



# **Iowa Library Services / State Library of Iowa<sup>1</sup>**

## **FY 2008-2012 LSTA Five Year Evaluation**

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<sup>1</sup> 2011 legislation passed by the Iowa General Assembly reorganized library services and renamed the agency "Iowa Library Services."

## Evaluation Summary

The evaluation's overarching question was "Did the activities undertaken through the state's LSTA plan achieve results related to priorities identified in the Act?" The evaluation was conducted and is organized according to the six LSTA priorities.

The research design employed two major methodologies:

1. Data sources from Iowa Library Services / State Library of Iowa<sup>2</sup> as well as U.S and state sources were identified for **quantitative analysis**. These sources, which primarily reflect outputs for various projects, included:
  - Statistics from the Public Library Annual Survey
  - Statistics collected internally by Iowa Library Services such as number of libraries subscribing to sponsored databases, number of database searches, attendance at continuing education events, number of interlibrary loan transactions
  - Evaluation surveys from library training sessions, professional development workshops and other programs supported by LSTA funds
  - Internal databases maintained by Iowa Library Services
  - Impact results from post training evaluations conducted by Iowa Library Services
  - 2010 Iowa census data from the U.S. Census Bureau
  - LSTA State Program Reports for the grant period
2. Following the quantitative analysis, the evaluator gathered **qualitative data** through interviews with key employees, a telephone focus group with district library consultants and two surveys: *LSTA Evaluation Survey (Public Libraries)* and *LSTA Evaluation Survey (Academic Libraries)*. Both surveys provided sound samples with 43 representatives of Iowa's 77 academic libraries and 371 representatives of Iowa's 544 public libraries participating. Respondents represented libraries of all sizes and geographical areas. Both surveys included multiple choice and rating scale items as well as open-ended questions from which results were coded to identify trends, issues and recommendations.

### Key findings and recommendations

#### **LSTA Priority 1: Did services for learning and access to information and educational resources expand for individuals of all ages?**

A major initiative of Iowa Library Services is Library Accreditation. This is an outcomes-based program that promotes the improvement of library services across the state by tying state aid to the achievement of quality measures contained in the document, *In Service to Iowa: Public Library Standards*. The document was re-written in 2010 to improve clarity and assure the standards reflect current best practice. State aid to libraries is tied to the accomplishment of a series of measures in a three-tiered system, with the third tier receiving the highest level of funding. When a library achieves Tier 3 status it is considered to be accredited. When the last LSTA Five Year Evaluation was submitted in 2007, there were 291 accredited libraries (Tier 3).

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<sup>2</sup> 2011 legislation passed by the Iowa General Assembly reorganized library services and renamed the agency "Iowa Library Services."

At the current time, 348 Iowa libraries are accredited, a 20% increase in the last five years. **Key finding:** the increase in the number of accredited libraries indicates more libraries are meeting quality measures and expanding services to Iowans. **Key recommendation:** Continue the accreditation program.

Like most states, Iowa Library Services participates in the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP) to provide materials for the summer reading programs held in individual libraries across the state. In the *LSTA Evaluation Survey (Public Libraries)* administered in February 2012, respondents were queried on how well the summer reading program is meeting its goals. There were 331 responses and 96.9% agreed that the program encourages reading; 87.7% agreed that the program maintains reading skills; 76.6% agreed that the program involves children living in poverty. The program includes teens and 56.3% of respondents in the survey indicated that service to teens would constitute an area of particular challenge over the next five years. **Key finding:** A high percentage of library staff feels the summer library program encourages reading and helps to maintain reading skills. **Key recommendation:** Continue providing summer library program; target children living in poverty and continue to include and expand the teen portion of the program.

The goal of the Iowa Center for the Book is to support lifelong learning by stimulating public interest in books, reading, literacy and libraries. The Center sponsors “All Iowa Reads,” the statewide reading of a common title each year and “Letters about Literature,” a national reading and writing program for students in grades 4 through 12. According to the survey mentioned above, 52% believe the Center stimulates an interest in reading, literacy and libraries. **Key finding:** The Center is perceived to be meeting its goal. **Key recommendation:** Increase awareness of the Iowa Center for the Book.

To develop skills in information literacy, Iowa Library Services sponsored online training sessions attended by 478 primarily public library staff. In the most recent EBSCOhost workshop conducted in February 2012, 94.8% of participants agreed that they would be better able to show customers how to use the databases as a result of the workshop; 100% agreed that having had the training they feel more confident using EBSCOhost to answer students’ and patrons’ reference questions. In the *LSTA Evaluation Survey (Academic Libraries)*, 81.9% of the respondents said that they feel students’ information literacy skills are “much better” or “better” than five years ago. **Key finding:** Indications are that information literacy skills are improving among students. **Key recommendation:** Continue to offer information literacy skills training to public librarians.

## **LSTA Priority 2: Have library services been developed that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national and international electronic networks?**

To address this priority, Iowa Library Services provided support for subscription databases and the development of Iowa-specific online information tools. EBSCOhost and OCLC/First Search are the two major subscription databases subsidized with LSTA funds. In surveys completed for this evaluation, 87.5% of public library directors indicate that their library provides EBSCOhost to customers. This exceeds the 80% subscription rate by public libraries set as an output target in the LSTA plan for the period. One hundred percent of academic libraries participating in the *LSTA Evaluation Survey (Academic Libraries)* subscribe to

EBSCOhost. This exceeds the outcome target of 90% set in the 2008-2012 plan. Sixty-five percent of respondents to the public library LSTA survey indicated that they would not be able to provide EBSCO without the support of Iowa Library Services. Eighty-six percent of public librarians surveyed indicated that EBSCOhost is very important or important in providing reliable information to customers. One hundred percent of academic librarians surveyed indicated that EBSCOhost is very important in providing trustworthy information to faculty, staff and students. EBSCOhost is emphasized in most instructional offerings at the college and university level. **Key finding:** Iowa Library Services support for subscription databases has had a highly positive impact on libraries' ability to provide reliable information to Iowans. **Key recommendations:** Continue to negotiate for subscriptions databases and other digital content for Iowa libraries; consider expanding the list of available databases.

Iowa Library Services provides electronic access to Iowa-specific resources that contain unique information tailored to local needs. These include Iowa Publications Online, which provides access to documents produced for the general public by state agencies; the State Data Center, which provides access to demographic, community, housing and social data and is the Iowa liaison to the U.S. Census Bureau; the Iowa Heritage Digital Collections, which is an online repository of Iowa history and culture that includes documents, images, maps and other media from library and museum collections across the state; and the Law Library's online legal reference service, the only such service in Iowa available to the public. All of these services have shown increased use over the course of the grant period. **Key finding:** The Iowa-specific resources maintained by Iowa Library Services provide significant access to local and state information sources. **Key recommendation:** Since the majority of the documents in these resources are specific to the state and not available elsewhere, it is appropriate and important that Iowa Library Services maintain these initiatives.

### **LSTA Priority 3: Have electronic and other linkages been provided among and between all types of libraries?**

The State of Iowa Online (SILO) network offers resource-sharing services, including the Iowa Locator and Interlibrary Loan to all types of libraries in Iowa. There are over 15 million items in the Locator union catalog of Iowa library holdings. The service is heavily used, with 70% of those who completed the SILO survey indicating that they used it daily or weekly. SILO also offers hosted services such as DNS, e-mail and maillists. Another service made possible through SILO is Putting Libraries on the Web (PLOW), which provides website development, hosting and training for libraries. The system currently hosts over 300 public library web sites and provides an Internet presence for libraries without the resources to mount websites on their own. **Key finding:** SILO provides a powerful linkage for resource sharing and electronic communication for Iowa libraries. **Key recommendation:** Continue to maintain and develop SILO services.

