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A Newsletter from the Illinois State Library — Jesse White, Secretary of State & State Librarian

Illinois State Library Strategic Plan released

Over the past three years, a committee of State Library staff has thoroughly examined all facets of State Library operations with the goal of developing a comprehensive strategic plan. The Strategic Plan for 2008-2011 has been released, and this issue features the plan's Executive Summary and Strategic Priorities. To view the entire plan, please visit www.cyberdriveillinois.com (click Departments, then New Projects).

"I commend the staff of the State Library who worked diligently to develop a plan that positions the State Library to address the needs of state government and the Illinois library community in the coming years," said Secretary of State Jesse White. "This comprehensive document is a reflection of the commitment and dedication of the State Library to providing the best possible programs and services to the people of Illinois, and to guarantee that the State Library remains at the forefront of technology and information needs of its patrons into the next decade and beyond."

Strategic Plan 2008-2011 • Executive Summary

The Illinois State Library has been meeting the informational needs of state government since 1839. Over the years, the State Library's range of service has expanded from its genesis as a library for state government to the flagship of the 5,000-plus libraries strong Illinois Library and Information Network. The State of Illinois, like many other state governments, is facing an increasing demand for services with insufficient resources, both human and capital. To address this situation, the State Library developed a comprehensive strategic plan for the future.

As a key part of the planning process, the State Library identified its primary clientele as Secretary of State employees; members of the General Assembly and state officials and employees; special users (Talking Book and Braille Service; electronic resources; maps;

patents; adult literacy users); and Illinois libraries and patrons.

A Mission Statement was adopted that states: ***"The Illinois State Library promotes excellence in information access and innovative services for government, libraries and people."***

The Strategic Plan will serve as a road map for the State Library in addressing programmatic and budgetary challenges in the coming years by emphasizing the following:

- The State Library recognizes technology is the foundation of its services and programs. The State Library will use the best available technology to better serve its users.
- The State Library will invest in leadership by supporting continuing education activities for its staff and for libraries in Illinois.

- The State Library is committed to expanding opportunities for people having difficulty using library services. The State Library will strive to increase the state's literacy rate through its programs.
- The State Library intends to increase the use of its collections and services. A more aggressive outreach program is the vehicle for attracting new users and addressing the future needs of current users.

The State Library's strategic vision places an emphasis on customer service and complements the mission of the Office of Secretary of State: *Service Above All*. (See pages 3-4 for Strategic Plan Priorities.)

May/June
2008

Illinois Library Day – April 10

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A downpour didn't dampen the enthusiastic spirit of participants at Illinois Library Day, who warmly welcomed Secretary of State Jesse White.

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State Library Director Anne Craig and Chief Deputy Director Lawren Tucker were among the Illinois Library Day crowd showing support for libraries.

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Randee Hudson (right), president-elect of the Illinois School Library Media Association, attended Library Day with Jasmine Claspell (left) and Veronica Sprague, members of the Teen Advisory Board at Millburn Central School in Wadsworth.

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A view of the large crowd that gathered in the State Library's atrium for the Library Day legislative breakfast and rally.

Letters About Literature winners

Students from Buffalo Grove, Norridge and Skokie have been selected as the Illinois winners of the annual "Letters About Literature" contest, a national reading and writing contest for students in grades 4 through 12. The contest is sponsored by the Illinois Center for the Book, and presented by The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress in partnership with Target Stores.

Approximately 56,000 young readers across the country participated in this year's competition in which participants write a letter to an author explaining how the author's work changed their view of the world or themselves. Readers may select authors, living or deceased, from any literary genre. The Illinois Center for the Book appointed judges who selected the top Illinois essayists at three competition levels.

Level I, grades 4-6 — Nikki Rhum, Twin Groves Middle School, Buffalo Grove, for her letter to Dan Millman, author of *The Peaceful Warrior*.

Level II, grades 7, 8 — Joey Romano, James Giles School, Norridge, for his letter to Betsy Byars, author of *The Summer of the Swans*.

Level III, grades 9-12 — Amy Nathan, Ida Crown Jewish Academy in Chicago, for her letter to Mitch Albom, author of *Tuesdays with Morrie*.

"These three talented young readers were among nearly 4,800 Illinois students who took part in this year's contest, giving Illinois more entries than any state in the nation," said Secretary of State Jesse White, who serves as honorary chair of the Illinois Center for the Book. "Though only these three students will advance to the national competition, all the students who took part are winners because they are developing a lifelong love of reading and learning."

The three Illinois winners will meet with Secretary White later this year to receive their awards, which include a \$50 Target gift card and \$150 from the Illinois Center for the Book.

