

# *Hawaii State Public Library System*

## **IMLS Five-Year Evaluation Report, 1998-2002**

### *I. Executive Summary*

In August 1997, the Hawaii State Public Library System (HSPLS) submitted a plan to spend 100% of Hawaii's LSTA funds for the 1998-2002 grant period on a single program. That program is the HSPLS library automation system, which has been ongoing since 1983 and has linked all the State's public libraries to one automation system.

As a result of the unified system, patrons at every branch have equal access to library materials as well as to on-line information databases and services and to the Internet. Further, dial-in access makes the HSPLS catalog available to patrons anywhere in the State. The past five years have been unusually challenging for Hawaii's public libraries, but the entire \$4,360,225 (*Appendix A*) received from the grant will be used as planned on automation and the system will have been steadily enhanced.

### *II. Overall Report of Results in Achieving Goals and Objectives Based on Five-Year Plan*

#### *A. Background of the Hawaii State Public Library System*

The Hawaii State Public Library System began with the founding of the Honolulu Library and Reading Room Association in 1879. Over the next thirty years, other private libraries were established on the islands of Kauai, Maui and Hawaii. The Honolulu group donated its resources to start the Library of Hawaii in 1909 and a Carnegie grant provided funds for the building in downtown Honolulu that opened to the public in 1913.

With the coming of statehood in 1959, the Legislature created a statewide public library system overseen by the statewide Board of Education (BOE). The Board, an elected body, appoints the State Librarian, who serves as chief executive officer of the library system. Neither the Board nor the library system has any powers of taxation. Hawaii has just two levels of government, State and County. As a State agency, HSPLS does not receive any County monies. Funding for public libraries comes primarily from appropriations by the State Legislature. Other sources of support include grants from nonprofit groups such as the Friends of the Library of Hawaii and the Hawaii Library Foundation, gifts from private citizens, and donations from corporate sponsors for

specific programs such as the Children’s Summer Reading Program. Federal funds have been critical to implementing and maintaining a successful library automation system.

HSPLS operates public libraries on the six major islands of the State.(*Appendix B*) The downtown Honolulu facility, now enlarged and named the Hawaii State Library, is the HSPLS flagship. Princeville Public Library, the fiftieth library in the system, opened on Kauai on April 14, 1999. A fifty-first site, Kapolei Public Library on Oahu, has been built and the opening is pending funding by the State Legislature.

The fifty current libraries include 13 facilities on Hawaii, 6 on Kauai, 1 on Lanai, 6 on Maui, 1 on Molokai and 23 on Oahu. Twelve of the branches are combination public and school libraries.(*Appendix C*) Each has at least one school librarian who is an employee of the adjacent school, but the Branch Manager is always an HSPLS employee. The Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped (LBPH) is located on Oahu and serves the entire state.

### ***B. Demographics Affecting Library Service***

Geography has played an important role in the development of the State and of the Hawaii State Public Library System. The State is made up of a series of islands stretching 1,523 miles from Kure Atoll to Cape Kumukahi on the island of Hawaii.(*Appendix D*) No place in the State is more than 28.5 miles from the ocean.(*Appendix E*) Public transportation between islands is by air. Freight and mail move from one island to another by air or by barge. The six islands serviced by HSPLS range in size from Lanai at 140.5 square miles to Hawaii (commonly called the Big Island) at 4,028 square miles.(*Appendix F*)

The State of Hawaii is sometimes described as the most isolated inhabited place on earth, and factors such as distance and time zones do have an impact on local life. For example, San Francisco, the closest American city via the Great Circle route, is 2,397 miles from Honolulu International Airport; 2,315 miles from Hilo Airport. Such distances mean freight costs and delivery times are everyday topics of discussion for local residents. Time zone differences also affect Hawaii’s citizens. The State does not go on Daylight Savings Time, so for seven months a year there is a three-hour time difference between Hawaii and the U.S. West Coast, six hours between Hawaii and the East Coast. The rest of the year, the difference is “only” two hours to the West Coast and five to the East.

