



# Jesse White

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SECRETARY OF STATE

# NEWS

## ILLINOIS SECRETARY OF STATE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

- **March 30, 2001**
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### **White Salutes Illinois Libraries Celebrating National Library Week April 1-7**

**SPRINGFIELD** —Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White today saluted the nearly 4,000 academic, public, school and special libraries in Illinois as they prepare to celebrate National Library Week April 1-7.

"More patrons are utilizing our libraries than ever before, and much of the credit for the ever-growing popularity of our libraries goes to the outstanding men and women who serve as librarians," White said. "In my role as State Librarian I have the opportunity to visit many libraries, and the enthusiasm and professionalism of the librarians with whom I meet always impresses me. I am proud of all that they do to keep the citizens of Illinois educated, enlightened and entertained."

White said he is particularly proud that 18 Illinois public libraries serve as hosts for White's innovative statewide mentoring program, Project Next Generation. Project Next Generation is a program for sixth through ninth graders, where qualified mentors help students develop technological skills and serve as positive role models.

"Our public libraries are proving to be the perfect environment for the development of Project Next Generation," White said. "At every site I've visited, kids are having fun and developing technological skills that will serve them well for the rest of their lives. Librarians, parents, educators, civic leaders and others are proud that their local library and their students are part of Project Next Generation."

"Libraries are special places that have a tremendous impact on the lives of patrons. At a library, you can see the

wonder and awe in a child's eyes as they listen to a story told during a library reading program. You can see the joy in the smile of a senior citizen that has learned how to e-mail their grandchildren thanks to a library Internet training program. You can see the satisfaction experienced by a young entrepreneur who has used a library to obtain information to increase her business opportunities.

"I encourage the citizens of Illinois to stop by their local library during National Library Week and thank their library staff for being such an important part of the community."