LIBRARY SERVICES & TECHNOLOGY ACT (LSTA) AND MISSISSIPPI LIBRARIES

CHANGING
RESPONDING
GROWING
HELPING

LSTA—ENHANCING LIBRARY SERVICES FOR ALL MISSISSIPPIANS

Statewide programs and services through MS Library Commission

Special Needs Library Services

Mississippians who cannot read or hold traditional books due to vision or physical issues are eligible to receive audiobooks/players/other specialized equipment and materials through the Library Commission's **Blind & Physically Handicapped Library Services.** Staff members work with patrons on the transition to new digital talking books and machines, which provide better-quality sound and easier operation.

Learn-A-Test

Online, interactive tutorials help prepare individuals for academic and career advancement tests such as GED, ACT, SAT, LSAT, civil service, and hundreds more. The service is free to all Mississippians through the state's public libraries.

Skills Development

Continuing education is integral to strengthening public library services by increasing the expertise of public library staff, directors, and trustees. One of the many workshops offered is the annual four-day, in-residence Librarianship 101 Institute. Focusing on the basics of librarianship, the Institute equips frontline library staff without master's degrees in library science to deliver outstanding public library service. One participant described her experience, "Presenters made me feel that no question was unimportant."

Consulting Assistance

Throughout the year, consultation services are provided on a variety of topics including grants, working with local governments, budgeting, patron relations, strategic planning, Board and Director relations, e-rate, social networking, personnel, collection development, e-books, technology planning, grant opportunities, etc.

Summer Programming

The Library Commission coordinates a **statewide summer library program** with more than 110,000 children, 14,000 young adults, and 3,000 adults participating.

Technology Assistance

Help with library technology issues is provided through a 24/7 help desk, consulting and troubleshooting via email, telephone, and on-site visits, and mediation on connectivity and service issues with third-party providers. In addition, access to Internet service is provided for public libraries across the state.

MAGNOLIA

Mississippi Alliance for Gaining New Opportunities through Library Information Access—primarily funded by the Mississippi Legislature—benefits all Mississippians by providing statewide access to thousands of electronic magazines, newspapers, and books. With library-issued passwords, Mississippians can access the databases from any Internet-accessible computer at home, work, school, or the library.
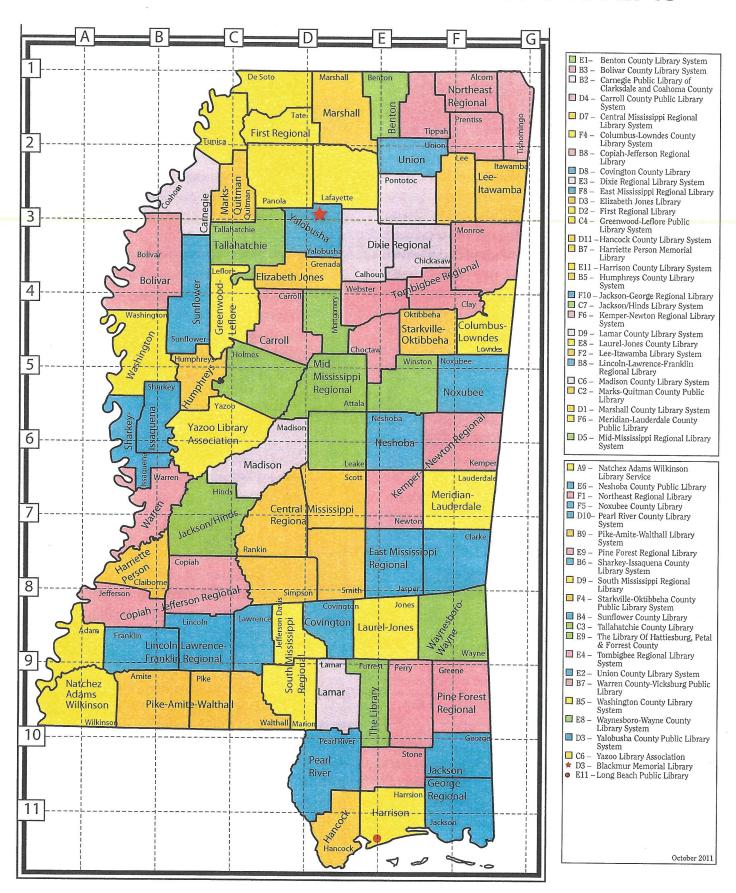
SYMBOLS KEY

Libraries mean business, helping people find jobs, start a company, and do what is needed to get/keep Mississippi working.