Hawaii’s location in the middle of the Pacific has a profound impact on both library operations, such as moving books from place to place or contacting vendors, and on the interests of library patrons. Not surprisingly, people in Hawaii have a strong interest in Asia and the Pacific. Polynesians originally settled the islands. Later, waves of immigrants included many arrivals from the Orient and from various Pacific islands. Even today, the proximity of these areas influences life in the fiftieth state. Papeete and Anchorage are the same distance from Honolulu, while Tokyo is a thousand miles closer than Washington, D.C. HSPLS patrons need materials about the Pacific Basin, as well as in the languages of the area.

### C. 1998-2002 Plan

The five-year plan the Hawaii State Library System submitted in August 1997 promised that 100% of the funds received from the Institute of Museum and Library Services would be used to support the LSTA goals of

- Establishing or enhancing electronic linkages among and between libraries;
- Linking libraries electronically with educational, social or informational services;
- Assisting libraries in accessing information through electronic networks;
- Encouraging libraries in different areas, and encouraging different types of libraries to establish and share resources; or
- Paying costs for libraries to acquire or share computer systems/telecommunications technologies; and
- Targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities, including children (from birth through age 17) from families with incomes below the poverty line [as defined by the Office of Management and Budget and revised annually in accordance with section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2) applicable to a family of the size involved].

The plan packet identified forty-seven activities which would further both the LSTA goals and the mission of HSPLS, defined at that time as being to “serve as the lead state agency to provide individuals at each stage of their lives with timely access to information, and to provide materials and customer services that foster reading and life-long learning”.

The actual plan, however, was a single paragraph:

“As funding, budget, economic climate, present library facilities, and prevailing technology permit, continue to carry out the activities of FY 1997-98. Continue to be alert to changing technology and to implement appropriate technology whenever possible to extend and enhance library service and to make the most efficient use of available funds and facilities.”(See *Appendix G for FY 1997-98 activities as listed in plan document.*)

HSPLS annual reports during the five-year grant period have indicated there is a single LSTA grant for the purpose of “accessing information”.

The 1997 grant plan also listed a variety of performance measures that would be used to assess the library system’s progress.

Due to changing circumstances, not all forty-seven activities took place and not all performance measures were actually tracked, but the intent of the five-year plan certainly has been carried out.

#### ***D. Events Affecting HSPLS During the Grant Period***

Hawaii's economy soared during the late 1980's and early 1990's. About 1995, however, the situation changed, primarily in response to the downturn of Japan's economy. State agencies like HSPLS have seen rather generous budgets turn into lean allotments that leave little room for anything other than maintaining the status quo. The library system, for instance, has gone from FY 1995-96's \$21.7 million budget with 582 full-time civil service positions to the FY 2000-2001 budget of \$20.7 million with 519.05 full-time employees.

In March 1995, then State Librarian Bartholomew Kane decided to address the economic problem with a reengineering program. He sought to overhaul HSPLS in such a way that services could actually be improved even with less money and fewer staff members. To do this, he formed partnerships with Baker & Taylor, Ameritech and Information Access Company (IAC). The plan was for Baker & Taylor to take over all materials selection, acquisition, cataloging, processing and distribution, freeing many staff people for public service. Ameritech provided its Dynix software and its own personnel to administer the HSPLS automation system. HSPLS acquired a new computer, which was housed at the Maui High Performance Computing Center. As part of the new automation program, new cabling and frame relays were installed and libraries were provided at least one PC each with graphical Internet. IAC's service gave HSPLS patrons access to more than 1,000 on-line magazine articles with full text and graphics. The reengineered HSPLS system debuted on July 18, 1996.

The agreements with Baker & Taylor and Ameritech were in trouble even before that time, however. Library personnel objected vigorously to privatization; two unions filed lawsuits on behalf of employees. CARL corporation protested the choice of Ameritech as the HSPLS automation vendor (after an RFP process) and filed suit. Both staff and public had complaints about the materials being selected by Baker & Taylor. The Board of Education formed a panel to study the Baker & Taylor contract, and the 1997 session of the State Legislature passed Act 252 requiring formal involvement of the State's public service librarians in the selection of library materials. The Baker & Taylor contract was cancelled on July 11, 1997. Baker & Taylor promptly sued HSPLS for wrongful termination of its contract, while HSPLS countersued Baker & Taylor for nonperformance.

