2011

National Medal

for Museum and Library Service

INSTITUTE of Museum and Library SERVICES

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Our Nation's Highest Honor

The National Medal for Museum and Library Service is the nation's highest honor for libraries and museums. The award celebrates libraries and museums that make a difference for individuals, families, and communities.

Medal winners are selected from nationwide nominations for institutions that demonstrate innovative approaches to public service, exceeding the expected levels of community outreach. This year five libraries and five museums have been selected to receive the award.

The ten institutions honored this year serve communities in both large cities and small towns, with users of all ages. The winners are representative of the great diversity of U.S. libraries and museums and include history, children's, art, and science museums, a botanical garden and public libraries. They all share the common bond of having achieved extraordinary success at reaching out to the communities they serve in effective and inventive ways.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services, together with the National Museum and Library Services Board, is proud to congratulate the winners of the 2011 National Medals for Museum and Library Service.

HISTORY

The Institute of Museum and Library Services would like to thank HISTORY for their generous support of the National Medals celebration.

The Institute is proud to partner with

StoryCorps

to document stories that demonstrate the ongoing impact of these award-winning institutions.

Alachua County Library District

Gainesville, FL

Staff members at the Alachua County Library District (ACLD) believe in "Thinking outside the book" and have incorporated that mindset into the tag line that appears beneath ACLD's logo. Two of their collaborative projects demonstrate this slogan in action and their commitment to both innovative approaches and the communities they serve: the Library Partnership and the University of Florida Mobile Outreach Clinic.

This "Thinking outside the book" approach helped open the door to new partnerships. ACLD formed the Library Partnership Neighborhood Resource Center when it joined forces with Partnerships for Strong Families, Department of Children and Families Children, and the Casey Foundation. The idea originated to reduce the number of children removed from homes because of neglect or abuse, and quickly expanded to include additional partners that provide health and legal services, rent and utility subsidies, tax assistance, counseling for substance or domestic abuse, and a host of other social services. The Library Partnership also serves as a distribution point for book and clothing drives, food, and a backpack program that provides weekend food for neighborhood children who otherwise might not eat.

Library Partnership clients can benefit from a comprehensive one-stop approach to address their needs. For example, the Neighborhood Resource Center provides a variety of social services that might help a jobless client secure a rent subsidy or navigate the e-government application process or refer the client to the Library Partnership for parenting or computer classes. At the Library Partnership, the client can get help with literacy issues, job skill development, testing, e-government forms, and resume writing. That client can also access Internet job search sites, get help with basic computer skills, and even receive assistance in establishing an email account. Multiple organizations pool their resources under one roof to provide a one-stop solution to the needs of the community.

"Getting social services at the library masks the stigma associated with visiting a traditional social services agency and people in need don't have to go from one agency to another," says Director Shaney Livingston. "In most case they can access assistance in one place, delivered either by library staff or one of our partners with whom we share administrative space."

Visiting the local library for basic health services or legal advice may not have been an option in the past, but it is now, thanks to ACLD's partnership with the University of Florida Mobile Outreach Clinic. The University of Florida's College of Medicine owned a bus outfitted with two examination rooms and had mapped out the areas of need, but were hampered by a lack of parking and electrical hookups. Through its partnership with ACLD, UF's mobile medical units gained parking, electrical hookups, and meeting space. The Library District gained additional patrons from a community who might not otherwise visit.

"We see expanded use of the library," says Livingston. "Parents can come here for social services and bring their children with them. And they can also get assistance with eGovernment services."

Though the Library District does not provide formal daycare, children have the opportunity to enjoy toys, books, and programs geared to early learning in its Snuggle Up centers while the adults visit the Mobile Outreach Clinic for basic health care services. The partnership, which began in a single location as a pilot program has grown to three different locations each offering a different days of service, and the program is poised to add another day.

"We are always alert to the possibility of beneficial partnerships," says Livingston. Recently appointed as the Library District's director, Livingston is excited about the future. "We can see that technology is going to play a big role in future services and we need to stay on top of that," she says.

Although she does not see the total demise of traditional books in the near future, she knows that to best serve its clients ACLD will need to invest in technology and training and is thinking about future community partners she can engage.

Left:
Teen Tech Week
at two branch locations engages
teens in hands-on robotics programming. **Top right:**
The computer stations at the Library Partnership stay busy as users
search for jobs, access e-government services, or participate in online classes. **Bottom right:**
Swag House, a rap and hip hop group, performed at the Library Partnership's Juneteenth Celebration.

Livingston sees the expansion of traditional library services to partnerships with social services and other agencies as beneficial to the entire community. It is an opportunity to pool many resources and meet many needs in a rapidly changing world. And staff members have gained an unexpected benefit. They are encouraged to leave the library, go out into the community, learn what the community needs, and brainstorm to figure out how to meet those needs. This empowering culture has resulted in a large boost to staff morale and has created an environment where new ideas thrive.

Address

Alachua County Library District
401 E. University Avenue
Gainesville, FL 32601
Web site: www.aclib.us
Phone: 352-334-3900
Annual Budget: $18 million
Full-time Staff: 157
Part-time Staff: 77
Director: Shaney T. Livingston

Community Partners

Alachua County Children's Alliance, Alachua County Friends of the Library, Alachua County Library District Foundation, Alachua County Literacy Network, CHOICES Health Services Alachua County, City of Gainesville Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs, Department of Children and Families, East Gainesville Initiative, Florida Library Association, Florida Literacy Coalition, John A. H. Murphree Law Library Board of Trustees, Latina Women's League, Micanopy Friends of the Library, Partnership for Strong Families, School Board of Alachua County, University of Florida Mobile Outreach Clinic.

Brooklyn Museum

Brooklyn, NY

Founded in 1823, today's Brooklyn Museum continues its tradition of bringing great art and rare treasures to the public. Located in the heart of Brooklyn, the museum welcomes a widely diverse population of citizens who want to see, learn more about, and interact with the arts. Recognized as a national role model for innovative visitor engagement techniques, the museum helps visitors make meaningful connections between the exhibits and their lives, traditions, and cultures. Each year some 400,000 visitors enjoy exhibitions and programs that are as diverse and dynamic as Brooklyn itself.

Schoolchildren draw inspiration from the visual arts through onsite educational programs. School groups participate in guided gallery visits and teachers use museum-provided resource packets to demonstrate relationships between the collections and their lesson plans. Teachers also participate in a week-long summer course to learn how to use the collections as an educational resource and earn professional development credits.

The museum has pioneered numerous programs to make art more easily accessible and relevant to its community. It has digitized its collections to support research, educational programs, and exhibitions worldwide. Through an IMLS-funded program, the museum joined a partnership to digitally capture historic Brooklyn photographs. Another successful museum partnership aimed at expanding public access and supporting education and research brought together records from the Museum of Modern Art and the Frick Museum—some 800,000 records—in an online database called Arcade.