Libraries change lives, as a place where people develop a lifelong love of learning and get tools to overcome life's obstacles.

Libraries strengthen Mississippi communities by providing the programs and services essential to creating informed, productive, and enlightened people and places.

Mississippi public library systems save money while enhancing services.

MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEMS

E1 –	Benton County Library System
B3 –	Bolivar County Library System
B2 –	Carnegie Public Library of Clarksdale and Coahoma County
D4 –	Carroll County Public Library System
D7 –	Central Mississippi Regional Library System
F4 –	Columbus-Lowndes County Library System
B8 –	Copiah-Jefferson Regional Library
D8 –	Covington County Library
E3 –	Dixie Regional Library System
F8 –	East Mississippi Regional Library
D3 –	Elizabeth Jones Library
D2 –	First Regional Library
C4 –	Greenwood-Leflore Public Library System
D11 –	Hancock County Library System
B7 –	Harriette Person Memorial Library
E11 –	Harrison County Library System
B5 –	Humphreys County Library System
F10 –	Jackson-George Regional Library
C7 –	Jackson/Hinds Library System
F6 –	Kemper-Newton Regional Library System
D9 –	Lamar County Library System
E8 –	Laurel-Jones County Library
F2 –	Lee-Itawamba Library System
B8 –	Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin Regional Library
C6 –	Madison County Library System
C2 –	Marks-Quitman County Public Library
D1 –	Marshall County Library System
F6 –	Meridian-Lauderdale County Public Library
D5 –	Mid-Mississippi Regional Library System

A9 –	Natchez Adams Wilkinson Library Service
E6 –	Neshoba County Public Library
F1 –	Northeast Regional Library
F5 –	Noxubee County Library
D10 –	Pearl River County Library System
B9 –	Pike-Amite-Walthall Library System
E9 –	Pine Forest Regional Library
B6 –	Sharkey-Issaquena County Library System
D9 –	South Mississippi Regional Library
F4 –	Starkville-Oktibbeha County Public Library System
B4 –	Sunflower County Library
C3 –	Tallahatchie County Library
E9 –	The Library Of Hattiesburg, Petal & Forrest County
E4 –	Tombigbee Regional Library System
E2 –	Union County Library System
B7 –	Warren County-Vicksburg Public Library
B5 –	Washington County Library System
E8 –	Waynesboro-Wayne County Library System
D3 –	Yalobusha County Public Library System
C6 –	Yazoo Library Association
★ D3 –	Blackmur Memorial Library
● E11 –	Long Beach Public Library

October 2011

LSTA Impact in Congressional District 1:

HelpNow!

Online homework help is now available in the five counties (DeSoto, Tunica, Tate, Panola, Lafayette) served by **First Regional Library.** Students in Grades 1-12, early college students, and adults going back to school can get help and develop skills through online lessons. Or, they can receive tutoring in math, English, and many other subjects. Available from 3:00-10:00 p.m., HelpNow! is praised by local schools and generates much community goodwill.

Making Teenagers Feel at Home

The **Columbus-Lowndes Library System** created an educational and fun area for teenagers. The new teen lounge houses books and magazines for young adults, as well as a cool collection of games and gaming equipment. The lounge is wildly successful with students, the community, and library staff. Patrons support the idea as a positive move forward for the library and the community.

> "The lounge is so cool! I never wanted to come to the library but now I want to come every day." +

Planning for the Future

Faced with an aging building with severe function and space limitations, the **Lee-Itawamba Library System** conducted an assessment of current and future facility needs of the Lee County Library. After meeting with a variety of local groups including the library board, staff, library friends, and community focus groups, a determination was made that work should begin immediately on a new library.

Informed Decision-Making

Columbus-Lowndes Library System initiated a cost analysis to determine whether to stay with its current check-out system vendor or join a library consortium. The study took a scientific, unbiased look at the issue. Based on the results, the library system clearly identified the long-term financial, technological, information delivery, and personnel benefits of joining the consortium.

Preserving Music Memories

The Emily J. Pointer Public Library (Como) branch of **First Regional Library** trained a group of teenagers to conduct an oral history project with Panola County seniors. The students gathered unique, undocumented stories about the county's important music heritage and preserved some of the area's rich music history.