On February 19, 1998, the Board of Education declined to renew the State Librarian's contract. Mr. Kane served until June 30. The Board selected Virginia Lowell, Director of Nassau Library System in New York, as the new State Librarian on June 14. She took office August 13. For FY 1998-99, the new head of HSPLS had an operating budget of \$19.9 million and 512 full-time employees.

Mrs. Lowell's first priority was to deal with the lawsuits facing the system. In light of mounting litigation costs, she cancelled the Ameritech contract on September 14, 1998. To avoid a shutdown of Hawaii's public libraries, Ameritech offered to continue providing the HSPLS library automation system on an interim basis. The two Ameritech

(now “epixtech”) employees who had been the system administrator and hardware engineer remained on the job until June 30, 2001. Meanwhile, HSPLS issued a request for proposals for a new automation vendor. In April 2000, the Hawaii Supreme Court ruled against CARL Corporation in its suit against HSPLS and Ameritech. The other lawsuits pending against the library system as a result of the reengineering project were settled in 2000.

Ironically, epixtech again won the bidding process and was chosen to provide automation service for Hawaii’s public libraries. A new contract went into effect in August 2001 and work is now underway to move the HSPLS Dynix system to epitech’s Horizon system.

During this difficult period, HSPLS has been fortunate to receive additional support for automation from two sources. First, the system was notified in July 1998 that it had qualified for the third round of Gates Library Initiative State Partnership Grants. Second, the 2000 session of the State Legislature acknowledged the library system’s efforts and passed Act 292, the Internet Portal bill, to purchase equipment and network connections to link residents around the State to the eHawaiiGov project. This project allows users to go online for information about State government and to download a wide variety of State forms.

#### ***E. HSPLS Achievements During the Grant Period***

In light of the turmoil and budget crunches of the 1998-2002 grant period, the mere fact that the Hawaii State Public Library System has been able to conduct “business as usual” is testimony to success. *(Appendix H)* HSPLS has done much more than simply survive, however. The system actually has been able to improve its infrastructure and organization, while extending the reach of its services.

A new branch opened April 14, 1999, at Princeville on Kauai, bringing full library service to that island’s North Shore for the first time. Two branches, Waipahu on Oahu and Kihei on Maui had moved to brand new buildings in new locations in the spring of 1996 before the grant period began. In the case of Kihei, the new quarters – at 18,000 square feet – are ten times larger than the old library, which was 1,800 square feet. Funds received through IMLS have enabled HSPLS to upgrade its automation system to handle the increased demands made on it by these facilities.

Twenty-eight of the fifty HSPLS libraries have been closed for renovations or repairs at least once during the grant period. *(Appendix I)* The system has had to refit many buildings to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act requirements. A number of libraries have needed repairs due to problems caused by Hawaii’s climate -- rust, mold, mildew, termites, and other hazards of island life. The automation system has made it possible to for staff to remove a branch from holds lists when the facility is closed, re-direct patron reserves to other libraries, continue linking books to the closed library’s collection and so on.

In 1998, the library system began purging the records of inactive borrowers. (*Appendix J*) Patrons whose cards showed no activity in five or more years and had no blocks, i.e. fines records or other notices, were deleted from the database. This had not been done in any formal way since HSPLS started automating. Hawaii's population is fairly transient for a variety of reasons, and staff had expressed concern for years that the registered borrowers counts were too inaccurate to be of any practical use. For instance, military personnel and their dependents come and go, but were never removed from the database. The general feeling now is that the total registered borrower count is a much-improved representation of the number of library users in Hawaii. However, since patrons may use the same card at any of the HSPLS facilities, the current counts of borrowers are not necessarily a fair indicator of users at a particular library. Many people move from one area or one island to another and continue to use their cards without changing the registration. Nonetheless, the database is far more accurate than in the past.

