

Arkansas

Evaluation
of the
2003-2007
Library Services and
Technology Act
Five-Year Plan

Arkansas State Library
Carolyn Ashcraft
State Librarian

March 2007



I. Introductory Statement	2
II. Overall Report of results in achieving goals and objectives based on Five-Year Plan	
ASL Goal 1	4
ASL Goal 2	5
ASL Goal 3	7
ASL Goal 4	11
ASL Goal 5	13
III. In-Depth Evaluations	
Full-Text Database Program	15
Arkansas Center for the Book	18
IV. Progress in showing results of library initiatives or services	20
V. Lessons Learned/Conclusion	20
VI. Brief Description of Evaluation Process	21

I. Introductory Statement

LSTA funds had a positive impact on Arkansas libraries during this reporting period. Arkansas LSTA funds are utilized through statewide programs, therefore offering “all Arkansans equal opportunity to benefit from access to available information” as stated in the vision for the Arkansas State Library (ASL).

The programs that supported the **Arkansas LSTA 5-year Plan** ranged from one with a small investment, Arkansas Center for the Book, to the largest investment, *Traveler*, which is the online database project. The participation in the Arkansas Center for the Book, activities has increased steadily over the years and this project offers a huge impact for the dollars spent. On the other end is the *Traveler* program which is widely popular among all types of libraries around Arkansas and utilizes the largest segment of LSTA funds. Both programs have been able to solicit other funding in collaborative projects.

LSTA support of all programs is of the utmost importance. At this time, Arkansas relies almost totally on LSTA funds to support the most popular program, *Traveler*. A small percentage of funding is provided by the Arkansas Department of Education for one database. *Traveler* provides a service and product many libraries cannot afford.

The following priorities as established in the **Arkansas LSTA 5-Year Plan** were a key factor in conducting this evaluation.

- Resource sharing among all types of libraries statewide through interlibrary loan, electronic linkages, utilization of online databases, expansion and operation of networks, and other projects.
- Access to information for all citizens, to include state and federal documents services, computer-based user services, marketing, information dissemination, continuing education, and other projects.

- Services to libraries and to persons who need special services through State Library consultant services, State Library children's services, training and continuing education programs, support of literacy activities in local communities, State Library services to the blind and physically handicapped, and other projects.

Activities consistent with LSTA purposes and meeting state goals and priorities were developed to meet the goals of the ***Five-Year Plan***. Activities were designed for each goal so that if an activity was not necessary during a particular time frame the goal would still be met.

II. Report

Goal 1: *Link Arkansas libraries electronically with educational, social, or informational services.*

LSTA purposes represented by Goal 1:

- ◆ Services for lifelong learning
- ◆ Library technology, connectivity, and services

Two ASL programs, *Traveler* full-text database project and supporting and expanding statewide cooperative networks, further the above LSTA purposes throughout libraries in Arkansas.

- Surpassed the goal
 Met this goal
 Made progress towards this goal
 Did not work toward this goal

Objective/Target: 95% of libraries of all types will be registered *Traveler* users by 2007.

100% of public library headquarters, special libraries, academic two-year and four-year, and k-12 school libraries are registered users of *Traveler*. In addition, 33% of parochial/nonpublic school libraries accredited by ANSAA are registered users. The total number of libraries registered as of November 2006 is 1,320. Registration is open monthly with the dates listed on the ASL website. (<http://www.asl.lib.ar.us/traveler/Dates2006.htm>)

During the reporting period Network Services and Extension Services staff participated in the Arkansas E-rate Workgroup with the Office of the Governor, Arkansas Department of Education and the Arkansas Department of Information Systems with an average of

55 public libraries receiving E-Rate. The coordinator of Network Services worked with the Executive CIO's Office through the Security Workgroup which helps establish IT best practices for the state and leads to state laws (such as the Record Retention group) which are passed on to 37 publicly funded academic libraries and 52 public library systems. As a member of the Disaster Recovery/Continuity Workgroup the coordinator of Network Services coordinated the state library plan for disaster recovery and provided funding for disaster recovery software and maintenance. ASL staff attended training sessions, seminars, conferences, and workshops to improve skills and knowledge in automation and other networks. The information from this training was used in the development of workshops and training sessions for other ASL staff and library professionals throughout the state.

