

CMCLLD Annual Meeting, 12/03/18, at the Judicial College Education and Conference Center, Annapolis, MD.

Meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Kate Martin, Chair.

Attendees included: Anne Arundel County Public Law Library Director Joanie Bellistri; Baltimore County Circuit Court Law Library Director Stephanie Levasseur; Carroll County Circuit Court Law Librarian Florence Barnes; Charles County Public Law Library Director Mary Jo Lazun; Howard County Circuit Court Law Library Director Sandy Brewer; Tonya Baroudi, Prince George's County Circuit Court Director of Library Services, Md State Law Library Deputy Director James Durham; Catherine McGuire, Head of Reference and Outreach, Md State Law Library; and Lonni Kyhos Summers, Esq., Access to Justice Department, Administrative Office of the Courts.

## **I. Welcome and Housekeeping**

Kate Martin, Chair, Montgomery County Circuit Court Law Library, welcomed everyone. Kate announced her retirement from the Montgomery County Circuit Court Law Library effective February 1, 2019. Mary Jo Lazun will be taking over as Chair for the last two meetings of the 2017-2019 term.

## **II. End of Year Summit: How can we improve public law libraries within the State of Maryland (Our 2018 Success Stories)**

Tonya (Prince Georges Co.) spoke about the successful Courthouse tours that has evolved into a program with speakers from different court departments for local high schools and summer camps which generally takes half a day from 9:30 am – 12:30 pm; they provide snacks and goodie bags for the children who attend. Tonya's library also hosts a Courthouse employee lecture series, four programs a year, on topical areas such as employment law, elder law and grant writing.

Kate (Montgomery Co.) spoke about the four phases of renovation at her law library and that it was challenging because moving their collection each time was very time consuming, they have a new security gate with a people counter and their whole library has to be re-tagged with RFID's. Since the renovation they are being visited by more people and are reserving more conference rooms for court business, meditations, attorney conferences and depositions.

James (MSLL) announced they have one new staff member, the construction at their building is approaching being finished with new carpet in the lobby of the entranceway and a new parking

garage. Catherine (MSLL) added that the "Ask a Librarian" button has been very successful, increasing email requests significantly, particularly in the areas of landlord/tenant and family law. She also noted that they are using SharePoint, Office 365, for scripted language at the reference desk. Catherine also said that the statewide Public Library training program has been successfully completed in about half of the county's and she is gearing up to finish the training programs for the rest of the public libraries in 2019.

Sandy (Howard Co.) shared that the Judges there are sending people to the Law Library to watch the guardianship video and upon completion she is handing out the Certification to the participants. MDEC started at their Courthouse last April of 2018 and she is now receiving Clerk's Office MDEC calls which accounts for her MDEC stats going up. A new Howard County Circuit Court Courthouse is being planned for possibly June of 2021, the Law Library will be spacious and situated on the first level along with a Self-Help room.

Mary Jo (Charles Co.) went through a one-month renovation in her law library and she shared pictures of it. The whole basement area will now house the Law Library and a Self-Help Center with an Attorney and herself. She held a program entitled "So you were pulled over?" with a State's Attorney and Public Defender, will be holding it again but targeting "new drivers" next time; also held a Homeowners Association program. Her stat's for SRLs doubled which she attributed to outreach to public libraries.

Lonnie (Access to Justice Dept.) spoke about the success of the new Center that was recently opened in Frederick County. She shared that they are expanding the groundwork for Self-Help Centers in Circuit Courts. She also noted that their Spring/Summer outreach and advertising, targeting smaller jurisdictions, has been very successful. Two new additional District Court self-help centers, one in 2020 at Baltimore County, and one in 2021 at Montgomery County, are slated to be opened. There will be a Self-Help provider conference again next Fall, scheduled for September 27, 2019; she asked the group for any suggestions/ideas. The group suggested: Mutual Consent Divorce, Power of Attorney, Post-Judgment, Mediation, Self-Help Providers and the Bench.

Joanie (AArundel Co.) said that she cancelled non-Maryland print from West and Lexis; that everything is now online. Hired an administrative assistant for two days per week. She is expanding the Lawyer in the Library program with Legal Aid.

Florence (Carroll Co.) shared that despite stagnant revenue and increased expenses, they were able to successfully continue to provide a core collection along with a CALR service for all who can make use of the Law Library. MDEC began in April of 2018 in Carroll County and at that time a Public Kiosk was

installed in the Law Library; the kiosk has proven to be a success as it is a very convenient and useful addition to the Law Library for use by attorneys and the public.

Stephanie (Baltimore Co.) said MDEC will be launching there soon and that she and Scott are on the MDEC Committee in Baltimore County. There have been some catalog transfer issues with the State computers which they are currently working on with the county, state and vendor. Stephanie remarked that she had sent out an email to our group asking for help to provide coverage in her library while she and her staff attend MDEC training at the JCECC; she is happy to report that her library will be fully covered while they are in Annapolis and thanked everyone who is helping. She added that they have a new Deputy Court Administrator and that Scott is currently attending CM classes at the AOC which is a four-year program.

## **LUNCH**

### **III. Positioning resources to support public/county law libraries**

Mary Jo suggested that positioning resources to support access to court law libraries could be gained by self-help kiosks, catalog sharing, pooling funds, and by partnering with Md Legal Aid or Lawyer in the Library programs.

Joanie commented on the importance of the issue of access to court law libraries.

Lonnie said that there is a Family Law Self-Help Center in every court making what's there now more robust and that there are regional District Court Self-Help Centers, but not yet regional Self-Help Centers in Circuit Courts as they make their own decisions but if the Circuit Courts are interested they are happy to help.

### **IV. Statistics: Demonstrating our value**

Tabled until next meeting.

### **V. Collaborations: Strategic networking both within the Conference and as individual libraries**

Kate discussed our 2016 Strategic Plan and suggested to use it to evaluate what we are doing and what we can add to it. Each of us are to review the Strategic Plan and propose any edits or additions at our

next quarterly meeting. Lonnie suggested that we create an excel spreadsheet to track goals and objectives, using green font color for goals/objectives met and red font color for goals/objectives in progress. Mary Jo volunteered to create the excel spreadsheet.

## **VI. Future of Law Libraries in the Maryland Court System: Issues and Opportunities**

The issues: How can we support staffed and unstaffed county circuit court law libraries?

The opportunities: Unifying access to county law libraries in Maryland, creating a unified model for purchasing, how a unified catalog would benefit all of us, placing kiosks in unstaffed county circuit court law libraries, having a law librarian on staff in Resource/Self-Help Centers.

## **VII. Housekeeping and Closing Remarks**

Housekeeping: The next two meeting places will be at the Carroll County Circuit Court Law Library in March of 2019 and at the Howard County Circuit Court Law Library in June of 2019, the September 2019 meeting place will be determined and the annual meeting will take place in Annapolis at the JCECC. Days and times will be forthcoming.

Closing remarks: What an ideal legal resource center would look like.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.