### **LSTA Priority 4: What public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations developed?**

The most significant new partnership was with Iowa Workforce Development (IWD). Beginning in 2009 the State Librarian and Head of Library Development met regularly with IWD staff to discuss cooperation between the two agencies and among libraries to serve job seekers. In February 2011, IWD announced the planned closure of more than 30 field offices, along with

a plan to deliver services through Virtual Access Points (VAP) in Iowa communities. Following this announcement, Iowa libraries were asked to cooperate by making IWD resources available on library computers. While most Iowa libraries already delivered services to job seekers, many librarians were concerned about whether they had enough staff, space, computers and bandwidth to take on additional responsibilities formerly provided by IWD staff.

During meetings with IWD staff, Iowa Library Service management stressed that Iowa's public libraries are already very heavily used; that local board of trustees have the sole authority to decide what programs and services a local library offers; that studies show 67% of public library computer users need assistance; and that libraries are being asked to assume additional workforce services at a time when state funding for library services had been cut by 39%. Despite the rocky beginning, a partnership with IWD, Iowa Library Services and local libraries was slowly forged. IWD made changes in their service delivery program in response to questions raised by librarians. Well over 200 public and academic libraries are currently making the IWD VAPs available to their customers. Iowa Library Services installed the VAPs in the Law Library and the Main Library. Continued development of the VAP network is expected in the coming year.

In addition, there were ongoing partnerships with:

- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Opportunities Online Hardware Grant)
- Iowa Department of Education (early literacy initiatives)
- Iowa League of Cities (communication between cities and public libraries)
- Iowa Library Association (Leadership Institute and library services reorganization)
- Iowa Public Television (continuing education for librarians serving youth)
- Iowa State University (SILO services)
- Iowa Utilities Board (broadband access and capacity)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (Community Facilities Grant Program)
- University of Iowa Center for the Book, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, the State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa Center for the Book)

**Key finding:** Partnerships with other organizations are an effective means to carry out statewide library programs, services and initiatives. **Key recommendation:** Continue partnering with organizations that have complementary interests.

**LSTA Priority 5: How were library services targeted to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills?**

To be an accredited library, *In Service to Iowa: Public Library Standards*, requires that the library building meet the state definition of accessibility which is tougher than the Americans with Disability Act. This requirement has led to a 20% increase in the number of accessible public libraries over the last five years.

An LSTA grant to the Decorah public library provides large print books to visually-impaired Iowans. Many of these individuals are served by small, rural libraries that could not afford to provide large print books and audio materials were it not for this program. A modest

amount of LSTA funds, \$34,985, are utilized to purchase materials and provide for the staff members who implement this program; day-to-day operations are conducted by the local Retired and Senior Volunteers Program. Circulation of large print books has grown by 35 percent over the grant period with 34,178 materials circulated in 2011. This is an extremely cost-effective program with a cost of \$1.02 per item circulated to provide materials to the visually impaired across the state. The need for this service will likely continue to grow due to Iowa's aging population. Some concern was noted due to the closing of rural post offices that have been delivering these materials. **Key finding:** The Accreditation Program improves Iowans' physical access to libraries. The large print service is a low-cost, highly effective program that serves individuals with visual impairments. **Key recommendations:** Continue support for these programs; explore alternate delivery systems as e-readers become more widespread and in the event of post office closings.

### **LSTA Priority 6: How have library and information services been targeted to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children from families with incomes below the poverty line?**

Many of the services provided by Iowa Library Services are intended to "provide expanded, equitable access to library information, materials and services to all Iowans" (Goal 1 of the 2008-2012 Plan). Seventy-five percent of Iowa public libraries serve populations of fewer than 2,500 people and are classified as rural. In the *LSTA Evaluation Survey (Public Libraries)* completed for this evaluation, 77.1% of those who completed the survey classified themselves as serving rural areas. Therefore, the majority of the programs and services evaluated in this report serve rural communities which, by their very nature, have limited resources. These programs and services include SILO Locator and Interlibrary Loan; PLOW websites; the Library Accreditation Program; continuing education and certification; the Summer Library Reading program; the Iowa Center for the Book; subscription and Iowa-specific databases; and the large print materials program. **Key finding:** Iowa Library Services is serving rural communities in an equitable and comprehensive fashion. **Key recommendations:** Continue to assure that services are available equitably to urban and rural areas; assure that children living in poverty are targeted for summer reading and other library programming.

## **Body of the Evaluation Report**

### **Background of the Study**

Section 9134 (c) of IMLS' authorizing legislation directs SLAAs to "independently evaluate, and report to the (IMLS) Director regarding, the activities assisted under this chapter, prior to the end of the 5-year plan." In accord with this requirement, Iowa Library Services, using an outside evaluator, conducted the FY 2008-2012 Five Year LSTA Evaluation. Questions and issues addressed were:

1. Did services for learning and access to information and educational resources expand for individuals of all ages?
2. Have library services been developed that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national and international electronic networks?

3. Have electronic and other linkages been provided among and between all types of libraries?
4. What public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations developed?
5. How were library services targeted to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills?
6. How have library and information services been targeted to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children from families with incomes below the poverty line?

The study identifies effective past practices and includes key findings and recommendations. The study will be used to develop the 2013-2017 LSTA Five Year Plan and Iowa Library Services' agency-wide strategic plan. The following groups will make use of this evaluation:

- Iowa Commission of Libraries (governing board)
- Iowa Library Services Advisory Panel
- Iowa Library Services Management Team
- Iowa Library Services Staff
- Iowa librarians

## Methodology

The research design employed two major methodologies:

1. Data sources from the Iowa Library Services as well as U.S and state sources were identified for **quantitative analysis**. These sources, which primarily reflect outputs for various projects, included:
  - Statistics from the Public Library Annual Survey
  - Statistics collected internally by the Iowa Library Services such as number of libraries subscribing to sponsored databases, number of database searches, attendance at continuing education events, number of interlibrary loan transactions
  - Evaluation surveys from library training sessions, professional development workshops and other programs supported by LSTA funds
  - Internal databases maintained by Iowa Library Services
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  - 2010 census data from the U.S. Census Bureau
  - LSTA State Program Reports for the grant period
2. Following the quantitative analysis, the evaluator gathered **qualitative data** through interviews with key employees, a telephone focus group with district library consultants and two surveys: *LSTA Evaluation Survey (Public Libraries)* and *LSTA Evaluation Survey (Academic Libraries)*. Both of these surveys included open ended questions from which results were coded to identify trends, issues and recommendations.

## Evaluation Findings

### LSTA Priority 1: Did services for learning and access to information and educational resources expand for individuals of all ages?

Iowa Library Services has utilized LSTA funding to expand access to information and resources to Iowans through several initiatives. Two major strategies have been employed in support of this priority:

- Development of service capacity among Iowa libraries
- Supporting life-long learning

#### SERVICE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

##### Library Accreditation/Direct State Aid

A major initiative of Iowa Library Services is Library Accreditation. The program began during a previous grant period, and implementation continued during 2008-2011. This is an outcomes-based program that promotes the improvement of library services across the state by tying state aid to the achievement of quality measures contained in the standards document, *In Service to Iowa: Public Library Standards*. The document was re-written in 2010 to improve clarity and assure the standards reflect current best practice. State aid to libraries is tied to the accomplishment of a series of measures in a three-tiered system, with the third tier receiving the highest level of funding. When a library achieves Tier 3 status it is considered to be accredited. Iowa Library Services monitors the status of libraries by collecting and analyzing data relative to accomplishment of the standards. Library statistics, standards and direct state aid are integrated into a comprehensive program for improving library services across the state.

Data used in the Library Accreditation Program includes the "Public Library Annual Survey" that is completed by 96% of Iowa libraries and an "Accreditation Report" which participating libraries submit every three years. The software *Bibliostat Collect* is used to collect data for the Public Library Annual Survey and *Bibliostat Connect* is used to access and analyze Iowa public library statistics. Library staff can create tables and graphs with the software and organize results into a report or presentation. Data from the Public Library Annual Survey is published electronically.