In 2001, seeking to break through traditional exhibition boundaries, the museum integrated American, Spanish Colonial, and Native American collections in *American Identities.* The exhibition brought a fresh, new perspective to the collections. Placing these artifacts together revealed intriguing relationships not seen in the formerly disparate exhibits. In fact, breaking through boundaries has become something of a hallmark at the museum. Two popular programs, *First Saturdays* and *Click! A Crowd-Curated Exhibition,* have turned the traditional museum-going experience around to attract and engage the community in proactive and creative ways. "With *First Saturdays* we wanted people to choose our museum as an alternative to the thousands of other attractions available in our city," says Director Arnold Lehman. The response was gratifying; as many as 22,000 have visited during the six-hour program, filling up the exhibit halls and enjoying the interactive programs. "It's a heartwarming experience to see parents, grandparents, and caregivers sharing the museum experience with children. They tell stories around our exhibits, they enjoy music, and they dance—hip hop, salsa, swing—it's just great to see the interaction," he says. "It's not only a very economical way for families to spend an enjoyable evening together (the program is free), but it's an incredibly enriching experience for our visitors. We want them to feel at home here, and they have told us they do." The program, which starts at 5:00 p.m., also attracts singles and groups of friends.

In *Click!,* the museum not only engaged a higher level of community participation, it expanded the physical boundaries of that community. "We turned the public into exhibitors and curators. Through the Internet we invited, basically, the world to submit photographs and then select the photos to include in the exhibition," says Lehman. The idea felt a bit risky, but succeeded beyond expectations. Thousands sent images. Thousands acted as curators to select images for the exhibit. And thousands more came to the museum to see the photos. Lehman believes firmly in the need for professional curators and trained museum staff. But he also sees programs that actively engage the public as key to keeping the museum moving forward and relevant to an increasingly expanding and often younger audience. He has seen the average age of museum visitors drop to 35. "We have these new virtual audiences to also think about when we make plans for the future," he says. He feels this larger audience will both inform and

Left:
Students on a classroom tour study *Bouquet,* a work of art by JoAnne Carson.
Top right: A child participates in the *Arty Facts* program.
Bottom right: *Target First Saturdays* at the museum, photo by Adam Husted.

challenge plans for the future. But for the Brooklyn Museum, it's not just a matter of speaking in a 21st century voice. The museum wants to keep looking and moving ahead, to go beyond the old model of museums as storehouses remote from their communities. Lehman acknowledges that moving forward means sometimes risking failure, but it's a position he's comfortable with, saying, "If we are going to fall, I'd much rather we fall forward."

Address

Brooklyn Museum
200 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn NY, 11238
Web site: www.brooklynmuseum.org
Phone: 718-638-5000
Annual Budget: $30 million
Full-time Staff: 259
Part-time Staff: 59
Director: Arnold Lehman

Community Partners

Brooklyn Arts Council, Con Edison, Cool Culture, Haiti Cultural Exchange, The Hearst Foundation, Heart of Brooklyn, JPMorgan Chase Foundation, Moving Mountains, New York Art Resources Consortium, New York City Museum Educators Roundtable, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York City Department of Education, New York City Housing Authority, New York State Council on the Arts, Nuyorican Poets Cafe, PBS, Pratt Institute, Target, WBGO, West Indian-American Day Carnival Association, Youth Development Institute.

Columbus Metropolitan Library

Columbus, OH

Columbus Metropolitan Library (CML) considers itself a transformational agency, one that changes lives for the better in order to achieve its lofty vision of "a thriving community where wisdom prevails." In the worst economic climate in decades voters said "yes" to this idea and voted by a two-to-one margin for a permanent operating levy for the library. For CML's Executive Director, Patrick Losinski, the trust and support of the community was gratifying and humbling.

Like many communities, Columbus has few programs focused on literacy and school preparedness. CML saw a gap in services to children and parents for whom regular library visits were few and brief. Reflecting its strong marketing philosophy, CML decided to meet its customers wherever they congregated in the community and developed the *Ready to Read Corps.* The program focuses on three key areas: connecting with library users, organizing pre-reading skills trainings tied to early literacy, and providing mobile library services. CML teams, partnering with community and faith-based support organizations, focus on at-risk neighborhoods where they provide short training sessions with easy literacy-building exercises. "We hand out kits with board books, finger puppets, and tips to help parents continue to work with their kids at home," said Losinski. The program is costly, but effective, and community organizations have demonstrated their support with some $1.2 million and free staff training facilities. Losinski says that parents in underserved communities are deeply concerned about their children's literacy. "We might, for example, be explaining our program to a family at a neighborhood health clinic and the doctor will call them in just as we are getting started. Almost every time, they ask if we will be there when they are finished because they really want to help their kids," says Losinski.

The Columbus community rallies around all of CML's programs. The library offers Homework Help Centers for students in all 21 of its locations, and the last 11 centers were funded entirely by donations from the community. And more than 500 volunteers, retired teachers and college and university students, share their time and expertise to help kids succeed in school. Students complete homework assignments using the computers, printers, reference books, and supplies provided at the centers. The program, which in 2010 saw 52,000 visits to its centers, is highly successful and Losinski expects participation to continue to grow each year. "In the past, libraries measured success only in numbers of books checked out," he said. "Now we also ask, how have our programs affected the people in our community?"

With unemployment in its service area hovering around 10%, CML saw a community need and opened its first Job Help Center in January 2009. By February, centers had opened in all 21 locations. In 2009, job seekers visited our centers 38,000 times and that number jumped to 44,000 in 2010. CML augments the program by bringing in partners with expertise in employment, entrepreneurship, and business development. To help promote this resource to the community and offer expanded services, CML participates in *Job Help Week at Your Library,* a twice-yearly program that provides free, concentrated programming at CML and other libraries in the community. "Our Job Help Centers and *Job Help Week* focus on a single, important goal—helping the people in our communities get back to work," said Losinski. "And we get notes and emails from those who have used this service and are now employed, which is very gratifying."

In helping its customers gain access to literacy, resources, jobs, and knowledge, CML staffers have learned a few lessons as well. They have seen that reaching out to and involving parents and caregivers provides a strong basis from which children can achieve early literacy and school success. They have seen increasing attendance at both their Homework Help Centers and Job Help Centers and have defined new and challenging roles for library staff. They have learned that they can, and do, make a difference in their community. And their efforts have not gone

Left: CML's Job Help Centers provide one-on-one help for job seekers. **Top right:** *Ready to Read Corps* team members engage with kids in and out of the library. **Bottom right:** CML's Homework Help Centers are dedicated library spaces for students to get help after school. Photos courtesy of Columbus Metropolitan Library.

unnoticed. In addition to numerous other awards, CML in 2010 was named Library of the Year by *Library Journal*. With a thoughtful combination of traditional and innovative services and a steadfast commitment to meet—and help—its customers wherever they are, CML lives up to the words printed next to its name—"Open to All."

