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2010 MCLS Annual Report

It is amazing to me that our first year as MCLS has passed already! The older I get, the faster the years fly by, but even so, I look back to February 15, 2010, and wonder where the time went.

A one-year anniversary is an occasion to take stock and measure our progress. Like most yardsticks, our one-year measurement is marked with some progress, some wheel-spinning, and a whole lot of hard work.

None of us really knew how this adventure would turn out when we started. I am so impressed with the way that the staff members at our two locations have stepped up and worked to make our new organization a success. Nearly everyone on staff got some new assignments and many added to an already full work plate. It was stressful for all concerned. But everyone hung in. The result is that our first year had far more successes than setbacks.

We had to make some difficult decisions about consolidating operations and keeping or eliminating services. In every case, we looked at where we are now and where we want to be in the future and made a determination about whether the services we offer would move us ahead or not. In some cases, such as SCION, we had to shut down the service. In other cases, such as group licensing, we saw real gains as libraries in both states were able to increase subscriptions to e-resources through our service. After a year, we now have a good foundation for future growth.

I am also deeply appreciative of the way you, our members, have responded. I visited quite a few libraries this year and everywhere I went, I heard that you were looking forward to working with us to keep libraries in Michigan and Indiana moving forward. Naturally, budgets and finances were almost always a part of those conversations. It can be difficult to think about the future and innovation when the present feels so threatening, but I talked to many determined librarians who are welcoming record numbers of users to their libraries and providing them with outstanding service. And we talked about the future and where we all need to be to remain valued parts of our communities. There can be no doubt: we live and work in a challenging environment. But based on my first year at MCLS, I am confident we are emerging stronger and better able to serve our users.

So it was a year of learning. It was also a year of accomplishment. Much remains to be done. Thank you for starting on this journey with us and sticking with us so far.

Randy Dykhuis
MCLS Executive Director
February 2011

On February 15, 2010, INCOLSA and the Michigan Library Consortium merged to become the Midwest Collaborative for Library Services (MCLS).

In 2010, the newly-combined MCLS membership included 1,082 member libraries of all types and sizes from Indiana and Michigan. An MCLS Interim Board of Directors was elected by the membership, and Nancy McGriff of South Central Community Schools library was selected as Chair of the initial Interim Board.

MEMBER LIBRARY REPRESENTATION ON THE MCLS INTERIM BOARD OF DIRECTORS INCLUDED:

Academic Library Representatives: Amy Harshbarger, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology (IN), and Victor Liu, Washtenaw Community College (MI).

At Large Representatives: Stephen Day, New Albany Floyd County Public Library (IN), Pamela Grudzien, Central Michigan University (MI), Ishwar Laxminarayan, Jackson District Library (MI), and Beverly Martin, Johnson County Public Library (IN).

Public Library Representatives: Pam Christensen, Peter White Public Library (MI), and Kelly Currie, Delphi Public Library (IN).

Research Library Representatives: Cliff Haka, Michigan State University (MI), and Jim Mullins, Purdue University (IN), who replaced Jennifer Younger, University of Notre Dame (IN), mid-year on the board.

School Library Representatives: Margaret Lincoln, Lakeview High School (MI), and Nancy McGriff (Chair), South Central Community Schools (IN).

Special Library Representatives: Denise Hooks, Mideastern Michigan Library Cooperative (MI), and Patricia Lunsford (Board Secretary), Franciscan St. Elizabeth Health (IN).

State Library Permanent Seats: Vacant seat, Indiana State Library, and Nancy R. Robertson, Library of Michigan.

During 2010, the MCLS Interim Board of Directors divided its meeting locations between Indiana and Michigan, ending the year with a joint Board retreat with members the incoming 2011 MCLS Board of Directors.

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Group Purchasing

In 2010, MCLS offered our members savings on hundreds of subscriptions, products, and services from more than 60 vendors, including databases, eBooks, eJournals, software, and supplies.