During the grant period, a decision was made to use LSTA funds to pay for additional programming on the *Bibliostat Collect* software to enable data from each library's annual survey to be "pulled into" the Accreditation Report thereby streamlining the process for the library. An Iowa Library Services staff member, whose salary is LSTA-funded, works with the *Bibliostat Collect* for the Public Library Annual Survey and coordinates the data analysis for accreditation. He expressed a considerable level of satisfaction with the program, stating that, he believes it is "very successful," and that it is "very important that libraries participate since it helps them improve service." This same staff member also produces *Pocket Digest: Iowa Public Library Statistics* annually. This pocket-sized summary of data relative to Iowa libraries is useful in local strategic planning, budget preparation and "telling the library story."

When the last LSTA Five Year Evaluation was submitted in 2007, there were 291 accredited libraries (Tier 3). At the current time, 348 Iowa libraries are accredited, a 20% increase in the last five years. Presently, there are 106 libraries at Tiers 1 or 2. The following

table shows the increase in public library accreditation in Iowa over the life of the grant, and the number of libraries in the first two tiers that are not yet fully accredited.

<b>FY</b>	<b>Tier 1 Libraries</b>	<b>Tier 2 Libraries</b>	<b>Tier 3 Libraries (Accredited)</b>	<b>% Accredited</b>
<b>FY08</b>	53	87	331	61
<b>FY09</b>	37	95	339	62
<b>FY10</b>	34	94	346	64
<b>FY11</b>	36	94	348	64

**Library Accreditation Data FY08–FY11**

Iowa Library Services regularly offers Public Library Management (PLM) classes to assist non-MLS directors and staff develop their skills in order to improve library service to their communities. The classes also help them to meet certification and accreditation requirements. Since 40% of Iowa’s population lives in rural areas and 415 (75%) of Iowa’s 543 public libraries serve populations of fewer than 2,500, it is often difficult to attract library directors with MLS degrees. Topics included in the PLM 1 class are working with library boards, managing staff, budget preparation, policy development and use of data in the library. Detailed pre and post-evaluations are completed for each of the classes. In response to a survey item asking participants to rank the usefulness of the PLM 1 class, 100 % of respondents answered affirmatively to the question “After taking this class I am better able to serve the people in my community.” A total of 89.9% “Strongly Agreed” with this statement while 11.1% stated that they “Agreed.” One hundred percent of participants said that they would recommend the class to others, indicating a high level of satisfaction with the content and presentation of the class.

The PLM 2 class includes instruction in developing skills to help customers become information literate, identifying community needs, and services to youth, long-range planning and advocacy. Again, pre and post-surveys are done for each class. During the three sections of the PLM 2 class held in 2010, there was a 67% increase in the number of participants who felt their ability to help customers with their information literacy needs was “Excellent” and a 26% increase in the number who felt their skills in this area were “Good.” A 57% increase was indicated for participants improving skills in assessing community needs and a 120% increase was shown in their ability to develop and follow a long-range plan. Again, 100% agreed that they were better able to serve the people in their community as a result of taking the class (66.6% “Strongly agreed,” 33.3% agreed). Responses were over the course of the grant. The library consultant who has coordinated the offering of these classes for the past several years stated that the classes offer participants the opportunity to improve basic skills in library operation and services, to become more conversant with issues in the library world and to interact with colleagues in similar positions around the state. For future professional development, she suggested that a needs assessment be conducted, and that additional methods to evaluate the effectiveness of the classes be utilized. To make the classes accessible to a wider audience, online delivery systems using *Moodle* (a learning management system) and *Adobe Connect* (webinar software) has been implemented during the past year. One hundred percent of participants in the surveys found this an effective way to conduct the class as indicated in their post-surveys.

## **Evaluation**

While it is difficult to prove correlation between the Library Accreditation program and improved services, the increase in library usage over the evaluation period is significant as shown in the table below. The number of visits to Iowa libraries has shown a 9.8% increase, and the number of library cardholders has increased by 4.8%, with 69% of Iowans holding a library card.

<b>FY</b>	<b>Library Visits</b>	<b>Checkouts</b>	<b>Library Cardholders</b>
<b>FY08</b>	18,092,805	28,264,121	1,997,979
<b>FY09</b>	18,744,559	28,702,115	2,035,242
<b>FY10</b>	19,656,938	29,414,678	2,051,465
<b>FY11</b>	19,861,484	29,498,942	2,093,551

**Use of Iowa Public Libraries**

The *LSTA Evaluation Survey (Public Libraries)* completed for this evaluation showed strong support for the Library Accreditation Program with 66.5% ranking it as very important and 30% rating it important.” The median rating of 1.35, with “1” being the highest, was second only to library discounts in a question where respondents were asked to rank the importance of 14 different services. Seventy percent of respondents who classified their libraries as serving rural populations feel that the librarian certification program is very important and 26% ranked it as important. The annual survey was felt to be very important by 63.4% of those surveyed, while 30.8% ranked it as important. As noted above, library employees that have participated in management development classes strongly feel that they are better able to serve their communities as a result of the training they have received. In interviews, the Iowa Library Services staff member who works most closely with the training related to the accreditation program recommended changes in how the classes are evaluated, and that a new needs assessment be conducted to redesign curriculum for the classes.

### **Library Services Reorganization**

During the 2011 session of the Iowa Legislature, the then “State Library,” partnered with the Iowa Library Association to secure passage of legislation forming a new agency called Iowa Library Services. The legislation consolidated the State Library and the seven independent regional library systems into one agency which has been renamed Iowa Library Services. The new agency has one governing body, the Iowa Commission of Libraries, and maintains six district offices and one main office in Des Moines. All staff work under the direction of the State Librarian. The first line of support for libraries remains in the district offices, but extensive back-up services are available from the Des Moines office. This consolidation is intended to result in better and more consistent library service across the state. It fulfills one of the strategies in the 2008-2012 LSTA Plan to “identify opportunities for Iowa libraries to streamline and centralize basic library functions...” Coordination and sharing of planning and professional development, better synchronization of scheduling and expanded access to services are intended outcomes. The new legislation was signed into law on July 27, 2011 and became effective immediately.

### **Evaluation**

A focus group was conducted with the six Iowa Library Services district consultants on March 5, 2012. While it is relatively early in the implementation process to do a thorough assessment of outcomes, the overall impression gained from those directly involved is that the transition has been relatively smooth and that things are going well. The consultants praised the breadth of experience and knowledge possessed by the new group. One noted that it is good to be part of a “bigger team,” which includes all Iowa Library Services staff members who can bring more skills to bear on serving customers. The potential that services will now be more consistent was noted as both strength and a potential threat. Equalizing services across the state is desirable, but there is concern some of the individuality and character of previous services will be lost or watered down. The consultants are supportive of the opportunity to develop a shared focus and vision, and feel that that communication will certainly be enhanced.

### **Building project consultant grants**

In 2008-2011, LSTA provided space planning consultation grants to 41 Iowa libraries in smaller communities. The grants provided funds to employ library building consultants for space needs assessments, space utilization plans, building program statements and site evaluation. Funds were used to reimburse consultants for no more than \$3,000 per project. With the help of consultants, the libraries identified sequential steps needed to proceed with a library building project, including the amount of time and money necessary to complete the project.

### **Evaluation**

While no formal assessment of these projects was completed, comments from staff in the libraries that received grants support a finding that the grants did allow the libraries to increase service capacity through facilities improvements. Three such comments follow: “It resulted in a great plan that we could implement for optimum results. Architects plan well on paper, but it does not always transfer to the best usage of collections and furniture placement to meet the actual needs of patrons.” “The results were better than expected. By following Mr. Lawson’s drawings we rearranged the library. The rearrangement made the library seem bigger, brighter and more people friendly.” “What was achieved was a workable floor plan with enough shelves to expand our collection while organizing it into a user friendly traffic pattern. It enabled us to know where our library holdings will be so that our architects and interior designer can plan accordingly.”