The Como project yielded unanticipated outcomes:

- Teens continue volunteering at the library.
- Interviewee Jimbo Mathus donated his collection of music-related biographies to the library.
- The Jessie May Hemphill Foundation long-term loaned photographs, including some from Alan Lomax's time in North Mississippi.
- The interviews were featured at the blues festival in Clarksdale, Mississippi.
- Several rare books/records important to the county's music history have been donated from as far away as Italy.

Help Yourself

First Regional Library installed self-check kiosks in Olive Branch. In addition to speeding up check-out for individual library users, the new kiosks free up staff to assist other library users in retrieving information. Reference assistance increased by 11%.

Starting Young

Using LSTA funds, many public libraries across the state, including **Dixie Regional Library System** (Pontotoc, Calhoun, Chickasaw Counties), **Benton County Library System,** and **First Regional Library** acquired bilingual early education computer learning stations. Interactive educational software encourages early childhood literacy skills, helping preschool children enter school ready to read/learn, and helping elementary-school children to master academic skills for increased school success. The computers allow children to strengthen skills and learn computer basics.

Library Service for All

The **Lee-Itawamba Library System** added adaptive hardware/software to public computers to facilitate access for blind/visually-impaired library users. These patrons now independently participate in lifelong learning activities such as reading printed materials, accessing the Internet, and using word-processing programs.

One Lee County user with a visual impairment (a retired paralegal) learned how to use technology to search the Mississippi Code, allowing him to work part-time for lawyers in the area.

"My kids drive me crazy wanting to come to the library and use the computer."

New Playaways Audiobooks

With LSTA funds, **Union County Library System** began offering Playaways (audiobooks preloaded on MP3-like devices) to appeal to all ages. Young adults and children were immediately enamored. And, the convenience of the format drew many veteran library users as well. The project more than met expectations with patrons overwhelmingly happy with Playaways and begging for MORE!

Digital Fiction

Northeast Regional Library System wanted to experiment with downloadable audiobooks for children and young adults. Using LSTA funds, a subscription was purchased and heavily publicized. Interestingly, the project had an unexpected result—the most used audiobooks were not the children/young adult titles, but the adult classic fiction that came free with the package. As a result of the project, the library system now knows that there is great community interest in digital contemporary adult fiction.

District 1: Demographics Determine Local Needs

Total Population	766,863
Median Income	$34,624
Poverty Rate	21.9%
Under 18 in Poverty	33.0%
Unemployment Rate	12.9%
Illiteracy Rate	17.7%
Median Age	34–40.1
Receiving SNAP	20.06%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	59.6%
Average Graduation Rate	72.9%
Public Libraries in District	61

Other LSTA Projects

Blackmur Memorial Library (Water Valley)	Public computers replacement
Blackmur Memorial Library	Staff computers replacement
Columbus-Lowndes Public Library System	Large print books for baby boomers
Columbus-Lowndes Public Library System	Early literacy computers for children
Dixie Regional Library System (Pontotoc)	Network computer hardware replacement
Dixie Regional Library System	New computers for check-out system and reference
Elizabeth Jones Library (Grenada)	Public computers replacement
Elizabeth Jones Library	Early literacy computers for children
First Regional Library System (Hernando)	Books for adults and young adults by African American authors
First Regional Library System	Board books for infants and toddlers
Lee-Itawamba Library System (Tupelo)	Juvenile biographies
Marshall County Library System (Holly Springs)	Laptop computer lab
Marshall County Library System	Programming equipment for Potts Camp branch
Northeast Regional Library System (Corinth)	Staff computers replacement
Northeast Regional Library System	Check-out computers for three branch libraries
Union County Library System (New Albany)	Children's books for Myrtle
Union County Library System	Public computers and genealogy computer replacement
Yalobusha County Public Library System (Coffeeville)	Best-sellers collection
Yalobusha County Public Library System	Public computers replacement for Coffeeville

LSTA Impact in Congressional District 2:

Preserving Local History

The **Madison County Library System**, using LSTA funds, expanded/enhanced public access to the library system's local history collection. Library users throughout the county now have electronic access to more than 100,000 items.

> "Having our local history preserved is important, and the library makes it easy to access."

