

# Arkansas

Evaluation  
of the  
2008-2012  
Library Services and  
Technology Act  
Five-Year Plan

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## **Arkansas LSTA 2008-2012 Evaluation**

## I. Introductory Statement

The Arkansas State Library (ASL) is the State Library Administrative Agency (SLAA) designated to receive and manage Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) federal funds for library programs and projects in the state of Arkansas. The mission of the Arkansas State Library is to serve as the information resource center for state agencies, legislators and legislative staffs, to provide guidance and support for the development of local public libraries and library services, and to provide the resources, services, and leadership necessary to meet the educational, informational and cultural needs of the citizens of Arkansas.

For federal fiscal years 2008-2011, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) awarded to Arkansas a total of \$7,486,523 to address the goals and objectives as defined in the LSTA 5-Year Plan for 2008-2012.

FY 2008 : \$1,766,109  
FY 2009 : \$1,936,529  
FY 2010 : \$1,945,548  
FY 2011 : \$1,838,337

The programs supported by LSTA ranged from the valued Training and Education project, at a total cost of \$41,944 during the reporting period, to the popular and wide-reaching Traveler Full-Text Database project, at a total cost of \$1,649,456 during the reporting period.

The following priorities were established to guide the 2008-12 Arkansas LSTA 5-Year Plan:

- Access to information
- Resource sharing
- Education and training
- Services to libraries and to persons needing special services

The Arkansas LSTA 5-Year Plan 2008-2012 identifies goals and activities in keeping with these priorities and with federal purposes, to improve library services and resources for Arkansans.

## II. Report

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

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LSTA Purposes represented by Goal 1:

Purpose No. 1: Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages;

Purpose No. 2: Developing library services that provide all users access to information through local, State, regional, national, and international electronic networks;

Two ASL Programs further the above LSTA purposes represented by Goal 1:

- Planning for Statewide Cooperative Network and Expanding Networks
- Traveler Full-Text Database Project

### Traveler Full-Text Database Project

**Objective/Target #1:** *Number of libraries registered for Traveler will increase to 95% by 2012.*

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

During the reporting period, the number of libraries in Arkansas registered for the Traveler Full-Text Database Project increased 9%, from 78% to 87%.

#### **Other activities during the reporting period:**

Worked with the Network Advisory Committee on subscription selection and continued the e-book collection, for a total of 102 e-books. Traveler-related trainings were conducted, including workshops for IT staff of elementary and secondary schools, presentations for ALPS (Arkansas Library

Paraprofessionals), and webinars. All elementary & secondary school libraries were re-registered due to technical changes/issues.

**Survey:**

92.5% of those surveyed reported using/benefiting from Traveler in their libraries, with 5% reporting not knowing if their libraries use/benefit from this program.

Comments on the survey included “could not do without it,” “one of the most important services provided by the state library,” “an integral component of higher education resources in Arkansas,” and “we need to keep spreading the word.” One commenter inquired about exploring funding for a similar statewide e-book platform.

**Comments from in-depth interviews:**

- Traveler workshops provide a solid overview of what's in Traveler. For advanced users, more in-depth Traveler workshops would be useful. Suggestions included using real world examples of actual reference questions and demonstrating how to use Traveler to find answers. Advanced workshops might additionally be well suited to college or university staff who often already have basic database skills.
- It's difficult to keep statistics on how many patrons are using Traveler. Can ASL provide usage statistics for cities or regions?
- Traveler is very accessible for blind and low-vision patrons. Braille users access Traveler resources using assistive technologies.
- Multiple interviewees commented on upcoming changes to Traveler databases. Although some are disappointed about the loss of particular subscriptions, one director summed up the overall sentiment that the Traveler committee presents a very fair process for database selection, and that it's understood that there isn't ever enough funding for everything.

**Recommendations:**

- Increase visibility. In keeping with the 2011 RSL Research Group's Needs Assessment recommendation, increasing visibility should be an important consideration. Suggestions include:
  - Incorporate a new outcome-based evaluation (OBE) that sets Traveler usage goals. Use a measure such as number of articles downloaded or number of unique IP addresses.
  - Offer workshops for advanced users so that librarians and staff will increasingly see Traveler as a viable reference resource.
  - In promoting Traveler, consider a broad approach aimed at increasing visibility of all online database resources in Arkansas libraries. As one interviewee noted, patrons don't see Traveler as a separate or unique entity in libraries that offer additional databases.

## **Planning for Statewide Cooperative Network and Expanding Networks**

### **Activities during the reporting period:**

This project included providing and supporting workshops on networking and automation, including an Amigos Digital Preservation virtual program for multi-type libraries. ASL staff attended training seminars and conferences, and in turn developed workshops and training sessions for both ASL staff and library professionals throughout the state. ASL staff attended training sessions to improve skills and knowledge in automation and to investigate new technologies. ASL developed a Facebook presence, which now includes pages for ASL State Library Services, the Center for the Book and Network Services.

Funding was provided for disaster recovery software and maintenance. ASL took the lead to ensure that public libraries are aware of ACOOP (AR Continuity of Operations Program). Trainings were provided all over AR, including in academic libraries.

Network services staff participated in the AR E-Rate workgroup, with representatives from other state agencies as designated by the AR Office of the Governor.

