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mdcourts.gov/lawlib
The Maryland State Law Library, established by the State Legislature in 1827 and now a part of the Judicial branch of State Government, serves the population of the State of Maryland in many capacities. Although the Library’s primary responsibility is support of the research activities of the Judiciary, a wide variety of information services are also extended to the Executive and Legislative branches of State Government; to bar members statewide; and to the public. Both alone and in cooperation with circuit court law libraries, the public library system, and many special libraries, the State Law Library aims to provide comprehensive assistance to all of its users.

We welcome you to the library facility and take seriously our commitment to serving your research needs.

- Steve Anderson, Director

The Library Staff, 2006-2007
Steve Anderson, Director
Shirley Aronson, State Publications
Scott Ashlin, Library Clerk
Bernice Bernstein, Acquisitions
Maureen Della Barba, Library Clerk
Debra Haines, Library Aide
Ruth Henderson, Webmaster
Kate Kelchner, Reference
Gene Kowalczuk, Reference
Rudi Lamy, Reference and Cataloging
Mary Jo Lazun, State Publications
Catherine McGuire, Outreach Services
Jessie Tam, Cataloging
Cindy Terry, Federal Documents and Technology
Dee Van Nest, Reference Coordinator
Ed Wiesenbaler, Federal Documents
Donna Wiesinger, Electronic Resources

The Library Committee, 2006-2007
Hon. Robert M. Bell, Chief Judge, Court of Appeals
Hon. Clayton Greene, Jr., Court of Appeals
Hon. Joseph F. Murphy, Jr., Court of Special Appeals
Hon. Deborah Sweet Eyler, Court of Special Appeals
Frank Broccolina, State Court Administrator
Alexander L. Cummings, Esq., Clerk, Court of Appeals
Patricia Ann Logan, Esq., Anne Arundel County Office of Law
Steven Anderson, Esq., Library Director
The Maryland State Law Library opened its doors in 1827 as the Maryland State Library. Originally housed in the Capitol Building, the Library’s original mission centered on the collection of materials of general interest to the State of Maryland. Because its nearest neighbors were the judges and legislators, legal materials grew much faster in proportion to the general history collection and other miscellany. When the Court of Appeals moved to its own building, the Library moved with it, cementing a relationship with the courts that has continued to this day. The Library’s name was officially changed to the Maryland State Law Library in the 1970’s to reflect a purpose that was already well-established.

Currently, the Library has seventeen staff, of which twelve are full time. In addition, the Library supports volunteer relationships with members of the community and local educational institutions.

The Library’s collection numbers some 235,000 volumes in print and audio-visual formats, 12 online database subscriptions, and 125,000 microform volume equivalents. The Library collects materials in the areas of general law, Maryland law, Maryland state publications and task force reports, Maryland history, Federal documents, general reference, and law and general periodicals and newspapers.

On an average day, the staff fields dozens of requests, both short and complex, from our many patrons, including judges, law clerks, attorneys, self-represented litigants, students, and other members of the public. The staff maintains dynamic working relationships with colleagues in public libraries, law school libraries, and law firms; and with many sister State agencies.
The Library unveiled a new library catalog interface at the end of summer 2006. The redesign is more user-friendly and easier on the eyes. Included in the redesign is a link to the Library's Journal & Law Review Portal, a tool to make searching for a journal title in our collection more comprehensive. The JLRP links access points to all journal titles in our collection to a single search box. The title of a sought-for journal is typed into one search box, and the results show where that journal is located in our collection, whether in print form, on Westlaw, or in other databases. It's one-stop-shopping for journals.
Collections: increasing law holdings

The Library significantly expanded its holdings of Maryland-related CLE handbooks published by MICPEL, Lorman and NBI. These materials provide in-depth insight to cutting edge topics of interest to legal professionals. The handbooks are also beneficial to lay researchers because the works usually thoroughly explain the topics they cover.

The State Law Library is the only library in Maryland that strives to acquire a comprehensive collection of these materials. As the preeminent repository for Maryland legal publications, this collection will provide value to researchers for years to come.

