



Report to the Connecticut State Library Board

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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 November 23, 2020, meeting of the Board, covers the period of September 22, 2020, through November 20, 2020. It focuses on key accomplishments of agency staff. Agency staff continued to work in the challenging conditions brought forth by the COVID 19 pandemic and the requirement to telework as much as possible. This report 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.

The State Library Building continues to be open to employees from state agencies, the courts and the legislature. **Access Services** staff provide materials through online and digital delivery to state employees and to members of the public. Plans are being developed to open the building to members of the public by appointment only. Procedures are now in place to reopen the Van Block Avenue facility, by appointment, to staff, state employees and contractors with critical time sensitive research needs that cannot be accommodated in the Archives Reading Area at the 231 Capitol Avenue building.

All staff continue to follow the Governor's Guidelines for Re-Opening and the expectation that staff will telework as much as possible. Staff continue to adapt, adjust, and apply their creativity as they act on their commitment to provide the best service possible, given the circumstances.

The work to develop the budget request and plan continued, including efforts to identify ways to reduce and reallocate funds. Carol Trinchitella and Kandace Yuen from Collection Services have undertaken a review of the Library's subscriptions for electronic databases and print materials to identify possible areas to reduce costs.

LeAnn Burbank, the Public Records Administrator, developed a proposal for cost savings at the state level. This proposal calls for the State Library to be the central location for records retention. This would eliminate the need for the 69 individual state agencies to do this work. The State Library would assume this responsibility for all agencies. To do this will require an additional position dedicated to this work. Our budget request includes a request for this position. This will result in a fully electronic records system for State government, a program that is very much in alignment with Governor Lamont's initiatives. The expected cost savings is about \$4,000,000.00.

On October 7, Governor Lamont announced his program to allocate \$2,600,000 to the State Library for distribution to the 62 public libraries identified by the Governor's Office to receive a grant. The program, launched in a press conference at the Raymond Library in East Hartford, will enable expansion of a public library's capacity to serve its community residents. The funds in the grants must be spent by December 31, 2020. Dawn LaValle and Maria Bernier of the **Division of Library Development (DLD)** established and now manage this program to guide and support the library directors in the execution of their plans to spend their allocations. A LibGuide (<https://libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/ELgrants>) was created to support the grant program, including a list of eligible expenses, FAQs, and a map of recipient libraries and amounts.

The partnership with the Council of Connecticut Academic Library Directors (CCALD) and the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) consortium to create *Guiding Principles for Reopening Connecticut's Academic Libraries* continued and included a mid-semester survey of the academic libraries. The survey results were reviewed with Alice Pritchard, Chief of Staff to the CSCU President and Jen Widness, President of the Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges, in a virtual meeting. Most of the campus libraries reported that things were going well. Alice Pritchard and Jen Widness agreed to share the survey results with academic administrators on their respective campuses.

On Monday November 2, the local NBC news aired a segment on the history of Connecticut absentee voting. They were able to get information from us and the Connecticut Historical Society. Librarians Mel Smith, Debra Pond, and Steve Rice provided information for this report.

This year the State Library was included in *Family Tree Magazine's* annual list of best state-specific online resources for researching ancestors, <https://www.familytreemagazine.com/best-state-genealogy-websites/>

Implementation of the grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), *Transformation for Libraries: The Futures School*, continued. The current phase focuses on preparation of library leaders for the rapidly changing landscape of the 21st century and the importance of their work to embrace new, adaptive, resilient and transformative pathways to the future of library service. The Division of Library Development staff hosted a series of programs to introduce three resource sharing scenarios to the library community. These scenarios will be a very useful tool for library leaders to use in strategic planning.

For the *NASA @My Library* project, **Division of Library Development (DLD)** staff developed a toolkit for underserved communities. David Keeley, of the Cornerstones of Science and N@ML project team chose to include DLD's plan in the State Library Agency (SLA) guide that the *NASA @ My Library* project team is developing.

As part of strategic communications, Adult Services and Community Engagement Consultant Ashley Sklar organized the bi-annual DLD Virtual Open House to provide the opportunity for Connecticut librarians to "drop in" to DLD consultant office hours to learn about new initiatives or to have the opportunity to ask detailed questions.

In partnership with the Young Adult Services Library Association (YALSA) and the Chief Officers of State Library Association (COSLA) in a project funded by the Institute of Museums and Library Services (IMLS), Kym Powe led DLD to conclude its first month of **facilitating T3-Transforming Teen Services: a Train the Trainer Approach** project virtually. State Library Agency staff play a critical leadership role in the development and delivery of library-related continuing education (CE) to front line library staff. By implementing a training program for and with youth services representatives from each of the 50 state library agencies, as well as front-line library staff, YALSA and COSLA are working together to develop a coordinated, efficient, and effective process for transforming teen services throughout the U.S., so that teen programs and services will enhance civic and cultural engagement, facilitate lifelong learning, promote digital inclusion, and support economic vitality.