E-Readers

The **Bolivar County Library System** purchased seven e-book readers for patron check-out. The readers were placed in the four largest branch libraries—Cleveland, Rosedale, Shaw, and Shelby—to help introduce e-book technology and expand access for adults, especially those with special needs.

The **Carnegie Library of Clarksdale & Coahoma County** purchased five e-readers for check-out. A variety of book titles were also made available to patrons. The project was successful with overwhelmingly positive patron feedback and waiting lists for all five readers.

Tapping an emerging and important new service delivery format for information, the **Starkville/Oktibbeha County Library System** invested local funds in an e-book subscription for use by the library users. The growing collection has seen steady increases in usage.

With LSTA funds, the library system purchased e-readers (Nooks and Kindles) and loaded e-book titles, focusing on best-selling fiction, nonfiction, and young adult books. Library reserve lists were significantly reduced.

Reaching Young Adults

The Attala County Library, a branch of **Mid-Mississippi Regional Library System** (Attala, Montgomery, Holmes, Leake, and Winston Counties), surveyed teens and determined that most teens did not feel the library had anything for them. So, working with the teens, the library created a comfortable, innovative space including new paperback collections, computers, technology, wireless Internet, and programming.

Success of the effort was measurable through several positive outcomes:

- Tremendous increases in check-out of young adult books and materials
- Formation of an active teen advisory group involved in selecting materials and developing new programming
- Teens volunteering at other library programs, such as summer reading programs for children
- Teens coming in and using the library instead of loitering outside
- Other system branches anxious to develop similar programs

Bringing Them Back

Faced with declining numbers of young adults using the library, the **Bolivar County Library System** implemented gaming programs, including associated print materials, at four branch libraries. One young man, who had not been a library user, joined the teen group, and became very active.

> "I was so happy to do something with my children that didn't cost a lot of money."

Library Teen Center

The **Harriette Person Memorial Library** (Claiborne County) developed a center designated for the teens and young adults of Port Gibson. The center provides a safe haven, homework area, and an environment that encourages learning and creative and critical thinking skills. The project was a success, with a 50% increase in program participation among

teens. Staffers initially thought the center would be more popular with girls, but it seems that boys are using the space more often.

Job Seekers

Recognizing that many people using the computers were looking for jobs, the **Bolivar County Library System** purchased and dedicated at least one public computer in Cleveland, Rosedale, Shaw, and Shelby to unimpeded Internet access and resources for pursuing employment opportunities.

Access for All

With assistive technology equipment/software provided by an LSTA grant to **Copiah Jefferson Regional Library System**, visually-impaired citizens of Copiah County can utilize local library services, access the Longleaf Library consortium, and utilize statewide interlibrary loan services without extensive travel or staff intervention. As one of the most successful projects ever implemented by the library system, the grant allowed the creation of an Assistive Technologies area with two wide-screen desktop computers loaded with adaptive software including JAWS and MAGIC. A magnifier system was also added.

Partnerships were established with the Council for the Blind, the Federation of the Blind, and the Lion's Club to share information, insight, and ideas.

Visually-impaired residents regularly participate in computer training courses. The new technology brings in visitors from other cities and states as well. To meet the demand, the library system employs a full-time person to handle computer-training activities.
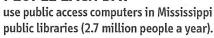
Print Management

The **Jackson/Hinds Library System** used LSTA funds to purchase software to better manage printer access, time management, online reservation of public computers, and to enable wireless printing.

Wireless

The **Carroll County Public Library System** now provides wireless access to the Internet, allowing patrons with their own laptops to surf the Web while in the library.

NEARLY 8,000 PEOPLE EACH DAY use public access computers in Mississippi public libraries (2.7 million people a year).

District 2: Demographics Determine Local Needs

Total Population	674,368
Median Income	$27,732
Poverty Rate	33.6%
Under 18 in Poverty	46.9%
Unemployment Rate	13.7%
Illiteracy Rate	23.0%
Median Age	33.4–38.26
Receiving SNAP	31.84%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	83.3%
Average Graduation Rate	67.2%
Public Libraries in District	68