The Coordinator of Network Services annually administered an automation survey to provide statistics on public access, integrated library systems, online database participation, filtering, e-rate, wifi, laptop usage, and RFID. Staff collaborated as needed on the Traveler project, working with the Network Advisory Committee to choose databases. RFIs were sent to 9 vendors in regards to providing a portal for Traveler that will lay the groundwork for intrastate resource sharing.

### **Survey:**

58% of those surveyed reported using/benefiting from the Statewide Cooperative Network and Expanding Networks program, with 28% reporting not knowing if their libraries use/benefit from this program.

Comments included “This service sounds very useful,” “need to know more,” “these projects are unknown to me” and “very excited about ... an upcoming DISASTER and RECOVERY planning workshop.”

### **Comments from in-depth interviews:**

- One library credited the fact that they have a disaster recovery plan to ASL.
- Most interviewed were not familiar with this program. Some noted overlap with other programs, such as Training and Education and Traveler-related tasks.



**Recommendations:**

- There seems to be less name recognition for this project than others. If the work of this project is largely behind the scenes, consider including updates in the ASL newsletter about major activities.
- Incorporate one or more OBEs, such as, “X% of Arkansas libraries will have a disaster recovery plan by 2013.”

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

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LSTA Purposes represented by Goal 2:

Purpose No. 1: Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats, in all types of libraries, for individuals of all ages.

Purpose No. 3: Providing electronic and other linkages among and between all types of libraries.

Two ASL Programs further the above LSTA purposes represented by Goal 2:

- Reference and Interlibrary Loan
- Resource Sharing Development

**Resource Sharing Development**

**Objective/Target #1:** *Number of CatExpress holdings will increase 5% by 2012.*

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

During the reporting period, a total of 48,289 new holdings were added. New holdings were reduced in 2009 as a result of budget cuts within the 23 participating libraries, and libraries performed less cataloging activities because fewer materials were purchased. Access to OCLC cataloging records was provided for all types of AR libraries through AR CatExpress. Due to changes at OCLC, CatExpress will not be a part of ASL's next 5-Year Plan.

**Other activities during the reporting period:**

This project supports the maintenance of the online AR Union List of Serials, now referred to as Local Holding Maintenance. ASL Cataloging Services adds and deletes holdings as needed. AKF membership in Amigos/OCLC, which is used for public libraries that lack sufficient resources to participate in OCLC cataloging projects, was maintained.

Original cataloging services were provided for libraries and/or agencies with little or no professional cataloging expertise, upon request. 8,627 original records were created for AR libraries during the reporting period. Local holdings records were added to the OCLC database, including those from non-OCLC libraries. 235 local holdings records were created for AR libraries during the reporting period.

ASL reference collections were increased and maintained in both print and online formats to enhance statewide resource sharing. Over the course of the reporting period, LSTA funds were used for 84 database renewals, 6 new database subscriptions, 1022 new print volumes, 605 new serial titles and 20 new DVDs. Additionally, a large scale weeding of State Library resources was conducted, with a total of 30,350 titles withdrawn during the reporting period. At the end of the period, total collections stood at 60,929, a reduction of at least 57%. LSTA funds were used to distribute 17,137 withdrawn titles to AR libraries during the reporting period.

Collaborations with various cooperative networks and educational institutions were carried out. An ongoing project with AR History Commission, including the cataloging of a historical microfilm collection, has added 13,162 records to a shared Sirsi catalog, 4,115 of which were original cataloging done by ASL. Projects with the AR Press Association and Parkhurst Bros., Inc. distributed 629 new titles to AR public libraries. Additionally, 911 new titles from the Publishers' Exhibit Collection were distributed to Lafayette County Library and Polk County Library.

**Survey:**

46% of those surveyed reported using/benefiting from Resource Sharing Development in their libraries, with 30% unsure whether their libraries use/benefit from this project.

Comments on the survey included “these services would be out of reach for my library without LSTA funding,” “need to know more,” “helps expand our access to often obscure material,” and “... YES!!!! We have to call on state catalogers occasionally to ... walk us through tough materials. ... I absolutely CANNOT do my job without it. ... Further, work with the Arkansas History Commission and AETN is a most valuable investment ... Thank you for all the monies spent in these powerful partnerships.”

**Comments from in-depth interviews:**

- Most were unaware of original cataloging services provided by ASL, but very glad to learn of them. One suggested that new directors be notified about available cataloging-related services.

**Recommendations:**

- Since CatExpress will not be a part of ASL's next 5-Year Plan, a replacement OBE is recommended. Given the level of interest by survey respondents and interviewees in ASL's original cataloging services, one suggestion is to provide a training workshop explaining ASL's available cataloging services to representatives from x% of Arkansas libraries. Alternatively, survey AR librarians to gauge their knowledge of ASL cataloging services; aim to increase that number by x% over the reporting period.

**Reference and Interlibrary Loan**

**Objective/Target #1:** *ASL reference staff will answer 90% of the total number of reference requests received.*

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

During the reporting period, 7,403 reference requests were answered, an average of 2,468 per year. Reference numbers were low in 2009 as a result of ASL's move, which required a closure of 3 months.

**Objective/Target #2:** *ASL ILL staff will fill 75% of ILL requests received.*

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

During the reporting period, a total of 12,500 ILL requests, an average of 4,167 per year, were filled.