State Librarian Lowell has completed a reorganization of HSPLS, creating several new support sections to replace those eliminated during the reengineering program:

- The Technical Services Section (TSS) was established in September 1999 to provide ordering, cataloging and some processing for the libraries. The entire TSS operation relies on the automation system and on Internet access. During FY 2001, TSS ordered 21,693 book titles for HSPLS libraries, completed 32,059 cataloging requests and processed 28,693 items for the branches. (*Appendix K*)
- In addition to TSS, the State Librarian created the Electronic Services Support Section (ESSS) a year later. ESSS provides technological support for the entire HSPLS system of libraries and staff offices. For FY 2001, the ESSS annual report section *Events of Note* says, "The ESSS current project is a major upgrade to the entire HSPLS network. The project began with the installation of a new and larger server and firewall at the Salt Lake-Moanalua facility. All frame relay lines in the libraries have been upgraded to at least 256k lines and staff is currently upgrading the connecting network hardware and completing electrical upgrades. The next phase will be to install additional PCs for staff use and thin clients for public web browsing in all branches." The report goes on to say, "Finally, ESSS is already hard at work planning to move to a new web-based automation system in the summer of 2002." (*Appendix L*)
- State Librarian Lowell also established the Library Development Services Section (LDSS). Although not involved with HSPLS automation on a daily basis, the unit coordinates and promotes statewide library programs. In that capacity, LDSS personnel prepared parent Internet workshops for the public, conducted "train the trainer" sessions for library staff, then publicized the workshops offered at all fifty libraries during October 2001. The focus of these workshops was to help parents help their children use the Internet effectively and safely. The sessions tied in with the HSPLS "PACE" (Parents Authorize Cyberspace Entry) program which allows parents to place a block on their child's card if they prefer that the minor not have unmonitored Internet access. (*Appendix M*)

The State Librarian has also authorized a new HSPLS Master Plan, dated September 5, 2001. (*Appendix N*) That document begins, "The mission of the Hawaii State Library

System is to provide Hawaii's residents, in all walks of life, and at each stage of their lives, with access to education, information, programs and services, and to teach and nurture the love of reading and life-long learning." The new Master Plan emphasizes the HSPLS commitments to serving Hawaii's people through outreach projects as well as "in house" and to keeping up with new technologies while continuing to deliver traditional library services.

### ***III. Results of In-Depth Evaluations***

#### ***A. Technology Goal***

Five technology goals are included in the stated purpose of LSTA. HSPLS identified one – "Accessing Information—assist libraries in accessing information through electronic networks" – as its focus for the 1998-2002 grant period.(Appendix O) The other four technology goals are closely related, though, and in reality HSPLS is using 1998-2002 LSTA funds to accomplish all five goals.

The first LSTA goal listed on the annual report form is "Linkages Among Libraries—establish or enhance electronic linkages among or between libraries". Hawaii's public libraries had been part of a single system prior to automation, but that was more true administratively than from the patron's standpoint. With automation, patrons are able to review the entire HSPLS catalog from home, work, or school computers. They can place reserves from home and indicate where they want to pick up their materials. They can access the HSPLS Internet home page and find everything from the system's fines schedule to downloadable library card applications. They can use the same card to borrow materials at any public library in the State system. Materials may be returned at any public library; for example, a book borrowed at the Hawaii State Library in downtown Honolulu may be returned to Lanai Public & School Library with no problem and no charge. No other state has total electronic linkage of its public libraries.

The second technology goal is "Linkages with Others—link libraries electronically with educational, social or informational services". HSPLS had been purchasing online periodical databases for some time prior to this grant period. Library system personnel regularly review existing resources and participate in trials of new databases. Through the HSPLS automation link, patrons at every public library have access to thousands of full-text, graphical articles that otherwise would be available to them only via loan from a Mainland library.