Other LSTA Projects

Carnegie Public Library of Clarksdale & Coahoma County	Medical and exercise books and online database
Carroll County Public Library System (Carrollton)	Books for young adults
Carroll County Public Library System	Early literacy computers for children
Greenwood-Leflore Public Library System	Staff computers upgrade
Greenwood-Leflore Public Library System	Public computers upgrade
Harriette Person Memorial Library (Port Gibson)	Children's and juvenile books
Harriette Person Memorial Library	Early literacy computers for children
Humphreys County Library System (Belzoni)	Adult fiction and nonfiction books
Humphreys County Library System	Children's books and DVDs (Catfish Reading Club)
Marks-Quitman County Library	Replacement of classic children's books
Mid Mississippi Regional Library System (Kosciusko)	Bilingual early literacy computers for children (Carthage)
Mid Mississippi Regional Library System	Bilingual early literacy computers for children (Louisville)
Sharkey-Issaquena County Library	Nook and iPad e-readers
Sharkey-Issaquena County Library	Check-out computers
Yazoo Library Association (Yazoo City)	Staff computers replacement
Yazoo Library Association	Public computers replacement

LSTA Impact in Congressional District 3:

Customers now request more information about specific programs. A teen at the Pearl Public Library stated, "I hope that you put the pictures from the program on the slideshow."

"Thanks for keeping us informed of all the services and good things you do around here." +

"If we build it, they will come."

Natchez-Adams-Wilkinson Library Service adopted this goal in designing an inviting, fun place for teens and young adults at the Judge George W. Armstrong Library (Natchez). The space includes an area for gaming, Internet, and crafts—and houses a young adult book collection. For teenagers, the Teen Zone is "their place" and is thought of as more than a place to do school work. Two girls come regularly to do beading and crafts; two teen boys meet in the Teen Zone and play Battleship on Saturday mornings. Teenagers have expressed interest in starting a Teen Advisory Group to help with more programming.

Gaming at the Library

South Mississippi Regional Library System (Marion, Jefferson Davis Counties) used LSTA funds to create teen-specific areas and provide gaming programming to increase students' use of the three branch libraries in the library system. Ten gaming programs were conducted. Teen usage of the library grew by 186%. The library system now offers teens safe, fun environments with programming designed specifically for them.

Sending Strong Visual Messages

Using flat screen televisions and digital picture frames, the **Central Mississippi Regional Library System** (Rankin, Scott, Smith, Forrest Counties) used technology to create new relevancy for traditional library services in its 20 branch libraries. Regardless of branch location, library users now experience a clear, unified message about system-wide services and local activities.

This LSTA project has had a greater impact on branch libraries than any other project the library system has undertaken. Library users are updated daily on available services and local events. The visual nature of the project has affected the way the public feels about the library. Staff are very enthusiastic about the attractive messages.

Delve into the Decades

Central Mississippi Regional Library System (Rankin, Scott, Smith, Forrest Counties) developed a new program that helped expand opportunities for each branch's programming. For Delve into the Decades, citizens in each community were invited to focus on a particular 10-year period of history, and engage in the fun by viewing an award-winning film from that era, reading relevant best sellers, discussing major historical events of the period, and recalling chart-topping songs of that decade. The tiered approach of this different program allowed branch libraries to customize programming regardless of staff size or space limitations. Because of the LSTA project, branch libraries now have the equipment and basic training to develop a series of programs for their communities.

MORE THAN 600,000
people attended programs in public libraries in 2010.

Print Management

The **Natchez-Adams-Wilkinson Library Service** used LSTA funds to purchase software to better manage the printing, time management, and online reservation of public computers, and to enable wireless printing. With this software, access has increased, fewer unwanted pages are printed, less paper is wasted, and staff are no longer the "Time Police." Everyone is much happier.

Hands-On Learning

Thanks to LSTA grant funding, children in **South Mississippi Regional Library System** (Marion, Jefferson Davis Counties) and **Central Mississippi Regional Library System** (Rankin, Scott, Smith, Forrest Counties) now have access to computers featuring touch-screen monitors, a child-sized mouse, and color-coordinated keyboards for easy identification. Because children learn through tactile, visual, and auditory experiences, modern technology and traditional learning methods are combined and kid-sized.

Offering interactive educational games for preschoolers and babies increased services. This also increases parent/child interaction, since the parent holds or sits with the baby or preschooler while games are being played. And, after a brief demonstration, older preschoolers easily master the skills needed for the interactive educational games.