**Other activities during the reporting period:**

Through this project, ASL functioned as the statewide referral center for ILL requests for 18 small public libraries. Reference librarians and ILL personnel attended conferences and conducted training sessions with the aim of supporting and expanding access to the AR Reference and Interlibrary Loan Network (ARIN) at ASL to include all types of libraries. Information services were provided to libraries statewide, state government, businesses, and AR citizens as well as out-of-state and international libraries.

**Survey:**

72% of those surveyed reported using/benefiting from the Reference and Interlibrary Loan program, with 9% reporting not knowing if their libraries use/benefit from this program.

Comments included, “Our small town of 10,000 simply could not OPERATE without access to ILL. The county budget does not hold room for specialized study materials for scholars. ILL helps us to increase our reach and broadens our ability to obtain materials for non-general needs. ILL makes us much more effective as providers,” and “We don't participate as much as we used to but feel it is an important service.”

**Comments from in-depth interviews:**

- ASL reference staff is used often. When questions are asked that exceed the library staff's time and resources, they direct patrons to ASL. Director has used ASL reference services for personal library-related questions.
- Director thinks reference services should be promoted, that many are not aware of the value.
- Library staff feels comfortable contacting ASL ILL about special circumstances. Reference services have never been used, but staff is aware that the service is available should they need it.
- Uses OCLC for ILL; most patrons are casual readers who don't ask reference questions.

**Recommendations:**

- Consider targets (OBEs) that are less output-oriented. For example, provide a training workshop explaining the benefits of ASL's reference services to representatives from x% of Arkansas libraries. Alternatively, survey library directors to determine how many are fully knowledgeable about ASL reference services; aim to increase the number of knowledgeable library directors by x% over the next reporting period.

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

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LSTA Purposes represented by Goal 3:

Purpose No. 1: Expanding services for learning and access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats.

Purpose No. 4: Developing public and private partnerships with other agencies and community-based organizations;

Five ASL programs, Information Dissemination, Statewide Documents Services, Center for the Book, Training and Education and Consultant Services further one or both of the above LSTA purposes.

**Information Dissemination**

**Objective/Target #1:** *At least 4 issues of “the news” will be published annually.*

Surpassed the goal

Met this goal

Made progress towards this goal

Did not work towards this goal

During each year of the reporting period, 4 newsletters were published.

**Objective/Target #2:** *ASL will exhibit in at least 4 events annually.*

Surpassed the goal

Met this goal

Made progress towards this goal

Did not work towards this goal

During the reporting period ASL exhibited 17 times, more than four times per year, reaching a total of

5000 trade show and conference attendees, newspaper editors and community leaders.

**Objective/Target #3:** *ASL will promote library programs via news releases at least 4 times annually.*

Surpassed this goal

Met this goal

Made progress towards this goal

Did not work towards this goal

During each year of the reporting period, ASL issued more than 4 news releases promoting library programs. A total of 21 major press releases were distributed. After feedback from LSTA program officers, focus shifted to promoting public awareness of LSTA programs in libraries statewide through the media.

**Other activities during the reporting period:**

Tracked & analyzed news stories and print PSAs appearing in AR newspapers. In 2010, monitored AR newspaper clippings for LSTA program information that through advertising would have cost more than \$134,600.

In conjunction with other departments, including Extension Services, State Library Services, Network Services, and the Library for the Blind, new & emerging technologies, such as blogs, wikis and social networks were used to share info and promote resources to younger Arkansans.

**Survey:**

60% of those surveyed reported using/benefiting from Information Dissemination in their libraries, with 22% unsure whether their libraries use/benefit from this project.

Comments on the survey included “Informative newsletter about what is going on in the state library and in other libraries,” “I subscribe to the state library's e-newsletter, which has proven valuable to me being a newbie to the library business. I've learned of projects, supported legislative issues & the like,” and “I appreciate the newsletter and seeing the the state library presence at conferences but I don't see a lot of evidence of press releases to the public at large.”

**Comments from in-depth interviews:**

- Not aware of ASL press releases to the general media. There is a newspaper but no local radio in the community. It's hard to disseminate information and reach the general public. Very interested to hear on a Little Rock radio station advertisements for CALS services such as help filing taxes and resume writing. Does receive and appreciate the newsletter.

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- Has never seen an ASL release in the local newspaper. Does receive the newsletter, but prefers more timely email communications. Only local radio is an AM station, director does not have cable television. Director really appreciates ASL staff's use of the listserv.
- Doesn't see much about ASL in the media; gets the LR paper, but doesn't read thoroughly. Receives most general news online, receives most library news through the listserv.
- Not aware of ASL press releases to the general media, however, director doesn't seek out news about AR libraries. Mainly gets ASL news through email, and commends ASL for improved communications over the last few years.

### Recommendations:

- Investigate ways to make AR librarians with limited access to traditional media aware of ASL press releases, such as sharing releases through the listserv, ASL website and Facebook page, or forwarding template press releases to library directors that they can in turn submit to local media.
- Replace output-oriented targets with OBEs. For example, "increase number of times 'the news' is downloaded by x% each year."

