



Statement of

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Institute of Museum and
Library Services**

before the

Committee on Education and Labor

**Subcommittee on Healthy Families
and Communities**

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Madame Chairwoman and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before this subcommittee today to report on the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the ways in which it helps museums and libraries strengthen communities.

My name is Anne-Imelda Radice and it has been my privilege to serve as the Director of IMLS since May of 2006. Previous federal positions I have held include Acting Assistant Chairman for Programs at the National Endowment for the Humanities, Chief of Staff to the Secretary of the United States Department of Education, Acting Chairman and Senior Deputy Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, Chief of the Creative Arts Division of the United States Information Agency, Curator and Architectural Historian for the Architect of the Capitol, and Assistant Curator at the National Gallery of Art. I was also the first Director of the National Museum of Women in the Arts from 1983 until 1989.

The Mission and Goals of the Institute of Museum and Library Services

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 122,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The impact of our funding reaches into nearly every community in America.

We involve hundreds of library and museum experts from communities across the nation in our stellar peer review process for our competitive awards. And we work in close partnership with every state and the territories to support library services through a population-based grant to every state. We provide federal leadership that helps institutions connect with the expertise they need to make a difference in their communities.

Each year we make hundreds of grants that go beyond supporting individual projects. We are strategic. By encouraging great projects, innovative ideas, and solid research we are changing the way library and museum services are delivered in the United States.

Our mission is to support these essential institutions in their efforts to connect people to information and ideas, the fundamental purpose of all museums and libraries. In carrying out that mission we have four major goals.

Goal One: Attaining Excellence in Federal Management, Operations, and Service

This first goal is the one that undergirds all the others. The Institute is focusing on its administrative capacity in order to fulfill its statutory grant making, research, evaluation, and policy activities. We continue to implement the consolidation of federal responsibilities for library statistics activities and provide advice on library and information policy. My management team and I are committed to meeting growing expectations to demonstrate accountability. Strategic planning and evaluation, as well as implementation of the President's Management Agenda (PMA), are a priority at the Institute and will enable the Institute to continue achieving high-quality management and performance. I am proud to report that IMLS has received only clean audits since my tenure as Director.

Goal Two: Sustaining Heritage, Culture, and Knowledge

The Institute's second goal is to help sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge. The collections in libraries and museums connect people to the full spectrum of human experience: culture, science, history, and art. By preserving and conserving books, artwork, scientific specimens, and other cultural artifacts, libraries and museums provide a tangible link with humankind's history.

Late in 2005, Heritage Preservation, the national not-for-profit organization dedicated to saving the objects that embody our history, issued the Heritage Health Index, a study funded by IMLS. The findings of the Heritage Health Index were sobering:

- 190 million objects in the United States are in need of conservation treatment.
- 65 percent of collecting institutions have experienced damage to collections due to improper storage.
- 80 percent of collecting institutions do not have an emergency plan that includes collections, with staff trained to carry it out.
- 40 percent of institutions have no funds allocated in their annual budgets for preservation or conservation.

IMLS, which has always supported conservation and preservation activities through conferences, publications, and millions of dollars in grants each year, responded with the *Connecting to Collections* initiative, or C2C. The purpose of this initiative is to raise public awareness of the importance of caring for our treasures, and to underscore the fact that these collections are essential to the American story. Moreover, through C2C we are providing direct assistance to the collections care efforts of museums and libraries in ways we never had before. The initiative has included a national summit on conservation with representatives of libraries and museums from every state, forums in different parts of the country on different aspects of collections care, statewide planning grants to promote collaborative efforts, and grants of an essential collection of books and other resources on conservation. This *Connecting to Collections Bookshelf* has been particularly well received. I have received hundreds of heartwarming expressions of thanks.

I will excerpt briefly just a few:

The Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium wrote, "We...appreciate the resources that help us prepare for emergencies. Our collection contains representatives of 22 threatened or endangered species, and the loss of those animals—some of whom are among the most genetically valuable in American zoos—would be of incalculable harm to the cause of conservation."

