

## in this issue

Secretary White salutes librarians

Letters About Literature

Construction grants awarded

White, Durbin award small business grant

\$12 million in per capita grants awarded



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

May/June  
2011

## Secretary White salutes librarians during National Library Week

Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White saluted Illinois librarians and other members of the library community during National Library Week, April 10-16.

“As I enter my fourth term as State Librarian, I am more proud than ever of our librarians and library staff,” said Secretary White. “They remain completely committed to providing the best possible service to library users, and are some of our most dedicated, hardworking and knowledgeable public servants. Illinois has a network of more than 5,000 academic, public, school and special libraries and library systems that are without question the finest in the nation. Our libraries are so important to our communities, and during National Library Week I hope the citizens who use and enjoy libraries thank their local librarians and library staffs for their outstanding service.”

Secretary White said he is particularly proud that librarians and library staff embrace change and constantly seek to enhance their skills to provide better service to patrons.

“Right now, members of the Illinois library community are enthusiastically taking part in ILEAD U, the State Library’s initiative where librarians are learning to use a variety of participatory technology tools and create programs that can be models for the nation. Other members of the library community are involved in exhaustive efforts to merge our regional library systems so we can continue to provide essential core services like prompt delivery, resource sharing and talking books to library users.

“In conjunction with National Library Week, librarians throughout Illinois collected and compiled information, comments and photographs from events in a typical library day to show how valuable libraries are to our communities,” he added. “These are the types of commitments that prove conclusively that Illinois libraries are the best, most affordable and most reliable sources of information available to citizens. I am honored to be a part of this outstanding community.”



**WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH** — Secretary of State Jesse White commemorated National Women’s History Month in March with an exhibit titled “Our History, Our Strength,” which was on display in the Illinois State Library in Springfield and the James R. Thompson Center in Chicago. The exhibit was developed with images from the Illinois Digital Archives, Illinois State Archives and the collection of the late Theresa Petrone, Board of Election Commissioner for the City of Chicago. Joining Secretary White in Chicago were (left to right): Associate Judge Angela Petrone, Theresa Petrone’s daughter; Kathy Gallanis, president of the Women’s Bar Association of Illinois; and Julie Ann Sebastian, assistant Cook County state’s attorney.

## ILEAD U

The second year of ILEAD U (Illinois Librarians Explore, Apply and Discover), the 21st Century Technology Tool Institute for Illinois library staff, is under way at the University of Illinois Springfield. The State Library developed ILEAD U to help library staff understand and respond to user needs through the application of participatory technology tools and the creation of an easy-to-replicate model program.

The second of three weeklong seminars takes place in June. A special guest for the opening week of year two of ILEAD U was Mary Chute, deputy director for libraries at the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). State Library staffers Robert Jones and Tom Huber are on one of the teams developing projects this year.

Funding for ILEAD U is provided through a Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program Grant awarded to the State Library from IMLS.



Mary Chute



Robert Jones (left) and Tom Huber

## “Letters About Literature” winners

Students from Lincolnshire, Naperville and Bloomington are among the Illinois winners of the 2011 “Letters About Literature” contest, a national reading and writing competition for students. The contest is sponsored by the Illinois Center for the Book in cooperation with the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress and in partnership with Target.

Students in grades 4-12 read a book and write a personal letter to the author explaining how the book changed their views of the world or themselves. Authors may be living or deceased and from any genre — fiction or nonfiction, contemporary or classic. An impressive 6,700 Illinois students took part in this year’s contest, marking the fourth year in a row that Illinois had more entries than any state in the nation. The Illinois Center for the Book appointed judges who selected the top essayists on three competition levels. This year’s winners are:

- **Level I, Grades 4-6:** *Conrad Oberhaus*, 5th grade, Daniel Wright Jr. High School in Lincolnshire, for his letter to Daniel Defoe, author of *Robinson Crusoe*.
- **Level II – Grades 7-8:** *Naasir Haleem*, 7th grade, Jefferson Jr. High School in Naperville, for his letter to Mark Pfitzer, author of *Within Reach*.
- **Level III, Grades 9-12:** *Stacie Cle*, senior, Central Catholic High School in Bloomington, for her letter to Helen Siiteri, author of *The Adventures of Nicholas*.

(Winning essays are available at <http://illinoiscenterforthebook.org/projects/projectse.html>.)

Each state winner receives a \$50 Target gift card, a U.S. Savings Bond from the Illinois Center for the Book, and a plaque presented by Secretary of State Jesse White at an awards ceremony. Illinois winning letters are forwarded to a national judging panel where six national winners (two per level) and 12 national honorable mentions (four per level) will be selected.

The six national winners will receive a \$500 Target gift card and a \$10,000 Letters About Literature Reading Promotion Grant in their name for their community or school library. The national honorable mention winners will receive a \$100 Target gift card and a \$1,000 Letters About Literature Reading Promotion Grant in their name for their community or school library.