Databases. MCLS contracts with 37 vendors for access to hundreds of electronic databases in every discipline. Savings in 2010 for our member libraries totalled $549,000.
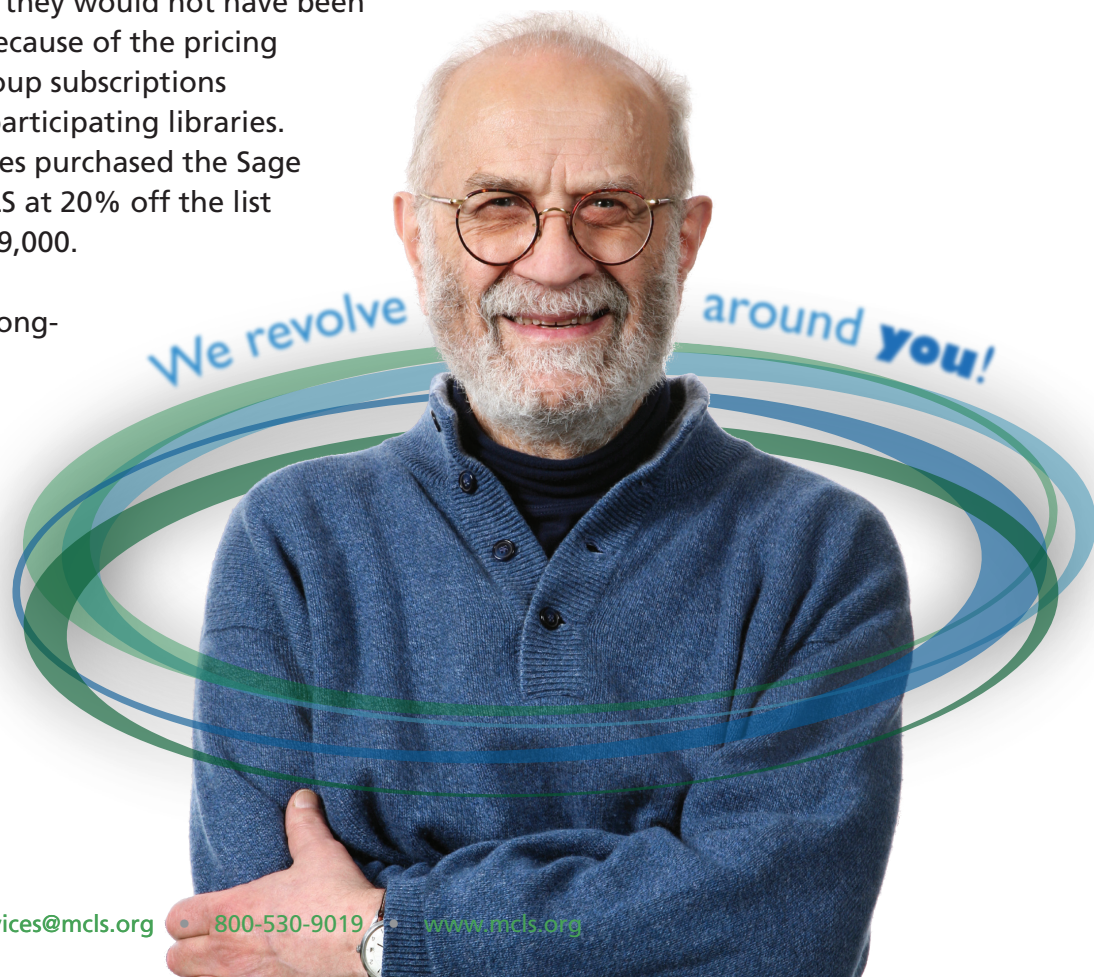
eBooks. In 2010, MCLS added new eBook group purchases, including Elsevier eBooks on ScienceDirect (savings of $90,000 for academic libraries), Springer eBooks for academic libraries (savings of $85,000), and Springer eBooks for hospital libraries (savings of $164,000). Our OverDrive shared collection of eBooks and audiobooks saw a 60% leap in usage in 2010.

eJournals. MCLS has offered eJournal subscriptions to our members since 1999. In 2010, our eJournal subscriptions included 13 publishers providing group access to full ranges of titles. By sharing within the group, libraries gained access to titles they would not have been able to afford on their own. Because of the pricing policies of most publishers, group subscriptions provide maximum benefit to participating libraries. For example, in 2010 six libraries purchased the Sage backfile package through MCLS at 20% off the list price for a total savings of $149,000.