Goal 2: *Encourage Arkansas libraries of all types in all areas of the state to establish consortia and share resources.*

LSTA purpose represented by Goal 2

- ◆ Services for lifelong learning

Two ASL programs, Resource Sharing and Reference and Interlibrary Loan further the above LSTA purposes throughout libraries in Arkansas.

- Surpassed the goal
 Met this goal
 Made progress towards this goal
 Did not work towards this goal

Objective/Target: Number of libraries participating in CatExpress will increase 5% annually to have at least 25 libraries participating by 2007

During the reporting period 26 libraries participated in CatExpress, which exceeds the 25 libraries targeted.

Cataloging Services of the Arkansas State Library supports resource sharing by adding original cataloging for items needed by Arkansas

libraries through CatExpress. Cataloging services also supports requests for original cataloging by public libraries in the state. During this reporting period staff added to OCLC 2,216 print items and 9,713 digital images for the Arkansas History Commission through an on-going collaborative agreement.

The Arkansas State Library maintains a centralized collection of specialized resources to meet the information needs of local libraries and Arkansas state government. ASL integrates electronic reference materials and electronic delivery services with print-based collections and traditional services. LSTA funds were used to purchase an increasing number of web-based reference resources and services. The number of ASL subscriptions for web-based products increased from 42 to 50 during this reporting period. Print volumes increased from 216 to 1,019 while serials decreased from 334 to 296. The decrease in serials is due to higher costs, more web-based products serving the same needs and providing the same titles, and evaluation and deletion of titles no longer needed.

Objective/Target: *Number of reference requests received and answered.*

90% of the total number of reference requests received will be answered by ASL reference staff.

The information obtained from the reference section of ASL indicates that over 90% of the reference requests are answered by the staff. During the reporting period an average of 3,565 reference requests were answered annually. Over 3,250 of these requests were answered in-house.

The number of reference requests received by ASL has dropped over the past years due to the increase of Internet availability in public libraries, state agencies, and in individual homes. The reference staff has worked this past year to inform libraries and state agencies about the sources, both print and online databases, available at ASL.

Objective/target: *Number of Interlibrary Loan requests received and filled. 75% of ILL requests received will be filled by ASL ILL staff.*

Year	Arkansas Libraries	Unfilled	Percent Filled	Total Libraries	Unfilled	Percent Filled
2003	8,543	238	97%	17,342	1,404	92%
2004	7,483	338	97%	17,409	1,939	89%
2005	7,978	410	95%	22,528	2,086	91%
2006	6,132	455	93%	12,740	2,113	83%

The above chart shows that over 75% of ILL requests were filled during the reporting period. The average for Arkansas libraries requesting materials was 96% and the average for total libraries was 89%. Both these figures are well above the objective/target of 75% for this program.

ASL continues to support reference and interlibrary loan services for all types of libraries. Reference and interlibrary loan requests fluctuated during this reporting period due in large part to the Internet and the *Traveler* database project. In addition, ASL is no longer the Arkansas referral library. OCLC eliminated the referral and GAC (Group Area Cluster). Libraries now submit requests directly to OCLC instead of funneling requests through ASL.

Goal 3: *Provide access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats*

LSTA purposes represented by Goal 3

- ◆ Services for lifelong learning
- ◆ Library technology, connectivity, and services

This goal is supported by the following ASL programs:

- ◆ Arkansas Center for the Book
- ◆ Consultant Services, including the Children’s Workshop and Summer Reading Program
- ◆ Information Dissemination
- ◆ Statewide Documents Services
- ◆ Statewide Preservation
- ◆ Training and Education

- Surpassed the goal
 Met this goal
 Made progress towards this goal
 Did not work towards this goal

Objective/target: *Number of issues of the ASL newsletter, “the news”, is published and number of times ASL exhibits at trade, business, library, and association events.*

At least 4 issues of “the news” will be published annually. ASL will exhibit in at least 4 events annually.