Address

Columbus Metropolitan Library
96 S. Grant Ave.
Columbus, OH 43215
Web site: www.columbuslibrary.org
Phone: 614-645-2275
Annual Budget: $44 million
Full-time Staff: 465
Part-time Staff: 323
Director: Patrick Losinski

Community Partners

AARP, Action for Children, Central Ohio Workforce Investment Corporation, Columbus Dispatch, Columbus Foundation, Columbus Kids, Columbus Literacy Council, Columbus Metropolitan Library Foundation, Columbus State Community College, Every Citizen Online, Friends of the Library, Jewish Family Services, JP Morgan Chase, Learn for Life, Metropreneur Columbus, Nationwide Children's Hospital, Nationwide Insurance Foundation, New Albany Community Foundation, New Directions Career Center, Ohio Small Business Development Center, Siemer Family Foundation, The Ohio State University, United Way of Central Ohio.

EdVenture Children's Museum

Columbia, SC

Visitors entering EdVenture Children's Museum are immediately greeted by EDDIE®, the world's largest child. The four-story high, 17.5-ton 10-year-old boy is the museum's centerpiece and a hands-on exhibit large enough for children and adults to explore the inner wonders of the human body. Children gaze and squeal with delight as they discover EDDIE's internal organs and listen to the intriguing sounds of his heart, stomach, and lungs. They can climb his vertebrae to his brain, crawl through his heart, bounce around inside his stomach, and slide out his intestines. As a model of learning through immersion, EDDIE® allows children to use their gross motor skills to discover what's inside their bodies in a unique and personal way.

EdVenture has more than 350 individual hands-on activities including nine world-class exhibit galleries, a library, learning laboratories, and resources centers with a focus on creativity, science, literacy, and early learning. Visitors can roll up their sleeves and discover the *World of Work,* where children can recognize and appreciate the diversity of jobs such as farmer, mechanic, firefighter, scientist, and builder. Other interactive exhibits involve creativity using recycled products in the *Aha Factory,* a 30-foot Energy Tower in *The Great Outdoors,* the biodiversity of plants and animals native to South Carolina in *Blooming Butterflies,* home and fire safety in EdVenture's 4-D theater, *Home Safe Home,* and health and nutrition. "Our guests enjoy a truly immersive experience. EdVenture is a place visitors of all ages can discover the many ways learning can be an interesting mix of information, imagination, and fun," says Catherine Wilson Horne, president and CEO of EdVenture. "So much can be learned through play."

For EdVenture, play is, in fact, a rather serious business and forms the basis for much of their programming efforts. For Horne and the staff at EdVenture, play has power. It has the power to engage a child's curiosity, change how families interact and learn, and unite a community to tackle big problems.

Shaping how families experience learning inspires and challenges Horne and her staff. "We want families to see the connection between what they learn here and its effect on their daily lives," she says. Toward that goal, EdVenture has established *The Big ED Health Initiative,* a year-round series of activities promoting healthy life skills. Facilitated programming demonstrates healthy cooking skills and shows children how their food travels from farm to market to table. These programs have important implications for the future health of South Carolina's children. "We hope children will learn to make choices that will help them grow into healthy adults," says Horne. *Body Detectives,* a new permanent exhibit at EdVenture, opened in 2011 to teach children about chronic disease prevention. Children are able to participate in a variety of treatment, related challenges that simulate the skills needed by doctors and scientists, as well as explore the many factors contributing to chronic disease, particularly the three most widespread chronic diseases: heart disease, colon cancer, and diabetes. "Our goal is to have families understand how nutrition and lifestyle choices are linked to chronic disease," says Horne.

Through its community partnerships, EdVenture has expanded its program to bring services to underserved populations. Each year, dentists provide free screenings for hundreds of children, many of whom have never seen a dentist. Its partnership with SAFE Kids of the Midlands offers free car seat checks. EdVenture also works with the sheriff's department and researchers at The University of South Carolina to provide programs aimed at good health and personal safety. The museum parlays these partnerships into positive resources for every issue it tackles, from early childhood learning, to school readiness, to childhood obesity.

Left: Quiet reading time with mom in EdVenture's toddler area, My Backyard.
Top right: Science, science, science!
Bottom right: Susan Bonk, Director of Exhibits and Experiences, instructs how butterflies eat.

Address
EdVenture Children's Museum
211 Gervais Street
Columbia, SC 29201
Web site: www.edventure.org
Phone: 803-779-3100
Annual Budget: $3.5 million
Full-time Staff: 38
Part-time Staff: 50
Director: Catherine Wilson Horne

Community Partners
City of Columbia, Children's Trust Fund of South Carolina, Colonial Life Insurance, Family Connection, Junior League of Columbia, Lexington Medical Center, Lexington School Districts I and II, Lexington/Richland School District V, Palmetto Health Alliance, Providence Hospital, Richland County Public Library, Richland County School Districts I and II, South Carolina Department of Agriculture, South Carolina Department of Education, South Carolina Institute for Childhood Obesity and Related Disorders, South Carolina Parks Recreation and Tourism, United Way of the Midlands, University of South Carolina.

Erie Art Museum

Erie, PA

The Erie Art Museum is committed to revitalizing Erie's urban core. It plays a leading role among cultural and entertainment options that attract visitors from around the region. Things are changing so quickly that sometimes visitors say, "I don't feel like I'm in Erie anymore!" Museum Director John Vanco appreciates the compliment, even if it is somewhat ironic.

From its beginnings as an artist's association, the museum has grown to encompass five historic buildings connected in a single complex. In addition to art exhibitions and classes, the museum also offers music and dance programs and annually hosts *Chimera,* a student-led organization that publishes an art and literary magazine. No other comprehensive arts facility exists in northwestern Pennsylvania. In addition to serving some 400 artists each year, the museum also provides programs that engage teachers, students, and a public representing many nationalities and incomes. Recognized for excellence in providing traditional museum exhibit experiences, the museum also reaches beyond its doors to challenge the perception of what constitutes art and serve its community in innovative and inspiring ways.

