



Maryland State Law Library

Highlights

FY 2013
July 2012 – June 2013

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.

Library Highlights

The Maryland State Law Library, established in 1826 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, Maryland history, and federal government documents.

These Library Highlights provide updates on Maryland State Law Library collections, staffing, initiatives, and accomplishments throughout the year.

Maryland State Law Library
Robert C. Murphy Courts of Appeal Building
361 Rowe Blvd
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
Reference: 410-260-1430
Fax: 410-260-1572
E-mail: lawlibrary@mdcourts.gov
Website: www.mdcourts.gov/lawlib

Building and Preserving Collections

Digitization Activities

Library staff began assessing options for the next digitization project. Discussions began with the Maryland State Bar Association regarding the possibility of scanning the MSBA Transactions. The Library's collection of Transactions dates to Volume 1, 1896. The Transactions include reports of MSBA committees on many legislative proposals, providing a wealth of legislative history for a time period preceding the legislative bill files.

Judiciary-wide Legal Research Database Subscription

At the start of the 2013 calendar year, the Library began preparing for a change in legal research database providers, from LexisNexis to Westlaw. Westlaw was selected through the Judiciary's competitive bidding procurement process. Library staff set up password access for over 800 Judiciary employees and established a calendar of training events to familiarize Judiciary staff with Westlaw Classic and WestlawNext. In March, the official transition was completed successfully.

Book Publisher Contracts

With assistance from the Department of Procurement and Contract Administration of the Administrative Office of the Courts, the Library began new contracts with the two largest legal book publishers, ThomsonReuters (West) and LexisNexis. These multi-year contracts provide the Maryland Judiciary, including the Library, with significant savings over retail pricing.

Collection Management

After a survey of the print collection, Library staff began a long-term project to deacquisition outdated and unused materials and provide more space on the shelves for newer, more relevant publications. The Library's Collection Development Committee began identifying subject areas requiring augmentation and updated material, and met regularly to discuss potential purchases and strategies. Staff will extend the review in FY2014 to other areas of the collection.

Special Collections Room Display

Working with the conservation staff of the Maryland State Archives, Library staff planned and completed *On the Wall: Highlights of the Special Collections Room*, a collection of framed archival reproductions of unique items in the Special Collections Room. Reproductions include pages from *The Constitutions of the Several Independent States of America* (1781); *The Orchardist's Companion or Fruits of the United States: a Quarterly Journal* (1841-1843); *History of the Indian Tribes of North America with Biographical Sketches and Anecdotes of the Principal Chiefs* (1837); and *The Reports of Sir Edward Coke* (1607). A matching flyer, including short descriptions of the displayed materials, was posted to the Library's website, with print copies available for interested Library visitors. The new wall display and accompanying flyer will allow Library staff members to explain the Special Collections Room to visitors without overhandling, and potentially damaging, rare or fragile materials.

Promoting Access

People's Law Library

The Maryland People's Law Library website saw a surge of activity in FY2013. Total hits on the site more than doubled the FY2012 number, from almost 16 million to over 32 million hits. Other site metrics also experienced significant growth.

The site's content expanded as well, including new procedural materials about types of court cases; a new video tutorial on Reading the Maryland Rules; and the updating of the domestic violence section and other pages with gender neutral terminology. Site editing was assisted by undergraduate intern Rene LaVigne, who provided assistance in proofreading.

Significant changes for the project included the departure in January of Web Content Coordinator Michael Craven and the subsequent hiring of David Pantzer to fill that position. Google Analytics was installed on the site for enhanced statistical tracking. The People's Law Library website was represented at the annual Partners for Justice Conference in Baltimore, and almost 3,000 new rack cards describing the website were distributed around the State.

Reference Statistics

In mid-September, the Library began using Gimlet, an internet-based reference statistics tracking and reporting system, to record reference interactions received by telephone and in-person. In keeping with the Library's privacy standards, patron-identifying information is not recorded. For each interaction, desk staff record duration of the request; format received (phone or in-person); question type (for example, legislative history, directional, or tech assistance); location (where the question was received, such as at the reference desk or in the stacks); and the category of patron (bar member, Judiciary, public, student, etc.). Gimlet allows Library staff to track trends in reference volume and interaction. Benefits of tracking will include improved desk coverage for indicated heavy hours of use and more individualized services to specific populations.

From the start of Gimlet usage to the end of the fiscal year, the Library received a total of 4,312 requests in person and by phone, averaging about 454 questions per month. 60% of the requests were in-person, meaning that in more than half of the interactions, the patron actually visited the Library. Just under 50% of reference questions were received from public patrons. The numbers peaked in June 2013, with a monthly total of 572 interactions.

Reference activity in FY2013 included an upsurge of 15% in e-mail requests from FY2012, as well as an 8% rise in AskUsNow follow-up questions. Combining all formats of requests, the Library saw an increase of 4%, from a total in FY2012 of about 9,000 questions to almost 9,500 in FY2013.

Circuit Court Libraries Study Committee

The Maryland Circuit Court Libraries Study Committee continued its work throughout the year. In July, the Subcommittee chairs completed revisions to draft recommendations and presented them to the full Committee for comment. Committee members began drafting the final report.

Maryland AskUsNow 24/7 Chat Service

The Library continued its involvement in the Maryland AskUsNow 24/7 chat service, monitoring the chat site live six hours per week and checking daily for follow-up questions. Numbers of requests rose slightly over FY2012.

New Cataloging Rules

On April 1, 2013, the Library of Congress and the British Library began using RDA, or “Resource Description and Access”, as their official descriptive cataloging standard. In preparation for this change, Jessie Tam, the Library’s Head of Technical Services, participated in numerous training and information sessions throughout the year.

