Talking Book and Braille Service during library hours. 77.5% usually talk to a staff member the first time they try. 15.5% prefer to use regular mail or email to communicate with staff. 3.5% usually leave a message on the answering machine. This includes those who typically call after-hours. Finally, 3.5% usually decline to leave a message.

80 borrowers responded to a question concerning the new Library of Congress digital player. 87.5% are using the player and enjoying it. 7.5% were using the player but have some questions about its operation. 2.5% were not using the new player but wanted to learn more about it; and 2.5% were not interested in having the new player.

Out of 74 responses, 98.5% indicated they would recommend the Talking Book and Braille Service without reservation; while 1.5% would recommend the Talking Book and Braille Service with some reservations.

#### **1K.4 Promotion**

Various methods of outreach were used. Articles and ads appeared in newspapers, magazines, and newsletters. Phone calls, packets, and presentations were given to support groups. Packets were mailed to health professionals, care facilities, and teachers. Twice TBBS was featured on radio shows. Booths were staffed at health fairs, state-wide events, and volunteer service fairs. A 2010 YouTube video, *Recording a Nebraska Talking Book: From Farm to Fork*, about the process of making a digital talking magazine was archived on the NLC blog. The following NCompass Live presentations were given: Meet the NLC, Library of Congress Talking Books: Now Downloadable 24/7, Behind the Studio Glass: Meet the Volunteers and Staff Who Make Talking Books and Magazines, Now That Talking Books Are Digital: Talking Book Readers Describe a New Way of Reading, and Volunteers, A Link to the Community.

Suggestions for outreach were gathered from the TBBS Advisory committee and the Area Coordinators. With budget cuts, TBBS turned to ads in Nebraska Life, a relatively new coffee table magazine, to replace travel to health fairs.

Attempts to track promotional success included color-coded coupons, coding on application forms, and rates of new borrowers after big promotional efforts.

To encourage more widespread use of the digital technology, TBBS plans to make YouTube videos targeting activity directors at care facilities and school teachers. Another NLS postcard will be sent to borrowers who have not shown an interest in the digital player.

- Phone contacts made to Multiple Sclerosis and stroke support groups. Packets then mailed to them.
- Articles for newsletters sent to United Cerebral Palsy of Nebraska and the Nebraska Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation.
- Articles sent to Nebraska library system administrators for their newsletters.
- Article published in *NEMA News*
- Braille alphabet cards sent to Amherst Public Schools
- A packet sent to AgriAbility—an Easter Seals program headquartered in Hastings, and to the Nebraska Polio Survivors Association
- Brochures sent to *Nebraska Farmer* for its hospitality tent during Husker Harvest Days
- Packets mailed to parish nurses and to long-term and assisted living care facilities
- Staff interviewed over KZUM radio
- Packets sent to diabetes support groups and to Easter Seals' three state offices
- Ran ad in the *Neighborhood Extra*, supplement to the *Lincoln Journal Star*, and in two editions of *The Prairie Wind*, newsletter of the Nebraska Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers
- Packets sent to dystonia, traumatic brain injury, and caregivers support groups
- News release re: vacancies on the Advisory Committee
- Article appeared in *MS Connection*, newsletter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Nebraska Chapter.
- Packets mailed to Nebraska optometrists and ophthalmologists
- Ran ad in *Lincoln Journal Star* and in *Nebraska Life* magazine
- Ran ad in *Nebraska VFW News*
- Packets mailed to Nebraska nursing homes and assisted living facilities

#### Presentations:

- V.I.P.S. (Visually Impaired Peer Support) group at Omaha's Crown Point Retirement Center
- V.I.P.S. group at The Walters Apartments (Lincoln)
- National Federation of the Blind of Nebraska state convention (North Platte)

#### Displays:

- Phelps County Diabetes Fair
- UNL Service Fair
- Diabetes Education Center of the Midlands spring seminar

#### FY 2009

- Paid ad in *Living Well* magazine.
- Tour given to clients of the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
- Article appeared in Eastern Library System newsletter.
- Packets sent to Heartland Eye Consultants and to the Brumm Eye Center.
- Packets mailed to Nebraska media center specialists.

- Tour and demonstration to library managers from Tajikistan.
- Paid ad in *The Neighborhood Extra* and in *The Lincoln Journal Star*.
- Article appeared in the Lincoln, Nebraska Dystonia Digest.
- Article appeared in the Southeast Library System newsletter.
- Packets mailed to Nebraska nursing homes and assistive living facilities.
- Press release and audio PSAs sent via email attachment to Nebraska radio stations.
- Article with photo appeared in Nebraska Life magazine.
- Mailing to teachers concerning direct downloads of audio books.
- Packets to Nebraska optometrists who specialize in low vision.

#### Presentations:

- Immanuel Courtyard (Omaha).
- To Library Commission staff during “Go Go Geeky Gadgets” program.
- Visually Impaired Peer Support Group at The Walter Apartment (Lincoln).
- National Federation of the Blind of Nebraska state convention (Grand Island).
- Learning Disabilities Association of Nebraska state conference.
- Dystonia Support Group.
- NCompass Live: Meet the NLC.
- NCompass Live: Library of Congress Talking Books: Now Downloadable 24/7.
- Volunteer Partners Board of Directors.
- Special Libraries class from UNO.
- American Council of the Blind of Nebraska state convention (Hastings).
- UNL Services for Students with Disabilities.
- Bethany Lions Club (Lincoln).