## **SUPPORTING LIFE-LONG LEARNING**

A second major strategy aimed at improving learning and the use of information and resources across the state is support for learning at all ages and across all regions of the state. Several LSTA-funded programs comprise this strategy.

### **Summer Reading Program**

Iowa Library Services participates in the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP) to provide local libraries with materials for the summer reading programs. The materials include a manual with suggested activities as well as publicity and artwork that may be used in the program. The Summer Reading Program involves both children and teens, with a different theme and manual for each. CSLP provides a means for states to work together in developing materials and programming for summer reading initiatives. This streamlines the development process, as each individual state does not need to identify themes and produce materials on

their own. This model is then passed on to local libraries that then do not need to develop their own materials and programming.

During the fall, Summer Library Program workshops are held in eight locations around the state. These workshops introduce the materials and provide librarians with training and suggestions for their use. In 2011, 506 library directors and staff attended these workshops. One commented, “We appreciate all the work that goes into putting the manual together--so many wonderful ideas, it makes planning our programs so much easier!!! “ LSTA funds provide the salary of the library consultant who is in charge of the program as well as stipends for summer library program workshop presenters and materials distributed to libraries.

Ninety percent of Iowa libraries reported conducting a summer library program in 2011. The program reached approximately 23% of Iowa’s children ages 5-14 years (95,683 out of 413,150) and six percent of teens ages 15-19 (13,543 out of 226,420).

### Evaluation

Ninety-six percent of respondents (353 out of 367) to the *LSTA Program Evaluation (Public Libraries)* administered in February 2012 indicated that their libraries use the annual summer reading program materials provided by Iowa Library Services. Respondents were queried on how well the summer reading program is meeting its goals. The table below summarizes perceived outcomes of the program. A high percentage of library staff feels the summer programming encourages reading and helps to maintain reading skills. This was a major desired outcome articulated in the current five-year plan, based upon a classic research study that shows that the number of books read during the summer is consistently related to academic gains when school resumes, and that children in every income group who read six or more books over the summer gain more in reading achievement than children who did not (Heyns, 1978).

Does the annual summer reading program:	Percentage who agreed	No. of Responses
Encourage reading?	96.8%	331
Help families provides a positive activity for their children when they're not in school?	93.3%	319
Maintain reading skills?	87.7%	300
Bring in people who might not otherwise use the library?	85.4%	292
Attract a broad-base of children from your community?	84.8%	290
Involve children living in poverty?	76.6%	262
Develop reading skills?	66.1%	226

**Summer Reading Program Perceived Outcomes**

Iowa Library Services staff interviewed about the summer reading program described it as a high-quality program that is very valuable to Iowa libraries. They noted the collaborative nature of the program which reflects co-operation at the national, state and local levels. While outcomes are overall very positive, developing some means of attracting more children living in poverty and providing additional training to improve local librarians’ expertise in developing children’s reading skills are recommended for future summer reading materials and training. Focusing more effort on attracting teens may also be indicated. This conclusion is supported by data from the *LSTA Evaluation Survey (Public Libraries)* in which 56.3 % of respondents classified “teens” as a group the library will find the most challenging to serve over the next five years (188/334), the most frequently chosen item.

### Youth Services Consulting

A strategy from Iowa’s LSTA Plan, 2008 to 2012 is to “Provide libraries with consulting on youth services.” Such consulting includes reading and literacy outreach programs, after school programming; serving teens and English Language Learners; early literacy; and information Literacy. LSTA funds provide the youth services consultant’s salary.

A major initiative in support of improving youth services is the Kids First Conferences held biennially. This conference is focused exclusively on library services for children and teens. During the current grant period, Kids First Conferences were held in 2009 and 2011. Sessions offered at these conferences include a wide range of topics of interest to those who work with children and teens including “Children’s Outreach Services: Book Babies”, “Reflections on the Modern Age of Young Adult Literature”, “Working with the Community to Provide Children’s Library Services”, “Raising Readers: Building Literacy Skills with Our Youngest Citizens”; “Using Evidence-based Practices to Enhance Story Hours” and “Information Literacy in the Public Library.”

### Evaluation

The 2011 conference was attended by 213 librarians, and 149 completed an online survey following the conference. Each of the 149 indicated that they had learned something they intended to take home and use in their own libraries. One commented “The conference was great! I got many new ideas and came back home very inspired. Webinars and ICN sessions are okay but nothing takes the place of being able to talk to fellow librarians face to face. I can't wait for 2013.” The LSTA Program Evaluation (Public Libraries) included a question on the application of training received at the Kids First Conferences. Ninety-four individuals who participated in that survey indicated that they attended the most recent Kids First Conference and have used strategies and skills learned at the conference in their own libraries. Children’s programming ideas had been used by 91.1 % of respondents and story time techniques had been used by 75.6 %. There was less usage reported of teen program ideas including gaming. Complete results are shown in the table below.

<b>What information from the Kids First conference have you used to provide services to youth in your community (check all that apply)?</b>		
	<b>Percentage who agreed</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>
Buying children's books and other materials	74.4%	67
Buying teens' books and other materials	56.7%	51
Children's programs	91.1%	82
Teen Programs	56.7%	51
Services for babies and toddlers	60.0%	54
Book talks/reviews	30.0%	27
Story time techniques	75.6%	68
Using media [online videos, movies, television] in programming	26.7%	24
Gaming	30.0%	27
Crafts	65.6%	59
<b>Total Responses</b>		90

**Application of Kids First Training**

The Youth Services consultant works regularly with Iowa libraries on collection development, censorship, story hours, serving teens, early literacy, the summer library program, outreach and literacy programs, collection development, policy issues and other topics related to providing great library service to children and teens. The consultant has provided one-to-one consulting to libraries an average of 237 times per month over the past several years. In the LSTA Program Evaluation (Public Libraries), 56.3 % of respondents classified “teens” as a group the library will find the most challenging to serve over the next five years and 43.4 % listed English language learners. These may be areas for some concentration of youth services efforts in the years to come.

### **Iowa Center for the Book**

LSTA funds provide a half-time coordinator for the Iowa Center for the Book. The goal of this program is to support lifelong learning by stimulating public interest in books, reading, literacy and libraries. Iowa Library Services partners with several agencies in Iowa to deliver this program, including The University of Iowa Center for the Book, the Iowa Commission of Libraries, the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, The University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, the State Historical Society of Iowa and others. The program is overseen by a 22 member advisory council with representatives from a variety of types of libraries and related agencies from across the state.

A major program of the Iowa Center for the Book is “All Iowa Reads,” now in its tenth year. The program promotes the statewide reading of a common title each year. Public libraries, schools, book clubs, community colleges, universities and other groups plan programs and book discussions about the selected book. For each year’s selection, biographical information, book reviews, study guides, related readings, fliers, bookmarks, and lists of places to obtain the book are posted on the All Iowa Reads website. Statewide training sessions have been sponsored to help plan book discussions that take place in local libraries, schools and other venues. The criteria for selecting the All Iowa Reads book are that the book: must be available in paperback, large print and unabridged audio; will lend itself to in-depth discussion and raise universal social issues relevant to Iowans; be accessible to adults and high school age youth. It is desirable, but not required, that the book have an Iowa or Midwest connection and that it is a recent publication that has not been widely read.

Another program of the Center for the Book is Letters about Literature, a national reading and writing program for students in grades 4 through 12. Nationally, over 70,000 students participate in this program sponsored by the Library of Congress and Target stores. Students write to an author and describe how the author’s work changed the reader’s view of the world or him/herself. To encourage participation, the Center coordinator has promoted the program at conferences for the Iowa Talented and Gifted Conference for Teachers, Iowa Council of Teachers of English Conference, and the Iowa Association of School Librarians, as well as through the website and promotional materials. In 2011, 2,253 Iowa students participated in the program, a 24 % increase over the past year. Only five states had more entries. Eighteen Iowa students won awards in the program; these were presented at the Iowa Library Services Des Moines office with the students, their families and their teachers invited to attend. Five students won national awards.