### Statewide Documents Services

**Objective/Target #1:** *17,000 state documents will be collected and distributed annually to 18 Arkansas state documents depository libraries.*

Surpassed this goal

Met this goal

Made progress towards this goal

Did not work towards this goal

During the reporting period 57,643 items were distributed. Distributed 8 shipping lists to depository libraries (consisting of 1,240 titles, and 16,326 items). The goal was not met due to reductions in the number of libraries remaining in the Depository Program. Libraries relinquished their status due to the ability of ASL to provide online access.

### Other activities during the reporting period:

Worked to create a sustainable service providing long term access to web publications from state agencies, libraries, museums, etc. Worked to identify, collect, store and provide access to e-publications of State Agencies, Boards and Commissions for the State Document Depository and Clearinghouse. Developed comprehensive collection development plan for collecting digital publications that coincides with the legal requirement to collect state government digital publications. Guidelines for deposit were updated & made available on ASL website.

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Provided self-serve tool for uploading metadata of digital content through Worldcat Digital Collection Gateway, thereby making these unique documents more visible and discoverable.

Ongoing maintenance of 3 digital collections: AR Digital State Publications Collection, Governors' Proclamations Collection and the Legislative Audit Reports Collection, which are all accessible via ASL's online catalog and OCLC Worldcat: collections total 9,450, with a total of 23,521 items viewed.

### Survey:

52% of those surveyed reported using/benefiting from Statewide Documents Services in their libraries, with 24% unsure whether their libraries use/benefit from this project.

Comments included, "assistance with state government information is important and I would like to see more on the ASL website," and "Advertise this more!!! Talk to other libraries and collaborate more-- we're collecting these documents too, and we may have some you do not have. (UAF)" and "We do not often require government documents in our small town (save those forms taken from the internet). However, these government documents [are critical] ... to provide common men with some amount of government oversight."

### Comments from in-depth interviews:

- Most reported a rare need for government documents, but also stressed how essential it is to be able to fill these important requests when they are presented.

### Recommendations:

- Replace output-oriented targets with OBEs. For example, "increase number of times state documents are viewed on the ASL website by x% each year."

## Center for the Book

**Objective/Target #1:** *5% increase annually in number of children participating in the "Letters About Literature" contest.*

Surpassed the goal

Met this goal

Made progress towards this goal

Did not work towards this goal

During the reporting period, 3701 children participated in Letters about Literature, and 856 attended the awards presentation. The objective was surpassed in 2009, with a 69% increase in participation.



The reduced increase in 2010 of 2.6% can be attributed to core curriculum changes that are being put into practice by every school. Fluctuations are expected in the number of participants as administrators, teachers and students adjust their schedules and expectations.

**Other activities during the reporting period:**

The annual “If All Arkansas Reads the Same Book” project with author visits, posters and presentations had 220 participants during this period. In 2010 this project was put on hold in favor of the Sesquicentennial Author Event; it will resume in 2011.

Relationships were cultivated with AR authors during the reporting period. Coordinated the Porter Literary Prize for AR authors and poets and the AR Teen Book Award annually. Participated yearly in the National Book Festival, distributing posters that feature AR authors.

Book club collections were established and maintained for use throughout the state of Arkansas in public, private, academic, and institutional libraries connected through juvenile, young adult and adult book clubs. 1,120 book sets were loaned during the reporting period. 2010 saw 3,160 participants. Book club workshops had 295 participants during the reporting period. Staff provided presentations and training workshops including 14 library site visits, programming visits, and book club how-tos.

Collaborated with AETN for WGBH Boston's We Shall Remain documentary series; 328 attendees. Partnered with ACTELA (Arkansas Council of Teachers of English and Language Arts), AETN and other groups to share information and resources.

**Survey:**

57% of those surveyed reported using/benefiting from the Center for the Book in their libraries, with 15% unsure whether their libraries use/benefit from this project.

Comments included “We have hosted an author brought to us by AR Center for the Book,” and “May [participate] in the future.”

**Comments from in-depth interviews:**

- Participate in adult book club program. The biggest challenge is the cost of mailing books back and forth, which resulted in the library starting to buy its own books.
- Has had a monthly book club for 3 years now, ASL books are always used. Postage is not a burden; they send books media rate for about \$5. Unsure how many from the community participate in Letters About Literature, though they do help promote it.
- Appreciates the book clubs and author luncheons. Sometimes use ASL books, but not always.
- Had an author visit the college library one year. It was a very nice event; local high school English classes attended, too. The library hasn't been contacted about doing this again, but they would like to continue to participate.

**Recommendations:**

- Given the curriculum shift in schools and the resulting affect on Letters for Literature participation, consider implementing new OBEs, such as “X% increase annually in juvenile book clubs, X% increase annually in young adult book clubs, X% increase annually in adult book clubs.”

**Training and Education**

**Objective/Target #1:** *70% of workshop participants will demonstrate knowledge of 75% of key course material.*

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

During the reporting period, ASL moved locations; as a result outcome-based evaluations were not available for all years. In 2010, of 107 workshop attendees completing evaluations, 86 or 80% indicated an increase in level of knowledge.

**Other activities during the reporting period:**

Provided in-service training and continuing education opportunities for staff of AR libraries, including preservation workshops (targeted at public library staff, but open to all). Sponsored 12 Traveler workshops, with additional sessions presented at AR Assoc. of Instructional Media, Hot Springs Tech Institute, ArLA and AR Reading Assoc. Traveled to Educational Cooperatives to discuss Traveler project with school librarians. In 2010, 7 training sessions at ASL had 84 participants for topics including hiring & training shelving staff, basic reference and weeding. 8 special session topics were requested, with 129 attendees.