Year	Newsletters	Exhibits
2002-03	3	9
2003-04	3	8
2004-05	3	8
2005-06	3	7

While the number of newsletters did not meet the objective/target, the number of exhibits exceeded the objective/target. The state librarian is committed to getting the newsletter to the 4 issues published annually. The newsletter is also available in PDF format on the ASL web site at <http://www.asl.lib.ar.us/news/news.htm>. The exhibits are used at different association/trade meetings to increase the visibility of libraries in Arkansas and of the Arkansas State Library.

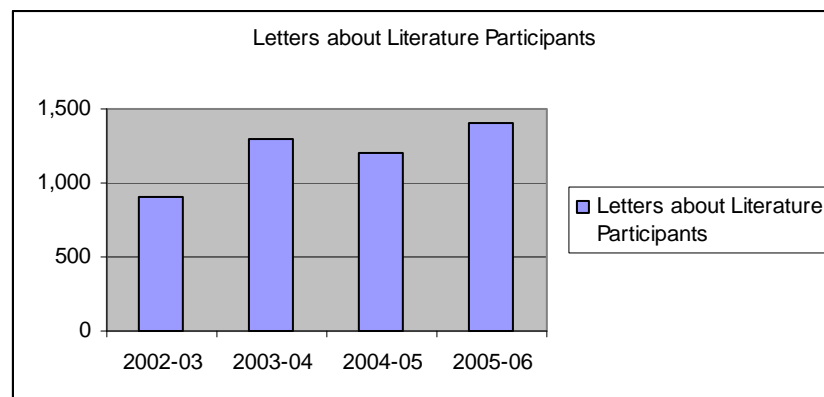
The Information Officer also handles all press releases and keeps track of press clippings about public libraries and their participation in LSTA supported programs such as the Summer Reading Program.

Objective/target: *Collect and distribute state documents to Arkansas State Documents depository libraries. 15,000 state documents will be collected and distributed annually to 26 Arkansas State documents depository libraries.*

Year	Documents Distributed	Electronic Publications
2002-03	13,333	60
2003-04	13,330	656
2004-05	9,762	1,395
2005-06	10,370	1,600

There are currently 10,370 state documents distributed to 25 depository libraries. The number of documents distributed is decreasing due to state agencies not publishing as many items and using the Internet instead. The five-year plan indicated that ASL would investigate alternate methods for the duplication and distribution of state documents. In addition to receiving print publications from agencies, State Documents Services identifies, collects and provides access to electronic publications. The electronic publications are stored for permanent retrieval.

Objective/target: *Number of participants in the annual "Letters about Literature" contest for children in grades 4 through 12. 5% increase annually in number of children participating in the "Letters about Literature" contest.*



This objective/target was surpassed during the reporting period with an increase of 65% from 2002-03 to 2005-06. This is one segment of the Arkansas Center of the Book that will be reported in more detail in the In-Depth Evaluation.

Objective/target: *Workshop participants will demonstrate knowledge of course content. 70% of workshop participants will demonstrate knowledge of key course material.*

These workshops were conducted by Amigos Library Services and used their evaluation tools. During this reporting period their questions changed from basic knowledge, average knowledge, and very knowledgeable to beginner, average, above average, and expert. The following numbers are a compilation of these evaluations. Amigos Library Services evaluates the change in knowledge.

Level or Knowledge	Pre-Workshop	Post-Workshop
Beginner/Basic	48%	8%
Average/Above Average	52.5%	92%

Another program that supports this goal is the consultant services offered through the Extension Services section of ASL. This program includes the children's summer reading program, site visits, and workshops. During this reporting period 55 workshops on areas including outreach, book arts, trustees of public libraries, space planning, weeding library collections, basic reference, and E-Rate funding were conducted. The Children's Services Workshop is conducted every spring for the kick-off of the summer reading program.

This goal is also supported by the Training and Education program of ASL. This program provides in-service training and continuing education opportunities for staff of Arkansas libraries. Training was provided through 24 workshops for OCLC First Search; 105 workshops for EbscoHost; and 36 workshops for Grolier. These workshops are conducted throughout the state during conferences such as the Arkansas Library Association, Hot Springs Technical Institute, and the Arkansas Association of Instructional Media. Many

of the workshops take place at educational cooperatives around the state. Although participants continually request training, attendance varies as locations are scheduled geographically to provide access to as many participants as possible. The average attendance is 15 but some locations have gone up to 40.