To better serve middle-school children and their instructors, the museum created *Kids as Curators,* a two-stage program aimed at involving teachers and through them, their students, in the curating experience. "Each year teachers from three middle schools—one urban, one rural, and one suburban—spend a week at our museum learning how to curate exhibitions," says Vanco. The teachers then work with their students to develop exhibits using their own collections. "Kids have a lot of stuff," says Vanco, "and it's fascinating to see how they find new purposes for it as exhibit objects." Students work in teams to select, label, interpret, design, install, act as docents for, and publicize the installation. Staff offer assistance as needed, but students are free to develop exhibit themes of their own imagining. Vanco recalls one exhibit on the language of texting. Students labeled the covers of old flip phones with the alphabet soup of the digital world—OMG, LOL, TTFN—and provided additional labels inside each phone that spelled out the terms. "The kids created the interactive component on their own and that was a nice surprise," says Vanco. The program is having positive impacts on learning and on how students and teachers view their community and the overall museum experience.

To serve a growing refugee population, the museum instituted a project titled *Old Songs: New Opportunities.* A collaboration among five organizations, the project provides child daycare training for refugee women. The training leads to employment, and the project encourages the women to also share their native songs and dances in the daycare setting. Daycare children learn about their own culture and also experience others. And the museum has gained a vibrant addition to its folk arts program. Participants in *Old Songs* have become confident presenters and share their cultural experiences, songs, and dances with other daycare teachers. "These women lived most of their lives in refugee camps then come here with little formal education, no money, and no prospects. Their children learn English faster than they do," says Vanco. It's a recipe for isolation and depression, but through *Old Songs* these women are finding ways to participate in the American dream.

Currently, the museum offers several free admission programs, but Vanco hopes one day to eliminate admission charges completely, seeing this move as key to carrying out the museum's belief that social change is integral to its programs. "It may seem a small thing," he says, "but a paid admission is a barrier in so many ways for so many people." This will require additional funding, but Vanco is counting on strong partnerships and a growing community support for the arts to reach that goal.

Left: A visitor tours the Museum's Annual Spring Show exhibit, a juried show representing never-before-exhibited works by artists in the Erie area. **Top right:** Kids painting clay pots at the Erie Art Museum Blues & Jazz Festival, the region's largest outdoor jazz festival. **Bottom right:** A Sudanese woman and *Old Songs: New Opportunities* graduate shares her native songs with children in an Erie daycare.

Address

Erie Art Museum
411 State Street
Erie, PA 16501
Web site: www.erieartmuseum.org
Phone: 814-459-5477
Annual Budget: $1.1 million
Full-time Staff: 8
Part-time Staff: 8
Director: John L. Vanco

Community Partners

City of Erie, Dafmark Dance Theater, Early Connections, Edinboro and Gannon Universities, Erie County Historical Society, Erie Philharmonic, Erie Playhouse, expERIEnce Children's Museum, Flagship Niagara League, Lake Erie Arboretum, Lake Erie Ballet, Mercyhurst, Multicultural Community Resource Center, Northwest PA Artists Association, Penn State Behrend, Pennsylvania Art Education Assoc., Pennsylvania Middle School Assoc., Pennsylvania Music Educators Assoc., St. Benedict Education Center, St. Martin Early Childhood Center, Stairways Behavioral Health, YMCA of Erie.

Hill Museum & Manuscript Library

Collegeville, MN

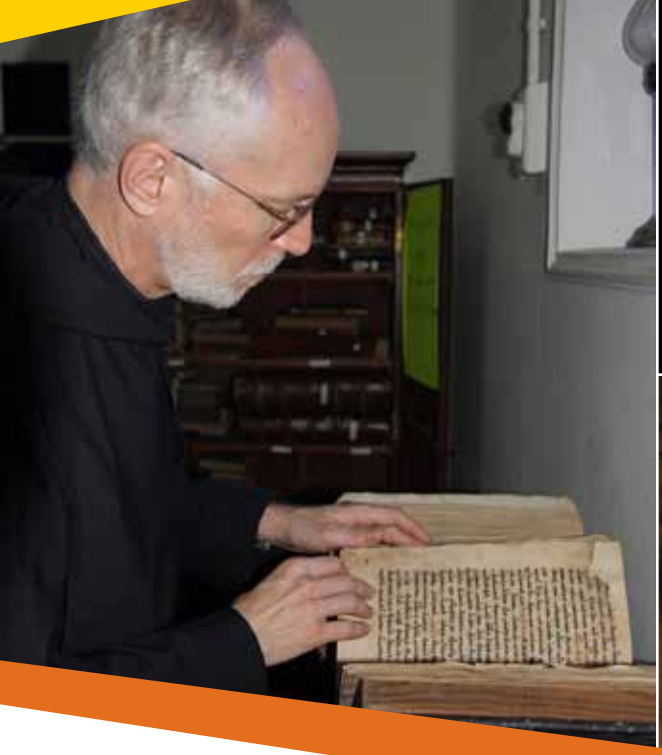
Once a week, a large truck passes by Father Columba Stewart's window. Emblazoned on its side is the legend: "Information Destruction Authority." The irony is not lost on Fr. Columba, Director of the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library (HMML). He and his staff are daily engaged as what he likes to call "the information preservation authority." HMML's commitment to that preservation is at the core of its mission. Maintaining partnerships with more than 480 libraries and archives throughout the world, HMML has amassed photographs of some 120,000 medieval, Renaissance, and early-modern manuscripts from Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and India.

The Benedictine monks of Saint John's Abbey in Minnesota founded HMML in 1965 in response to the destruction of manuscripts and books in European libraries during the two World Wars. Using the latest technology available, they created a microfilm collection for safekeeping against the possibility of another European war. Initially, the effort focused on preservation of western monastic manuscripts in Austria and Germany, but soon expanded throughout Europe to the Iberian Peninsula and south to Malta and Ethiopia. With escalating unrest in the Middle East, the library began in 2003 to digitize manuscripts there. After starting in Lebanon in 2003, the project quickly expanded to Syria, Turkey, Iraq, and India, and resumed its projects in Ethiopia.

HMML staff typically work through church-related groups in the countries they visit, but Fr. Columba acknowledges they sometimes must overcome suspicion and mistrust, which he says is understandable given the difficult circumstances endured by citizens trying to live amid wars and political unrest. Staff work diligently to nurture mutually beneficial relationships. "We are not coming in under a colonial imperialist model," says Fr. Columba. "Our purpose is to work with the local experts. We remove no original records, and we usually train someone on site to do the photographic work." The library hosts the images on its website at no charge to its partners who retain full commercial and publication rights. Fr. Columba notes that HMML's programs support institutions that often lack the equipment to photograph their manuscripts and in some cases, resources to properly catalog them. Field directors train an institution's employees on photographic equipment and provide support as needed to enable local staff to continue to maintain, photograph, and catalog images after HMML staff have gone.