**Survey:**

75% of those surveyed reported using/benefiting from the Training and Education program in their libraries, with 18% unsure whether their libraries use/benefit from this project.

**Comments included :**

- “Very helpful. Also encourages networking and resource sharing,” “Our library's training budget is minimal, so training programs funded by LSTA are vital for our staff to be able to provide quality library service in our community.”

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- “As a school librarian, it is difficult for me to take advantage of many of the workshops provided. Offering them during conferences, as archived webinars and using the educational co-ops in order to offer the workshops regionally would make it possible to attend more of them. Workshops with a more focused emphasis on school libraries would increase school librarian appeal also.”
- “We rely heavily on the expertise of the Arkansas State Library and their training programs. The new Traveler portal worked up by Sally Hawkes is nothing short of a marvel. We gave 50 people information on it last night here at the library (by handing out the GREEN traveler bags we were given). We will soon be hosting a workshop given by the ASL on starting a FRIENDS of the Library group.”
- “Never heard of them. How do you advertise this or is this just for ASL staff?”
- “I'd like to see Ark incorporate free/low cost professional webinar trainings like the [Texas State system](#). ... via webinar, because of time/money constraints, would get my participation.”

### Comments from in-depth interviews:

- Director has attended many workshops at ASL. Since not all staff can go to ALPS because of the cost, ASL workshops are a helpful alternative.
- Only training info they receive is about Traveler databases and workshops in Little Rock. Thinks they maybe don't know as much as they should about ASL training offerings. They do subscribe to the listserv, but they don't always notice training offerings here.
- Didn't see anything in the eastern part of the state on this year's training schedule; closer to home would be nice. Noted that maybe ASL just wants to be asked.
- Director is glad that ASL is putting programs forward, instead of waiting for requests. It's very helpful that the training calendar is available a year in advance.

### Recommendations:

- Tailored communications. Those who are participating in this project are very happy with it. Since much of what ASL does is geared toward public libraries, tailored communications for college/university, school and special libraries regarding trainings that pertain to them could increase the number of participants.
- Continue collecting data for OBE.

## Consultant Services

**Objective/Target #1:** *90% of librarians attending the Children's Workshop will demonstrate knowledge of 80% of the key concepts introduced in the workshop.*

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

Provided a statewide summer reading program for children in libraries in all AR counties, including those with high percentages of low-income families. During the reporting period, over 450 attended 3 Annual Children's Workshops. In 2010, 79% of evaluators reported increasing their knowledge / skill level. An average of 79 libraries per year participated. Averages of 408 staff, 637 volunteers, and 25,135 registered participants per year were recorded. 204,360 people attended 5,369 programs.

**Other activities during the reporting period:**

Provided 30 direct site visits by consultants to individual libraries, as well as numerous phone/email communications with public libraries. Questions from the field are answered by email and/or telephone daily, with several hundred questions falling between report dates.

Provided workshops and training sessions that emphasize building community coalitions and partnerships for trustees, librarians, and library staff, both onsite and at ASL. Fourteen workshops for trustees had 177 participants. More than 12 other workshops included collection development, community outreach, starting a private research library, puppetry, reference and computer skills, E-rate, weeding and comprehensive programs emphasizing libraries' roles in early literacy (including the Annual Children's Workshop described above.) Some were held onsite at small libraries.

Field surveys: AR Public libraries participate in a short survey in an effort to provide library directors with data they can use to compare their libraries policies and procedures to others in the state.

Through the Early Literacy program, 204 AWE bilingual Early Literacy stations were purchased. 86% of all AR public libraries participated in the project. Training was provided for 93 public library staff. Early Literacy stations serve early learners, ESL population, & those with low literacy at a cost of \$2,451 each. ASL continues to support these popular stations and act as a liaison with the vendor.

One special program was conducted: Proactive health care through AR Kids program. Through a partnership between ASL, Communications Group, AR Kids, and Radio Disney, there were 8 Radio Disney performances at central AR libraries with 1200 participants.

**Survey:**

43% of those surveyed reported using/benefiting from the Consultant Services program in their libraries, with 18% unsure whether their libraries use/benefit from this project.

Comments included: "Following the donation of our new LSTA funded Early Literacy Station, our

library bought another. We tore out a bathroom and installed a children's computer work station. With two sets of headphones, parents are working alongside early readers. It is also a TREMENDOUS boon that much of this software is bilingual. It's been a great welcoming agent for children and parents to our community. Thank you again, so much!" and "I have attended the workshops hosted for children's librarians and found them to be very informative." and "I think it is very valuable. We are an academic library."

**Comments from in-depth interviews:**

- Two directors reported loving the Early Literacy stations, emphasizing their popularity.
- Director really appreciates being able to turn to ASL for E-Rate support and training.

**Recommendations:**

- Incorporate a new OBE related to the popular Summer Reading Program, such as "Will increase registered participants by X% annually," or "Will increase the number of participating libraries by X% during the reporting period."
- Continue collecting data for current OBE.

