



Maryland State Law Library

Highlights

FY 2010

July 2009 – June 2010

The Library's Mission

The Maryland State Law Library, a court-related agency of the Maryland Judiciary, serves the needs of Maryland's government and citizens by building and preserving collections of legal information resources, promoting access to these collections and creating educational opportunities that enhance the understanding of legal information.

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“MARYLAND’S FIRST LEGAL RESOURCE”

Building and Preserving Collections

Conservation of Congressional Acts Signed by Thomas Jefferson

The Library took delivery early in the fiscal year of the newly conserved Acts of Congress bearing Thomas Jefferson's signature. The work was done by the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts. The signatures are valued individually at \$20,000 to \$25,000.

Updating of the Collection

The Library's municipal code collection was expanded to include both print copies and links in the Library's catalog and on the Library website to available online versions.

Catalog staff completed procedures and provided staff training for a catalog-based "tickler" system for tracking the delivery of periodicals. The refinements to the system will allow for improved identification and swifter replacement and receipt of missing issues and updates.

The Library's basement storage space was reallocated to accommodate the growing collection on the first floor. Older non-legal materials, no longer in keeping with the Library's purpose and mission, were removed and made available to interested public and academic libraries. The shift allows for more accessible storage of the Library's continually-growing but less frequently used segments of the law collection.

Baltimore Sun Historical Issues

Added to the Library's database collection this year is the *Historical Baltimore Sun* from Proquest. The database includes the full scanned text of the Baltimore Sun, 1837 through 1986.

Scanning Project

The Library completed the initial phase of scanning the legislative task force reports collection, comprised of the most legally-oriented reports. Library staff are revising cataloging fields and website navigation elements in preparation for loading scanned files into its PTFS Archivalware platform.

Promoting Access

AskUsNow! Live Chat

In May 2010, Library staff added live chat to their reference service activities. The State Law Library has been providing backup assistance to the Maryland AskUsNow 24/7 chat service since AskUsNow's launch in March 2003. Using the service's follow-up procedures, Library staff retrieve law-related questions and respond via email with specialized sources and referrals. Beginning in 2010, Library staff also provides live specialized chat assistance, four hours weekly, on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

People's Law Library

In October, members of the PLL's Content Advisory Committee adopted Content Guidelines. The Guidelines serve to focus the purpose of the website and to prioritize the types of materials that will be added. The Committee also adopted three Workflow Protocols that describe in detail the procedures that will be used in the areas of topic selection, content development and content management.

Representatives from the Library attended the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators and the Mid-Atlantic Association for Court Management conferences to display and demonstrate the People's Law Library site to attendees.

Grants

The Library's Grants for Maryland Circuit Court Libraries policy and procedures were revised and streamlined to ensure accountability. Despite improved procedures, due to budget constraints the grant program was unfunded for FY2010. The Library continues to play a consulting role with smaller court libraries to help ensure the continued availability of library materials.

Reference Staff Weekly Meetings

A schedule of brief weekly reference staff meetings was established to provide additional opportunities for communication and continuing education. In June 2010, the reference staff hosted Pamela Ortiz, Director of the Maryland Access to Justice Commission, for a discussion of unauthorized practice of law and the boundaries of reference provision.

Flash Drives at Front Desk

Starting in FY10, Library patrons now may purchase flash drives. For \$10.00, patrons can purchase a drive to save documents and other materials from the public computer stations and take home with them, relieving them of printing costs.

Mutual Aid Agreements

The State Law Library began working with the largest Circuit Court libraries to seek alternative work locations for the staff in the event of a weather or other emergency. Circuit Court Library Directors all expressed interest in the execution of "mutual aid agreements" that provide for reciprocal accommodations for library staff in the case of disaster plan activation.

Creating Educational Opportunities

Legal Research for the Judiciary

The Library's popular Legal Research series added a Part III: Commercial Online Sources, with a focus on Lexis and HeinOnline, continued under the auspices of the Office of Professional Development. In addition, staff also taught legal research classes for the Judiciary's Court Professional Certificate Program and the District Court's New Commissioner Academy.

Library Tours

The Library regularly holds tours upon request. The Library hosted a broad range of tour groups, with visits from the Department of Legislative Services Library staff, the Baltimore Scholars Program, Stevenson University students, the Attorney General's Office law clerks, high school students from Queen Anne's County Public Schools, attendees of the Maryland Justice Institute sponsored by the Citizenship Law-Related Education Program for the Schools of Maryland (CLREP), and members of the Study Tour for Ukrainian Public Information Officers.

"Bring Your Sons and Daughters to Work Day"

April 2010 saw the return of the annual event, "Bring Your Sons and Daughters to Work Day". Library staff participated in a planning committee for the Appellate Courts, Administrative Office of the Courts, and Court-Related Agencies. The result was a day-long program for more than 40 children of employees and their parents.

Law Reference for Public Libraries

Library staff began work with the Maryland delegation to the Austin, TX, conference on training public librarians about "access to justice" issues, sponsored by the National Center for State Courts in January 2010.

The Library also provided, with Joan Bellistri (Director of the Anne Arundel County Public Law Library) an on-site tour and presentation for librarians from the Anne Arundel County Public Library system in October 2009. Attendees were treated to tips and guidelines on the provision of legal reference at their libraries.

Outreach Activities

The annual meeting of Maryland Circuit Court Libraries convened on November 4. The meeting included an overview of the Judiciary's Internal Audit procedures and practices.

The Library exhibited at the MSBA Solo & Small Firm Conference in November. Additionally, the Library was represented at the Maryland Advisory Council on Libraries meeting in June 2010 and at the Mid-Atlantic Association for Court Management conference in October 2009.

Library Profile

The Maryland State Law Library, established in 1827 as the Maryland State Library, supports the research activities of the Maryland State Judiciary. The Library offers its services and collections to other government entities, the legal community, and the public. In addition to a significant number of legal materials, the Library's collections include Maryland state agency publications, works on Maryland history and Federal government documents.

Staff, FY2010

Steve Anderson, Director
Shirley Aronson, State Publications/Research Librarian (Part-time)
Scott Ashlin, Library Clerk
Katherine Baer, State Publications/Research Librarian
Bernice Bernstein, Acquisitions Librarian
Carol Carman, Reference Librarian (Part-time)
Michael Craven, People's Law Library Web Content Coordinator
Maureen Della Barba, Library Clerk
Debra Haines, Library Aide (Part-time)
Ruth Henderson, Administrative Specialist
Deborah Judy, Reference Librarian (Part-time)
Rudi Lamy, Cataloging/Research Librarian
Mary Jo Lazun, Head of Electronic Services
Catherine McGuire, Outreach Services Librarian
Jessie Tam, Head of Technical Services
Cindy Terry, Federal Documents and Systems Associate
Dee Van Nest, Reference Coordinator
Ed Wiesenbaler, Federal Documents Assistant (Part-time)

Library Committee

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
Bessie Decker, Clerk, Court of Appeals
Patricia Ann Logan, Esq., Anne Arundel County Office of Law
Steven Anderson, Esq., Library Director