#### Displays:

- Phelps County Diabetes Fair.
- University of Nebraska Lincoln Service Fair.
- Exploratorium session during the Nebraska Library Association/Nebraska Educational Media Association annual conference.
- Learning Disabilities Association of Nebraska state conference.
- Diabetes Spring Seminar (Omaha), sponsored by Diabetes Education Center of the Midlands.

#### FY 2010

- Provided materials for Braille Boot Camp (Boys Town).
- Tour given to special education class from Lincoln Public Schools.
- Packet sent to Great Plains Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America.
- Packet sent to Accessibility.net.
- Segment on KFOR Radio *Lincoln Live*.
- Article appeared in *The Omaha World Herald*.
- Packet sent to the Nebraska Foundation for Visually Impaired Children.

- Promotional materials sent for the Blindness Works Conference in Sioux City, IA.
- Tour and demonstration given to Girls' State participants.

#### Presentations:

- Panhandle Library System annual meeting.
- Visually Impaired Peer Support Group (V.I.P. S.) in Columbus
- County Service Officers training event.
- Republican Valley Library System meetings (McCook and Hastings).
- Veterans of Foreign Wars Annual Council (Grand Island).
- National Federation of the Blind of Nebraska state convention (Scottsbluff).
- NCompass Live: Behind the Studio Glass: Meet the Volunteers and Staff Who Make Talking Books and Magazines.
- Sunshine Visually Impaired Peer Support Group (Lincoln).
- Southeast Library System's Training Extravaganza (Lincoln).
- The Legacy Retirement Community (Lincoln).

#### Displays:

- UNL Service Fair.
  - Diabetic Health Fair (McCook).
  - World Day on the Mall (Lincoln).
  - Veterans Day at the State Fair.
  - Exploratorium Session at the Nebraska Library Association/Nebraska Educational Media Association annual conference.
  - Health Fair (Fullerton).
  - Teachers' Night at the Durham Museum.
  - Veterans of Foreign Wars Annual Council (Grand Island).
  - Nebraska Digital Government Summit.
  - BryanLGH Diabetes Fair (Lincoln).
  - Older Blind Conference (Kearney), sponsored by the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
- 
- Paid ad in *Living Well* magazine.
  - Tour given to clients of the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
  - Article appeared in Eastern Library System newsletter.
  - Packets sent to Heartland Eye Consultants and to the Brumm Eye Center.
  - Packets mailed to Nebraska media center specialists.
  - Tour and demonstration to library managers from Tajikistan.
  - Paid ad in *The Neighborhood Extra* and in *The Lincoln Journal Star*.
  - Article appeared in the Lincoln, Nebraska *Dystonia Digest*.
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  - Packets mailed to Nebraska nursing homes and assistive living facilities.
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- Special Libraries class from University of Nebraska at Omaha.
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Displays:

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- UNL Service Fair.
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- Learning Disabilities Association of Nebraska state conference.
- Diabetes Spring Seminar (Omaha).

FY 2010

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- Article appeared in *The Omaha World Herald*.
- Packet sent to the Nebraska Foundation for Visually Impaired Children.
- Promotional materials sent for the Blindness Works Conference in Sioux City, IA.
- Tour and demonstration given to Girls’ State participants.

Presentations:

- Panhandle Library System annual meeting.
- Visually Impaired Peer Support Group (Columbus).
- County Service Officers training event.
- Republican Valley Library System meetings (McCook and Hastings).
- Veterans of Foreign Wars Annual Council (Grand Island).
- National Federation of the Blind of Nebraska state convention (Scottsbluff).
- NCompass Live: *Behind the Studio Glass: Meet the Volunteers and Staff Who Make Talking Books and Magazines.*
- Sunshine Visually Impaired Peer Support Group (Lincoln).
- Southeast Library System's Training Extravaganza (Lincoln).
- The Legacy Retirement Community (Lincoln).

#### Displays:

- University of Nebraska Lincoln Service Fair.
- Diabetic Health Fair (McCook).
- World Day on the Mall (Lincoln).
- Veterans Day at the State Fair.
- Exploratorium Session at the Nebraska Library Association/Nebraska Educational Media Association annual conference.
- Community health fair (Fullerton).
- Teachers' Night at the Durham Museum, Omaha.
- Veterans of Foreign Wars Annual Council (Grand Island).
- Nebraska Digital Government Summit.
- BryanLGH Diabetes Fair (Lincoln).
- Older Blind Conference (Kearney).

#### FY 2011

- An article published as a Local View op-ed letter in *The Lincoln Journal Star* concerning the record of Joe Starita's book, *I Am a Man*.
- An article in *The Lincoln Journal Star* concerning Talking Book involvement in One Lincoln-One Book.
- "Take a Break" postcards were included in an agency mailing to Nebraska public libraries.
- Two paid ads in *Nebraska Life* magazine.
- Four public service spots aired one evening on KZUM Radio.
- Contacts made to the Nebraska Occupational Therapy Association, Arthritis Foundation of Nebraska, and ALS in the Heartland.
- *Nebline*, published online by the University of Nebraska Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County, includes Talking Books on its website.
- Letter sent via email to Nebraska school media specialists about Talking Book summer reading program. Same letter sent to resource teachers that currently serve as Talking Book contact person in schools.
- Girl State participants toured Talking Book and Braille Service and participated in a studio recording session.

- Talking Book listing updated on NE 2-1-1, which is managed by United Way of the Midlands.

