

Access



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Read Indeed!

2000 Awards Announced

By Sarah Watkins, Executive Director
Library of Michigan Foundation

Every year since 1993 the Foundation's Board of Directors has provided funding for libraries and literacy organizations in Michigan to fund volunteer literacy programs whose services focus primarily on the literacy needs of adults. In the seven years since its inception, the Read Indeed! Literacy Grant Program of the Library of Michigan Foundation has provided sixty-two grants totaling over \$500,000 to promote literacy in Michigan.

This year's awards were made to the Mercy Education Project in Detroit; the Ruth Hughes Memorial District Library in Imlay City; and the Whitefish Township Community Library in Paradise (located in Michigan's Upper Peninsula).

The Mercy Education Project is a sponsored work of the Sisters of Mercy Regional Community of Detroit. It addresses the needs of women and girls whose economic level, family and neighborhood environment puts them at risk for low academic achievement, drop out and under-employment. They received a \$10,000 grant to assist them in the continuation of their literacy program.

The Ruth Hughes Memorial District Library received \$8,160 to assist in hiring a bilingual person and purchasing English as a second language (ESL) materials for the library. The library will expand its collection to include videos, audiocassettes and software to improve the English-speaking and reading skills of its community's Spanish-speaking members.

The Whitefish Township Community Library was awarded \$5,000 to help 1) provide regular in-home literacy instruction in basic reading skills for the general adult public, and adaptive instruction as needed for non-school age adults with learning disabilities and vision problems; 2) supportive instruction and tutorial for GED level adults on an in-home basis; and 3) free materials for objectives 1 and 2, as well as free testing for GED candidates.

To qualify for the Read Indeed! grant funding, an organization must meet the following criteria:

- Be based in Michigan
- Provide services to Michigan residents
- Focus primarily on the literacy needs of adults
- Provide services without charge or fee
- And, the applicant organization must be a public library or a non-profit organization with 501 (C) 3 status (or collaborate with a public library or 501 (C) 3).

In This
Issue:

Michigan
Libraries
Work

page 2

One Million
Customers
Served!

page 2

Calendar/
Around the
State

page 3

Michigan (Libraries) Work!

By Valerie A. McNiff, SPHR, Executive Director
Genesee District Library System

As the result of a shared agreement between the Genesee District Library System and the Genesee County Community Action Agency (GCCAA), the operating agency for a state program known as Michigan Works!, residents may enter any of GDL's eighteen locations to electronically update unemployment information and search for jobs and job related information. This is a unique example of successful cooperation between two different agencies. Job seekers first register at the Reuther Center, the central Michigan Works! location in downtown Flint. Employers who participate can advertise vacancies and review candidate resumes with a click of the mouse.

Preparations began several months before the project's official implementation on July 1, 1999. Many legal issues were resolved during the pre-agreement phase, but there were several unanticipated snafus. Nebulous communication, staff and registrant apprehension and the seemingly hourly paperwork/procedure changes presented unexpected challenges. Staff eventually bought into the new service, although this was not exactly a traditional library offering. Some of the registrants felt uncomfortable relaying detailed personal information to their local librarian; those without technology backgrounds feared the information would vanish unprocessed. The constant improvement (revision) of forms, often more than once in a day, was the major deterrent. However, since this was a new service to both agencies, all parties were involved in the learning process and dedicated to making it work.

By establishing defined lines of communication, and sched-

uling thorough training of GDL staff at the Reuther Center, solutions to these problems were achieved. Advertising the program via various media, and links to each other's web sites were established. Paperwork forms were streamlined to make them more user-friendly. Participants are assured of privacy with the addition of a relevant declaration on the documents. The GDL Special Programs Coordinator, became the principal liaison responsible for training and disseminating information. Good rapport between the librarian and registrants is becoming the norm and each agency acts as a distribution center for each other's literature.

The benefits generated by this project are many. For example, it is most convenient for county residents to walk into their GDL library branch to update their information and perform job searches. Our libraries also offer late evening hours and two locations are open on Sundays. Parking problems are non-existent and participants save on gas and bus fares. GDL receives a stipend for each transaction and adds many new patrons to its database. The publicity and good will generated by this service are priceless. It made sense to do this in an era when many agencies must justify their existence.

Plans are already in the works for expansion. We are participating in a federal grant that could expand GCCAA services at GDL to include Meals on Wheels applications and other programs. The single, essential component for this type of project is a visionary and committed Board of Trustees, such as GDL's.