HMML is also home to *The Saint John's Bible,* which has been seen in major exhibitions around the world. Completed in 2011, this hand-written, illuminated Bible was created using ancient materials and methods. This undertaking has brought HMML, in a sense, full circle from preserving rare manuscripts and books to creating a one-of-a kind Bible that blends ancient methods with modern images and text. Indeed, the library has seen a renewed interest in traditional cultural forms and employs its digital resources to present the most traditional kind of information technology—handwritten books—to new audiences.

Fr. Columba acknowledges that a popular and somewhat romantic view of Benedictine monks writing with quill pens by candlelight prevails even today. "In fact," he says, "Benedictine monks have long been among the early adopters of modern technology. They were the first in the 1450s to make use of Gutenberg's technique for making the Bible accessible to more people. We continue that tradition of accessibility today." HMML captures copies of manuscripts and books using the most effective methods to keep these works secure and available for the long term. "When setting our goals, we tend to think in centuries," says Fr. Columba, "and some digital forms have a fugitive quality to them. We want to ensure the long-term life of these materials." To that end, HMML backs up its copies to multiple media on servers employing different storage formats and maintains backup copies in two off-campus locations. To some, these efforts may seem redundant, but to HMML, engaged in a race against the ravages of time and manmade destruction, these measures are necessary.



Left: Fr. Columba in Kerala, India, where HMML has partnered with local experts to preserve the Syriac Christian communities' heritage. **Top right:** 14th century Armenian Book of the Gospels, frontispiece to the Gospel of Luke. Armenian Catholic Clergy Institute, Bzommar, Lebanon. **Bottom right:** Bundled against the bitter cold, field director Walid Mourad photographs manuscripts at the Chaldean Church of Mar Patyun in Diyarbakir, Turkey.

The safety of original documents in a restless world is tenuous at best. "For many, our records may be the only tangible link to ancient peoples, their struggles, their ideas," says Fr. Columba. He feels that, even in digital form, these materials retain a living quality that spans time and holds powerful messages for people today and in the future.

Address

Hill Museum & Manuscript Library
Saint John's University
PO Box 7300
Collegeville, MN 56321
Web site: www.hmml.org
Phone: 320-363-3514
Annual Budget: $1.6 million
Full-time Staff: Nine, plus technicians in 15 fieldwork sites around the world
Part-time Staff: Five
Director: Fr. Columba Stewart, OSB

Community Partners

Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; Arcadia Fund of London; Ethiopian Orthodox Patriarchate Library in Addis Ababa; Institut de Recherches des Textes (IRHT) Paris; Library of Congress; National Archives of Malta; National Endowment for the Humanities; Royal Library of Sweden; Sherif Harar City Museum (Ethiopia); Stefanyk National Library (Lviv, Ukraine); World Digital Library; hundreds of manuscript libraries in Europe, the Middle East, Ethiopia, and India, including the Austrian National Library; numerous monastic and diocesan libraries in Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Iraq, and Jerusalem.

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

Richmond, VA

Love is a word heard often at the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden (LGBG), the second-most visited paid attraction in the greater Richmond, Virginia area. Visitors—nearly 300,000 in 2010—love wandering the landscaped gardens, taking photographs, enjoying familiar plants, discovering new plants, sharing family time, and learning something new. Staff members thought they would see attendance drop in the difficult economy of the past two years. Instead general day admissions increased by more than 45 percent. "Our visitors tell us they need a refreshing, peaceful environment to reduce the stress of both hard economic times and their busy lives," says President and CEO Frank Robinson.

Established in 1984, LGBG encompasses some 60 acres of landscaped gardens, a children's garden, visitor's center, greenhouses, an education and library complex, and a glass-domed conservatory. Visitors of all ages enjoy access to a wide variety of educational resources in these living classrooms. In 2010 more than 2,000 adults enrolled in continuing education classes, workshops, and seminars. LGBG offers classes in home gardening, landscape design, botanical art, and nature photography. In addition, the facility has hosted symposia addressing climate change, early childhood nature education, urban gardening, and sustainable landscape design. "We are seeing heightened interest in the area of sustainable landscapes. Citizens are becoming more aware that individual decisions, such as water usage and putting chemicals on lawns and plants, affect us all," says Robinson.

LGBG believes that working with living plants gives children a fun and interesting way to learn about science and math. Younger children make those learning connections through activities that tie into and enhance what they are learning in school. Older children complete youth service learning requirements and also serve as volunteers in the Children's Garden. This program gives young people an opportunity to develop a strong work ethic, gain practical work experience, and explore careers related to the horticultural field. LGBG staff members maintain close relationships with the school systems and early childhood learning centers in Richmond and surrounding counties. Educators participate in professional development programs offered by LGBG in partnership with Virginia Commonwealth University's Center for Life Sciences Education, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and the Departments of Game and Inland Fisheries and Forestry.

An active community partner, LGBG pools unused corporate benefits to open the gardens to visitors who, because of their economic circumstances, would not otherwise be able to come. Two free programs, a group program for children and *Sharing the Garden,* enable underserved and at-risk populations to visit and enjoy the gardens for free. Each year, to celebrate July 4th, LGBG suspends admission charges and invites the entire community in to celebrate.

These beautiful gardens and thoughtful programs clearly feed mind and soul, but LGBG also feeds the hungry through its Community Kitchen Garden. Volunteers help plant, cultivate, harvest, and deliver some 9,000 pounds of fresh nutritious food to FeedMore, an umbrella organization encompassing the Central Virginia Food Bank, Meals on Wheels, and the Community Kitchen. FeedMore President Fay Lohr says that LGBG provides common ground for a community that cares for the well-being of all its citizens. Many of the volunteers in the program are young people who gain a new appreciation for how food gets from the garden to the table as well as a better understanding of the challenges faced in feeding the hungry.

LGBG also provides common ground for broader regional efforts focused on urban greening. Robinson cites LGBG's partnership with Henrico County, which funded the first phase of a comprehensive water management plan, an exciting and innovative program aimed at conserving and purifying water flowing through the gardens to the Chesapeake Bay. The plan includes low-tech sustainable and regenerative design. The water management system will boost infiltration to local water tables, clean on-site water via natural

Left: Planting in the Community Kitchen Garden. **Top right:** Guests visit the garden on the Fourth of July free day. **Bottom right:** Children enjoy the accessible tree house in the Children's Garden.

biological systems, and reduce pollutant sources. "We see this as an opportunity to raise awareness that the Chesapeake Bay begins right here," says Robinson. "Our program will be a powerful resource for educational programming." LGBG is working now to incorporate best water management practices, an effort Robinson concedes is challenging, especially when those practices clash with established local building codes or familiar landscaping models. As water resources become increasingly threatened, however, he feels it's a challenge well worth taking on.