#### Presentations:

- A session at Nebraska Library Association / Nebraska Educational Media Association (NLA/NEMA) annual conference on “Digital Talking Book and BARD Book Downloading Service.”
- National Federation of the Blind of Nebraska state convention in Columbus.
- Talking Book staff hosted a segment of NCompass Live: *Now That Talking Books Are Digital: Talking Book Readers Describe a New Way of Reading.*
- Lincoln’s Gateway Sertoma.
- Fall City Public Library and Arts Center.
- Two library science classes from University of Nebraska at Omaha.
- Talking Book digital players offered to Nebraska public libraries that serve as local machine exchange sites for talking book borrowers.
- Talking Book staff made a presentation to the Nebraska Occupational Therapy Association (NOTA). Two articles about Talking Books published in the *NOTA Newsletter*.

#### Displays:

- Staff at the Fullerton Public Library included a talking book digital player and flyers as part of its display at a community health fair.
- Talking Books designed and staffed a display at the NLA/NEMA annual conference.
- Long-standing talking book borrower staffed a talking book display at a diabetes health fair in McCook.
- Talking book digital player flyers featured as part of the Library Commission’s booth during the Nebraska League of Municipalities Midwinter Conference.

### **1K.5. Recruitment, Audio Production**

#### **Recruiting volunteers to assist in audio production**

Forty five auditions were conducted. A packet of information and audition materials were mailed to each applicant. The studio manager conducted the audition and provided feedback to the selection committee. He noted the number of errors, specific pronunciation of selected words, phrasing, expressiveness, tone, and rate. Independently, each member of the selection committee listened to a recording of the audition and provided feedback.

Of the 45 auditions, 26 volunteers were accepted as narrators. Subsequently, twelve have volunteered for over a year, and 6 began this year. Five were accepted on a short-term basis. Most of the new volunteers who resigned did so because they moved away. After unsuccessful coaching, one volunteer was referred to another opportunity and volunteered there.\*

\* Note: The volunteer retention rate for Nebraska as reported in *Volunteering in America* is 65.3%. The volunteer retention rate for TBBS narrators is 80.0% [12 volunteered over a year/ (26 passed audition-6 who began volunteering this year -5 who did not intend to become long-term volunteers

A professor from Creighton University in Omaha narrated a Gaelic poem which appeared in one of the Nebraska books. A university student whose first language is Spanish narrated the Spanish half of a dual-language book.

As the studio team became more comfortable with the digital technology, the area coordinators and studio team decided that TBBS would begin reviewing Nebraska books. Four individuals became reviewers. The feedback from the reviewers was used to pinpoint technical and narration edits. The Nebraska magazines would not be reviewed because the production of each magazine issue would probably be delayed for two weeks for edits, and magazines typically have a short shelf life.

Many narrators are uncertain about the pronunciation of athletes' names. Studio staff decided that a database showing the pronunciation of athletes' names would be a valuable asset when producing *Big Red Report*. An individual was recruited who assembled a database of University of Nebraska football players, the primary emphasis of *Big Red Report*.

## **Plan**

Recruitment of volunteers continues. The database for *Big Red Report* needs periodic updating. One vision is for an auditory database of more uncommon names.

The audition process will be changed to include cold reading and updated materials in the audition packet.

## **Outcomes and Outputs**

### **1k.1. Testimonials**

#### Testimonials

- The service has increased my enjoyment of life.
- (My daughter) was so excited to receive the five (books) that you sent her and very anxious to receive the next ten. What a wonderful program this is!
- Please remove my husband...from your mailing list. I want to thank you for all the books he was able to listen to before he passed away. You do a wonderful service to people that have a hard time seeing.
- (My father) was an enthusiastic participant in the Talking Book & Braille program, so I would like to also recognize all of those who make the service available. Your efforts enriched my father's life immensely in his later years, and for that I am most appreciative.
- Thank you for all the help getting my brother started with talking books!!! What a wonderful way to help him learn when reading is so difficult for him!!! You all are wonderful! I wish you

could see the smile on his face each time he finishes a book and tells me, "It was great!!!" (My brother) has had a tough life, so it is really fun filling his life with things he enjoys.

- Thank you for all the pleasure you have provided to me during the past year.
- Thank you for all the help that you have given me. My life would not be as enjoyable without you and talking books.
- Thank you so much for offering this service and for all you do in your office to keep it rolling. It is so great to be able to offer braille books as an option to readers, and we couldn't do it without your efforts." – public library staff member
- Thank you for adding my name to the request list for digital players and for the magazines. Books on cassettes help me normalize my life so I do not feel so limited or isolated. I love your service.
- I want to thank you for all the years of your wonderful service and kindness of sending, teaching, and letting us read your books. They have been some of the most wonderful times for my 93-year-old mother.
- You don't realize what these books mean to my wife. She is one that just buries herself into a book.
- My mother used the talking book service for many years. She had macular degeneration, so having books on tape provided a lot of hours of enjoyment for her. The easy way to return the books was also helpful to her. Many times she would tell me that she couldn't sleep, so she would start up one of her books. That would usually provide her enough relaxation to fall asleep again. She died last July, but I just wanted you to know how much your service meant to all of us.
- I want you to know how much (my friend) enjoyed the service you provide. We were both great readers, and she always told me how many books she had read and just recently she hit the 1000 mark . . . You provide a wonderful service, quite beyond my ability to describe. Thank you for your help.
- "(My mother) loved her talking books . . . Thank you for a wonderful program that brings so much joy to so many people who are sight-impaired. It dramatically improved her quality of life.
- Dad greatly enjoyed the talking books. They enriched his life beyond measure. Thank you for making this program available to the citizens of Nebraska.
- This letter is being sent to inform you of the death of (my husband). He so enjoyed receiving the talking books, and we want to sincerely thank you for this great service. We hope this continues for many years to come so others have the joy of reading.
- It has been great dealing with you, and the supply of talking books for my Mom. She was always telling me, "I need more tapes," and couldn't wait to listen to them...Thanks again, and the services you provide really make a difference.
- I am so thankful to be able to get to listen to all these wonderful tapes...Evenings and nights when I can't sleep is great listening times.