Additions to our print collection included:

- Send: The Essential Guide to Email for Office and Home, by David Shipley and Will Schwalbe (Knopf, 2007)
- Create Your Own Employee Handbook (Nolo, 2007)
- The Law (In Plain English) for Restaurants and Others in the Food Industry, by Leonard D. DuBoff and Christy O. King (Sphinx, 2007)
- Legal Issues of Dependent and Incapacitated People, by Dana Shilling (Civic Research Institute, 2007)
- Judicial Opinion Writing Handbook, by Joyce J. George (Hein, 2007)
In September 2006, a formal reception officially opened the newly-renovated Special Collections Room. The new facility features climate control and special security, and houses the Library’s collection of Audubon’s *Birds of America* Prints as well as many rare and historic materials. At the same time, the Library marked the return of its collection of the Audubon Prints from Philadelphia’s Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts, where they underwent substantial restoration.

The opening reception included Judiciary employees and guests from Maryland’s legal, library and history communities. The Honorable Robert M. Bell, Chief Judge of the Maryland Court of Appeals, gave a brief address and cut the ribbon, after which the guests toured the new room. Displays of several rare and valuable items illustrated the importance of preservation in a state-of-the-art environment.

“Although soiled from handling over the years and damaged from the backing and cropping job done during rebinding in 1921, the prints are in remarkably good condition for the use that they have had. Most colors appear clear and bright despite years of display, probably because the Library has been very conscientious about rotating the prints exposed.”

-Nancy Rea, Preservation of Audubon’s *Birds of America* at the Maryland State Law Library, 1990

Audubon’s Raven, now fully restored

Chief Judge Robert M. Bell and Library Director Steve Anderson, cutting the ribbon at the opening reception
The Special Collections Room contains more than just the Audubon Prints. Materials now being appropriately preserved include many historic law texts as well as primary materials from the Library’s own history. The lending records from the Library’s beginning decades, with handwritten listings of each appellate judge’s borrowed materials, give a compelling picture of the research that went into the cases decided by the State’s highest court. Other valuable works include:

- An Abstract of All the Penal Statutes Which Be in General, In Force and Use, by Ferdinando Pulton (London, 1579)
- An Introduction to the Law of Tenures, by Sir Martin Wright (London, 1730)
- A Journal of the Votes and Proceedings of the Lower House of the Assembly of the Province of Maryland, at their session begun May 1, 1739 (Annapolis: Jonas Green, c1739)
- Opinions on Interesting Subjects of Public Law and Commercial Policy; Arising from American Independence, by George Chalmers (London: Debrett, 1785)
- The Constitution of the United States of America (Philadelphia, 1796)
- The Law of Shipping and Navigation, from the Time of Edward III to the End of the Year 1806 (London, 1807)
Collections: digital Preservation

The State of Maryland publishes an increasing amount of material exclusively online. This "born digital" format presents storage and preservation challenges for librarians. The Library has begun a pilot project to store the digital version of these materials for long-term use. While the Library has the option to print these digital materials, and often does, the benefit of online publications is that they can be used from any computer anywhere in the world at anytime. Digital publications can be searched, shared, and printed with ease.

The primary problem with digital state publications is that over time, these materials may be moved or removed entirely from an agency's web site. To remedy this problem the MSLL is now storing these materials in "Digital Archive," an OCLC product accessible from both the Library's catalog and the national OCLC database. Selected material is "harvested" from a web site and "ingested" into the archive. Each publication is given a permanent URL and is given bit-level checks during backup for preservation purposes. A hypertext link to the material is added to the record in the library catalog, making access to the material permanent, even if it is removed from the original web site.

"State publications are key sources supporting research into public policies that often are tested in states before reaching the federal level."