Address

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
1800 Lakeside Avenue
Richmond, VA 23228
Web site: www.lewisginter.org
Phone: 804-262-9887
Annual Budget: $5.2 million
Full-time Staff: 48
Part-time Staff: 30
President and CEO: Frank Robinson

Community Partners

CenterStage Performing Arts Center, Central Virginia Nursery and Landscape Association, City of Richmond, FeedMore (Central Virginia FoodBank & Meals on Wheels), Flora of Virginia Project, Henrico County, Hollywood Cemetery, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, Massey Cancer Center, Monroe Park Advisory Council, Prevent Child Abuse Virginia, Richmond Audubon Society, Richmond Public Schools Garden Task Force, Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, Richmond SPCA, Tricycle Gardens, University of Richmond, Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia Society of Landscape Designers.

Madison Children's Museum

Madison, WI

For the more than 270,000 visitors to Madison Children's Museum (MCM), the facility might well be called the Madison Community Museum. Since its inception in 1980, the museum has outgrown three rented facilities. In 2005, with a $5 million gift, MCM purchased a 56,000-square-foot historic building marked for demolition. Working with a local architect, MCM restored the building's 1920s character and established a fully accessible, four-season green roof. From 2007 to its grand opening in August 2010, MCM involved the community at every opportunity. With a commitment to using only local people and products, MCM engaged some 15,000 citizens who donated money, time, and even artwork. A permanent installation features bottle cap art, made by 13,000 local students. MCM was built for and with the community and, through an environmentally responsible approach, anticipates being the first LEED-certified museum in Wisconsin.

The museum is proud of programs that enable families with limited means to visit often. "We offer a $1 admission for anyone on public assistance, no questions asked," says Executive Director Ruth Shelly. "And we also offer a Family Access annual membership for $8 for those on documented public assistance." Once inside, all visitors enjoy full access to the programs offered. MCM structures programs so that parents and caregivers can interact with their children through play. Staff, who are trained in early childhood development, help parents embrace their role as their children's first and best teachers. "We encourage open-ended play," says Shelly. "We provide tools and some basic guidance, but allow the children to follow their own lead. Children today are so often overscheduled. They need freedom to follow their imaginations." She notes that staff encourage parents to take a break from cell phones and e-mail and get the full benefit of this important time with their children. For adults who are caregivers to both children and elders with early-stage memory loss, MCM also offers *SPARK!,* an art-making program that engages three generations and often sees children taking on the role of teacher.

In reaching out to its community, MCM has made an effort to ensure staff members reflect the community they serve. Shelly sees the effect every day as visitors from a diverse community feel a sense of welcome and belonging. And visitors may find something familiar—perhaps something they donated—in the exhibits. MCM, with its "only local" focus, uses materials from the community in exhibits and programs. Such objects trigger both delighted recognition and intergenerational conversations. "For kids who have never seen a 1950s-era beauty parlor chair (complete with dryer hood) or a rotary telephone, these objects serve as a way to connect with their caregivers and learn something new," says Shelly. These locally sourced objects provide great photo opportunities and create a sense of place directly related to Madison and its residents. The museum could not exist without the 250-plus volunteers who work in exhibit spaces, assist with programs, and help out behind the scenes each day, Shelly says.

Shelly says the museum has learned lessons from the community it serves. "We had no idea of the impact we would have on workforce development," she says. MCM has been able to offer jobs to young people needing experience, as well as those in need of a second chance to start anew. Taking on new and inexperienced staff challenged MCM employees to provide training and guidance, but Shelly says it has been an uplifting and heartwarming experience. MCM also learned it could have a positive impact on community relations. Staff developed the *Hmong at Heart* exhibit in collaboration with Hmong elders, an effort that drew hundreds of Hmong families to the museum and spawned teaching kits on Hmong culture for local schools. These projects created bright spots of hope following some high-profile conflicts between the Hmong and non-Hmong residents. As MCM works toward the future, Shelly cites two goals that will position the museum to have further positive

Left: A completed project in the ReFab Lab, a construction and building zone in Possible-opolis. **Top right:** The Water Dome in the Wildernest, and exhibit area that provides learning opportunities for children ages five and under. **Bottom right:** On the Rooftop Ramble, children learn about the natural world around them. All photos by Erin Moore Photography.

impacts on the community: leadership and collaboration. She is confident of MCM's readiness to lead by modeling practices that enrich the lives of children and families and she is equally confident that MCM's community is eager and ready to join in.

Address

Madison Children's Museum
100 North Hamilton Street
Madison, WI 53703
Web site: www.MadisonChildrensMuseum.org
Phone: 608-256-6445
Annual Budget: $3.2 million
Full-time Staff: 24
Part-time Staff: 44
Executive Director: Ruth Shelly

Community Partners

Aldo Leopold Nature Center, Alzheimer's Association-Greater Wisconsin, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Centro Hispano, Children's Theater of Madison, Girl Scouts of Badgerland Council, Goodman Community Center, Henry Vilas Zoo, MadCAP, Madison College, Madison Metropolitan School District, Madison Symphony Orchestra, Monona Terrace, NISE NET, Opera for the Young, Overture Center for the Arts, South Central Library System, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Urban League of Greater Madison, VSA Wisconsin, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, Wisconsin Historical Museum, YWCA Madison.

San José Public Library

San José, CA

Can a public library attract more visitors than popular sports events in the metropolitan area? San José Public Library (SJPL) can, and did, last year when it topped the combined total attendance of the home games of the San Francisco Giants, Oakland A's, San Francisco 49ers, Oakland Raiders, and San José Sharks by more than 1 million visitors. One of the busiest libraries in the country, with a checkout rate of nearly 14 million items annually, SJPL is widely known for its commitment to lifelong learning. From its origins in 1872, the library has grown to encompass the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, a collaboration with San José State University, and 18 branches. The library is on its way to adding five additional branches in the coming years.

A city with a population of nearly 959,000, San José is comprised of richly diverse neighborhoods. SJPL focuses its programs, services, and even staffing to ensure it meets each community's needs. The library employs staff that reflects the predominant cultures in the community and the website offers information in more than a dozen languages. "About 40% of the people in our service area were not born in the United States," says Director Jane Light. "We often get requests from residents asking if they can use our resources to teach their language or culture to their American-born children. And we say absolutely! We want all residents to see the library as their community hub."

At the library's *Inclusive Story Times,* children with varying learning styles and abilities learn together in a safe and supportive environment where respect and appreciation for differences is encouraged. Through the expanded story time program, *Stay and Play,* parents and children play together using library provided toys and parents build supportive relationships with one another. Interactive workshops help parents discover how much they can teach their children through everyday experiences and by using common household items. "It is always exciting to watch young children having fun while learning and to see parents become enthusiastic about the many ways they can support their child's development," says Light. School-age children access online homework help sessions in three languages and teens develop critical leadership skills through *teensReach.* Through its Family Learning Centers, some 18,000 children, young people, and adults improve their literacy and life skills each year.