- Thank you for your kindness and patience in helping me select talking books. You are really appreciated
- Thanks! For the loan of the book. My fourth graders love the braille cards too. I appreciate all you do! God bless you
- What good service. I talked to you about the player on Wednesday. Sent it in on Thursday, and Saturday I received a replacement. Thank you so much for such good service
- Thank your staff for the excellent job you are famous for. I spend many hours each week with your talking books. Thanks again
- Thank you for all the good work you do. We do appreciate it so much. Your staff is always so cordial and helpful and smart in finding books, etc.

### **1K.2. Collection increase – see 1K2 above**

### **1K3. Referrals**

Referrals in sample months were tabulated from individual application forms. Counselors for the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired provided between 20% and 55% of the referrals for each of the sample months. MDs provided between 10% and 27% of the referrals. Specialists doctors and other medical staff were also active referral sources. The Assistant Coordinator at Weigel Williamson Center for Visual Rehabilitation is an especially important partner. Other active sources of referrals were care facility activity directors and administrators and teachers.

Note: Table available, may be simplified

Some of the sources for referrals did not appear directly on the application forms. If an individual heard about TBBS from a support group for a specific disability, someone in the support group may not have the authority to sign the form. The individual would need to go to a professional for a signature.

READS, the circulation program for TBBS, does not have a category to note the referral of a new borrower, and a field cannot be added. Referrals would need a separate program. TBBS will experiment with methods of tracking of all arriving referrals.

### **1K4. Skills of studio volunteers**

Improving the skills of individual studio volunteers was a continual process. Several diverse methods were used.

- Monitors provided ongoing feedback and coaching. Because digital mastering was more sensitive to ambient sound, narrators were coached on making quiet page turns, avoiding microphone bumps, breath control and phrasing, consistent pronunciation of formal names, research to master difficult phrases, and maintaining consistent distance from microphone.

- Producers were coached on consistent volume levels, backing up files, and using standard methods for describing graphic tables and charts.
- Reviewers were coached to check for conformance to standard formats for tables of content and side changes, volume, ambient background sounds, adherence to original text, and consistent pronunciations.
- In addition, the area coordinators decided that the audition selection committee would be the studio team instead of representatives from other areas of TBBS. With their training and studio experience, they would be able to choose new narrators who would have higher narration skills.
- The area coordinators also decided that the recording quality would be higher and more uniform if more staff time was invested in monitoring. The number of volunteer monitors would decline through attrition.
- The decision to implement a book review process resulted in higher quality of Nebraska books because of the edits made.
- The studio staff began to supplement the print copies of *the Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness* with the internet version. In this version, the tables and figures are written out, making them much easier to narrate.
- The database of the University of Nebraska athletes' names gave the narrators quicker, more accurate access to pronunciations for *Big Red Report*

## 2G.1

### TBBS studios transition to digital

After 40 years of producing talking books on audio cassette, the National Library Service (NLS) began circulating books and players for the new Digital Talking Book (DTB) format in late 2009. In anticipation of the transition to digital, our recording studio staff began learning about the technical specifications for the new format and testing software. On May 6, 2010, staff duplicated the first Nebraska-based book on cartridge, *Heart of a Husker: Tom Osborne's Nebraska Legacy* by Mike Babcock, and on May 27, staff circulated the first Nebraska-based magazine on cartridge, the May/June issue of *Nebraska Life*, making Nebraska one of the first talking book libraries in the nation to circulate its own materials on cartridge. TBBS began circulating locally produced materials in dual-format (cartridge and cassette) from May 2010 onward. Starting in 2011, materials are gradually transitioning to cartridge-only circulation, with a goal of all-digital circulation of new locally recorded materials by the beginning of 2012.

### DTB Software considerations

DTBs are created in a specialized format that combines audio files with an xhtml-based navigational system, so that borrowers can move around within major elements of books and magazines (articles, chapters, parts, etc). The audio files are converted from "normal" recorded audio (16-bit 44.1 kHz .wav files) to a compressed AMRWB+ file format, which saves storage space while retaining audio quality. The audio and navigational files are then encrypted so that unauthorized persons cannot access the materials, protecting copyright by circulating in a specialized format as specified by the Chafee Amendment.

Specialized software is required to produce materials to these specifications. Presently, two software products are commercially available to make DTBs: American Printing House for the Blind (APH) offers a product called Book Wizard Producer, which we began experimenting with in 2008, but we found that it would not work for our needs at the time. APH later discovered that Book Wizard Producer needs to be used in conjunction with a recording software product they make, but by then we had purchased and were experimenting with a product called Low Complexity Mastering (LCM) made by Telex, a company that had previously created software and hardware products for duplication of talking books on cassette.