Preserving the Art of Storytelling

Central Mississippi Regional Library System conducted a series of programs featuring four nationally recognized storytellers entitled, "Storytelling: Preserving and Passing on the Oral Tradition." The project celebrated the cultural diversity of the storytelling tradition. African-American, Hispanic, Native-American, and traditional storytellers were selected to participate. Partnering with local school districts, storytellers visited schools throughout the area and presented intergenerational, family-oriented programs at public library branches.

Over 5,523 adults and children attended the programs that intertwined cultural diversity with storytelling and the oral tradition.

Free Family Entertainment

With the economic struggles and difficult choices facing area families in mind, the **Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin Regional Library System** used LSTA funds to give families a source of free, family-friendly entertainment by providing a collection of popular children's and general interest DVDs for check-out. The project was hugely successful as evidenced by the 62% increase in library checkouts.

10 MILLION PEOPLE
use Mississippi public libraries each year.

District 3: Demographics Determine Local Needs

Total Population	633,521
Median Income	$32,212
Poverty Rate	24.6%
Under 18 in Poverty	34.9%
Unemployment Rate	11.5%
Illiteracy Rate	19.0%
Median Age	32.5–38.3
Receiving SNAP	22.05%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	67.1%
Average Graduation Rate	67.1%
Public Libraries in District	67

Other LSTA Projects

Central Mississippi Regional Library System (Brandon)	Picture books for children
Central Mississippi Regional Library System	Music for story hours
Copiah-Jefferson Regional Library (Hazlehurst)	DVDs
Copiah-Jefferson Regional Library	Laptop and iPads
Kemper-Newton Regional Library System (Union)	Public computers upgrade in Union
Kemper-Newton Regional Library System	Public computers upgrade in DeKalb
Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin Regional Library (Brookhaven)	Books on CD for Franklin County (Meadville & Bude)
Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin Regional Library	Laptop computer replacement
Natchez-Adams-Wilkinson Library Service	Movies filmed in Natchez on BluRay & DVD
Natchez-Adams-Wilkinson Library Service	Newspapers online
Neshoba County Public Library (Philadelphia)	Books for boys for Summer Reading Tutorial Program
Neshoba County Public Library	Animal-themed reading program to improve 1st graders' reading
Noxubee County Public Library (Macon)	Staff computers upgrade
Noxubee County Public Library	Public computers replacement
South Mississippi Regional Library (Columbia)	Juvenile books on science and technology
South Mississippi Regional Library	Staff and public printers replacement
Starkville-Oktibbeha County Public Library System	DVDs for Sturgis
Starkville-Oktibbeha County Public Library System	DVDs for Maben

LSTA Impact in Congressional District 4:

Space

The Pass Christian Public Library branch of the **Harrison County Library System** was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. An important part of the new library was a space designed specifically for teens/young adults. LSTA funds were used to equip the space with technology, including gaming. The Teen Space was an immediate hit with young adults and adults alike.

Now, there are fewer complaints from adults about teen behavior. The number of teens using the library, and young adults attending library programming, has skyrocketed. Overall, teen interest in and satisfaction with the library has improved dramatically.

> "I am so appreciative of the Gaming for Families program on Saturday mornings. Playing board games with my children is something fun that we can all enjoy—and it doesn't cost anything."

America's Roots Music

Forming a cultural partnership with VisitHattiesburg, the Historic Hattiesburg Downtown Association and the Hattiesburg Arts Council, **The Library of Hattiesburg, Petal & Forrest County** used LSTA funds to seize a unique opportunity to provide lifelong learning services for adults in conjunction with a Smithsonian traveling exhibition, *New Harmonies, America's Roots Music*. LSTA funds purchased multiple copies of excellent resources for adults wishing to learn more about the history and heritage of roots music and Mississippi's rich musical traditions.

Each program drew a different segment of the community. The Jimmie Rodger's program attendance was mainly senior citizens who were very positive in their praise. One senior stated, "Great program... I learned a lot that I did not know." Another comment was, "This was outstanding. Great program—one of the best ever."

The project was a huge success with great attendance and positive audience evaluations. The roots music collection of books and DVDs experienced higher check-out rates. Generating positive publicity for the library system and its partners, stronger relationships with sister institutions have resulted.

Print Management

The **Jackson-George Regional Library System** (Jackson, George Counties) used LSTA funds to purchase computer reservation and print management software to better manage the printing, time management, and online reservation of public computers and to allow wireless printing in all eight branches. Library users now have increased confidentiality since library staff no longer handle patron-printed materials nor visit patron computers unless there is a need for assistance. Staff time is freed to assist those needing in-depth services. Computer availability has increased, giving more patrons access.