Library Suppliers. MCLS has a long-standing agreement with 3M, including discount pricing for 3M and Checkpoint hardware and accessories. In 2010, 150 members took advantage of the discount pricing through MCLS for total savings over $215,000.

> S erving on the MCLS Interim Board was a wonderful opportunity to network with others librarians and, more importantly, to begin a new tradition of service to Indiana and Michigan libraries.
>
> **— Nancy McGriff**
> Library Media Specialist
> South Central Schools
> Union Mills, IN

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One of the benefits of MCLS membership is easy, online access to your library's account summary, order history, and billing information through MCLS Member Accounts Online (MAO).

In 2010, MCLS combined the accounting services of MLC and INCOLSA into a single point of access for member libraries in Indiana and Michigan. Member libraries can go online through MAO to place orders, view account history, print invoices, renew subscriptions and more.

In addition to 24/7 access to online account information, MCLS offers our member libraries the personal touch of live assistance from our friendly accounting staff during business hours. During 2010, the MCLS account department assisted member libraries with OCLC billing questions, retrieving billing history, printing pro forma invoices, setting up deposit accounts, and other account questions.

W hile it was poignant and difficult for us to bid farewell to our colleagues and many staff members at INCOLSA, those of us continuing on as Interim Board members with MCLS felt confident that we were pursuing the right path, and that the benefits of merging with the Michigan Library Consortium to create MCLS would provide outstanding opportunities and collaboration in the long-term future.

We felt tremendously welcomed by Randy Dykhuis and the MLC staff, who regarded with sensitivity and care the history of our Indiana network and how we would move on as a team with the united goal of taking good care of our members in both states.

— Patty Lunsford
Medical Librarian
Franciscan St. Elizabeth Health
Lafayette, IN

MCLS also has discount agreements with Brodart, Demco, Gaylord, Highsmith, and others. In 2010, MCLS member libraries saved 10%–40% on library supplies.

Training & Special Programs

During 2010, MCLS training workshops and special programs were expanded to include Michigan and Indiana locations, as well as online training. MCLS ran 85 training workshops: 51 "live on-site" sessions and 34 online webinars.

IN ADDITION TO OUR REGULAR TRAINING WORKSHOPS, MCLS HOSTED THREE SPECIAL PROGRAMS:

- **MeL Users Day** was held in April in Lansing, with 167 in attendance. Michigan eLibrary updates were presented by MCLS staff and Library of Michigan staff. The highlight was an Open Forum facilitated by Debbi Schaubman of MCLS, who invited MeLCat users to bring up issues about loan periods, work flows, packaging, and anything else that struck their fancy.

- **The Ever-Changing User: Mobile Devices and Beyond** was held in May in Lansing, with 70 in attendance. Speakers included Gerry McKiernan, Brad Czerniak, Kathy Petlewski, Erin Helmrich, and Edith Burney.

- **Legacy Librarianship** was held in August in Indianapolis, with 95 in attendance. Speakers included George Needham, Jessamyn West, and Sue Davidsen, as well as a panel of Indiana librarians—Sara Laughlin, Patty Lunsford, Noah Brubaker, and George Stachokas.

Serving on the Interim MCLS Board as the Michigan School Library representative was a professionally enriching experience. I was especially grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with my Indiana School Library representative counterpart, Nancy McGriff, on a joint presentation to the Board about the status of school libraries in our respective states.

— Gigi Lincoln
District Librarian
Lakeview High School
Battle Creek, MI

During 2010, MCLS hosted three shared systems: PALNI's Aleph system, Michigan Evergreen, and SCION's Koha system.

PALNI, the Private Academic Library Network of Indiana, contracted with MCLS to provide implementation, support, and training for its shared system, which uses the Aleph integrated library automation software from Ex Libris to implement an online public-access catalog, local cataloging, authority control, circulation control, acquisitions, and serials control for participating libraries. MCLS also provided support for PALNI's SFX, MetaLib and CONTENTdm services. During 2010, MCLS staff upgraded PALNI's Aleph implementation to Version 20 release of the software. The PALNI online union catalog now includes over 2 million unique bibligraphic records and 3.8 million holding records representing the combined collections of twenty-two of the twenty-three PALNI libraries.