Expressing a sentiment echoed by many of the Bookshelf recipients, the curator of the Goldsmith Museum in Baltimore wrote, "Since we are a small museum with a limited budget, this library of resources is one that we could only have dreamed of owning."

It was particularly gratifying for me to read the following from the Mandarin Museum & Historical Society in Jacksonville:

"We received our Bookshelf a couple of days before [Tropical Storm] Fay hit near Jacksonville, Florida. Although we have a disaster plan in place, it is fairly limited... Through the Bookshelf,

we were able to ascertain quickly what we still needed to do to prepare our museum for the storm. After the storm, our historical park received substantial flooding, as well as a major tree fall, a sizeable amount of debris, and a couple of displaced alligators. With the guidance of the bookshelf, I am happy to say that we came through the storm with our structures and collections intact.”

The collections we are working to protect are the tangible link to every aspect of our culture. They are as significant to the American identity and character as any natural resource. That is why we have made this work such a high priority.

Many IMLS grant programs can support some component of collections care. Conservation Project Support (CPS) is the one that is entirely focused on this area. CPS grants may be used to fund surveys of collections, improvements to environmental conditions, and the treatment of all types of collections, both living and non-living. To be eligible for a grant, the project must be addressing the institution’s top conservation priority. Members of the subcommittee might be aware of some of these IMLS grants that have been awarded in recent years.

Goal Two Examples

- The Tucson Museum of Art and History received \$66,000 to properly rehouse the museum's collections, which include Mexican folk art and a collection of masks, pre-Columbian textiles, framed works on paper, regional sculpture, and a 50-piece furniture collection.
- The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Museum was awarded \$27,000 to conduct a detailed condition survey of the museum’s vast historic paper-based and audiovisual collections, which include motion picture film, videos, sound recordings, photographic prints, slides, transparencies, and glass plate/film negatives related to early American railroading.
- The National Aquarium in Baltimore will use a \$150,000 grant to upgrade the Life Support System of its Atlantic Coral Reef exhibit.
- With a \$9,000 CPS grant, the Currier Museum of Art in New Hampshire treated the Weare Press Cupboard, the most important piece of New England furniture in the museum's collection.
- The Brooklyn Museum received \$80,000 this year to complete Phase I of an Art Storage Master Plan, consolidating existing storage areas, eliminating storage shortages, creating a textile center and viewing area, and transporting the collection of textiles and Asian screens into these newly reorganized units.
- In response to a 2005 tribal resolution, the Big Pine Paiute Tribe of the Owens Valley will establish a museum/cultural center on its reservation in southeastern California. In anticipation of this event, an outside consultant will provide training in collections management techniques and will help draft a collections management policy. The tribe currently has several ethnographic pieces, mainly in the form of baskets, as well as 14,442 archaeological artifacts from excavations on its property that will form the core of the material for the museum/cultural center. In addition, a case in the office of the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer will host an exhibit of material from the Papoose Flat Archaeological District that is on loan from Inyo National Forest. This exhibition will be designed to creatively depict the cultural heritage of the Big Pine Paiute Tribe.

Goal Three: Enhancing Learning and Innovation

The third goal of IMLS is to enhance learning and innovation. Success in today's society requires information literacy, a spirit of self-reliance, and a strong ability to collaborate, communicate effectively, and solve problems. Combining strengths in traditional learning with robust investment in modern communication infrastructures, libraries and museums are well equipped to build the skills Americans need in the 21st century. Libraries and museums bring tremendous learning assets to communities engaged in a wide range of concerns, from workforce issues and parenting to cross-cultural understanding and student achievement. As partners in the exercise of civic responsibility, libraries and museums are part of larger efforts to weave a stronger community fabric.

Much of the work we do at the Institute serves this important goal. Through grants, convenings, and research, we are constantly striving to push the fields of museum and library services in ways that enhance the learning opportunities of all Americans.