As books and players were not yet available from NLS, a small DTB player called the Victor Reader Stream was purchased for testing in-house DTB productions. A book was made that worked on the Victor device, but when we began receiving NLS players in 2009, we discovered that our in-house book was not working properly on the free players that would be circulated to all of our patrons. Between August 2009 and May 2010, staff communicated with many contacts at NLS, Telex, other state recording programs, and ex-Telex employees to find solutions. Eventually, we found the solutions we needed to create NLS-style DTBs, which included a number of specifications that were not included in the manual shipped with the software. An additional program created by NLS is also required to complete the final "export" process from LCM and properly encrypt finished books, which also runs a "zedval" process that confirms proper construction of books to NLS specifications.

Considering the lack of a formal manual to guide future users through the process of using LCM to make Digital Talking Books, staff developed an "LCM instructions for making books" document, which we use ourselves and also have shared with staff at other regional libraries.

### **DTB Duplication considerations**

Digital talking books are circulated in a "cartridge" format, which is a USB flash memory storage device made in a unique shape to fit into the NLS DTB player. Duplication of large numbers of these devices requires computers with specialized duplication software, as well as specialized hardware receivers made to accommodate the unusual shape requirements of cartridges. Initially, the NLC computer team designed a cartridge duplication system made to work in a Windows Vista environment, which was implemented successfully for around six months of duplication. Over time, the system became sluggish and eventually stopped working properly. We discovered that each cartridge inserted into the system was causing unique sets of information to be recorded in the Windows registry, and eventually the large quantity of these accumulated records caused the system to fail. Finding it impossible to resolve this problem because of its inherent relationship to the operating system itself, we purchased an Altec CopyStation 21 hardware/software product from North Coast Interactive, which we understood was designed to meet our needs. Unfortunately, this product also runs on Windows, (Windows 7 in this case) and it developed similar problems with its Windows registry. Working with North Coast Interactive as recently as the last few weeks has so far not resolved registry problems, and we are now working with a third duplication system called Gutenberg. This system is made by NLS to work in a Linux operating system environment, which is a learning experience for NLC computer and TBBS staff. This system is not fully operational yet, but staff anticipate a successful launch shortly.

## **Review of book recordings**

TBBS implemented use of volunteer reviewers beginning in 2009. Reviewers listen to the recordings made of books in our studios while following along with a copy of the text. In the event they find any incorrect words, pronunciations, or extraneous sounds, they place a “marker” into the audio file using SoundForge recording software. These files are then sent back into the studios to make any needed changes before circulation. Presently, only books go through the review process, as it adds a significant time delay to the completion of projects. Magazines, with content that is frequently time-sensitive, are only spot-checked on occasion by the review process.

## **Workflow changes**

Because of dual format (cartridge and cassette) circulation and the addition of reviewing procedures, many steps have been added to the process of creating our local recordings. TBBS studio staff now have access to a small program created by the NLC computer team called “recording.exe.” This program allows staff to check the status of each book and magazine project currently in progress. Steps include mapping (creating a recording plan for each project, including opening and closing announcements and Tables of Contents with reading times), recording, assembly (combining recorded articles into larger chunks of audio), two rounds of postproduction, review, studio fixes from review, cassette duplication, DTB markup, digital duplication, and archiving of finished projects. These steps are frequently reviewed for efficiency, and re-evaluated as we gradually shift from production in two formats toward the eventual goal of digital-only circulation.

TBBS staff also created a YouTube video related to the new workflow including production of Digital Talking Books, which describes and briefly shows many of the steps involved in our productions. The video is archived on the Library Commission Blog, or available for direct viewing at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=4hxd97DJYPo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4hxd97DJYPo). The video has been helpful as both an outreach tool and knowledge-sharing resource.

## **BARD books online**

On April 30, 2009, NLS publicly launched a website where patrons can download books and magazines to their own cartridges or other approved playback devices at home. The website is called Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD), and TBBS staff have received training from NLS on approving Nebraska patrons to use BARD, as well as answering technical questions regarding its use. Audio duplication staff have also been involved with BARD in a different capacity: since regional libraries were not given large enough allotments to receive copies of all older “retrospective” titles available through BARD, in-house copies of popular retrospective titles are duplicated onto our own purchased blank cartridges. As cartridges and the boxes in which they circulate are expensive, this has somewhat shifted the cost of supplying books to borrowers to the state level, creating a significant economic impact.

Nebraska hopes to eventually make its own recordings available in a downloadable format similar to BARD. NLS has alluded to the possibility of creating an area on BARD for locally-produced recordings, but so far there isn’t a logical place to put the recordings online. However, Nebraska DTB book and

magazine products are shared with other regional libraries as requested, who make their own cartridge copies of our materials for circulation to their patrons, a practice analogous to earlier interlibrary loans of cassette masters. Our files are sent to other libraries either by mail on cartridge or via FTP depending on library preference. Nebraska also makes a DTB version of Guideposts Magazine from files recorded at Talking Book Productions in Denver, CO. With the blessing of Guideposts, this DTB magazine is provided to other libraries via an FTP site hosted by the Perkins Library in MA.

### **Digitizing older titles**

In addition to the transition of new recording projects to eventual circulation in cartridge format only, staff are working to create DTB versions of books recorded in our studios in previous years. Files archived in digital formats on CD and DVD from previous years are going through this process first, which involves opening and editing the files to include recorded information about navigation in the digital player environment. These files are imported into the LCM software to add navigational elements and remove references to cassette navigation, and then they are “exported” as finished DTBs. So far, over 100 older titles have been converted to DTB format, with approximately 400 digitally-archived books to go. Once those are completed, we will evaluate how to approach older recordings which only exist on cassette. In some cases, we may be able to digitize from cassette masters, but audio quality considerations may lead us toward re-recording certain popular or significant titles. All of these files, including the original high-resolution audio files, are also retained on NLC servers as backups, and to be used toward any new talking book formats that might evolve for future needs.