Light traces SJPL's present success to a building program started in 2000. She notes that with library usage increasing 10 to 15 percent every year, SJPL knew it had to evolve to meet the need. A $212 million bond measure helped turn ideas culled from community research into reality. Library branch size morphed from 8,000 square feet to 20,000 square feet, enabling the addition of teen centers, Internet cafés, community meeting rooms, classrooms, and more computers for customer use.

In 2001, in response to community research, SJPL adopted a customer-driven service model. Staff members have moved from behind desks and backroom tasks to the service floor to provide assistance where needed. One key to this approach was incorporating interior design elements that support a customer focus. Instead of seeing a big service desk when they enter SJPL branches, customers see the *Market Place,* a bookstore-style display of new and popular materials. All branches use a consistent way finding program which includes branded areas and signage. "We also made self-checkout the primary option, freeing our service staff to focus on assisting customers," says Light. In line with this approach, SJPL conducts customer satisfaction and program outcome surveys, using this information to fine tune its programs. These service innovations have become known in the field as the "San José Way."

Light notes that customers are excited about a recent grant-supported initiative called *Scan Jose. Scan Jose* consists of three Smartphone enabled self-guided walking tours that give residents and tourists alike an interactive way to explore downtown San José's history, using new and expanding technologies. *Scan Jose* integrates historical resources of SJPL's

Left: A parent and child select books together. **Top right:** Adults use computers in the Internet Cafe at the Cambrian Branch. **Bottom right:** A *Partners in Reading* learner works with a tutor.

California Room with the real-world. "We see this as a first step in giving our customers a meaningful and easy way to take library collections with them and use them in their everyday lives," says Light. *Scan Jose* brings our history to life. Customers are already asking, what's next?"

Address

San José Public Library
150 E. San Fernando Street
San José, CA 95112
Web site: www.sjpl.org
Phone: 408-808-2000
Annual Budget: $32.3 million
Full-time Staff: 163
Part-time Staff: 395
Director: Jane Light

Community Partners

Camera Cinemas; Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County; Center for Employment Training; Choices for Children East Side Union High School District; Local Early Education Planning Council of Santa Clara County; Master Gardeners of Santa Clara County; Pro Bono Project Silicon Valley; San José State University; San José Public Library Foundation and 21 Branch Library Friends Groups Santa Clara County Office of Education; Services, Immigrant Rights and Education Network; The Tech Museum.

Weippe Public Library & Discovery Center

Weippe, ID

For rural communities where Internet and cell phone services are not easily obtained, the local library may become a valued community resource and a persuasive advocate for dynamic future growth. That is certainly true in tiny Weippe (population 416). The Weippe Public Library & Discovery Center (WPL) provides traditional library services to some 1,000 county residents. A branch of the county library system, it also helps residents apply for jobs and unemployment assistance, serves as a catalyst for bringing technology to this remote region, and channels the abundant energy of youngsters into positive pathways, using both high-tech electronic games and the decidedly low-tech toy LEGOs®.

With a budget-forced, four-day school week, area children have time on their hands with few resources for recreation or continued learning. That three-day weekend, seemingly a childhood dream, created a boredom-filled gap. The WPL stepped in with programs designed to appeal to three age groups. Preschool children benefit from *First Books,* a program that provides free books and offers storytelling services. Library staffers employ popular electronic gaming systems to attract teens. "We try to keep teens busy and off the streets with reading materials and games suited to their interests," says WPL Director Terri Summerfield. In the LEGOs® program, elementary school students use the bright plastic bricks on challenging projects. They learn teamwork as well as basic design, problem solving, and engineering concepts. Originally serving 1st through 3rd grade, the popular program has expanded to cover grades 4 through 8.

In providing services to adults, WPL is taking on the triple challenges of mountainous terrain, persistent unemployment, and no cell phone service. Even short drives involve a long commute over winding roads that often are impassable in bad weather. WPL connects its community digitally with the world through its membership in VALNet (Valley Automated Library Service), WIN (Washington Idaho Network), Libraries Linking Idaho (LiLI) and WorldCat. More than 3 million resources and 54 million records in multiple languages are a few keystrokes away.

WPL staff saw a need for assistance among unemployed adults using their computers Its four, part-time staff members help patrons file unemployment claims, create resumes, search and apply for jobs, and even learn basic computer skills. Patrons can accomplish these tasks using a high-speed Internet connection, which the WPL helped secure for the community in 2007. Summerfield and her staff feel that they are here to serve the needs of the public. "We listen to residents of all ages. We ask: what services are lacking, what can we do to fill the need? And then we figure out how to get it done." That focus led to the purchase recently of a network booster that provides cellular service through the library's high-speed Internet connection. "We see people in the library and even in our parking lot making their cell calls through our connection, so we know there is a need to expand that service out to the community," says Summerfield.

Justifiably proud of the region's role in American history, the WPL operates the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center and serves as the point of contact for the all-Volunteer Chamber of Commerce. As she looks to the future, Summerfield says expanding cellular service to the community is high on her list followed closely by partnering with the local school system to improve math and reading scores. She is excited about the possibility of promoting recreational tourism through the library's association with the Chamber of Commerce and sees this initiative as key to stabilizing the local economy and creating jobs. Summerfield says that the WPL staff and community partners are following a clear vision in their future plans. "When we moved into our new facility," she says, "we envisioned something more than a traditional community center, something more than Ping-Pong tables and basketball. We wanted to create an information-age community center. We will continue to find ways to fund our needs, through grants, donations, overdue fines, whatever it takes. We want to strengthen our

Left:
Kiahna McCollum
and Connor Cox beat on an African
drum during a summer reading program.
Top right: WPL coaches and sponsors a First Lego® League.
Robo-Dragon team members Bradley McCollum, Theron Widener, Erin Sellers, Cady Jared,
Brodi Woodworth compete at the regional challenge. **Bottom right:** David and Andrew Stroup examine the
animal hides on one of the interpretive displays in the Weippe Discovery Center.

community against economic downturns and give residents access to 21st century tools." With its innovative approach to fulfilling community needs, WPL is well on its way accomplish those goals.

Address

Weippe Public Library & Discovery Center
P.O.Box 435
204 Wood Street
Weippe, ID 83553
Web sites: www.weippelibrary.org and
www.weippediscoverycenter.com
Phone: 208-435-4058
Annual Budget: $83,500
Full-time Staff: 0
Part-time Staff: 4
Director: Terri Summerfield

Community Partners

City of Weippe, County Free Library District, Friends of the Weippe Library, Lewis-Clark Early Childhood Program, Timberline Schools, Weippe-Fraser Recreation District.