Goal Three Examples

- Dr. Patricia Montiel Overall at the University of Arizona, in partnership with Sunnyside Unified School District and Tucson Unified School District, is examining the effect of teacher/librarian collaboration on science information literacy of Latino students. Using qualitative and quantitative methodologies over three years, this study will look at teacher/librarian collaboration in the preparation of science instructional modules for third, fourth, and fifth graders in predominantly Latino elementary schools. This research will examine questions about the relationship of teacher/librarian collaboration to Latino students' performance on standardized tests of science proficiency and information literacy.
- The Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico partnered with Operacion Exito (OE) to create an Art-Science-Technology Project that to bring to the museum top high school students from low-income areas, providing previously unavailable education opportunities. The project was to develop an enhanced computer lab at the museum through OE, an innovative education initiative in science and math supported by the Puerto Rico Department of Education. Through the enhanced curriculum, students from the Central Visual Arts School will use new learning tools that integrate art and science using new technologies. A key component is the integration of multiple resources at the museum, including use of museum collections, space to engage with other students, and interaction with artists. There will also be teacher workshops to further integrate the museum resources into the curriculum.
- The York County (Pennsylvania) Heritage Trust (YCHT) will develop communications and activities with local educators to facilitate creative methods of teaching history to children in grades four through six. The museum will hire an experienced educator with a working knowledge of Pennsylvania Commonwealth curriculum standards for two years to compile a contact list of educators and education advocates, establish and build a network with schools and educators for future cooperation in lifelong learning activities, increase YCHT visibility in the schools through an electronic newsletter, conduct workshops in which teachers and administrators develop new programming, create and

implement a list of traditional and electronic outreach products that schools can use, and publish and distribute an education service guide.

- The Frazier Arms Museum in Louisville will use videoconferencing capability to expand its education resources and provide the local community access to museum activities they would not normally encounter. A collaboration with the British Royal Armouries, this project will serve as a model, demonstrating how, using partnerships and the adaptation of some common technologies, museums can play a vital role in engaging local teachers and students in new learning opportunities.
- The Jonesborough–Washington County (Tennessee) History Museum is a major source of heritage education for this region of southern Appalachia. The objectives of the project are (1) to construct a Storytelling Porch in the museum gallery to provide an engaging and interactive experience for visitors and to achieve greater flexibility for special exhibits, and (2) to tell the story of Jonesborough through interpretive panels, using the National Register Historic District as an outdoor exhibition space and tying specific panels to stories visitors can listen to on the Storytelling Porch. Through this project, the museum aims to make its exhibits more engaging and to make use of the historic downtown as a unique resource for outdoor interpretation.

Goal Four: Building Professional Capacity

The fourth goal is building professional capacity in the museum and library fields. The need for lifelong learning applies to the staff of museums and libraries as well as their users. The Institute places a priority on building leadership capacity to address societal changes by supporting the development of a highly skilled workforce in libraries and museums. The Institute helps to spur innovation, support diversity, and build traditional library and museum service expertise.

Several of the Institute's grant programs address this goal. We have two programs in particular that focus on it exclusively. The Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian program and the 21st Century Museum Professionals program fund projects that anticipate the needs of the next generation of library and museum professionals. These projects recruit and educate new professionals and enhance the training opportunities of those already in the field.

Goal Four Examples

- The University of Arizona School of Information Resources and Library Science recruited 48 Native American and Hispanic students to a master's program in library and information science as part of its Knowledge River initiative. The initiative also involves 12 second-year scholars for the Knowledge River program and 24 Native American and Hispanic high school students in a Teen Community Health Information Institute to explore health sciences librarianship and provide community health services. The Knowledge River program helps students develop valuable skills such as leadership, professional contribution, and community service as well as improve their job preparation and job-seeking skills by providing workshops, community learning experiences, and opportunities to interact with library leaders.
- The Weeksville Heritage Center in Brooklyn has strengthened its institutional capacity by professionalizing its collections practices. As the only museum interpreting African American history in the 19th and 20th century in the Northeast, Weeksville Heritage

Center needed to preserve its collections, while identifying ways to use them more effectively in exhibits and programs. IMLS funding supported the creation of a part-time position of Collections Manager, responsible for evaluating the 450 artifacts in the center's collections, developing and implementing a collections management policy, overseeing the initiation of an environmental monitoring system, and collaborating with program staff to utilize collections more effectively in public programming.