The Library assists customers via phone, e-mail or in person, with suggestions for beginning and advanced research. Areas of reference assistance include, for example: expertise in identifying Maryland statutory legislative history sources; assistance in identifying old English case law; and specialized literature searches and the compilation of bibliographies. Library staff regularly answer ready-reference questions such as recommended contact persons and offices for various State agencies; practical websites for beginning research; and personal tutorials for using basic legal research materials such as digests, encyclopedias, and online resources.

FY 2007
Number of reference requests: 8,626
Number of in-person visitors: 9,583
Website visits: 236,318

“I JUST SPOKE WITH THE ATTORNEY AND HE SAID THAT EVERYTHING YOU’D DONE WAS VERY HELPFUL. HE SAID THAT YOU DIDN’T HAVE TO DIG ANY FURTHER...THANKS SO MUCH FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE! I WOULD HAVE BEEN LOST WITHOUT.”

Librarian, D.C. Law Firm
A desktop scanner and a high volume photocopier/scanner were added to enable the Library to better serve its customers. With the new technology, documents can now be scanned and sent via e-mail directly to a customer’s home or office e-mail. Many busy professional demand “real time” access and this capability meets their needs.

Payment for services is now accepted via MasterCard and Visa, in addition to cash and check. Patrons may submit their requests online via a link from the Library’s homepage. Once the form is received via e-mail at the Library Reference Desk, staff will locate the material and contact the patron regarding payment. Library staff are committed to a 24-hour turnaround for material requested before 2:00 p.m., business days. Material can be delivered digitally via e-mail or through the more traditional methods of fax or mail.

Copy charges are $.50 per page, regardless of delivery format.

Thank you so much for scanning and emailing the pages. No problem viewing them. The attorney was very appreciative. You have saved us so much time!

- Librarian, Baltimore law firm
A 2001 Report on the status of Maryland Circuit Court Libraries concluded that need for assistance in many of those libraries was crucial. Suggestions for this assistance included the establishment of a grants program through the State Law Library to augment funding shortfalls, and the creation of an outreach position at the Library to administer the grants, create and maintain recommended collections lists, draft sample policies, and in general provide aid and advice to the twenty-four Circuit Court, Bar and County Law Libraries around the State.

Since its inception, the grants program has provided for staffing, new and updated publications, computers and internet access, and other necessary items for many of these libraries. In addition, the Outreach Program in 2006-2007 developed and posted a Sample Collection Development Policy for the use of the libraries; and designed and posted start pages for smaller libraries. A new Maryland Circuit Court Library Materials page on the State Law Library’s website provides easy access to Outreach materials for librarians throughout the State.

A Circuit Court library may apply for a grant by completing an application or by requesting a site visit from the Outreach Program. The conclusions of the site visit are treated as an application for grant funding. The FY07 grant cycle included six applications for grants as well as nine field visits. These resulted in thirteen grants totalling $260,000.

“THE ROLE OF THE PUBLIC COURTHOUSE LIBRARY MUST NOT BE OVERLOOKED AS A LEGITIMATE GATEWAY TO AN INDIVIDUAL’S ACCESS TO JUSTICE.”

Frank Broccolina
State Court Administrator
The Value of a Public Law Library

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The Value of a Public Law Library
Services: Teaching our Specialty

The Library organized and held several successful education programs in the last year. Working with the Judicial Education and Conference Center (JECC), the Library’s Legal Research for Judiciary Employees got top marks. Following the positive feedback, the JECC and Library will be adding a second, advanced session focused on online legal research in Summer 2008.

Educational programs for Commissioners, Judicial Law Clerks, and State Correctional Librarians were also highly rated. The covered topics ranged from basic introductory sources of law, to online legal research and in-depth discussions of research in the Maryland Code. Each training session was specially tailored to the needs of the group, and several included hands-on research exercises to give participants experience in the use of the library materials.

...and it was FUN!

Balancing Online & Print Research

- Identify your legal issue
  - Dates, scope, related issues?
- Identify your research needs
  - Quick facts, summary, or in-depth treatment?
- Identify your sources
  - Primary or secondary?
  - Remember that sources are merely tools