Third on the list of LSTA goals is "Accessing Information—assist libraries in accessing information through electronic networks". One of the most significant sources of information that public libraries provide for Hawaii's people is access to a project called "eHawaiiGov". This is an electronic connection to State government that is invaluable in a place where miles of ocean often separate people from offices and services they need. "eHawaiiGov" allows anyone with a graphical Internet connection, such as found in a public library, to do everything from contacting a State Legislator to renewing a professional license online.

Fourth of the LSTA goals is “Consortia/Sharing—encourage libraries in different area, and encourage different types of libraries to establish consortia and share resources”. The State Librarian has been actively involved in meeting with other libraries to review possible resource sharing. Also, HSPLS has been fortunate enough to be on the receiving end of several projects initiated by different agencies. A prime example of this is the CHIS, or Consumer Health Information Service, from Hawaii Medical Library (HML) in Honolulu. (*Appendix P*) HML staff saw a need to make medical information more easily available to Neighbor Island residents. Through a grant from the National Library of Medicine, the local medical library was able to purchase five complete Internet computer systems and donate them to selected public libraries on five different islands. Hawaii Medical Library personnel conducted workshops for HSPLS staff about use of medical sites on the Internet, then offered training sessions to the public. When a simple doctor visit may be an airplane flight away, medical information is highly valued by a community. Because HSPLS has statewide automation and has been able to provide Internet access to every branch, the library system has been able to take advantage of opportunities such as CHIS.

The fifth LSTA technology goal is “Computers/Telecommunications—pay costs for libraries to acquire and share computer systems and telecommunications technologies”. Had the Hawaii State Library System not done this, all the other linkages would have been impossible.

### ***B. Targeted Services Goal***

In addition to the technology goals, LSTA goals include “Targeted Services—target library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library and to underserved urban and rural communities”. HSPLS did not identify one particular group to be targeted for service under the 1998-2002 plan. Rather, the library system has steadily extended its services to every corner of the State and has remained committed to the principle of equal access in every branch. Such access is only possible through a powerful library automation system. The use of LSTA funds to provide automation is the most effective way to assure quality library service for all the people of Hawaii.

### ***IV. Lessons Learned***

When HSPLS staff members prepared the 1998-2002 plan, they expected that all dumb terminals would be gone by this time, having been replaced by PCs. That is not the case, although the library system continues to move in that direction. Unfortunately, budget shortages and the CARL lawsuit delayed the conversion.

Despite the ups and downs of the last five years, the Hawaii State Public Library System has continued to move ahead technologically. Progress has not been as fast as hoped, but it has been steady and it has served the people of the State well. The major lesson learned during this time is that a system can continue moving in the desired direction when leadership remains focused on a goal. HSPLS leadership has indeed remained focused, and the results are obvious.

***V. Brief Review of Evaluation Process***

***A. Who Was Involved?***

Hawaii's plan for use of 1998-2002 IMLS funding was simple and straightforward. Accordingly, the State Librarian decided that HSPLS staff members would prepare the report. The current IMLS coordinator did the actual writing. The previous IMLS coordinator and the head of ESSS provided considerable input. Staff members throughout the HSPLS system contributed reports and information.

***B. How Was the Evaluation Conducted?***

The IMLS coordinator reviewed the 1998-2002 plan, then began gathering data to show the ways in which HSPLS had or had not achieved what it intended.

## *Appendices*

- A. HSPLS IMLS Funds, 1998-2002 Grant Period
- B. Map, Hawaii State Public Library System
- C. Hawaii State Public Library System Branch Directory
- D. Great Circle Distances Between Specified Places
- E. Miscellaneous Geographic Statistics, by Island
- F. Land Area of Island: 2000
- G. Five-Year Plan LSTA Activities Timeline
- H. Hawaii State Public Library System FY1997-2001 Statistical Summary
- I. HSPLS Footnotes, 1999-March 2002
- J. Registered Borrowers
- K. Technical Services Section (TSS)
- L. Electronic Services Support Section (ESSS)
- M. Library Development Services Section (LDSS)
- N. Hawaii State Public Library System Master Plan – September 5, 2001
- O. LSTA Annual Report FY 2001, Part A
- P. When You Have a Question About Health