



CT State Library

Office of the State Librarian

Report to the State Library Board

January 25, 2021

Deborah Schander
State Librarian

This report is prepared bi-monthly in conjunction with the regular meetings of the Connecticut State Library Board. The report, which will be included in the minutes of the January 25, 2021 meeting of the Board, covers the period of November 24, 2020 through January 22, 2021. It focuses on key accomplishments of agency staff and is a summary of the work activities described in unit reports submitted to me by the managers. These reports are available to you upon request.

Office of the State Librarian

I began my appointment as State Librarian on January 4, 2021. Maureen Sullivan concluded her term as Interim State Librarian on January 22, 2021. This three-week overlap afforded Maureen and me the opportunity to discuss agency operations in detail and ensured that work continued uninterrupted. Thank you to the Library Board for the foresight and willingness to provide that shared time. In addition to orientation meetings with unit heads and managers, I have had introductory meetings with many key state employees and library partners including: DAS liaisons, Connecticut Library Association, Connecticut Library Consortium, Connecticut State Colleges and Universities Library Consortium, community college library directors, Friends of Connecticut Libraries Board, Chief Officers of State Library Agencies, Council of Connecticut Academic Library Directors, and others. I look forward to continuing to build partnerships with these groups and others across Connecticut and the library community.

Work to develop our budget plan continues. We await information related to the format and nature of legislative testimony under pandemic conditions and will be prepared to present our request as necessary.

We continue to follow the Governor's Guidelines for Re-Opening and the expectation to telework as much as possible. Staff are responsive to requests via phone, email, and chat. Plans to resume limited in-person support are in development and will follow best practice guidelines.

Maureen and I attended the Winter Retreat of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) Library Consortium on January 8, during which more than one hundred individuals from the academic library community came together to review the Consortium's new Strategic Directions. Dr. Jane Gates, CSCU Interim President, opened the program and addressed how important the CSCU libraries are to student education.

She was followed by the CSCU Chief of Staff who discussed “What to Expect” on campus in Spring 2021. I will now take Maureen’s place as a member of the consortium’s Council of Library Directors.

On October 7, 2020, Governor Ned Lamont announced the dedication of \$2.6 million of Connecticut’s Coronavirus Relief Funds to support the state’s public libraries as they continue to make health and safety improvements to increase access to connectivity for residents amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The State Library quickly distributed grant funds to 62 public libraries using the State Aid formula, which accounts for a municipality’s Adjusted Equalized Net Grand List per Capita (AENGLC) wealth ranking, population, and library operating expenditures per capita. Each library director and their staff worked diligently to spend the money on eligible items by the deadline of December 28, with specific focus on providing connectivity access via Wi-Fi or public computers to remote learners and patrons working from home. Almost half the funding went to interior building improvements such as portable study pods, easy-to-clean furniture, mobile shelving, Plexiglas barriers around computers and service points, and air purification and filtration systems. A comprehensive report will be submitted to the Governor’s Office within the next few weeks.

Access Services

Jenny Groome has created a research guide for Connecticut students working on **History Day** projects (<https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/historyday>). The guide is live 24/7 and allows us to continue our long-standing support of these research projects while remote.

Mel Smith presented “**What’s New at the Connecticut State Library**” to the Connecticut Professional Genealogists Council annual meeting via Zoom on December 1, 2020. There were 18 attendees.

GrantWatch has been added to our A-Z database list and is available remotely to state agencies, Connecticut residents, and others. It provides access to grant information, including eligibility requirements, grant funder’s contact information, RFP applications, and the ability to filter search results by state.

Susan Bigelow has completed an inventory of **town charters and ordinances** and is working with Steve Rice on a system to maintain changes to the inventory using CTDA (Connecticut Digital Archive) and Archive IT.

Archives

Work has commenced on our **National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) grant**, *Uncovering Hidden Resources in New Haven County Court records* with Project Archivist Sarah Morin starting on December 11. This two-year project will enhance access to judicial records held in the State Archives. The project continues earlier grant-funded work to identify records related to interactions with the court system by

underrepresented groups, especially enslaved persons, free persons of color, and indigenous persons. The work product will allow researchers to uncover additional insights into these communities. The project will digitize case files, create a specialized finding aid, and a database for any cases related to these communities.

State Archives staff continue to move forward in strengthening the unit's **digital preservation knowledge and best practices**:

- State Archives staff began work with Public Records staff, the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Bureau of Enterprise Systems and Technologies (BEST) and the Materials Management Bureau of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) on implementing the IBM Enterprise Records module to automate the management of Bureau records. This includes workflows for the transfer of archival records from DEEP's electronic storage to the Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA).
- Archives, Public Records, and BEST staff met with North Carolina State Archives staff to discuss North Carolina's OneDrive guidance document and ways to manage records in the Office 365 environment at the end of November. North Carolina is interested in partnering with Connecticut to share best practices and common concerns.
- Lizette Pelletier and Allen Ramsey met with CSL IT Support staff to discuss management and preservation of agency records in the Office 365 environment in early December.
- Digital Records Archivist Barbara Austen continues to ingest records into the CTDA. Key collections include the minutes of the Advisory Council for Library Planning and Development (ACLPD) and images collected by the publisher of "Greater Hartford Memories: A Pictorial History of the 1800s through the 1930s" in partnership with the Hartford Courant.