Goal 4: *Promote targeted library and information services to Arkansans having difficulty using a library*

LSTA purpose represented by Goal 4

- ◆ Service to persons having difficulty using a library

ASL programs Library Services to the Blind and Physically Handicapped and State Institutional Services support this goal.

- Surpassed the goal
 Met this goal
 Made progress towards this goal
 Did not work towards this goal

Objective/target: *Number of Arkansas citizens being served who are unable to use regular print media and number of materials circulated.*

*15% of eligible readers will be served by ASL
 5% increase in materials circulated by 2007*

The 2006 population for Arkansas was 2,779,154. The National Library Service (NLS) estimates that 15% or 416,873 of the population have some type of disability. And 15% of the 416,873, or 62,531, have a disability that would interfere with their being unable to use regular print material.

ASL served 4,180 people directly as individual subscribers, with an additional 2,940 served through 294 deposit collections in places like the School for the Blind, Lions World Services, nursing homes, senior's centers, schools, prisons, etc. This represents approximately 7,120 people or 11.38% of the eligible population.

When compared to the ALA estimate that 15% of the general population use their public library, the ASL figure of 11.38% seems

low. This lower rate than the national average is due to the fact that many of our eligible population are in a category where other age related conditions such as Alzheimer's are a significant limiting factor (65% of our patrons are over age 65).

Usage and circulation have been dropping due to the increasing competition of books on CD and downloadable books, but the new format coming in 2008 will prove to be so much easier to use than CD's and DVD's that we should see a marked increase in circulation and demand.

Objective/target: Number of materials purchased and distributed to Arkansas institutional libraries. 2,000 print and non-print items will be purchased and distributed to 9 Arkansas state institutional libraries.

Year	Materials
2002-03	4,031
2003-04	3,543
2004-05	3,543
2005-06	2,175

The objective/target of 2,000 print and non-print items was successfully met and surpassed. The numbers are decreasing for several reasons. One reason, as like all libraries, we face increased book prices. Another reason is that more DVD's are being purchased along with print materials and these tend to cost more than videos. Also some institutions are purchasing magazine subscriptions which either are represented as one item or are not counted in the cataloging statistics.

Goal 5: Provide leadership and services to carry out purposes of the Library Services and Technology Act

LSTA purpose represented by Goal 5

- ◆ Library technology, connectivity, and services

- Surpassed the goal
 Met this goal
 Made progress towards this goal
 Did not work towards this goal

Program: *Form committees and/or use established committees for each of the four previous Goals.*

The LSTA Network Advisory Committee is represented by members from 3 academic, 3 public, 2 school, and 2 special libraries serving two-year terms. Approx. 50% of the committee changes each year. Face to face meetings are held at the discretion of the committee and the committee selects a chairperson. The Coordinator of Network Services is an ex officio member and handles vendor contacts, assists in research, provides a brochure for new committee members, and writes the RFI for online databases as well as distributes bid information to the committee members.

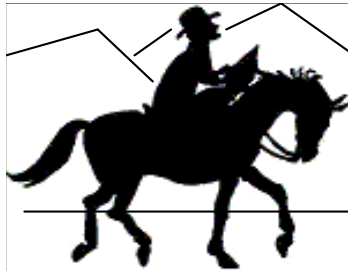
The process for selection includes online trials, vendor demonstrations, and bids. After the selection process, the Network Advisory Committee chooses databases for recommendation to the Arkansas State Library Board. The Arkansas State Library Board has final approval at the February meeting for the contract to begin in October. Statewide pricing and special group prices have also been offered for databases not chosen to be a part of *Traveler*.

Program: *Provide specialized support services at the State Library to supplement and reinforce local library programs, services, and operations.*

The State Librarian keeps track of library operations statewide through the work of several departments of ASL. These departments include the Office of Network Services and the Office of Extension Services. Through their work with public libraries, the Extension Services staff is able to keep the state librarian informed of possible areas that may need special support from the State Librarian or the State Library Board. Through *Traveler*, the Coordinator of Network Services is apprised of special needs for all types of libraries that may arise, which is then communicated to the State Librarian.

Communication of state and federal legislation with all types of libraries is carried out through the state librarian's office. This type of information is crucial for libraries around the state.