Creating Educational Opportunities

Training and Orientation

In the fall of 2012, Library staff initiated a new training program for incoming appellate law clerks. In addition to the overall orientation offered at the start of the law clerks’ terms, staff offered additional, optional, one-on-one training sessions, tailored to fit each law clerk’s schedule and subject needs. The duration of each session generally varied from one to two hours. The focus was mainly on Maryland legislative history, but has also included Maryland regulatory history as well as general library information, depending upon the individual’s request. Library staff provided more than seventeen individual sessions from September through December.

Library Tours

The Maryland Courts of Appeals and the State Law Library continued to be a popular stop for educators and international judicial personnel. The year included visits and tours for numerous groups, including multiple delegations from China comprised of judges and judicial administrative staff; visitors from the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL); the Maryland Department of Legislative Services Library’s cataloging department; Maryland District Court support staff; several groups of homeschooled, high school, and law school students; law clerks from the Office of the Attorney General; and summer interns from the UMBC Shriver Center Governor’s Summer Program. The staff also provided a special tour of the Audubon *Birds of America* prints to a pair of public citizen birdwatchers, who were very appreciative of the opportunity to see the prints in such a personal way.

Library Presentations

The Library continued to provide and participate in a diverse array of educational and training opportunities, including:

- Mining HeinOnline, hosted by the Library
- Guest lectures by Catherine McGuire, the Library’s Head of Reference and Outreach, at the University of Maryland’s iSchool
- Legal Research for the Judiciary, including Code & Rules; Cases; and Secondary Sources
- Participation by Catherine McGuire in the Special Libraries Association’s Speed Mentoring Program
- Participation by Deputy Director James Durham in a panel discussion on law librarianship for Master’s level students at the University of Maryland’s iSchool
- Maryland Library Association/Delaware Library Association Annual Meeting, “When a Form is Not a Form: Deciphering Maryland Legal ‘Forms’”; and “Law for Everyone @ The People’s Law Library of Maryland”
- Presentation at the Judiciary’s Family Law Matters
- Conference of Maryland Circuit Court Clerks, “Maryland People’s Law Library”
- The Law Library Association of Maryland’s Lunch & Learn: “Maryland Legislative History” program

Staff continued to exhibit the Library's services at conferences and fairs, including:

- The Maryland Partners for Justice Conference
- The University of Maryland iSchool's career/internship fair

Staff professional participation has included membership in and/or attendance at meetings of the following organizations:

- Law Library Association of Maryland
- American Association of Law Libraries
- Maryland Library Association
- Asian American Law Librarians Caucus
- Potomac Technical Processing Librarians
- Federal Depository Librarians Conference
- Maryland State Publications Depository & Distribution Program (SPDDP)
- Digital Preservation Best Practices Exchange Conference
- Computers in Libraries Conference

Library Profile

The State Law Library, Maryland's oldest law library, features one of the State's most extensive collections of legal and government information resources. Staffed by 18 full-time and part-time, professional and paraprofessional employees, the Library stands ready to serve users from all walks of life.

Hours of Operation

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Thursday 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Library Staff

In January, the job responsibilities and titles of several staff members were adjusted to reflect new workflow processes and changes in supervisory duties. The listing below reflects staff members and titles at both the start and the end of FY2013. During the year, staff members Michael Craven, Pam Luby and Katherine Baer left the Library and moved on to other positions; Deborah Judy was promoted to another position within the Library. New employees joining the Library by the end of the year are noted below.

As of July 2012:

Steve Anderson, Director

Shirley Aronson, State Publications Librarian (Part-time)

Scott Ashlin, Library Clerk

Katherine Baer, Maryland Collections Librarian

Michael Craven, People's Law Library Web Content Coordinator

Maureen Della Barba, Library Clerk

James G. Durham, Deputy Director

Debra Haines, Library Aide (Part-time)

Deborah Judy, Reference Librarian (Part-time)
Mary Jo Lazun, Head of Electronic Services
Pam Luby, Reference Librarian (Part-time)
Sara Marks, Fiscal Services Coordinator
Catherine McGuire, Outreach Services Librarian
Jessica Nhem, Cataloging/Reference Librarian
Jessie Tam, Head of Technical Services
Cindy Terry, Systems/Federal Documents Associate
Crystal Welsh, Administrative Assistant
Ed Wisenbaler, Federal Documents Assistant (Part-time)

As of June 2013:

Steve Anderson, Director
Shirley Aronson, State Publications Librarian (Part-time)
Scott Ashlin, Technical Services Assistant
Maureen Della Barba, Reference Assistant
James G. Durham, Deputy Director
Debra Haines, Library Aide (Part-time)
Deborah Judy, Maryland Collections Librarian
Mary Jo Lazun, Head of Collection Management
Sara Marks, Fiscal Services Coordinator
Catherine McGuire, Head of Reference and Outreach
Jessica Nhem, Cataloging/Reference Librarian
Dave Pantzer, People's Law Library Web Content Coordinator
Elizabeth Simmons, Reference Librarian (Part-time)
Jessie Tam, Head of Technical Services
Cindy Terry, Systems/Federal Documents Associate
Tanya Thomas, Reference Librarian (Part-time)
Crystal Welsh, Administrative Assistant
Ed Wisenbaler, Federal Documents Assistant (Part-time)

Library Committee

Hon. Robert M. Bell, Chief Judge, Court of Appeals
Hon. Clayton Greene Jr., Court of Appeals
Hon. Peter B. Krauser, Chief Judge, 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., Assistant Attorney General, Maryland Higher Education Commission
Steve Anderson, Director, State Law Library