The Center for the Book has sponsored other reading promotion events for children and maintains an Iowa Author List on its website, which is used by libraries and groups wishing to bring Iowa authors to their sites. The Center partnered with the Iowa Library Association (ILA), the Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature, and the Coralville and Iowa City Public Libraries, to

sponsor “The Write Stuff: Iowa Author Fair 2010.” at the ILA annual fall conference. Fifty-eight Iowa authors participated and 758 librarians and members of the public attended.

### **Evaluation**

Sixty-three percent of public librarians participating in the LSTA Program Evaluation have used resources from the Iowa Center for the Book. Fifty-two percent believe the Center stimulates an interest in reading, literacy and libraries, while 12% feel that it does not. Comments about the program were generally in support of the All Iowa Reads initiative, and negative comments generally indicated lack of use due to time constraints. Only one individual commented that they did not know about the program. In the *LSTA Evaluation Survey (Academic Libraries)*, 34.4% report that they have used resources from The Center for the Book, with comments generally indicated some level of participation in All Iowa Reads.

### **Information Literacy**

The American Library Association publication *Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning (1998)* makes the distinction between physical and intellectual access to information. While physical access may be measured by numbers of searches and “hits,” intellectual access—the ability to select, understand and use relevant information or “information literacy”—is more difficult to assess. To develop skills in information literacy, the Iowa Library Services sponsored online training sessions attended by 478 library staff from across the state and state employees during the grant period. These workshops were delivered primarily online by Iowa Library Services staff and included topics such as Google Searching, Information Literacy in the Public Library and Features of EBSCOhost. The goal of the workshops is to enable library staff to understand features of various web tools and be better able to help their communities use the resources.

LSTA funds pay for the OCLC FirstSearch Base Package for academic (and public) libraries. The funds also pay for approximately half the costs of EBSCOhost with the libraries providing the rest of the funding. Academic libraries provide information literacy instruction to 100% of their users as reported in the LSTA Program Evaluation Survey (Academic Libraries). This instruction is carried on in a variety of ways including required information literacy classes, collaborative efforts with faculty whose students are doing research assignments, online tutorials and classes, one-to-one instruction and though handouts and “how-to” guides.

Iowa Library Services staff offered classes during 2011 National Library Week for state employees. Classes included: Using the Legislative Website, Using the Iowa Administrative Code, Digital Sanborn Maps, Understanding the 2010 Census, Save Your Documents: Iowa Publications Online, Getting the Most from EBSCOhost and Searching FirstSearch Databases. 179 employees attended these workshops.

### **Evaluation**

Iowa Library Services routinely incorporates evaluations into all training, including information literacy instruction. The usual evaluation method is an online survey using *Survey Monkey*. Several survey questions always focus upon outcomes in order to determine if participants feel they have improved skills in helping their customers become more information literate. Participants rate the workshops well, indicating that they felt better able to help students and patrons use the tools following the workshops, and that they expected to use the databases more as a result of having attended the workshops. Survey results from online classes will guide decisions about future training opportunities.

EBSCOhost workshops at different levels have been held frequently during the grant period. Total participation numbers 344. In the most recent EBSCOhost workshop conducted in February of 2012, 94.8 % of participants agreed that they would be better able to show customers how to use the database as a result of the workshop. Seventy-nine percent predicted that the database would be used more now that they are more familiar with its features. Evaluation results showed that 100% of participants said they agree or strongly agree that, "Having had this training, I feel more confident using EBSCOhost to answer student's and patron's reference questions."

About one-half of Iowa's academic libraries (36/74) participated in the *LSTA Evaluation Survey*. While they did not report any assessment data from information literacy instruction they have done with students, 20.6% of the librarians completing the survey indicated that they feel students information literacy skills are "much better" than they were five years ago, and 55.9 % feel that they are "better." Only 5.9% feel that these skills are not better; 17.6% feel that they are "about the same." Another question asked respondents to rank their assessment of the current information literacy skills and understanding of students and staff; 8.8 % ranked skills as very good, 44.1% rank them as good and 47.1% rank them as "inadequate." Twenty-one of the academic librarians responded to the question, "What comments or suggestions do you have as we look at improving information skills and access to information tools in Iowa over the next five years?" These responses were coded with results as follows: nine comments pointed for the need for more K-12 students to have information literacy instruction, and for them to have access to the EBSCOhost databases so that there is consistency across the state, six expressed support for continuing and expanding database offerings, three highlighted the need for advocacy and marketing of our tools and services and three indicated a need for more assessment and collaboration within their institutions on information literacy.

### **Leadership Institute**

The Leadership Institute is held biennially and is jointly sponsored by the Iowa Library Association and Iowa Library Services. The program identifies emerging leaders from public, school, special and academic libraries, and agencies serving libraries, and brings them together for a weeklong program designed to develop their confidence as leaders so that they may better serve their libraries and communities. Maureen Sullivan, current ALA president, library consultant and educator, has facilitated the workshops with an LSTA grant awarded to the Iowa Library Association for Sullivan's honorarium.

Participants complete an application process that includes references from others who can verify their potential as leaders and are then selected by an Iowa Library Association committee that includes representation from Iowa Library Services. Workshop topics included Leadership in Libraries Today, Understanding Your Work and Leadership Styles, Leading Change, Transforming Libraries, Managing Differences, Working with Groups and Teams, Leading from the Middle, and Coaching and Mentoring Others. Twenty-three librarians from public, academic, special and school libraries in Iowa participated in this fourth Leadership Institute, held in July 2010.

### **Evaluation**

A post survey is administered to Institute participants. The results documented attitudinal and behavioral changes as a result of the Institute. Specifically, 100% said they strongly agreed or agreed with the statement "I am confident about my ability to be a change agent in my library." Ninety-five % said they strongly agreed or agreed with the statement "I am confident about my ability to be a change agent in the general library community." Comments

included: "This institute was a great way for me to gain insight in how I can make my library and community better. I also really appreciated hearing stories from other libraries and creating a network of people I can turn to when I need input." "I believe I will make some concrete changes as a result of this experience."

**LSTA Priority 2: Have library services been developed that provide all users access to information through local, state, regional, national and international electronic networks?**

Support for subscription databases and the development of Iowa-specific online information tools are the two strategies employed to address Priority 2.

**SUBSCRIPTION DATABASES**

**EBSCOhost/First Search**

Iowa Library Services utilizes LSTA funds to provide EBSCOhost and OCLC FirstSearch to Iowa's academic, public and special libraries. Access to EBSCOhost was initially implemented through a partnership between Iowa Library Services and the Iowa Educators Consortium (IEC). In order to focus on the needs of public, academic and special libraries and their customers, the Iowa Library Services decided to issue an RFP separately rather than continue to contract through the IEC which focuses on K-12 education. The joint contract ended June 30, 2011 and the new contract was awarded to EBSCOhost effective July 1, 2011. The one-year contract includes a provision that allows renewal for up to five times without rebidding.

The cost of the statewide license, negotiated by Iowa Library Services, is \$341,330. Libraries pay for a portion of the EBSCOhost costs. For public libraries, the cost is \$40 to \$4,000 based upon the size of the library. Public libraries would pay \$10,000 to \$60,000 per year for individually negotiated contracts. Cost to academic libraries is \$545 to \$8,000 per year; fees would range from \$25,000-\$50,000 if these libraries worked directly with EBSCO. In addition to the cost of the databases, LSTA funds pay for a .30 FTE employee who manages the database contracts and provides consulting and training on the use of the databases.

OCLC/First Search showed stable usage over the period. The slight dip in usage in FY11 is attributed to a change in the user interface. EBSCO usage increased significantly over the time of the grant. In FY11, public, academic and special library users logged in 5,668,416 times and conducted 38,834,838 searches in EBSCOhost, a 123 % increase in the number of sessions since the product was made available.