- The Cleveland Zoological Society will begin a conservation medicine program to enhance institutional capacity for research, training, and staff development. The program will allow the zoo to better understand the causes of health problems in captive animals through scientific research for improving animal management, health, and welfare. The proposed expansion of the project will support the zoo's veterinary epidemiologist (one who studies factors affecting the health and illness of populations) and add a master's degree student position and a three-year residency program in conservation medicine. By providing information to be shared with both public and professional members of the local, national, and international community, the zoo hopes to establish programs and initiatives to enhance conservation efforts and create a direct link to conservation programs in the field.
- The Beaver Area Memorial Library (Pennsylvania) used IMLS funds to subsidize the tuition cost of a student who will receive a master's in library science degree and work at the library.

Policy, Research, and Statistics

The 2003 reauthorization of the Museum and Library Services Act directed the Institute to conduct and publish analyses of the impact of museum and library services. IMLS responsibilities in this area were expanded with the passage of the FY 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act.

In fiscal year 2008, the transfer of responsibility for national collection of data about public and state libraries from the National Center for Education Statistics to IMLS was completed. These data are essential to inform good management practices in libraries as well as to inform policy. The collection and use of these data is a core factor in the delivery of high-quality library services in the United States. The data provide ongoing basic information about libraries and library service. Over the years, these data have been collected consistently and with an astounding 100 percent rate of public and state library participation. IMLS is continuing this record of participation and striving to ensure that the data collected are accurate and delivered to the public as quickly as possible so that they can be of maximum use. We are also hopeful of having funds appropriated to begin ongoing national data collection about museums.

Also in FY 2008, the role of advising the President and Congress about libraries and information policy was transferred from the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science to IMLS. This responsibility fits well with the mission of the agency; the Institute has been a source of support for examination of library and information policy issues both nationally and internationally for more than 10 years. In the years to come, the Institute will continue to support research and convene experts to help inform public debate in a range of policy issues, such as the new role of libraries and museums in the Internet age, the ways that communications policy

affects public access to information, and the role of libraries and museums in supporting learning throughout the lifetime.

National Medals for Museum and Library Service

All of the library and museum activities IMLS supports have the end user of those institutions in mind. All of the technology and education in the world means nothing unless it is put to use in the service of the communities museums and libraries serve. To emphasize this fundamental principle, the Institute established the National Medal for Museum and Library Service.

The National Medal honors outstanding institutions that make significant and exceptional contributions to their communities. Selected institutions demonstrate extraordinary and innovative approaches to public service, exceeding the expected levels of community outreach and core programs generally associated with its services.

Youth Initiative

The Institute's *Engaging America's Youth* initiative shines a spotlight on the role libraries and museums play in bringing about positive change in the lives of young people. The initiative included a study on youth programs in museums and libraries, the results of which showed that these institutions are unique in their ability to influence and educate youth. IMLS published a report on the study in December 2007. In May 2008 we published *Nine to Nineteen: Youth in Museums and Libraries; A Practitioner's Guide*, which features several examples of successful youth programming from around the country, as well as useful information for planning exemplary youth programs. I submit these two publications for the record.

21st Century Skills

IMLS is undertaking a landmark project to create tools that will enable museums and libraries to become effective 21st century institutions. This work will highlight the ways in which museums and libraries can use their resources to help communities develop the 21st century skills they need to succeed in the new global economy.

Conclusion

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is a small agency that makes a big difference. And that difference is felt in communities all over the United States. Museums and libraries are more than buildings with artwork or books or historic artifacts. They are integral parts of their communities and, as much or more than any other entity, they are crucial to the community's quality of life. It is my privilege, and that of everyone who works at IMLS, to help libraries and museums in essential work.

Thank you again for this opportunity. I look forward to answering any questions you might have.