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Michigan Evergreen is an open-source Evergreen system shared among public and school libraries in Michigan. During 2010, Michigan Evergreen upgraded to version 1.6 and wrote an openly-available User Manual for the new version. MCLS' staff provided support and training to our own participating libraries, as well as training for other Evergreen library systems in Michigan and Ontario. Michigan Evergreen was featured in a program at the annual Library Technology Conference in St. Paul, MN, and in a program at the Michigan Library Association's annual conference.

SCION is an open-source Koha system shared among public and school libraries in Indiana. Because many of the original members of SCION had migrated to new systems in 2009, it was no longer sustainable to continue with the shared system. During 2010, MCLS worked with SCION libraries to assist them in migration to new integrated library systems. The SCION project will be terminated in June 2011.

Under our contract with the Library of Michigan, MCLS provides training, support, and implementation services for the Michigan eLibrary (MeL) project, including MeL Databases and MeLCat, the statewide resource-sharing system. MCLS also contracts with delivery vendor, ProMed, to provide Michigan's statewide delivery service, RIDES.

I n spite of the history in each state that had taken generally similar organizations, MLC and INCOLSA, in some surprisingly different directions, the blending of the two entities was accomplished in a straightforward professional manner that avoided any partisan posturing. The good will of the interim board members, augmented by exceptional leadership, saw a conceptually difficult process unfold more smoothly than one could ever have imagined. It was a sincere pleasure to participate in this historic process.

— Cliff Haka
Director
Michigan State University Libraries
East Lansing, MI

MeLCat. In 2010, Michigan residents placed over one million MeLCat requests, making MeLCat the first INN-Reach system to handle a million requests in a single calendar year. By the end of December 2010, MeLCat had received 1,049,653 requests and had filled 931,812 loans, achieving an impressive fill rate of 88.77% for the year. MeLCat has grown to include 409 libraries of all sizes and types – academic, public, school, and special – that reach urban and rural communities across Michigan. Over the past six years, MeLCat has received 3,312,727 requests and has filled 2,948,089 loans, all at no cost to the Michigan library patron. Resident cardholders of a MeLCat library can go online to the MeLCat system at any time of the day or night to place a request for a book or other item at the click of a mouse. In just a few days, the item will be delivered to their home library.

MeL Databases. MCLS has provided training and support for MeL Databases since its inception as "AccessMichigan" in 1997. During 2010, MCLS staff resolved 596 support requests and trained 691 library staff. In 2010, MCLS also began the process of transitioning MeL Databases training from on-site training to online webinars. The new training model, which was phased in over in the fall, makes it easier for library staff to attend training without having to take the additional time and expense for travel.

RIDES. In 2010, MCLS announced the new name of "RIDES" for Michigan's statewide delivery service, formerly known as MeL Delivery. Participation is open to any public, academic, school, special library, library cooperative, school district, ISD or REMC in Michigan, with 716 libraries currently participating.

Much of our first year at MCLS was spent weaving together the staff, services, and assets of the two original organizations into a cohesive whole. Our goals the first year centered on staff and member services.

Staff. Our first step was to combine internal staff processes (payroll, benefits, staff policies) and to create an environment to allow the staffs at the two locations to work well together. The latter was achieved with weekly video-conferenced staff meetings, a shared inter-office phone system and online chat system, and regular travel by key staff to the Indianapolis location.

Member Services. Our next step was to focus on determining services to offer that would both serve the needs of our members and move MCLS ahead. This included finding economies of scale to cut costs wherever possible and determining which services MCLS was best positioned to provide for our members. MCLS Executive Director Randy Dykhuis spent much of 2010 visiting Indiana member libraries and attending library meetings in Indiana to learn more the needs of libraries in our expanded territory. He and other staff also spent time meeting with Michigan libraries to ensure that MCLS' direction matched Michigan's needs as well as Indiana's.

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MCLS

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