### **2G.1 Outcomes**

In a 2010 survey, 80 borrowers responded to a question concerning the new Library of Congress digital player. 87.5% are using the player and enjoying it. 7.5% were using the player but have some questions about its operation. 2.5% were not using the new player but wanted to learn more about it; and 2.5% were not interested in having the new player.

Personal comments about the digital technology included:

- This is the first time I have found it easy to understand a female reader of talking books. The digital recording is a great improvement over cassettes.
- I really appreciate this tape (sic). I have macular degeneration and this helped me understand more. I do appreciate digital tape (sic) I can hear so much better.
- Thank you so much for the use of the digital reader (sic). Its (sic) so simple and works great!
- I don't have to carry four or five cassettes around all the time to enjoy a book. I really like it, especially the clarity. It is crystal clear.
- I'm in love. The unit is lighter to carry around. It is smaller and easier to handle. I can't wait to take it with me on a trip. I don't have all those tapes. And the tone is infinitely better.
- I love it. It is so easy to start and stop again. It tells me how much time I have left on the battery and on the book. And the voice is clearer.

- I received my new tape player a few weeks ago. I'm really enjoying listening to the digital tapes...voices are so clear and not muffled like some of the old tapes were getting to be. I especially enjoy the sleep button. Now I can just set the timer and not worry about falling asleep and missing the end of the books.
- This machine and tape (sic) are very nice. Has much better tone etc. and easier to use.
- Machine worked great, easy to operate, and a nice clear tone to understand.

## **LSTA Purposes**

### **4. Partnerships**

TBBS partnered with support groups, health care professionals, and librarians for outreach.

Partnerships in volunteerism include the local volunteer center and its national connections, service clubs, secondary schools, universities, churches, librarian association, not-for-profit agencies, and companies. The partnership with the volunteer center was especially active with a listing on their website, dissemination of volunteer opportunities, participation and presentations at workshops, planning and participation in yearly volunteer recognition events, and participation on the Board of Directors.

#### **Partnerships for Volunteer Recruitment**

Volunteer Partners

Authors

Casper D Yost Chapter of Telephone Pioneers

Community Corrections

Diversion Services

Fresh Start

Girls State

Kenex (community service projects)

Lincoln Public Schools: job support class and seniors

Nebraska Commission for the Blind

Nebraska Wesleyan University

New Covenant Community Church

Owens Educational Services

Points of Light

Principal Financial Services (Day of Caring)

RSVP

ServiceLinc

St Marks United Methodist Church

Union College

University of Nebraska – Lincoln

WAGES

Workforce Development (until June 2009)

Points of Light – HandsOn Network: Give a Day Get a Disney Day (2010)

**Partnerships for Volunteer Recognition**

Volunteer Partners

Nebraska Library Association (2008)

Nebraska Governor’s Office: Admiralship in the Great Navy of Nebraska

Points of Light: Lifetime Presidential Award (2008)

RSVP

**On the Web:**

UNL Student Involvement

Nebraska Wesleyan University Career Center

Lincoln Public Schools Government and Politics

Volunteer Partners, Points of Light, Hands On Network

Give a Day Get a Disney Day (2010)

**Plan:**

Research local agency experiences with VolunteerMatch and Idealist

## Technology Innovation LSTA Report

### WiFi

In November 2007 Michael instigated an idea to increase the number of libraries in Nebraska that offered free and open public access WiFi. The idea was approved and in early 2008 it was decided to use the remaining balance of the Gates Staying Connected Grant to fund the project. Nebraska's public libraries were then surveyed to see which libraries that didn't already provide such WiFi access to the public would be interested in participating. In the end 49 libraries agreed to participate in the program.

Each participating library was supplied with a Linksys WiFi router and their choice of either a Dell Inspiron laptop or a Samsung Q1 Ultra UMPC. (Only four libraries chose the ultra-mobile PC.) All of the computers were set up by Michael including the creation of staff and public account, Windows updates, and anti-virus software and sent to the libraries along with the WiFi router. Instructions for setting up, and future updating of the equipment, along with guidelines for a public access WiFi policy were also sent to the libraries.

"Since we have just received the WiFi Connectivity Grant my new favorite thing is WiFi and the laptop computer. We get calls occasionally asking if we have WiFi (mostly from people visiting in Wilber) so now we can tell them "YES"."

Nancy Vacek, Wilbur Public Library

### Nebraska Libraries on the Web

In early 2009 the Nebraska Library Commission joined a multi-state cooperative, the Plinkit Collaborative, to offer Website design and hosting services for public libraries. During the biennium it was determined that a combination of software update issues and monetary costs made it infeasible to continue to participate in Plinkit. In May 2010 the Commission decided to change the underlying technology, but still offer the same service—renamed Nebraska Libraries on the Web—with WordPress replacing Plinkit and hosting the service on Library Commission servers instead of offsite. This method provided more immediate and direct control over the whole system, with the cost of a new server representing the only additional funds required.

The new server was purchased and WordPress was installed within a few weeks. The first group of eight libraries (five public libraries and three regional library systems) was trained on how to use WordPress, with the first group of Websites live within ten weeks. Criteria for selection of the first groups of participating libraries included distance from a training location, number of open hours, and the lack of any previous Web presence.

Throughout 2010 five groups of librarians attended live training. In January 2011 training was moved online and a series of videos were created covering all of the material presented in the live workshops. At this point all training has been online and self-paced with Michael continuing to offer technical support for all participating libraries.