Collection Services

Collection Services continues to serve Connecticut State Library (CSL) patrons remotely. Eighty three new **CT State Library card applications** were processed in November and December, providing patrons with 24/7 remote access to many CSL and researchIT CT online databases. State agency employees may borrow **physical materials** from our collection by making an appointment with Access Services staff. Electronic **Interlibrary Loan** requests are processed regularly. Kandace Yuen has been working with the CSCU Fulfillment Affinity Group to configure a CSL profile which will enable CSCU consortial members to place requests for **materials to be digitized from CSL collections** for interlibrary loan purposes.

Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) shipments have resumed at CSL, after being suspended from March through September 2020. The United States Government Publishing Office (GPO) has notified us to expect smaller shipments than usual, as less

material has been produced by Congress and Federal agencies since the start of the pandemic.

The Preservation Office continues to scan new content from the library collection and preserve digitized materials in the Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA). Ongoing digitization projects include prison newspapers for the **American Prison Newspapers Collection**, administered by the non-profit Reveal Digital, and **Connecticut vote statements (1819-1919)**, in collaboration with the State Archives and the Office of the Secretary of the State. The **Special Genealogical Files collection**, which includes Bible records, correspondence, typescripts, and manuscripts, continues to be added to the CTDA, as well as the daily newspaper Evening Sentinel, as part of the **Newspapers of Connecticut program**, which offers assistance to Connecticut libraries in ingesting their digitized newspapers into the CTDA. Preservation is also working on the **migration of digital collection content** from CONTENTdm to the CTDA.

Discovery Services

William Anderson and Glynis Georgie continued to catalog **Connecticut regional planning agency reports** acquired as gifts from State agencies. These reports were issued in the 1960s and 1970s.

Stephen Slovasky designed and Verna Thomas-Green began production on a project to update **State University Press publications** incorrectly identified as government documents in Primo. This project benefits all Connecticut State Colleges and Universities institutions and supports our custodial responsibility for works produced by federal and state government.

William Anderson and Laura Diller finished online training on new catalog description standards. In turn, they will both be contributing **training modules** to a Connecticut State Colleges and Universities message board for others.

Division of Library Development (DLD)

DLD continues to maintain the **Connecticut Libraries Roadmap to Reopening and Recovery** Libguide, which tracks data about closures, continued services, and reopening conditions for libraries across the state. This information is regularly updated and also includes REALM (Reopening Archives Libraries and Museums) project results, sample policies and procedures, and webinars on COVID-related topics.

DLD oversaw the 2020 completion of 7 **public library literacy and planning projects** whose awards totaled \$37,742.56 and made new awards of \$12,280 for two new public library projects, one providing jobs skills to teens and one providing mentoring for small business owners.

Work continues on numerous efforts for 2021, including: a **Library Board Self-Assessment Tool** developed by the Association of CT Library Boards, application for a fifth **National Endowment for the Humanities grant** to digitize historic state newspapers, the January 2021 launch of the Set the Stage pilot program and **The Futures Schools training** for cohorts in Hawaii, Minnesota, and Maryland.

Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH)

Unit head Gordon Reddick retired on January 1, 2021 after 35 years of service (27 years at the State Library, 4 years as a corrections officer, and 4 years of credited time for military service). A request for him to return under the temporary worker retiree program has been approved.

Office of the Public Records Administrator (OPRA)

The **Office of the Public Records Administrator** continued work with municipalities and state agencies on records retention, preservation and management.

Under the **Historic Documents Preservation Program**, the State Library awarded a total of \$882,000 in grants to 140 municipalities for FY21, most recently awarding its Cycle 2 grants on December 31, 2020. The grants support local government records preservation and management. The Library's account is funded through towns' land recording fees, with 70% returned to the towns and 30% expended by the agency for its own work, including many State Archives and Access Services initiatives.

LeAnn Burbank and Elise Marzik are working to bring a second pilot agency into the **Enterprise Records Management Application (IER)** to automate the review and disposition of agency records. They are continuing work on the **Enterprise Content Management System (ECM)** which allows the Library and all state agencies to manage official records more effectively. Elise Marzik is updating schedules and procedures and providing training on the new system.

Kathy Makover has been serving on the **Notary Law Drafting Committee** convened by the Secretary of the State to develop legislation that will be introduced in the January session. It provides for remote electronic notarization, fast becoming an essential service in today's world. And it further updates current notary law to align with other states through review of the Uniform Law Commission (ULC) model.

Kathy Makover is working with towns on **municipal vault projects**. Pursuant to statute, vaults must meet the State Library's administrative regulations. These vaults provide a high level of fire protection and security for towns' permanent and essential records.