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

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LSTA Purpose represented by Goal 4:

Purpose No. 6: Targeting library and information services to persons having difficulty using a library.

Two ASL programs, Library Services to the Blind and Physically Handicapped and State Institutional Library Services, further the above LSTA purpose.

**Library Services to the Blind and Physically Handicapped**

**Objective / Target #1:** 11.7% of eligible readers will be served by ASL.

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

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At the end of the reporting period, this project was serving 4,957 patrons, amounting to 7.5% of the eligible population. This target was developed using 2000 census data. With the population increase that came with 2010 census data, serving 11.7% of the new, larger population became unrealistic. A total of 554 patrons registered for NLS BARD downloads.

**Objective/Target #2:** *3% increase in materials circulated by 2012.*

Surpassed the goal

Met this goal

Made progress towards this goal

Did not work towards this goal

During the reporting period, there was an impressive increase of 152% in materials circulated, from 180,551 to 274,820. The project began providing digital book service. In 2010, digital book circulation went from 42,917 to 128,383, accounting for 57% of annual book circulation.

### **Other activities during the reporting period:**

Provided services to the blind and physically handicapped in all 75 counties of Arkansas. Provided daily circulation of books, magazines, downloadable books and playback machines through the mail; provided Reader Advisory, reference, support of recreational reading, school booklist titles, accelerated reading lists, book clubs. Satellite service was provided through one sub-regional library. Acquired, processed, circulated resources; promoted program through presentations, consultations, and interaction with members and groups representing target audience. Provided information and referral services on disabilities to libraries, state agencies, volunteer organizations, and interested citizens.

During the reporting period, provided service to an average of 233 deposit collections each year, including AR School for the Blind, Lion's World Services for the Blind, nursing homes, hospitals, rehab agencies, hospices and public schools. Exhibited/spoke 38 times during the reporting period.

### **Survey:**

40% of those surveyed reported using/benefiting from Library Services to the Blind and Physically Handicapped in their libraries, with 27% unsure whether their libraries use/benefit from this project.

Comments included, "This is a fantastic resources for the disabled in our community. Our library does not have the resources to provide the caliber of service to the disabled that LBPH offers," and "I think a lot of people, students need this service and don't know about it," and "We have had a few people ask about the service but then they do not follow through when we give the information," and "...The Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped is one of the most valuable services offered through the state library to Arkansas."

**Comments from in-depth interviews:**

- Director is very interested in learning more. Didn't know ASL still had this program.
- Librarian who serves a blind and low-vision population commended ASL for this well-developed program. Getting needed materials from ASL is a very smooth process; librarian is new and they have helped a great deal. Library downloads the books from BARD in addition to getting preloaded cartridges from ASL. Really appreciated a field trip to ASL, in which staff trained students how to use players and showed what's available in the collection.

**Recommendations:**

- Continue communications with libraries who only serve a small number of low-vision patrons, to ensure they are aware of available services.

**State Institutional Library Services**

**Objective/Target #1:** *2,000 print and non-print items will be purchased and distributed to Arkansas state institutional libraries.*

Surpassed the goal

Met this goal

Made progress towards this goal

Did not work towards this goal

During the reporting period, an average of 2,376 books and DVDs per year were purchased and distributed to AR institutions, for a total of 7,129 items.

**Other activities during the reporting period:**

Supported library service to AR residents in institutions operated by the Dept. of Correction, the Dept. of Human Services, and AR Rehab Services, including libraries in 13 state operated prisons and 9 residential institutions. Materials were purchased for indefinite loan, and consulting services were provided.

**Survey:**

While only 13.4% of those surveyed reported using/benefiting from State Institutional Library

Services, this is to be expected since this project target specific libraries. 30% were unsure whether their libraries benefit from this project.

Comments included, “Incarcerated people from our area housed in various facilities around the state reap a tremendous benefit from these services. Local libraries don't have a budget for this type of service,” and “Hadn't heard of the prison institution access,” and “As our Arkansas inmates continue to educate themselves through reading, the WORLD benefits. Again, another high value investment for LSTA and the Arkansas State Library.”

**Comments from in-depth interviews:**

- One director noted that learning about this program has generated ideas; wants to learn more.
- Public library director approached local prison about collaboration, but there was no interest.

**Recommendations:**

- Replace output-oriented targets with OBEs. For example, “increase circulation in institutional libraries by 5%.”
- Provide information about this program to public librarians and leverage their interest in collaboration with institutional libraries.

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

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LSTA Purpose represented by Goal 5:

Purposes No. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6, all detailed above. As Goal 5 provides support for all LSTA projects, the work carried out here aligns with every LSTA purpose named above.

One ASL program, LSTA Program Administration, furthers these four LSTA purposes.

**LSTA Program Administration**

**Activities during the reporting period:**

Evaluated the agency to help guide and plan for possible reorganization of areas and responsibilities including programs, services, and staffing issues. Monitored 12 LSTA programs during reporting period via site visits, reports, and personal contact with project directors and participants. Updated LSTA Program Guidelines Manual and provided a copy to each project director.



**Survey:**

57% of those surveyed reported using/benefiting from LSTA Program Administration, with 31% reporting not knowing if their libraries use/benefit from this program.