First Search Usage			EBSCOhost Usage		
	Sessions	Searches		Sessions	Searches
<b>FY08</b>	256,464	453,925	<b>FY08</b>	2,543,833	8,034,612
<b>FY09</b>	203,485	388,072	<b>FY09</b>	3,446,945	12,855,455
<b>FY10</b>	201,247	385,344	<b>FY10</b>	5,872,180	20,176,798
<b>FY11</b>	191,386	375,951	<b>FY11</b>	5,668,416	38,834,838

**EBSCOhost Usage Growth FY 08-FY11**

Iowa Library Services worked directly with EBSCOhost to obtain library discounts for seven additional databases, Auto Repair Reference Center, Hobbies and Crafts Reference Center, Home Improvement Reference Center, Novelist and Novelist Plus, Small Engine Repair Reference Center and Consumer Health Complete. Iowa Library Services utilizes LSTA funds to

subsidize a small portion of the costs of these databases for the libraries that purchase them. Fifty-four libraries purchased 122 of these additional resources. Classes are offered online describing the features of the specialized databases to assist local library staff in making selection decisions.

### Evaluation

In the *LSTA Evaluation Survey (Public Libraries)*, 87.5% of public library directors indicate that their library provides EBSCOhost to customers. This exceeds the 80% subscription rate by public libraries set as an output target in the LSTA plan for the period (Note: not all libraries participated in the survey). One hundred percent of academic libraries participating in the *LSTA Evaluation Survey (Academic Libraries)* subscribe to EBSCOhost. This is nicely above the outcome target of 90% set in the 2008-2012 plan. Sixty-five percent of respondents to the public library LSTA survey indicated that they would not be able to provide EBSCO without the support of Iowa Library Services; 5.8% said they would be able to provide the database and 28.9% were not certain if they would be able to continue without state funding. In the LSTA Survey of academic libraries, 33.3% indicated that they would not be able to subscribe without Iowa Library Services support, while 38.9% said that they could continue and 27.8% did not know. Several comments were made to the effect that other databases might need to be sacrificed if Iowa Library Services support for EBSCO were withdrawn.

OCLC/First Search is provided in 69.4% of surveyed public libraries and 88.9% of academic libraries. Only 5.5% of public libraries said they would continue to subscribe to this tool if the state support were dropped, 66.4% said that they would not and 28.2% responded that they did not know if they would continue. In the academic survey, 31% of respondents said that they would be able to continue subscriptions, 20.7% would not, and 48.3% did not know.

In the academic library survey, 100% of participants rated EBSCOhost as “Very Important” in providing trustworthy information to students, faculty and staff. EBSCOhost is included in most types of information literacy instruction in academic libraries as indicated by the table below. One academic librarian commented, “EBSCOhost is our single port of entry to the world of reliable scholarship, and the primary way we teach our students -- most of whom have no experience in any kind of library -- how to become information literate.”

Type of Instruction	Is Offered	Includes EBSCO	Includes First Search
Information literacy classes students are required to take	100	100	66.7
Face to face instruction with classes as scheduled by faculty	97.1	97.1	35.3
Online tutorials and classes	95.5	100	31.8
One to one instruction	97	100	39.4
Handouts, how-to-guides	96.6	96.6	34.5
Other (please describe below)	100	100	33.3

Percentage of Types of Instruction Including EBSCO and First Search

Thirty-eight percent of respondents to the *LSTA Evaluation Survey (Public Libraries)* indicate that EBSCO is “Very Important” in providing trustworthy information to patrons, while 48.5% ranked it as “Important,” and 12.5% feel that it is Not Important. For OCLC/First Search, the rankings are 45% “Very Important,” 45.5% important and 9.5% not important. While those numbers are good, they may reflect some lack of knowledge of the usefulness of these tools. One staff member interviewed for this study recommended that more marketing of the products may be needed, and that additional information literacy instruction would help local library staff feel more confident in recommending the tools and teaching others to use them. The staff member rated the EBSCO and First Search tools very highly, “definitely a value added service for libraries,” and suggested negotiating for additional tools in order to offer a package to libraries.

### IOWA SPECIFIC INFORMATION RESOURCES

With LSTA funding support, Iowa Library Services provided Iowans with electronic access to a variety of Iowa-specific resources that offer unique information tailored to local needs. These include access to Iowa Law, state agency and policy documents, collections of Iowa historical and cultural documents and census and demographic information. The salaries of the librarians who develop and maintain these resources are funded through the LSTA funds. A summary of these initiatives appears below.

**Iowa Publications Online (IPO)** provides Internet access to digital documents, brochures, guides and reports produced by state government agencies. The librarian responsible for this area describes it as the “digital side of the State Library.” It serves as an electronic depository for materials intended for the general public and produced by Iowa state agencies that may be browsed, downloaded and printed base upon user needs. State agency staff are shown how to upload the publications to an open-source database software called *E-prints* that includes multiple search features. Currently, there are nearly 11,000 items available from this site. The number of hits on the site has grown consistently from 2008-2011. The primary users of IPO are state government employees as well as individual Iowans seeking information about state programs, procedures and requirements.

<b>Iowa Publications Online</b>		
	<b>Documents</b>	<b>Web Hits</b>
<b>FY08</b>	5,636	957,743
<b>FY09</b>	6,733	974,702
<b>FY10</b>	8660	1,311,141
<b>FY11</b>	10,042	137,702*
<b>FY12 (as of 3/8)</b>	10,948	72,930*

#### **Iowa Publications Online Usage FY08-FY12**

**\*Note:** New software that computes usage differently is responsible for the decline in the number of hits recorded in 2011 to the present.

The **State Data Center (SDC)** is Iowa’s liaison to the U.S. Census Bureau for the state data center program, business and industry data center program, and the federal-state cooperative programs for population estimates and projections. The State Data Center maintains thousands of data tables, demographic profiles, maps, and charts about Iowa on its website. State agencies, local officials, the media, businesses, non-profits, students, and the

general public use SDC data to secure information about Iowa demographics, communities, housing and social and economic statistics. There were 338,394 hits to the SDC website in FY10. The center provides consulting services to Iowans looking for specific data. The salary of the employee who maintains the SDC is funded through LSTA funds. The SDC website was recently redesigned to improve access. The employee states that his job is to, “help people find data about Iowa,” and he takes obvious pride in the structure he has created. For the future, he sees a need for more training on using the website, and finding the means to deal with innovations such as the mobile market. The recent loss of the SDC assistant due to budget constraints will likely slow these efforts.

State Data Center Usage		
	Requests	Web Hits
<b>FY08</b>	718	429,616
<b>FY09</b>	562	347,487
<b>FY10</b>	543	338,394
<b>FY11</b>	725	193,607

**State Data Center Usage FY08-FY11**

**\*Note:** New software that computes usage differently is responsible for the decline in the number of hits recorded in 2011 to the present.

**The Iowa Heritage Digital Collections (IHDC)** is an online repository of Iowa history and culture that includes documents, images, maps and other media from library and museum collections throughout Iowa. These digital collections provide access to historical materials and assure their preservation. Iowa Library Services provides the technical infrastructure for these collections as well as training for various organizations to participate in developing the collections. A total of 2,316 documents were added to the Iowa Heritage Digital Collection during the grant period.

**Legal Reference.** The Iowa Law Library contains a highly specialized collection of legal treatises as well as both state and federal statutory, regulatory and case law. The collection also contains the abstracts and arguments of the Iowa Supreme Court and Court of Appeals, legal periodicals, and materials produced by the Iowa legislature. It is the only law library in Iowa that provides research assistance to the general public. The library is located in the State Capitol. The law library/legal reference serves people in government, libraries, attorneys and individuals. For fiscal year 2011, 67% of questions were from the general public, 13% from governmental agencies, 11% from attorneys and 9% from libraries. The library assists individuals in understanding state government and law. “When people don’t know where to turn,” the law librarian states, “we point them in the right direction.” Law Library staff frequently makes referrals to attorneys. Law library staff also offer workshops on topics such as copyright issues and how to use the *Iowa Code*.

