Division of Library and Information Services
Florida Department of State
Library Services and Technology Act
Exemplary Project Recognition Program

The Division of Library and Information Services selects exemplary projects from among the many outstanding programs funded by the Library Services and Technology Act during the previous year. The Exemplary Project Recognition Program is designed to highlight excellence in program planning, implementation, and evaluation, with special emphasis on outcome measurement.

To be selected for the program, a project must be LSTA-funded and must fall into one of the following categories:

- Effective use of technology to enhance connectivity among libraries and/or the promotion of resource sharing; or
- Innovation in targeting services to people who have difficulty using a library, including children in poverty, and to urban and rural communities.

The program also provides the Division of Library and Information Services with information about projects that can be shared with libraries throughout the state and with the Institute of Museum and Library Services, while providing recognition of excellence in program planning and outcome-based evaluation, and encouraging the replication of high quality projects by other libraries.

This year, the Division has chosen five projects from the 2009 grants cycle:

- Jacksonville Public Library's "Expanding Horizons Adult Literacy Project"

- Orange County Library System's "The Right Service at the Right Time: Navigating E-Government"

- Pasco County Public Library Cooperative's "Pasco County E-Government Initiative"

- Saint Johns County Public Library's "The Library Express Outreach Project"

- Wilderness Coast Public Libraries' "Training for the 21st Century - Year 2"

The Jacksonville Public Library System's "Expanding Horizons Adult Literacy Project" is a positive approach to library services that meet patron needs. The project has developed many partnerships, both formal and informal, and is able to use them to expand the services the library provides. Learn to Read of Jacksonville relocated to the Jacksonville Public Library, where the library is able to offer a one-stop shop for one-on-one literacy and math instruction, and provide basic computer training, online instruction, and walk-in clinics for in-depth instruction on resume building and help filling out job applications. Partnerships with Catholic Charities, Lutheran Social Services and World Relief opened these resources to refugees from Nepal, Burma and other countries. The Center for Adult Literacy at Jacksonville Public Library uses the Fast Track Reading System, a system they developed with previous LSTA grant funding that is available for free to tutors trained in its use. The Jacksonville Literacy Coordinator trains volunteers from other agencies, both in and outside of Duval County, in the Fast

Track Reading System. These include Learn to Read from St. Lucie County, the Literacy Volunteers of Lee County, the Women's Center of Jacksonville, and the Lake County Library System. The Center for Adult Literacy also has several web-based programs for distance learning that can be used from home or from the Jacksonville Library's computer lab.

The Orange County Library System's "The Right Service at the Right Time" project does an excellent job of meeting users at their points of need through a self-serve kiosk at their local libraries or a website they can access remotely. For people in search of a variety of public services, even a nice well-populated web page can be overwhelming. "The Right Services at the Right Time" provides a tool through which a service consumer can create a profile that seeks to match the patron's need to available services. Without providing personal information like a social security number, the patron answers questions on factors such as status (marital, employment, citizenship), service need, age, preferred language options, etc. Based on responses to these questions, this interactive agent matches needs, background and eligibility to the right service or services. Geographic matching will be included to connect to nearest services.

Patrons feel comfortable with the touch screen technology, and are able to start using the kiosk to find information immediately and without a librarian's help. The library is building relationships with local service providers, and more providers are creating profiles on the website. Both library staff and the providers themselves update the website, so the information remains current. Both patron and service provider feedback are used to improve the site. To take a look at "The Right Services at the Right Time" see www.rightservicefl.org.

The Pasco County Public Library Cooperative's "Pasco County E-Government Initiative" expands E-government services to Pasco County residents through a mobile computer lab. The initiative focuses on community outreach to areas in Pasco County that have limited public transportation and library services. As part of the outreach into these communities, the Program Director attended community events and Task Force meetings, and the Pasco County Library Cooperative conducted children's programming. This built relationships between the Cooperative and the community, and inspired a level of trust not present prior to the mobile computer lab arriving. Partners such as Connections (a non-profit employment agency) and the Pasco Economic Development Council collaborated with Pasco County Library Cooperative to present workshops on resume writing, interviewing for jobs, and even where to find inexpensive or free clothing appropriate for a job interview. The initiative includes training of Pasco County Library Cooperative staff and creates training tutorials to assist staff in delivering effective E-government services to residents. Tutorials and extensive sensitivity training for the librarians also make this an exemplary program This project can be scaled and reproduced in other communities. Components of this service have become a model in the state and nation.

Saint Johns County Public Library's "The Library Express Outreach Project" targets Saint Johns County residents of all ages who have difficulty using the library due to distance from the closest branch; age or physical challenges (e.g., seniors in nursing

homes, assisted living facilities, adult day care centers, senior residential communities and senior congregate meals/activities centers); families who live more than a 15-20 minute drive from a branch; and youth in at risk after-school centers and other youth-serving centers located in predominately low-income inner-city and rural communities. The purpose of the project is to reduce or eliminate barriers that get in the way of people using their library. This project utilizes two bookmobiles, books-by-mail, six honor paperback reading-exchange depots, 18 rotating deposit collections, special outreach programming, and a core group of trained volunteers to serve nine afterschool centers, 18 licensed day care centers, five parks and recreation centers, three year-round community centers, one high school serving new and expecting teen mothers, one public elementary afterschool program, one Adult and Family Literacy Center and 27 senior-serving facilities.

The creative and positive impacts of the St. Johns bookmobiles are well documented. The project is a very good reaction to the economic downturn which has most greatly impacted the residents it serves. This is even more evident when factoring in the increasingly larger population of individuals unable to travel due to physical and age restrictions. The project has tremendous student and community support. The number of personalized letters from children thanking library personnel demonstrates a great level of engagement to not only read, but also to write effectively. The program demonstrates an innovative use of third-party entertainers and themes that capture the imagination of children. The use of water aerobics as a recruiting tool to create partnerships for reading and healthy living also has great potential for replication and recruitment of active adults. Facing great adversity, the library system continued to grow a much needed service.

Wilderness Coast Public Libraries' "Training for the 21st Century - Year 2" project expands upon Year 1 training capabilities in Franklin, Jefferson and Wakulla County Libraries. Wilderness Coast Public Libraries purchased software and hardware which enables the Libraries' SMART Boards to perform live web conferencing and to pay for contractual trainer hours for the benefit of library patrons. One popular example of a course being taught using the SMART Board is a six week Genealogy course at the Franklin County Public Library – Carrabelle Branch. Others include how to use Adobe Photoshop Elements, Microsoft PowerPoint, computer basics and file management, how to write a resume or cover letter and search for a job online. The use of the SMART Board, wireless microphone and mixer allow the classes to be recorded and saved for future use.

Wilderness Coast's "Training for the 21st Century" project surpassed its own expectations in the number of classes offered and the number of people attending. Wilderness Coast is a multi-county cooperative; all three counties were excellently served by the project. Ongoing evaluation of the classes offered and patron interest helped the Wilderness Coast staff update and adjust the training topics and schedule to meet patron needs. Partnerships helped the Wilderness Coast expand the services they were able to offer. For example, the Franklin County Library partnered with Franklin County Literacy, Inc. to extend the library computer lab into the Literacy office space, creating more room for computer classes and allowing the Literacy students access to computers. LSTA funds were used to hire specialists to teach workshops in all three

counties; videos and handouts from these courses are now available for free on the Wilderness Coast website (www.wildernesscoast.org/training/training.html). These courses include three levels of computer basics, and introductions to Photoshop, PowerPoint, Microsoft Publisher and Windows Vista.