

USL Report September 2020

Utah State Library is hosting a competitive grant round of Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funding allocated to us by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Funds totaling \$275,000 are available for public, school, academic, institutional, special, tribal, private, and research libraries, and library consortia

USL is one of four libraries in the country involved in the first phase of the e-reader pilot, testing a device made by HumanWare. The e-reader is designed for reading electronic braille files. The e-reader itself is a compact and portable device that reads braille files via a 20 cell refreshable braille display. Part of the pilot is to discover the best access for users, whether the user downloads braille files from an online database, or the library provides the braille files on media that is plugged into the device. In addition to internal and external memory capabilities, the e-reader is able to connect via wifi to the BARD audio and braille site to download books. The e-reader is also bluetooth enabled, to connect to a smartphone or tablet to read files via the BARD app.

USL is partnering with Multicultural Affairs to create a book list for the Book Buzz book group regarding diversity inclusion. These titles are an excellent addition to the Book Buzz collection, and will hopefully stimulate some much needed conversations throughout Utah.

USL is partnering with Utah Education Network to provide free Mobile hotspots available for checkout at Utah libraries.

State of Utah received CARES funding and distributed a portion to Utah Education Network. UEN approached USL to distribute some of their allocated funds. USL agreed and has plans for spending up to \$337,000. This project is moving at lightning speed. UEN must spend funds by August 31st. USL must spend funds by December 1st. Funds must be spent on professional development on the topic of blended learning in libraries or librarianship in the time of COVID-19.

The Library Resources Program reevaluated the way that it managed OverDrive, one of its most popular online offerings. Previously, the State Library carried a significant portion of the financial burden for this platform and its content, which consists of e-books, e-audio books, magazines, and videos. USL staff met with representatives from all the participating libraries and organized the Beehive Library Consortium. All members of this consortium sign an annual agreement which states that their library will contribute a specific dollar amount (based on their budget and usage) towards the shared collection. The agreement also details the various responsibilities of the member libraries and State Library. An administrative committee was formed to manage the group. The organization of the Beehive Library Consortium shifted OverDrive from being a State Library led and funded resource to a member-library led and funded resource, which dramatically improved the resources' long-term sustainability, while at the same time, will end up saving the State Library more than \$200,000 per year.

State Library signed a new 5 year contract with Creativebug, an online learning platform containing high-quality, on-trend arts and crafts instructional videos. Included are award-winning HD instructional videos on drawing, painting, sewing, knitting, crochet, quilting, jewelry making, baking, crafts for kids, and more.

New websites were launched for the Bookmobile Program and Utah's Online Public Library.

With less than a month left to help Utah get a complete, accurate count in the 2020 Census, the State Library created materials for public and tribal libraries to give patrons to engage them in the Census. A mini grant was also offered to public and tribal libraries to purchase resources that would support their community in responding to the Census.

USL is hosting a new library directors' orientation. This orientation is an opportunity to meet and to get to know one another. It also provides a time for Utah State Library staff to highlight the many services and resources that are available through the state library. This year we plan to offer this orientation in a virtual format over two day.

In a lightning-fast response to Covid-19, the State Library offered a mini-grant providing \$100 or \$400 for libraries to expand their network into their outdoor spaces to maintain connectivity while public buildings are closed. Twenty four libraries took advantage, roughly doubling parking lot WIFI statewide.

USL is working with the Dept. of Heritage and Arts to create an umbrella marketing campaign for USL beginning with a push on Utah Bookmobiles.