



Jesse White

SECRETARY OF STATE

NEWS

ILLINOIS SECRETARY OF STATE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 1, 2003

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White Salutes Illinois Librarians Celebrating National Library Week April 6-12

Springfield — Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White today saluted the librarians working in Illinois' nearly 4,000 academic, public, school and special libraries as they prepare to celebrate National Library Week April 6-12.

"More patrons are using our libraries than ever before," White said. "Libraries play an important role in our communities, especially at times like these. Studies indicate that library usage goes up during difficult economic times, because persons looking for work rely on libraries for research. In addition, Persons living on fixed incomes, students and many of our senior citizens are regular users of our libraries. Individuals without access to computers or the Internet at home or work know they can obtain such access for free at many of our libraries. And citizens eager to learn more about current events know they can find newspapers, magazines and books at their local library.

"Much of the credit for the ever-growing popularity of our libraries goes to the outstanding men and women who serve as librarians. In my role as State Librarian I visit many libraries, and I am always impressed by the enthusiasm and professionalism of our librarians. I am proud of everything they do to keep the citizens of Illinois well educated and entertained."

White will meet with and speak to several hundred Illinois librarians traveling to Springfield April 9th for Library Advocacy Day at the Illinois State Library. Each year librarians travel to Springfield to lobby lawmakers about issues important to the library community. The Illinois Library Association, the Illinois State Library, the Illinois Library

System Directors Organization, and the Illinois School Library Media Association sponsor Illinois Library Advocacy Day.

White said he is also proud that 21 Illinois public libraries serve as hosts for his 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 the perfect environment for 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.

"Libraries are magical places, and I hope all Illinois citizens will stop by their local library during National Library Week, and thank their library staff for being such an important part of their community."