III. In-Depth Evaluations



Traveler Online Project

Full-Text Database Program

The *Traveler* program purchases online sources that are beneficial to the largest number of participants in the project. This program provides assistance to all libraries in Arkansas and is especially beneficial to those libraries that cannot afford basic online services. Libraries that purchase databases as part of their individual budgets can focus on specific, narrower subject databases to complement the general broad based databases provided as part of *Traveler*.

Traveler is an on-going project with vendors. Databases are chosen annually by the Arkansas State Library Network Advisory Committee. This committee is composed of 11 members representing all types of libraries in Arkansas.

(<http://www.asl.lib.ar.us/traveler/netcommittee.htm>) Input from the library community is accepted during the trial period when databases are being considered for selection.

The number of libraries participating in *Traveler* has increased from 1,250 at the beginning of the reporting period to 1,320 currently registered libraries.

The types of libraries are divided into the following categories:

Type of Library	Number Registered	Type of Library	Number Registered
Academic 4-Year	21	Elementary School	420
Acaemic 2-Year	27	Middle School	149
Technical Institutes	4	Junior High School	75
Public Library HQ	50	High School	263
Public Library Branches	145	Cooperative	13
Special	37	K-!2	49
Other	31	School Districts	36

A list of registered libraries is available on the ASL website at: <http://www.asl.lib.ar.us/traveler/travRegistration.htm>

During this reporting period ASL has partnered with the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) to annually provide funds for an encyclopedia as part of *Traveler*. The current subscription is for *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. The current list of *Traveler* databases is available on the ASL website at:

http://www.asl.lib.ar.us/traveler/databasesFY06_07.htm.

Trial subscriptions are available during the year and vendors also offer group pricing for those libraries wishing to participate. Vendors provide training on databases throughout the year at various sites around Arkansas. These training workshops are usually well attended and participants receive valuable information to utilize the databases to their fullest extent.

The following are quotes from different libraries on the importance of *Traveler*.

- ◆ “*Traveler* databases have changed library patron’s skills, knowledge and attitudes for many years. I have been in both the public and academic setting and access to the databases provided by *Traveler* are an essential part of the learning process at both places. We would be hard pressed to provide

the access to information that *Traveler* provides. Making people aware of this is the hardest task as they still do not understand that these are scholarly databases provided by LSTA grant money and not just an Internet site. It is one of the first teaching tools for classes doing research in the college setting.” -*2-year Academic*

- ◆ “I can only afford 2 additional add-ons: 1 from EBSCO and 1 from Gale. By having the initial access through *Traveler*, I am able to do this. The *Traveler* project, in my opinion, has had a huge impact on library services to students of Arkansas with no regard to socio-economic status. We could not have the impact on student learning that we do at the high school level without these databases.” -*School*
- ◆ “I used to be ashamed that this branch could not afford subscriptions to various magazines (such as National Geographic or Smithsonian), especially for the school kids who might need them for resource material. Now that the “*Traveler*” is provided there are no bounds to the magazine and newspaper resources this small branch can supply to its patrons.” *Public Library Branch*
- ◆ “We use *Traveler* databases for everything! All research in our library begins with *Traveler*. A librarian commented, ‘I am a better librarian because of my ability to access the *Traveler* Databases!’ These databases allow us to serve our patrons better, faster, and more efficiently. We don’t know what we’d do without them.” –*Public Library*
- ◆ “*Traveler* databases are integral to our library’s support of curriculum and instruction. They are used by students, staff and faculty for academic and personal research. Librarians use them to teach information literacy skills in online and face-to-face formats. Since they are provided by IMLS and the State Library, our local funds can be applied to other databases, thus giving our community access to a wider range of general and subject-specific databases. We could not succeed without *Traveler*, and in fact, would like to see it expanded.”
4-year Academic
- ◆ “Students realize that the computer is used for more than just surfing the Internet. Through *Traveler* databases they find the value in using the computer for reference and research work

by accessing databases with sound, verifiable resources written, in most cases, by experts in many fields of knowledge. Just this spring I attended a workshop at the Fort Smith Public Library for the EBSCO database. I have presented informational classes to students for a number of years, but still learned new things about the service and what it offers.” - *School*

Traveler has continued to be an important part of service in all types of libraries in Arkansas. This is one program ASL is committed to providing for years to come.