Comments included, “ASL is blessed with a tremendously knowledgeable and outgoing staff. They work marvelously as a team and we benefit HIGHLY from our various partnerships with them... I believe they are fine stewards of LSTA funds,” and “I think it is vital in providing leadership and getting information out to library staff.”

**Comments from in-depth interviews:**

- All at state library are very helpful and generous with their time. Easy to get information about LSTA-related funding; would also like support from ASL on grants outside of LSTA.
- Director sees ASL staff at conferences and other places and therefore feels comfortable contacting them; thinks they are very approachable.

**Recommendations:**

- Incorporate an OBE

### **III. Goals and LSTA Purposes**

Each of ASL's five goals is well-aligned with one or more of the federal purposes, as noted throughout Section II of this report. ASL identified fourteen targets in the 2008-2012 5-Year Plan to help determine whether progress has been made toward goals. Of these 14 targets, ASL made progress toward 9, met 1, and surpassed 4.

It is important to note that external factors affected the relevance of some targets. The economy, technology, changes in school requirements, census data and ASL's move have all had a bearing on the applicability of one or more of the 14 targets. For example, “Letters about Literature” grew more slowly than anticipated in 2010 due to core curriculum changes in AR schools. Statewide Documents services distributed fewer documents than originally anticipated, as libraries relinquished their depository status in favor of accessing the same information now available online through ASL.

Considering the unique circumstances that apply to each target, combined with the positive feedback given by survey respondents and interviewees regarding LSTA programs, it is clear that ASL has been successful during this reporting period.

## IV. Outcome-based evaluation

An ideal outcome-based evaluation (OBE) focuses on measurable end-user outcomes rather than outputs. To evaluate OBEs in the 2008-2012 5-Year Plan, we look to see if they assess impact on the end-user. “Impact” can be defined as a change in behavior, attitude, skills, knowledge, and condition or status.

For example, the Center for the Book's target to increase by 5% annually the number of children participating in the “Letters About Literature” contest assesses a change in behavior and is an appropriate OBE. Similarly, Consultant Services' target that 90% of librarians attending the Children's Workshop will demonstrate knowledge of 80% of the key concepts assesses a change in knowledge.

Some targets from the 2008-12 5-Year Plan focus on outputs. For example, Information Dissemination's target was to publish at least 4 issues of “the news” annually. An alternative target would be to “increase downloads of 'the news' by X% over the reporting period.” Another example of an output-based measure is State Institutional Library Services' target of purchasing and distributing 2,000 items in AR state institutional libraries. An alternative target would be to “increase circulation in institutional libraries by 5%.” Other alternative measures have been suggested throughout Section II of this report.

Using OBEs can be more time-consuming than using output based measures, so automation is helpful when possible. The use of online surveys to assess change in knowledge, for example, will likely be more manageable than paper surveys.

For projects with no OBEs, adding a measure can help clarify the purpose of the project. Two 2008-12 project had no defined targets: Planning for Statewide Cooperative Networks & Expanding Networks and LSTA Program Administration. Feedback indicated that survey respondents and interviewees were unclear about the Statewide Networks program; implementing OBEs may help bring this program into focus for constituents.

## V. Impact on constituents, including end-users

ASL's LSTA projects have had exceptionally positive impacts on constituents. Sixty-seven librarians and library staff responded to the survey that was distributed via the arklb-1 listserv in January 2012. The majority of comments were very positive, and even when a particular project was not relevant to a respondent's library, respondents continued to express a great deal of support. Comments included:

“Services provided for us through LSTA funding are vital for our library. As a small rural library with a tight budget, these types of services would be out of our reach without LSTA funding.”

“We stand on the shoulders of our LSTA partners to increase our perspective, increase

## Arkansas LSTA 2008-2012 Evaluation

access to materials and enable well-rounded patron outreach.”

“While I don't directly benefit from this service, it is extremely important to continue. I wish that educational services could be added as well.”

“LSTA provides a number of vital services for Arkansas libraries. Our range and quality of service to our communities would be severely limited without the LSTA.”

The most common critique from constituents, across all programs, was that they were unaware of offerings, and they wanted to know more. However, several also commented on ASL's improvements in the communication arena over the past few years, with one interviewee expressing surprise at how quickly ASL has begun to respond to results from the March 2011 needs assessment.

The impact on end-users can be assessed through outcome-based evaluations (OBEs), by numbers served, and by anecdotal evidence from constituents. Six of the fourteen targets set by the 5-Year Plan are OBEs that measure impact on end-users. In five of these six OBEs, progress was made toward the target. As noted in Section III, external factors influenced the relevance of some of these targets; when this happens, consider revising the 5-Year Plan and developing a new OBE measure.

We can also look to project manager reports to learn how many AR residents have been served or have participated in various projects in the last year of the reporting period.

- AR Center for the Book - 2010: 10,675
- Consultant Services - 2010: 75,000
- Information Dissemination - 2010: 250,000
- Library Services to the Blind and Physically Handicapped - 2010: 4,957
- LSTA Program Administration - 2010: 50
- Planning for Statewide Cooperative Network and Expanding Networks - 2010: 460
- Reference & Interlibrary Loan - 2010: 12,927
- Resource Sharing Development - 2010: 21,000
- State Institutional Library Services - 2010: 2,800
- Statewide Documents Services - 2010: 275
- Training and Education - 2010: 251
- Traveler Full-Text Database Project: 2010: 2,117,796

Finally, we can look to constituent feedback for anecdotal information about how various projects are received in their libraries. Comments received in the survey and through the in-depth interviews ranged from “these are services our patrons have not needed” to “[Patrons] have told us many times that those stories, brought into their homes as free matter for the blind, help to keep them in touch with a larger world, help pass the time and enrich their lives immeasurably.” The absence of anecdotes about patron complaints or frustration with services speaks well for end-user impact.