**E-Rate** is included in this area because it provides funding for many libraries to access online information tools. Iowa Library Services provides consulting on e-rate applications to local libraries. The consultant who facilitates this program estimates that participating libraries save an average of about 60 % on telecommunications cost. Support for e-rate applications was rated as “Very Important” or “Important” by 69 % of the rural librarians who completed the *LSTA Evaluation Survey*. Many rural libraries in Iowa receive free Internet access from their local telecommunications providers. Such access tends to be at the 1.5 Mbps level, which is inadequate for newer services such as video streaming or downloading of large files. . About

73% of Iowa libraries have Internet access speeds of 1.5 Mbps or higher. Wireless access is available in 426 (78%) of Iowa's 543 public libraries.

### **Evaluation**

The 2008-2012 Iowa LSTA Plan included several strategies related to Iowa-specific resources:

- providing Iowans with permanent access to documents produced by state agencies,
- providing access to specialized collections in public policy, law and medicine,
- facilitating the digitization of cultural and historical resources,
- improving the State Data Center website and services.

These strategies have been implemented. With allowances made for statistical differences due to new usage computation software, the SDC and IPO databases have shown significant increases in usage over the period of the grant. Legal reference usage by the general public has grown. The Iowa Heritage Digital Collections project has shown slow growth, but 76.1 percent of public librarians surveyed felt that it was very important or important to continue this project. Because the majority of the documents in these resources are specific to the state and not available elsewhere, it is appropriate and important that these services are maintained by Iowa Library Services.

### **LSTA Priority 3: Have electronic and other linkages been provided among and between all types of libraries?**

One major strategy supports this priority: the State of Iowa Online (SILO) network which offers a variety of services to share resources.

#### **SILO: Interlibrary Loan**

Iowa Library Services partners with Iowa State University to develop and maintain SILO. SILO offers resource-sharing services, including the Iowa Locator union catalog of Iowa library holdings and SILO Interlibrary Loan to all types of libraries in Iowa. SILO has included a help desk and also offers hosted services including DNS, e-mail, e-mail lists, and web hosting to any public library with a high-speed Internet connection. LSTA funds finance a contract with Iowa State University, which provides three FTE technical staff, computers and other technology to develop and maintain the SILO services used by Iowa libraries. SILO staffs also provide technical support for Iowa Library Services' website, the Iowa Center for the Book, the State Data Center, Iowa Publications Online and Iowa Heritage Digital Collections. In the 2012 *LSTA Evaluation Survey (Public Libraries)*, 89% of those surveyed indicated that the technical support provided by Iowa Library Services was "Very Important" or "Important" to them. An Iowa Library Services employee is the intermediary between the technical operation of the SILO program located at Iowa State University in Ames, and users of the SILO system. She indicated that this is a very good role for Iowa Library Services to play, as there is a need to train library staff in the use of the system and to mediate between end-users and technical personnel.

SILO provides the infrastructure for statewide interlibrary loan. A survey of SILO services was completed in 2011 by a total of 424 Iowa librarians; 34 were from academic libraries, seven from special libraries, sixty-two from K-12 schools and 331 from public libraries with

respondents reflecting libraries of all sizes across the state. In FY11, 57,068 holdings were added to the Locator union catalog bringing the total number of titles in the Locator to 3,854,056 and number of records in the Locator to 15,367,194. Interlibrary loan transactions in that year totaled 108, 197. The SILO system is self-service. Libraries upload and delete their own bibliographic records and use SILO interlibrary loan system to borrow and fill interlibrary loans. It is widely used in the state—699 libraries of all types use and contribute to SILO. Suggestions for improvements to the system included website improvements and financing for development of a statewide automation system.

Public	532
Academic	69
Special	48
K-12 School	46
Regent	4
Total	699

**SILO Participants by Type of Library**

### **Evaluation**

Seventy percent of those who completed the *LSTA Evaluation Survey (Public Libraries)* indicated that they use the SILO Locator feature daily or weekly; 11% indicated that they have never used the system. Sixty-eight percent responded that they use SILO for interlibrary loan daily or weekly and another 11% use it monthly. Fifty-six percent indicated that they are “Very Satisfied” with the SILO ILL system and 41% responded that they are “Satisfied.” Comments about the system included a number of suggestions relative to improving communication of status and suggestions for enhancements to the system. While only 48% of those surveyed indicated that they have used the SILO Help Desk, those who have used it indicate a high level of satisfaction in areas such as staff courtesy, ease of contacting staff and timeliness of responses.

### **SILO: Putting Libraries on the Web (PLOW)**

Another service made possible by the SILO partnership with Iowa State University is PLOW, which provides website development and hosting for libraries. The system currently hosts over 300 public library websites. The websites were preloaded with a variety of local information specific to each library, including links to local catalogs, location, hours and contact information. The websites also provide a portal for access to statewide resources, such as EBSCOhost and FirstSearch databases. PLOW was originally funded by a Staying Connected grant awarded to the State Library of Iowa from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to sustain and expand public access computing in Iowa public libraries. The PLOW project “levels the playing field” by enabling smaller, rural libraries that do not have the technical expertise to mount their own websites to provide this form of library access to their customers. New web statistics gathering software has been added that gathers more data and provides more detailed information about how customers use the PLOW websites. A recently-added content editor allows the website authors to create more complex page layouts and provides more formatting options. The PLOW program utilizes Plone open source software that was customized for Iowa and periodic improvements are made and shared by both SILO staff and at other locations nationally. The consultant responsible for PLOW training indicated that the software could be more user-friendly. Technical support provided by a full-time computer support person has been available to public libraries by phone and e-mail during the period.

A variety of classes have been offered to develop the skills of local library staff in maintaining and updating their own websites on topics including, “Getting Your Website Started,” “Customizing Your Website,” and “Advanced Customization.” These classes are completed as new libraries are added to the PLOW system. At the beginning of 2012, 300 of Iowa’s 524 public libraries maintained their websites through PLOW.

<b>FY</b>	<b>Libraries Added</b>
FY08	45
FY09	38
FY10	38
FY11	14

**Libraries Added to PLOW FY08–FY11**

### **Evaluation**

Iowa Library Services staff who participated in a focus group that included discussion of various services indicated that PLOW is a valuable resource and that a lot of libraries would not have websites if the system were not offered. There were some concerns expressed about the timing and accessibility of the training. There was general agreement that every library needs a web presence and PLOW provides an inexpensive means to that end.

#### **LSTA Priority 4: What public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations developed?**

The most significant new partnership was with Iowa Workforce Development (IWD). Beginning in 2009 the State Librarian and Head of Library Development met regularly with IWD staff to discuss cooperation between the two agencies and among libraries to serve job seekers. In February 2011, IWD announced the planned closure of more than 30 field offices, along with a plan to deliver services through Virtual Access Points (VAP) in Iowa communities. Following this announcement, Iowa libraries were asked to cooperate by making IWD resources available on library computers. While most Iowa libraries already deliver services to job seekers, many librarians were concerned about whether they had enough staff, space, computers and bandwidth to take on additional responsibilities formerly provided by IWD staff.

During meetings with IWD staff, Iowa Library Service management stressed that Iowa’s public libraries are already very heavily used; that local board of trustees have the sole authority to decide what programs and services a local library offers; that studies show 67% of public library computer users need assistance; and that libraries are being asked to assume additional workforce services at a time when state funding for library services had been cut by 39%. Despite the rocky beginning, a partnership with IWD, Iowa Library Services and local libraries was slowly forged. IWD made changes in their service delivery program in response to questions raised by librarians. Well over 200 public and academic libraries are currently making the IWD VAPs available to their customers. Iowa Library Services installed the VAPs in the Law Library and the Main Library. Continued development of the VAP network is expected in the coming year.