IL2011 presentation.

As of February 2012, 43 public libraries have gone with their Web sites in the Nebraska Libraries on the Web program.

"Thank you so much! Appreciate all the hard work that went into making this easier for us laymen."

Cindee Wagner, Culbertson Library

"I LOVE the way WordPress works. It is so much more elegant/streamlined than anything else I've seen... By the way, I want you and the NLC to know how very much I and the Board appreciate your help and support so that we can have a website -- and one which is useful and attractive and easy to update, plus has such excellent technical support. I have dealt with numerous website hosts over the years, even though I'm not a real techy (just a very amateur one), and no one has ever made it so easy to get up and running, especially not with a relatively complex site. The "template" sites have been a real disappointment before now and, whether the hosts had you use their templates or simply were hosts for sites you designed on your own with Dreamweaver or FrontPage, there never was decent technical support. You, Michael, are much better than "decent" -- your technical support is superior."

Maria Cadwaller, Valparaiso Public Library

### Tech Talk

In November 2009, Michael suggested to Christa, the host of NCompass Live, that he'd like to do a monthly episode titled "Tech Talk with Michael Sauers". The format was to generally be an interview with someone in the technology world along with a short closing bit that included important technology news of the month and/or some new tools or tips regarding technology. They agreed that it sounded like a good idea and they decided that the episode on the last Wednesday of each month (more or less) would be set aside for Tech Talk.

Since then there have been 26 Tech Talk episodes with topics ranging from Google+, to eReaders, to Technology Planning, to QR codes and much more. Several episodes have even been panel discussions broadcast live from both the Computers in Libraries and Internet Librarians Conferences.

As with all NCompass Live episodes, Tech Talk episodes have been recorded and are posted as videos on YouTube and also turned into audio-only podcasts for anyone to watch and/or listen to at a later time.

"I just listened to your broadcast about giving presentations (you along with 3 others) and I wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed listening to that. I got lots of tips."

Susan Hubbard, cathedrallincoln.org

"We have a website here at school and use freewebs.com. I was unable to attend the inserve [sic] to set it up. Michael webinar was wonderful. I will watch the training videos that are available and look at what the other libraries are doing. I set up the webpage for the library but was really unsure of what I was doing. I know what widgets, plugins are now. I can see the use in the blogging also. I will be able to use all this to work on my webpage. Thank you for doing this lecture!!!!!"

Debra Covey, Maywood Public Schools

"Since the Valentine Public Library offers a free online WiFi connection to everyone, I felt this broadcast was very important in the aspect of helping keep library customers

information that may be available to all protected by setting a password within the router. My next step will be to do just that. However we are using two routers and I need my tech support person to assist me in which router is the one that needs the password. I also enjoyed the Q Code information and thought there is great potential there for library use.”  
Ann Quigley, Valentine Public Library

## Big Talk

Having attended several large conferences in the fall of 2011 (and previously) a comment I often heard was that so many presentations at conferences seem to be by and for librarians from larger libraries. As a result I came up with the idea of “Big Talk From Small Libraries” a free one-day online conference aimed at librarians from small libraries; the smaller the better. Each of the speakers would be from a small library or directly work with small libraries.

Topics range from technology (new tech and old tech) to programming to partnering with your community. This eight-hour event means eight topics with nine speakers. Come for the programs on what you’re dealing with now or maybe try something new.

Everyone is welcome to register and attend, regardless of how big or small their library is, but if your library serves a few thousand people, or a few hundred, this is the day for you. The will be broadcast online using the GoToWebinar online meeting service.

This conference was organized and is hosted by Michael Sauers and Laura Johnson of the Nebraska Library Commission and is co-sponsored by the Association for Rural & Small Libraries and Library Renewal.

As of February 15<sup>th</sup>, there were 367 people registered to attend along with several known viewing parties which will only increase the number of attendees. **Total was 444.**

The speakers and topics will be:

- Helping Your Patrons E-Read, Karen Mier, Plattsmouth Public Library (NE)
- Community Partnerships, Diane Althoff, City Librarian, Gregory Public Library (SD) & Karla Bieber, Director of the A.H. Brown Public Library (SD)
- The FFL Fabulous Laboratory: Developing a Read/Write Culture in Your Library, Lauren Smedley, Transliteracy Development Director at the Fayetteville Free Library (NY)
- Combined School/City Libraries: Everyone Wins, Lindsey Hansen, City Librarian, Centerville Community Library (SD) & Linda Holmberg, School Librarian, Centerville Community Library (SD)
- Magic Tricks and Maintenance: Helping the Public Learn Technology, Jessamyn West, Jessamyn.info (VT)
- Working in the Cloud, Jezymne Dene, Director, Portneuf District Library (ID)
- Gaming and Game collection development, Diane Trinkle, Director, Nortonville Public Library (KS)
- Closing Keynote: The Best Small Library in America 2012, Julie Hildebrand, Library Director, Independence Public Library (KS)

"Thanks for pulling this together and for extending the invitation to our Montana libraries."  
Joann Flick, Montana State Library

"Michael looking forward to your class. It looks wonderful. I can't wait to hear what all of the librarians have to say. Thank you for doing this."  
Kathleen Slocum, South Dakota State Library

"Super cool! I think this is a wonderful idea."  
Jessica Chamberlain, Northeast Library System (NE)

I thought this was an excellent event, and I hope it continues. I like that it brought several states together, and not just leaders/speakers from one area. Excellent work.