Michigan Center for the Book Calls for New Board Members

By Karren Reish, Legislative Team
Public Services

The Michigan Center for the Book has several positions open on its board and seeks candidates to fill them. The board meets twice a year; board members usually serve a two-year term that runs from October 1 to September 30. The board advises the Library of Michigan about policies and Center activities.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with the Center, it is a program of the Library of Michigan and is affiliated with the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress. Its goal is to promote awareness of books as conveyors of the written word and to help stimulate interest in reading and libraries, all facets of the book arts, the publishing world and authorship.

Programming includes events, such as co-sponsorship of the Michigan Author Festival at the Michigan Library Association conferences and the Michigan Author Award and luncheon. The Center also sponsors exhibits, public lectures and book events. A current project is the selection of a Michigan Literary Landmark. More information on current and past programming may be viewed at the Center webpage: <http://www.libraryofmichigan.org/special/mcfb.html>.

If you or someone you know would be interested in joining the board, please contact Karren Reish, Center Coordinator, at the Library of Michigan, 717 West Allegan St., Lansing, MI 48909, 517-373-3891, or by email at kreish@libofmich.lib.mi.us.

One Million Customers Served!

MichiganLegislature.org passed the 1,000,000 visitor mark during the first week of September! This is the first time this web site has hosted 1,000,000 visitors in a calendar year. David Lamb, software development coordinator of the Library of Michigan's Network and Information Systems, said that he expects MichiganLegislature.org to enjoy a 30-40 percent traffic increase over last year.

DECEMBER

- 1 Intermediate Excel, Suburban Library Cooperative
OCLC ILL Advanced, MLC
- 2 The Abrams Genealogy Series: Native American
Research, LM
- 4 Fundraising and Development for Libraries, White
Pine Library Cooperative
HTML II: Frames, Forms, & Cascading Style
Sheets, MLC
Libraries and Their Economic Impact on the
Community, LM
MULS Training, Suburban Library Cooperative
- 5 Finding Information on the Internet, Woodlands
Library Cooperative
LSTA Subgrant Administration Workshop, LM
OCLC ILLME for Windows, MLC
- 6 OCLC Union Listing, LM
- 7 Library Technology Interest Group, Novelist
Database Software Demonstration, White Pine
Library Cooperative
LSTA Subgrant Administration Workshop, LM
Word: Beginning, MLC
- 8 Dial-Up E-mail, Suburban Library Cooperative
- 11 White Pine Board Meeting, White Pine Library
Cooperative
- 12 Dial-Up E-mail, Suburban Library Cooperative
Excel: Beginning, MLC
Public Library Planning Using the PLA Planning
Process, White Pine Library Cooperative
- 13 LSTA Subgrant Administration Workshop, LM
OCLC/ILL Direct Request, MLC
- 14 AccessMichigan: Beyond the Basics, MLC for LM
Writing Reports - Advanced Word, Suburban
Library Cooperative
- 15 Legal Resources on the Internet, MLC

For more information about the Library of Michigan (LM) or Library of Michigan Foundation (LMF) events, call 517-373-1300, or visit the web site at <http://www.libraryofmichigan.org>; for more information about the Michigan Library Consortium (MLC) events, call 800-530-9019 ext.21 or visit the web site at <http://www.mlc.lib.mi.us/cal/index.htm>; for more information about the Michigan Library Association (MLA) events, call 517-694-6615 or visit the web site at <http://www.mla.lib.mi.us>; and for more information about events sponsored by individual library cooperatives, please contact the cooperative. To view the AccessMichigan training calendar, please visit the web site at <http://www.accessmichigan.lib.mi.us/traincal.htm>.



The Executive Board of the Michigan Library Association is pleased and proud to announce that its new executive director is Stephen A. Kershner. He will assume his new duties on Monday, October 23, 2000. "I am excited to be moving back into the world of libraries and librarians," Kershner said. "It's an exciting time for our profession, and MLA will be a driving force in our future." Kershner's most recent position has been General Manager of the bps Corporate Training and Conference Center in Birmingham, Michigan. Previously, Kershner was the director of the Baldwin Public and Bloomfield Township Public Libraries.

A large rabbit is appearing at public libraries in the Saginaw area. No, it's not Harvey—it's Hare E. Potter, a six-foot fiberglass bunny sculpture created by the Saginaw Hareitage Society. The sculpture, based on the lead character in the popular novels by J. K. Rowling, features glasses and the trademark lighting bolt scar on his forehead. He is reading, appropriately, Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire. Hare E. is part of a fundraiser for the Public Libraries of Saginaw and several other local charities. Local businesses are sponsoring the bunnies, which are displayed in various locations throughout Saginaw. The bunnies will be auctioned off in the spring of 2001 and the proceeds donated to charities. The bunnies were chosen as a symbol after the historic neon Jackrabbit Bean sign that is a Saginaw landmark.

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