A total of 241 new items were purchased for the **Digital Library**. The focus in selection was on antiracist titles, personal finance, self-help, and home improvement. Libraries continue to use the **SimplyE** application. There are now 26,752 items available in **SimplyE** and 42 libraries have gone live in the **SimplyE** application. Of the 191 public libraries in Connecticut, 143 are configured in the **SimplyE** application.

DLD staff completed planning for **Set the Stage Pilot**, a yearlong Children's and Young Adult Services initiative that will provide curated continuing education content to librarians who work with children aged birth to five and their families.

Museum Education Curator Patrick Smith created and presented four education programs to Home School students and their parents. The programs were titled, "Hiking Through History," and involved visits to different historic sites, landscapes and locations. Topics focused on Connecticut's Native American History, Revolutionary Connecticut, the industrial history and use of the Connecticut River and Hartford's architectural and immigration history.

Collection Services continues to fill Interlibrary loans requests digitally. Library patrons have been very fortunate that Collection Services has been able to provide several popular databases for remote use. Because of this service there has been an increase in library card requests.

In September 2020, Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) shipments resumed. While teleworking, Collection Services staff use the FDLP shipping lists to add holdings to our Alma catalog.

The State Library has signed on as a sourcing library for the American Prison Newspapers Collection, an open access collection of prison newspapers that is hosted and administered by the non-profit organization Reveal Digital. The Preservation Office will be digitizing prison newspapers in the State Library's collections, including the Monthly Record (1897-1960), published at the Connecticut State Prison, and the Hour Glass (1935-1940), published at the Connecticut State Farm for Women. The digitized newspapers will also be made available in the Connecticut Digital Archive, as part of the CSL's digital collections.

Discovery Services revived the project to analyze U.S. Congressional serial set bound volumes using the "host record" technique in the Alma/Primo system and entered new Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA) links into OCLC and into Alma/Primo for Connecticut Archives indexes newly ingested into CTDA.

Office of the Public Records Administrator (OPRA) staff continued to work with municipal and state agency personnel on issues related to records retention, disposal, preservation, recovery, records storage and vaults. Collaboration continues with the Department of Administrative Services, Bureau of Enterprise Systems & Technology (DAS/BEST) on the **Enterprise Content Management (ECM)** project to allow state agencies to manage electronic records more efficiently, ensure compliance and support agency requirements; and the **IBM Enterprise Records Management Application (IER)** project for automating the review and disposition of records.

The **Historic Documents Preservation Program** supports records preservation and management work in the State Library and through grants to municipalities. The program account is funded through a fee on municipal land recordings – 30% of the account is allocated for State Library preservation and administrative work and 70% for municipal grants. To date, the program has awarded over \$17 million in grants. For FY 2021, the program is awarding grants in the amounts of \$5,500, \$7,500 and \$10,500 for small, medium and large municipalities, respectively.

Archives staff completed implementation of the new content management system, *ArchivesSpace* and it went live on November 2. *ArchivesSpace* is an open source web application designed to support core archives administrative functions such as accessioning, describing and arranging both analog and digital content. The new system is available for viewing at <https://cslarchives.ctstatelibrary.org/>.

A group of State Library staff (State Archivist Lizette Pelletier, Assistant State Archivist Allen Ramsey, Christine Pittsley from the Connecticut in WWI project, Carolyn Picciano and Kevin Johnson from History and Genealogy) met with three individuals from the Concerned Parents of Color of West Hartford [CPCWH] and Jason Chang from the University of Connecticut on October 21. CPCWH, is working to identify people of color connected to Hartford and West Hartford whose stories have been lost or overlooked by historians and to trace the impact that the institution of slavery has had on Connecticut. The discussion focused on the various resources in the State Archives and State Library collections that may be of use as they pursue their research. The discussion included an exploration of how the organization can assist the State Archives in its efforts towards equality, diversity and inclusion.

Digital Records Archivist Barbara Austen completed testing of a new Preservica platform, Starter, a possible alternative digital preservation platform for town clerks and other local governments offices and local historical societies.

Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH) remains closed to patrons and visitors. Staff have been able to duplicate and send out audio books to patrons in quantities similar to before the pandemic – 18,390 titles on 2,953 cartridges in October. This is only possible because of the use of multiple-title cartridges and the Gutenberg duplication-on-demand system installed in 2019.