I found every single session useful and look forward to sharing and or viewing them again. I found useful information in every session. Thanks, please do this again.

It was an amazing idea and concept. We enjoyed almost every session although due to the oscillation of the speaker's voice during the second session, we had to mute the speakers. We were very envious of Fayetteville's Fab Lab and their ability to be on the cutting edge of creativity. Please keep us informed of the SECOND annual Big Talk from Small Libraries.

My three favorite presentations were 4. Combined School/City Libraries: Everyone Wins, 2. Community Partnerships and 8. The Closing Keynote. Even though we are fortunately not in the position to have to worry about combining our school and city libraries at this time the gals did an excellent job of presenting exactly how to go about that and all the things to be considered in that venture. I enjoyed the presentations very much. Good job!

I really enjoyed this conference! I thought a lot of the information was applicable to small library. Often times I attend conferences and the ideas and programs presented are not workable in a small or rural library. So I appreciate the effort in organizing this event!

I got so many ideas from all the sessions I listened too. I hope there will be more Big Talk conferences. I can't wait to listen to the archived sessions that I missed.

What a great webinar. I learned many valuable tools to use in the future of our small library.

I found all the topics and presenters interesting and informative. I learned something in each session that I can use in my job right now. I'm very grateful for the opportunity to attend this event.

I COULD NOT BELIEVE how the whole thing kept my interest, from start to finish. I was mesmerized with their stories of success. It was all such HELPFUL information, not theoretical babble. Thank you so much for having this conference. I look forward to attending next time!

EXCELLENT! By far the best online conference/webinar type event I've been to. The speakers/sessions were extremely relevant and timely, full of good, usable ideas. This is the way to get training/CE in this date and age, especially for small libraries who don't have the

luxury of staffing to let them attend events, or even have the events in the area to attend. Very happy to do what I can to support this effort, I'm extremely pleased with what you've done!!

Great event - hard to pick the most useful and most interesting - I found them all valuable and thought provoking. Hope you'll present another Big Talk conference next year. Thank you to the speakers and to all the behind the scenes staff, you did a great job. Thank you too for having the sessions archived - I'm sure I'll refer back to them at different times and inform our library board about them too. Again THANK YOU VERY MUCH for a VALUABLE conference.

I found the Big Talk conference to be really inspiring. Hearing speakers from small libraries talking about projects and going into detail about how they did it really held my interest. I did skip a couple of the presentations because I wasn't able to just sit in front of the computer all day. It was a day off work so there was plenty of other things that needed to be done. However, if it HAD been a work day I wouldn't have been able to see any of it...too many interruptions when you are the "one person" in that one person library. I've been reading Jessamyn West's book so her presentation was a nice compliment to that.

This was a terrific set of sessions and a nice alternative to streaming music or CBC. I will send a link to the archived sessions out to my contacts in our public library system.

This was amazing. The NE Library Commission should be extremely proud of their presenters. I'm not sure who came up with this idea - but for small libraries with no budget for travel or professional education - this conference helped me realize that I'm not the only fish in the sea -- networking opportunities for solo librarians or small libraries is such a fantastic thing!!!! Thank you to all of you and I hope we can do this again -- even if it is just a chat session with a topic. It sure helps to have like minded individuals talk. Thank you again!! Kathleen Robertson Union Free Public Library, Union, CT

Our regional library system is gone thanks to state/federal library budget cuts, so I plan to share this with as many of my neighboring libraries as possible. Hope they appreciate the time, energy and innovative ideas as much as I did. Better than spending a week at a Library Conference and coming back with loads of papers, pamphlets and insincere promises of helping us stay alive. This was "real" !!

I have over 22 pages of notes from this webinar, acquired alot of new knowledge that I can use in my library. It would be helpful to have a document that tells how many hours I attended. In small schools the librarian wears many hats, I need 30 hours CE credit a year for my emergency substitute certification. Thank you for this, it was very informative!

The whole program (that I saw so far) was outstanding. Thank you so much for organizing, producing, facilitating. It's very empowering to see these great things going on at small libraries!

AWESOME!!!! I enjoyed every speaker and learned something from each one of them. Didn't get to hear the one during the noon hour but will see the archived one. Great job

in planning such an educational and motivational day! (as always we here in Nebraska Libraries are informed and educated - you do an outstanding job and are appreciated!!!!!!)

Annex I

# Summary of Progress of LSTA-Funded Activities

<b>GOAL 1</b>			
<b>Activity &amp; Output/Outcome</b>	<b>No Progress</b>	<b>Progress Made</b>	<b>Output/Outcome Achieved</b>
D. 1			
D. 2			
E. 1			
E. 2			
F. 1			
G. 1			
G. 2			
G. 3			
G. 4			
G. 5			
G. 6			
G. 7			
J. 1			
J. 2			
J. 3			
J. 4			
K. 1			
K. 2			
K. 3			
K. 4			
L. 1			
L. 2			
L. 3			
L. 4			
M.1			
M. 2			
N.1			
N.2			
N.3			
N. 4			
N.5			
P. 1			
P. 2			
P. 3			
Q. 1			
Q. 2			
Q. 3			
Q. 4			

<b>GOAL 2</b>			
<b>Activity &amp; Output/Outcome</b>	<b>No Progress</b>	<b>Progress Made</b>	<b>Objective Met</b>
A. 1			
A. 2			
E. 1			
E. 2			
E. 3			
E. 4			
E. 5			
F. 1			
F. 2			
F. 3			
F. 4			
F. 5			
G. 1			
H. 1			
H. 2			
I. 1			