## VI. Funds

A summary of funds expended on LSTA projects during the reporting period follows, listed in order from most to least costly. Traveler, by far the most expensive project, reaches the greatest number of end-users and is used by all types of libraries. Given ASL's furthering of LSTA purposes, progress towards outcome-based evaluation measures, and positive impact on both constituents and end-users, there is rationale for continuing these 12 projects.

### Traveler Full-Text Database Project

Total cost: **\$1,649,456**

2008: \$750,778

2009: \$47,489

2010: \$851,189

### LSTA Program Administration

Total cost: **\$191,149**

2008: \$50,349

2009: \$77,268

2010: \$63,532

### Resource Sharing Development

Total cost: **\$1,111,960**

2008: \$301,619

2009: \$487,195

2010: \$323,146

### State Institutional Library Services

Total cost: **\$96,792**

2008: \$39,791

2009: \$21,270

2010: \$35,731

### Library Services to the Blind

Total cost: **\$613,974**

2008: \$198,345

2009: \$192,831

2010: \$222,798

### Center for the Book

Total cost: **\$73,438**

2008: \$13,984

2009: \$44,838

2010: \$14,616

### Reference and Interlibrary Loan

Total cost: **\$598,028**

2008: \$144,518

2009: \$257,113

2010: \$196,397

### Statewide Documents Services

Total cost: **\$59,012**

2008: \$14,480

2009: \$13,321

2010: \$31,211

### Consultant Services

Total cost: **\$453,495**

2008: \$93,013

2009: \$180,578

2010: \$179,904

### Training and Education

Total cost: **\$41,944**

2008: \$36,569

2009: \$4,168

2010: \$1,207

### Planning for Statewide Cooperative Network

Total cost: **\$224,772**

2008: \$102,474

2009: \$87,858

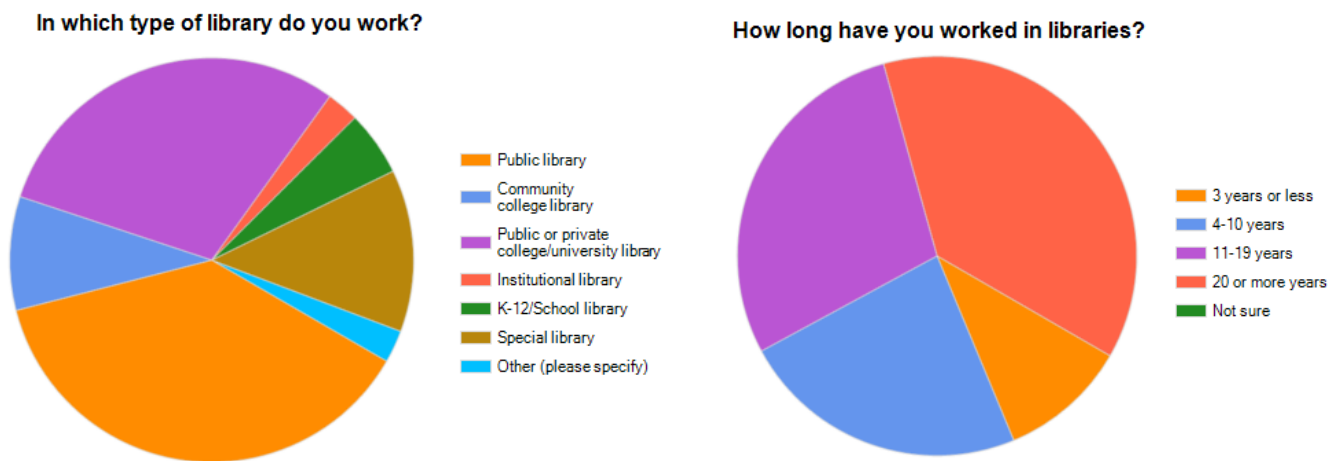
2010: \$34,440

## VII. Brief description of evaluation process

To determine the extent to which goals and activities were accomplished, background documents were thoroughly reviewed. These documents included State Program Reports, the 2011 Needs Assessment and other information provided by ASL project managers.

To assess LSTA impact in Arkansas, a brief survey was distributed through the ARKLIB-L listserv and other appropriate channels. Respondents were given an opportunity to indicate which LSTA projects their library used or benefited from, along with an opportunity to comment on each project.

Survey respondent demographics were as follows:



Qualitative data on all twelve programs was gathered both through the survey and through six in-depth telephone interviews from participants at public, college, and special libraries.



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Arkansas is a state near the center of the Southern United States. It is known as the "Natural State". Little Rock, State capital. Bentonville. El Dorado. Eureka Springs. Fayetteville. Fort Smith. Harrison. Hope, A small town, but the birth place of President William Jefferson Clinton. Hot Springs. Jacksonville, Home of Little Rock Air Force Base and Military History.