There were ongoing partnerships with:

- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (Opportunities Online Hardware Grant)
- Iowa Department of Education (early literacy initiatives)
- Iowa League of Cities (communication between cities and public libraries)
- Iowa Library Association (Leadership Institute and library services reorganization)
- Iowa Public Television (continuing education for librarians serving youth)
- Iowa State University (SILO services)
- Iowa Utilities Board (broadband and capacity)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (Community Facilities Grant Program)
- University of Iowa Center for the Book, Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, the State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa Center for the Book)

**LSTA Priority 5: How were library services targeted to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, to individuals with disabilities, and to individuals with limited functional literacy or information skills?**

Several strategies, some already described, address these needs. One major project undertaken to help Iowans with visual impairments is the Large Print Books program done in partnership with the Decorah (Iowa) Public Library

**Individuals with Disabilities**

To be an accredited library, *In Service to Iowa: Public Library Standards*, requires that the library building meet the state definition of accessibility which is tougher than the Americans with Disability Act.

Iowa Library Services awarded an LSTA grant to the Decorah Public Library to provide large print books and audio books to libraries throughout the state. The books are then used by the visually impaired and other individuals for whom reading standard-size print books is challenging. LSTA funding was used to purchase materials and pay part of the salaries of two part-time employees of the Decorah Public Library who coordinate the project. They are assisted by 20 members of the local Retired and Senior Volunteers Program. While the number of materials in the collection has grown only slightly over the grant period, circulation grew steadily over the past four years from 25,353 items in 2008 to 34,178 in 2011, an increase of nearly 35 %. Lorraine Borowski, director of the Decorah Public Library, attributes this increase to Iowa's aging population, which exhibits a corresponding increase in visual impairments. The U.S. Census Bureau indicates that 14.8 % of Iowa's population is 65 and over and 2.5 % of Iowans are over 85.

**Evaluation**

The accreditation requirement for accessibility has led to a 20% increase in the number of accessible public libraries over the last five years. A survey of participants in the large print program indicated that 93% believe that they are able to continue reading because they have access to large print books. Individual comments on the survey included, "I am retired & living in a nursing home & reading is one of the few activities I still enjoy & without the large print books I wouldn't be able to do this" and "With my failing eyesight I am so thankful to have access to L.P. books."

This is an extremely cost-effective program. In FY11, LSTA funds were utilized to support this project in the amount of \$34,985. A total of 34,178 items are circulated. This represents a cost of \$1.02 per item to provide materials to the visually impaired across the state. This program is additionally supported by 1,514 hours of volunteer service (2011), an estimated \$31,567 in-kind contribution, using the hourly rate of \$20.85, per hour suggested by the Independent Sector (2010).

	Large Print Books	Circulation	Participating Libraries
<b>FY 2008</b>	9, 625	25,353	160
<b>FY 2009</b>	10,269	27,911	160
<b>FY 2010</b>	10,195	31,311	160
<b>FY 2011</b>	10,377	34,178	220

**Usage of Large Print Materials FY08-FY11**

One hundred sixty libraries throughout the state participate in the monthly rotation of these materials, and another 60 libraries use the service on an on-demand basis. The libraries utilizing the service are smaller libraries serving rural areas. They would not be able to provide comprehensive large print collections to their customers if not for this program according to Borowski. One area of concern for the future of the program is the potential closing of small, rural post offices. This would make it both more difficult and more expensive to continue the service to some areas of the state.

**LSTA Priority 6: How have library and information services been targeted to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children from families with incomes below the poverty line?**

Many of the services provided by Iowa Library Services are intended to “provide expanded, equitable access to library information, materials and services to all Iowans” (Goal 1 of the 2008-2012 Plan). Seventy-five percent of Iowa public libraries serve populations of fewer than 2,500 people and are classified as rural. In the *LSTA Evaluation Survey (Public Libraries)* completed for this evaluation, 77.1% of those who completed the survey classified themselves as serving rural areas. Therefore, the majority of the programs and services evaluated in this report serve small, rural communities that, by their very nature, have limited resources. Most notable include the SILO Locator and Interlibrary Loan; PLOW websites; the Library Accreditation Program; continuing education and certification; the Summer Library Reading program; the Iowa Center for the Book; subscription and Iowa-specific databases; and the large print materials program.

## Annexes

### List of Acronyms

CSLP	Collaborative Summer Library Program
IEC	Iowa Educator's Consortium - purchasing program for Iowa schools, libraries and local government
IHDC	Iowa Heritage Digital Collections - an online repository of Iowa history and culture
ILA	Iowa Library Association
IPO	Iowa Publications Online - depository for electronic documents intended for the general public produced by Iowa state agencies
IWD	Iowa Workforce Development - a state agency that provides employment services, education and regulation of health, safety and employment laws
PLM	Public Library Management classes offered for non-MLS public library directors
PLOW	Putting Libraries on the Web - website hosting
SDC	State Data Center - the Iowa affiliate of the U.S. Census Bureau
SILO	State of Iowa Libraries Online - offers resource sharing services, including the Iowa Locator union catalog and SILO ILL to all types of libraries in Iowa.
VAP	Virtual Access Points – software installed on library computers (and computers in other locations) enabling job seekers to access Iowa Workforce Development services

## List of people interviewed

### Iowa Library Services Staff

- Mary Wegner, State Librarian
- Sandy Dixon, Head of Library Development and LSTA Coordinator
- Karen Burns, library consultant - Southwest district
- Scott Dermont, library consultant – Des Moines office
- Mandy Easter, law librarian – Law Library
- Marie Harms, library consultant – Des Moines office
- Becky Heil, library consultant - Southeast district
- Thomas Keyser, librarian and archivist, Des Moines office
- Jet Kofoot, library consultant - North Central district
- Gary Krob, data warehouse analyst – Des Moines office
- Robin Martin, library consultant – Des Moines office
- Bonnie McKewon, library consultant - Northwest district
- Merri Monks, library consultant – Des Moines office
- Maryann Mori, library consultant - Central district
- Alysia Peich, library consultant – Des Moines office
- Jay Peterson, library consultant – Des Moines office
- Pam Rees, librarian – Des Moines office
- Eunice Riesberg, library consultant – Northeast district
- Annette Wetteland, information specialist – Des Moines office

### Others

- Lorraine Borowski, director, Decorah Public Library, and President, Iowa Library Association

## Bibliography of all documents reviewed

*2007 IMLS State Program Report – 10/1/2006 to 9/30/2008*

*2008 IMLS State Program Report – 10/1/2007 to 9/30/2009*

*2009 IMLS State Program Report – 10/1/2008 to 9/30/2010*

*2010 IMLS State Program Report – 10/1/2009 to 9/30/2011*

*FY08 Iowa Public Library Annual Survey*

*FY09 Iowa Public Library Annual Survey*

*FY10 Iowa Public Library Annual Survey*

*FY11 Iowa Public Library Annual Survey*

2010 Iowa census data from the U.S. Census Bureau, <http://www.iowadatacenter.org/>

Evaluation surveys from library training sessions, professional development workshops and other programs supported by LSTA funds. Impact results from post training evaluations conducted by Iowa Library Services. Survey results are stored on *SurveyMonkey* and links to them are available upon request.

Internal databases maintained by Iowa Library Services such as Accreditation and Certification

Iowa Library Services website, <http://www.statelibraryofiowa.org/>

*LSTA Evaluation Survey 2012 (Academic Libraries)*

*LSTA Evaluation Survey 2012 (Public Libraries)*

*SILO Services Survey 2011*

Service statistics collected internally by Iowa Library Services such as number of libraries subscribing to sponsored databases, number of database searches, attendance at continuing education events, number of interlibrary loan transactions

## **Copies of research instruments**

*LSTA Evaluation Survey 2012 (Academic Libraries)*

*LSTA Evaluation Survey 2012 (Public Libraries)*

*SILO Services Survey 2011*