At the national level, judges for The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress will select six winners — two from each level — and 12 honorable mention winners — four from each level. The six winners will receive a \$500 Target gift card and a \$10,000 LAL Reading Promotion Grant for their community or school library. Honorable mention winners each will receive a \$100 Target gift card and a \$1,000 LAL Reading Promotion Grant for their community or school library.

Minneapolis-based Target serves guests at 1,591 stores in 47 states nationwide by delivering today's best retail trends at affordable prices. Target (NYSE:TGT) gives more than \$3 million a week to its local communities through grants and special programs. Since opening its first store in 1962, Target has partnered with nonprofit organizations, guests and team members to help meet community needs.



ISL Strategic Plan 2008-2011

Strategic Priorities



GOAL 1: Promote the Use of Technology to Improve Library Services

- Better serve statewide user needs by seeking the latest technology.
- Develop a single unified source of information for overall grant administration, allowing libraries and organizations to easily apply for grants and for the State Library to efficiently manage records.
- Lead, partner and demonstrate technology solutions to promote efficiency statewide.
- Establish a single, statewide continuing education calendar and registration system.
- Coordinate statewide online content.
- Increase the proficiency of State Library staff in applying technology to job duties.

GOAL 2: Provide Leadership to the Illinois Library Community To Enhance Library Service

- Enhance the skills and knowledge of State Library staff to provide leadership.
- Increase recognition of State Library staff by users and within the library community as experts in library service and development.
- Position Illinois librarians for leadership roles.
- Proactively cooperate with initiatives of libraries and other organizations in addressing key library issues.
- Update the Illinois Regional Library System Standards to establish benchmarks for library service in the state.

GOAL 3: Increase Access to Library Services for the Underserved

- Seek an increase in state funding for local public library service.
- Promote high-quality library service for all K-12 students.
- Expand opportunities for libraries and literacy organizations.

(continued on page 4)

Secretary White awards per capita, construction grants to public libraries

Secretary of State Jesse White awarded 644 Illinois public libraries nearly \$14.2 million in FY08 per capita and equalization aid grants. Per capita grants were awarded to 634 libraries at a rate of \$1.21 per resident. Ten libraries with low library tax bases received equalization aid grants, which ensure a minimum level of funding for library services.

"Illinois' public libraries are cornerstones of our communities — places where every citizen can go for information, education or entertainment," said Secretary White. "This valuable annual funding helps ensure that our public libraries have the resources to address the needs of their patrons." Libraries may use the grants for important expenses such as books, personnel, equipment and electronic access."

Ten public libraries with capital improvement needs received construction grants under the State Library's FY08 Live and Learn Construction Grant program. The grants assist public libraries in paying for projects such as remodeling for disability accessibility, new carpeting and windows, and parking improvements.

"Many of our public libraries simply don't have sufficient financial resources to pay for essential capital improvements on their own," said Secretary White. "I am pleased that we can award these grants to help maintain and improve public library facilities for patrons to enjoy today and into the future."

Construction grants were awarded to the following libraries:

- Helen M. Plum Memorial Library, Lombard
- Schmalting Memorial Public Library District, Fulton
- Cicero Public Library
- Golconda Public Library
- Kewanee Public Library District
- West Frankfort Public Library
- Wood River Public Library
- Coal City Public Library District
- Lemont Public Library District
- Warren Township Public Library, Freeport

SAVE THE DATE

June 2008							July 2008							August 2008						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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29	30						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
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June 1-6

Small Public Library Management Institute
University of Illinois at Springfield

June 8-13

Institute for School and Public Librarians
Bradley University, Peoria

August 5-7

Synergy Leadership Conference
Pere Marquette Lodge, Grafton

August 8-17

Illinois State Library at the
Illinois State Fair, Secretary of State tent
Springfield

*Look for a special display on the
Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial celebration!*

Strategic Priorities

(continued from page 3)

- Consolidate the State Library's statewide reading programs.
- Provide alternative library service for those who cannot read standard print material.

GOAL 4: Increase Usage of the State Library's Services and Collections

- Increase use of the State Library's facility and its entire collection, including reference, interlibrary loan and the Talking Book and Braille Service.
- Expand and strengthen the State Library's role as an information provider.
- Strengthen the Government Documents Program.
- Review and update the Collection Development Policy.
- Increase cooperative collection development with other libraries, including state agency libraries.

GOAL 5: Promote Awareness of the State Library's Strengths and Services

- Redesign the State Library's Web page in cooperation with the Secretary of State's Department of Information Technology.
- Increase awareness to state employees of services provided by the State Library.
- Improve internal and external communications to lead State Library staff and the Illinois library community.