Arkansas Center for the Book

Although a small part of LSTA funding, the Arkansas Center for the Book, affiliated with the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, has a definite impact on books, reading, libraries, and literacy in Arkansas. The amount of LSTA funds for this program ranged from less than 1% to 2% of the total ASL LSTA grant during the reporting period.

This unique project develops programs and publications to promote the state’s authors, publishers, readers, schools, and libraries, as well as to encourage partnerships and collaborations among its constituent groups.

“If All Arkansas Read the Same Book” is an annual statewide reading initiative. This project selects a book to promote to libraries, schools, and books clubs in Arkansas. The author is brought in for sessions in several locations around Arkansas. Depending on the selected book, these locations may include high schools as well as libraries. The Arkansas Center for the Book was awarded a major grant from the National Endowment of the Arts for participation in the nationwide “The Big Read”. There were 1,762 participants in “The Big Read” programming with 962 attending direct programming and 800 participating in book clubs.

Two Spanish Language programs were presented during the reporting period. “La Voz Latina”, a two day Latino literary festival, featured nationally recognized Latino authors. An \$8,000 grant from the Arkansas Humanities Council helped fund this project. The following year, “Literary Tapas”, a Latino author program, was

developed and held in conjunction with the Arkansas Literary Festival. 150 people attended this event.

The program advisor for the Arkansas Center for the Book developed and implemented the following projects during the reporting period:

- The nationwide “Letters About Literature” - Participation in this event has increased considerably during this reporting period. The number of entries has grown from 903 to 1,400.
- Book arts programming workshops – These are conducted during the summer months for young adults and include paper making and paper marbling.
- Book talks for different civic groups.
- “Gathering of the Groups” – Luncheon events for book club discussions

A new project from The Arkansas Center for the Book is a library of book club sets. The program advisor identified and purchased reading club sets of 12 books for distribution to library based book clubs. There are a total of 76 titles with 57 for adult book clubs and 19 for juvenile/young adult book clubs. Listings of books available may be found at the websites below for adult and YA books respectively.
<http://www.asl.lib.ar.us/ACFB/BookClubListAdult.htm>
<http://www.asl.lib.ar.us/ACFB/BookClubListYA.htm>

The Arkansas Center for the Book is increasing in popularity and will continue to be an exemplary program with minimal LSTA funding.

IV. Progress in showing results of library initiatives or services

Workshops in statewide preservation, conducted by Amigos Library Services, Inc., utilize Outcomes Based Evaluation methods. At this point ASL does not have OBE criteria for programs that would benefit from this type of evaluation in place.

V. Lessons Learned

Overall the **Arkansas LSTA Five-Year Plan** has been beneficial in ensuring that funds were expended where needed and met federal and state legislation.

The librarians across Arkansas have been very supportive of the programs and projects established in the **Five-Year Plan**.

Although ASL is very diligent in making sure that all materials produced with LSTA funds are labeled as such, public awareness efforts need to be improved. One of the database vendors, EBSCO, has placed the *Traveler* logo along with the following statement on the front access page of EBSCOhost. "The EBSCOhost databases are brought to the schools and libraries of Arkansas through *Traveler*, which is an LSTA project administered by the Arkansas State Library."

One aspect uncovered by this evaluation is the need to communicate with program coordinators the five-year plan and what is required of them for evaluation. At times the information received from the program coordinators did not meet the criteria found in the five-year plan. This is due to a lack of communication between coordinators and will be addressed with the new five-year plan.

This evaluation has given the Arkansas State Library a good starting point in formulating the next five-year plan.

VI. Brief description of evaluation process

The evaluation process consisted of several methods. The majority of the information was pulled from the SPR. Having the online report has been very beneficial in gathering information for this report.

Talking with program coordinators helped to clarify facts from the SPR as well as any additional information that added to the evaluation.

A survey of all types of libraries was conducted that will mainly help with the next five-year plan, but was also helpful with the evaluation.

Input from the state librarian, who served in three different positions during this reporting period, was also beneficial to the evaluation process.