*Target sponsors Letters About Literature as part of its national reading initiative, “Ready. Sit. Read!,” aimed at fostering a love of reading among children at an early age. Since opening its first store in 1962, Target has partnered with nonprofit organizations, guests and team members to help meet community needs.*

SAVE THE DATE

June 13-16

ILEAD U — University of Illinois Springfield

August 12-21

Illinois State Library at the Illinois State Fair — Springfield

September 1

Illinois State Library Advisory Committee meeting — State Library

The Illinois State Library will be closed  
for the following state holidays:

Monday, May 30 — Memorial Day Holiday

Monday, July 4 — Independence Day

## Secretary White, Senator Durbin award small business grant

The Illinois State Library will provide more than 60 Illinois public libraries with “business packages” consisting of equipment, software and training videos to assist small businesses and entrepreneurs in local communities. U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin obtained a \$300,000 grant through the Small Business Administration (SBA) to fund the initiative. Secretary of State Jesse White will administer the funds through the State Library.

“Partnerships such as this between libraries, small businesses and aspiring employers can hopefully spur economic development and job creation in our local communities,” said Secretary White. “Highly skilled librarians and library staff are extremely valuable and reliable sources of information for small businesses and entrepreneurs.

“These business packages represent new tools that our public libraries can utilize to promote business development and entrepreneurship. Illinois is very fortunate to have a public servant like Senator Durbin who supports our libraries and recognizes that they can be useful in assisting economic development in Illinois.”

“Small businesses are key to our economic recovery,” said Senator Durbin. “This funding will allow public libraries to offer information and assistance to small business owners in communities across the state. With these new resources and continued support from local public libraries, businesses throughout Illinois will grow and local economies will improve.”

Public libraries selected for the program will receive equipment (laptops, DVD players, projectors, video camera), software (planning and office functions) and training videos (office safety, sexual harassment, hostile workplace). The criteria for awarding the package include the library community’s local unemployment rate as well as the library’s proximity to and cooperation with a Small Business Development Center, Service Corps of Retired Employees (SCORE) office or chamber of commerce.

## \$12 million in per capita grants awarded

Secretary of State Jesse White has awarded FY2011 Illinois Public Library Per Capita and Equalization Aid Grants totaling nearly \$12 million to 603 public libraries serving more than 11 million patrons.

“I am extremely proud of the outstanding service Illinois’ public libraries provide to our communities,” said Secretary White. “Our public libraries have never been more important to the patrons they serve. They have helped citizens enormously during recent difficult economic times by providing free Internet access, e-mail, books, CDs, DVDs and other materials. Offering such service reinforces my belief that libraries are truly cornerstones of our communities.”

Per capita grant funding is authorized under Illinois library law and helps ensure that public libraries have some of the most important resources to address the needs of their patrons. Libraries count on the grants for such expenses as materials, personnel, equipment, electronic access, telecommunications and technology. Equalization aid grants are important because they help public libraries that have a low library tax base and help ensure a minimum level of funding for library services.

## FY2011 Construction grants awarded

Secretary of State Jesse White has awarded FY2011 Live & Learn Construction Grants to 16 public libraries to help pay for essential capital improvements. The grant program helps public libraries pay for projects such as remodeling for disability accessibility, new heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, and in some cases new construction or building additions.

“Our public libraries are cornerstones of our communities, and they have never been more important than they are today,” said Secretary White. “I am pleased to be able to award these grants through the Illinois State Library to help maintain the infrastructure of our public libraries, and help them remain the best information resource available to citizens.”

Libraries receiving grants are:

- LaGrange Park Public Library District — \$50,000
- Mount Zion Public Library District — \$3,255
- Nashville Public Library — \$2,712
- New Athens District Library — \$50,000
- Bryan-Bennett Library, Salem — \$20,546
- Carrier Mills-Stonefort Public Library District — \$22,508
- Olney Public Library — \$25,000
- Gillespie Public Library — \$25,000
- Harrisburg Public Library District — \$24,690
- Waverly Public Library — \$25,000
- Toulon Public Library District — \$125,000
- Sycamore Public Library — \$125,000
- Lanark Public Library — \$123,350
- Mississippi Valley Public Library District, Fairmont City — \$125,000
- Atwood-Hammond Public Library District — \$25,000
- Waukegan Public Library — \$38,739

# TBBS

JESSE WHITE • ILLINOIS SECRETARY OF STATE



**TBBS ON THE MOVE** — State Library Talking Book and Braille Service staff continues to move items from their stand-alone building in downtown Springfield to new office space within the State Library Gwendolyn Brooks Building on Second Street across from the State Capitol. The move is expected to be complete this summer. Above is some of the new shelving in the State Library that houses audio-cassettes and digital talking books. TBBS staffers Cheryl Johnson and Sheri Vaughn (left) demonstrate how to use one of the State Library's new digital Talking Book players.



## State Library staff news

**Cheryl Goza Smith** has retired from the State Library. Cheryl began her career at the State Library in 1983. For the past three years, she has worked with the library's Diversity Program, a division of the Library Development Group. Prior to that, she served 25 years as a library specialist in the Reference Department. Best wishes Cheryl!

Reference Librarian **Sandra Fritz** marked her 20-year anniversary with the State Library in April.

**Michelle Schorfheide** has transferred from the Technical Services Unit to the Administrative Services Division.

**Jason O'Dell** has joined the Library Development Group to assist with public library construction grants.

Chicago office staffer **Tango Miller** has transferred to the Secretary of State Securities Department.

**Bette Morreale** has transferred from the Secretary of State Securities Department to the State Library's Chicago office in the Thompson Center.

Digital Imaging Program Manager **Alyce Scott** is now a full-time library program specialist.



Insight  
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