Previous Winners of the National Medal

2010

Conner Prairie Interactive History Park, Fishers, IN
Explora, Albuquerque, NM
Japanese American National Museum, Los Angeles, CA
Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson, MS
Nashville Public Library, Nashville, TN
The New York Botanical Garden, New York, NY
Patchogue-Medford Library, Patchogue, NY
Peter White Public Library, Marquette, MI
Rangeview Library District and Anythink Libraries, Adams County, CO
West Bloomfield Township Public Library, West Bloomfield Township, MI

2009

Braille Institute Library Services, Los Angeles, CA
Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA
Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal, Cincinnati, OH
Gail Borden Public Library, Elgin, IL
Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, IN
Multnomah County Library, Portland, OR
Museum of Science & Industry, Tampa, FL
Pritzker Military Library, Chicago, IL
Stark County District Library, Canton, OH
Tennessee Aquarium, Chattanooga, TN

2008

Buffalo Bill Historical Center, Cody, WY
The Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, PA
General Lew Wallace Study and Museum, Crawfordsville, IN
Jane Stern Dorado Community Library, Inc., Dorado, PR
Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, MO
Lower East Side Tenement Museum, New York, NY
Miami-Dade Public Library System, Miami, FL
Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach, FL
Skidompha Library, Damariscotta, ME
Skokie Public Library, Skokie, IL

2007

Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, Birmingham, AL
Brookfield Zoo of the Chicago Zoological Society, Brookfield, IL
Georgetown County Library, Georgetown, SC
Kim Yerton Branch of the Humboldt County Library, Hoopa, CA
Memphis Public Library & Information Center, Memphis, TN
National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, DC
The Newberry Library, Chicago, IL
Ocean County Library, Toms River, NJ
Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, Portland, OR
Vermont Historical Society, Barre, VT

2006

Artrain USA, Ann Arbor, MI
Frankfort Community Public Library, Frankfort, IN
John G. Shedd Aquarium, Chicago, IL
Lincoln Children's Zoo, Lincoln, NE
Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, Charlotte, NC
San Antonio Public Library, San Antonio, TX

2005

COSI Toledo, Toledo, OH
Johnson County Library, Overland Park, KS
Levine Museum of the New South, Charlotte, NC
Mathews Memorial Library, Mathews, VA
Pratt Museum, Homer, AK
Saint Paul Public Library, Saint Paul, MN

2004

Chicago Botanic Garden, Chicago, IL
Flint Public Library, Flint, MI
Mayagüez Children's Library, Inc., Mayagüez, PR
The Regional Academic Health Center Medical Library of the University of Texas Health Science Center, San Antonio, TX
Western Folklife Center, Inc., Elko, NE
Zoological Society of San Diego, San Diego, CA

2003

Bozeman Public Library, Bozeman, MT
Carnegie Science Center, Pittsburgh, PA
Free Library of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA
Pocahontas County Free Libraries, Marlinton, WV
San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts, San Angelo, TX
USS Constitution Museum, Boston, MA

Previous Winners of the National Medal (Continued)

2002

Boundary County District Library, Bonners Ferry, ID
Hartford Public Library, Hartford, CT
Please Touch Museum, Philadelphia, PA
Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art, Loretto, PA
Southwest Georgia Regional Public Library System, Bainbridge, GA
Wildlife Conservation Society/Bronx Zoo, Bronx, NY

2001

Alaska Resources Library and Information Services, Anchorage, AK
Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose, San Jose, CA
Hancock County Library System, Bay St. Louis, MS
Miami Museum of Science, Miami, FL
New England Aquarium, Boston, MA
Providence Public Library, Providence, RI

2000 (the first year libraries participated in the program)

Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY
Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository, Kodiak, AK
B.B. Comer Memorial Library, Sylacauga, AL
Queens Borough Public Library, Jamaica, NY
Simon Wiesenthal Center Library and Archives, Los Angeles, CA
Urie Elementary School Library, Lyman, WY
Youth Museum of Southern West Virginia, Beckley, WV

1999

Lincoln Park Zoo, Chicago, IL
Nevada Museum of Art, Reno, NV
St. Simons Island Lighthouse Museum, St. Simons Island, GA

1998

Belknap Mill Society, Laconia, NH
Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village, Dearborn, MI
New Jersey Historical Society, Newark, NJ

1997

The Children's Museum of Indianapolis, Indianapolis, IN
The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX
National Aquarium in Baltimore, Baltimore, MD

1996

The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC
The Field Museum, Chicago, IL
The Natural Science Center of Greensboro, Greensboro, NC

1995

Brooklyn Children's Museum, Brooklyn, NY
The Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum, Chicago, IL
Montshire Museum of Science, Norwich, VT
The Wing Luke Asian Museum, Seattle, WA

1994

Brukner Nature Center, Troy, OH
The Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens, Jacksonville, FL
Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, MO

About IMLS

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 122,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The Institute's mission is to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas. The Institute works at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge; enhance learning and innovation; and support professional development. To learn more about the Institute, please visit www.imls.gov.

The Institute supports the full range of museums, including art, history, science and technology, children's, natural history, historic houses, nature centers, botanical gardens, and zoos; and all types of libraries, including public, school, academic, research, and archival. Our robust capacity for research, evaluation, policy analysis, grantmaking, and partnerships helps make it possible for libraries and museums to be leaders in their communities.

Museums and libraries are among America's leading public institutions, making knowledge available to millions at little or no cost. As public institutions they must meet a very high threshold of mission accountability and use resources wisely for public good. Through grants and information resources, we annually reach thousands of museums and libraries in myriad ways—from providing much-needed technical assistance for small institutions to establishing national and replicable models, strengthening state networks, and supporting professional development. To aid institutions in program design, we also provide tools for strategic planning and evaluation. Funding from the Institute helps museums and libraries operate effectively and give value to their communities. It also leverages additional public and private support.

Collecting and disseminating results from funded projects, engaging in research, and publishing reports enable the Institute of Museum and Library Services to make a significant contribution to library, museum, and information policy and practice in the United States.

Address

Institute of Museum and Library Services
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Washington, DC 20036-5802
Web site: www.imls.gov
Phone: 202-653-IMLS
E-mail: imlsinfo@imls.gov

About the National Museum and Library Services Board

The National Museum and Library Services Board advises the Institute's director on selections for the National Medals. This Board is an advisory body that includes President-appointed and Senate-confirmed individuals with expertise in, or commitment to, library, museum, and information services. Informed by its collectively vast experience and knowledge, the Board also advises the Institute's director on general policy, practices, and coordination with other federal agencies and offices.

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