Wireless Printing

The **Library of Hattiesburg, Petal, & Forrest County** used LSTA funds to purchase computer software to better manage the printing, time management, and online reservation of shared public computers and to allow wireless printing in all library facilities.

Committed to providing excellent library and customer service, the library system was concerned about negative experiences of patrons due to printing errors when using public computers. With the new print management system, user satisfaction increased to 98%. Fewer printing errors are now recorded by staff.

New Printing System

Lamar County Library System purchased and implemented a public access computing and print management system to provide equitable service to patrons using public access computers. The installation resulted in 20% fewer patron complaints about library computers. Patrons find library computers more convenient and less problematic than when staff had to mediate usage and printing.

One patron expressed that the system allowed her a more private session since no sign-in sheets with dates/times could be viewed by others. She also felt a greater fairness with an automated time system instead of a human timekeeper. She concluded the transition from one patron leaving a computer and another logging on was more seamless. She felt it made for more peaceful interactions in the library.

Check-Out as a Service

The **Laurel-Jones County Library System** used an LSTA grant to take advantage of 21st-century technology to better serve library users and to make better use of library staff and resources. After careful evaluation, the library system replaced the out-of-date, costly in-house check-out management system with a subscription-based service in which the software/hardware are regularly updated without additional costs to the library.

The move allowed the library to improve current services and expand the services offered to patrons. It also ensured the library will be in position to take advantage of future service expansions because no longer will the library be limited by in-house equipment.

Interactive Learning for the Young

Young children in the **Laurel-Jones County Library System** now have access to computers featuring touch-screen monitors, a child-sized mouse, and color-coordinated keyboards for easy identification. Because children learn through tactile, visual, and auditory experiences, modern technology and traditional learning methods are combined and kid-sized.

Said one mother, "My sons [5, 4, and 2] love using the touch-screen computers in the children's area. We get to story time extra early every Tuesday just so they can be sure of a chance to spend some time on them. Their favorite games are the ones that read stories to them. One son especially loves to 'play the piano' by touching the keyboard right on the monitor."

Another mother stated, "My children love the new computers! They love to come to the children's area to use them and play the various games that are there. They are learning Spanish by playing games. Mom loves it because they are in a safe environment where nothing will 'get' them via the Internet."

Teens Welcomed

Branch libraries of the **Jackson-George Regional Library System** began seeing more and more teens after school with little to do. These idle hands and minds resulted in increased noise complaints from other patrons. Not wanting to discourage teens from coming to the library, branch librarians struggled to find a way to channel teens and reduce complaints. The solution was a teen space in each branch library with video games, teen-specific books, and teen-friendly furnishings. Game Days were conducted with special events during Teen Read Week and during the summers.

The results were astounding, with more teens exposed to books and the full range of library services. Constructive relationships were developed between teenagers and staff through positive interaction. More teens now feel welcome and are actively engaged. Overall, teen use of the library has increased while complaints from other patrons have significantly decreased.

A Place for Teens

By adding a television and Nintendo Wii in Bay Springs and Quitman Public Libraries, the **East Mississippi Regional Library** transformed the library into a community center for teens and got young adults interested in books and other materials. Publicity, partnering with schools, and training staff to work with teens made the project a success.

Young adults and teenagers are now more comfortable in the library as evidenced by the number attending programs and checking out young adult and teen resources.

District 4: Demographics Determine Local Needs

Total Population	729,382
Median Income	$38,701
Poverty Rate	20.3%
Under 18 in Poverty	30.7%
Unemployment Rate	10.1%
Illiteracy Rate	15.0%
Median Age	35–39.9
Receiving SNAP	19.74%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	55.3%
Average Graduation Rate	74.9%
Public Libraries in District	44

Other LSTA Projects

Hancock County Library System (Bay St. Louis)	Juvenile and young adult playaways
Jackson-George Regional Library System (Pascagoula)	Genealogy and local history computers
Jackson-George Regional Library System	Computer for electronic "card" catalog
Laurel-Jones County Library System	Check-out scanners
The Library of Hattiesburg, Petal, & Forrest County	Spanish or bilingual English/Spanish books and other materials
The Library of Hattiesburg, Petal, & Forrest County	Check-out computers