

# ANNUAL REPORT

MISSISSIPPI LIBRARY COMMISSION

2021



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# OVERVIEW

**THE VISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI LIBRARY COMMISSION IS THAT ALL MISSISSIPPIANS HAVE ACCESS TO QUALITY LIBRARY SERVICES IN ORDER TO:**

- Achieve their greatest potential,
- Participate in a global society, and
- Enrich their daily lives.

**THE MISSION OF THE MISSISSIPPI LIBRARY COMMISSION IS COMMITMENT—THROUGH LEADERSHIP, ADVOCACY, AND SERVICE—TO STRENGTHENING AND ENHANCING LIBRARIES AND LIBRARY SERVICES FOR ALL MISSISSIPPIANS.**

**THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE MISSISSIPPI LIBRARY COMMISSION IS:**

Jolee Hussey	Oxford
Ann Marsh	Brandon
Stephen Cunetto	Starkville
Lori Barnes	Hernando
Becky Wright	Banner

In accordance with the requirements set forth in the *Mississippi Code of 1972, §27-101-1*, the Mississippi Library Commission respectfully submits the FY21 Annual Report for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2021.

Year two of the pandemic virus, like year one, brought many challenges. Some of these challenges were a repeat of the prior year while other challenges were new – not encountered in the year of 2020. The theme for the year was adaptability as the Mississippi Library Commission (MLC), working with the public libraries of Mississippi, coordinated activities to ensure that the citizens of the state could continue to receive essential services as designated under the statutory mission charge of MLC.

The COVID-19 conditions dictated many health-related changes. These changes included actions and policies that affected how services were provided, when services were provided, and the safeguards instituted to assure, as might be possible, the dissemination of knowledgeable materials.

**IN 2021 AS THE COVID VIRUS SPREAD, MLC ACTED QUICKLY TO HELP PUBLIC LIBRARIES TO TRANSITION AND EXPAND SERVICES THAT ENSURED THAT COMMUNITIES WERE STILL ABLE TO ACCESS THE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES THAT COMMUNITIES DESIRED.**

MLC made sure that ebook access and online support for students, employers, and job applicants was available, often being provided in a virtual format. These tasks were accomplished via the labor of MLC's dedicated employees working with librarians throughout the state.

The desire for and need of reading material increased during the pandemic conditions of the year. Material checkouts in both hardcopy and electronic formats increased with online delivery of information becoming a primary function. Supporting this need, MLC developed reading lists for all ages, and provided more CE opportunities, continued the premier services of the Talking Books program, coordinated virtual book club activities, and offered traditional favorite library programs like a summer reading program, this time in a more virtual format.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MLC worked strenuously to expand Wi-Fi broadband services in libraries across the state during the past year as funds were shifted by MLC to ensure the capabilities necessary to provide high quality information quickly, often in a virtual format, that was vital in the support of the many school students across the state which were unable to receive in-classroom instruction.

**ADDITIONALLY, DURING 2021, MLC SUPPORTED AND STRENGTHENED MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITIES BY PROVIDING REMOTE ACCESS TO VARIED COLLECTIONS OF MATERIALS, REAFFIRMING THAT PEOPLE ENJOY READING WHETHER IT BE TO GAIN KNOWLEDGE OR FOR LEISURE.**

During a difficult year, MLC's employees achieved amazing results as they completed a myriad number of tasks – tasks often done working in cooperative units dealing with a pandemic the likes never before encountered as library workers. Also, during the year MLC was well-served by its Board of Commissioners who were a dedicated group working hand-in-hand with MLC to support the work and effort necessary to provide premier library services. The time, talent, and effort of all made 2021 successful, keeping the ideals of free and open access to knowledge as an opportunity available to all in Mississippi.



# LIBRARY SERVICES

The Library Services Bureau provides direct and indirect services to Mississippi's public libraries by providing materials, answers to reference questions, and software, so libraries can catalog, borrow, and loan books to each other, furnish books in alternative formats for patrons with disabilities, and offer advice, support, and training to public libraries in order to improve library operations and develop staff knowledge.



## INFORMATION SERVICES

MLC endeavors to meet the information needs of all Mississippians through a variety of professional services. In FY21, MLC staff received 27,294 information requests--whether they were requests for materials, in-depth research questions, requests for genealogy assistance, or support for school projects, Mississippians were able to receive professional assistance for their information needs.

**IN FY21, MISSISSIPPI'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES SAVED \$251,860 BY BORROWING BOOKS FROM EACH OTHER THROUGH INTERLIBRARY LOAN.**

**USING CATALOGING SOFTWARE PROVIDED BY MLC, MISSISSIPPI'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES CATALOGED 139,370 BOOKS IN FY21.**

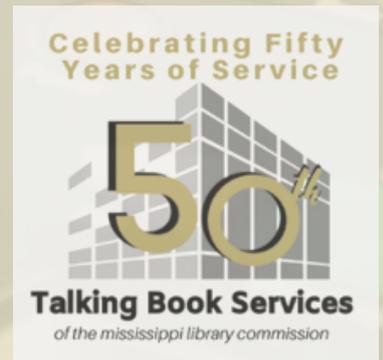
## TALKING BOOKS

TALKING BOOK SERVICES (TBS) provides statewide access to library materials in specialized formats to individuals with disabilities. Individuals eligible for this free program include adults and children with visual impairments (blindness or an inability to read standard print), physical limitations (unable to hold a book or turn a page), and those with a reading disability from an organic dysfunction, such as dyslexia.

**TALKING BOOKS PATRONS CHECKED OUT 114,136 ITEMS IN FY21. 94% OF TBS PATRONS WERE SATISFIED OR VERY SATISFIED WITH THE SERVICE OVERALL IN FY21.**

Usage of BARD (Braille and Audio Reading Download) service increased 11% from FY20 to FY21. This service allows TBS patrons to download materials directly to their personal devices so they can immediately access books and magazines in audio and braille formats.

**TALKING BOOKS CELEBRATED ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY ON JULY 15, 2020!**



## SOCIAL MEDIA

MLC had **7,689** followers on its social media platforms in FY21. Staff responsible for maintaining the agency's Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube pages posted **1,998** tweets, posts, photos, and videos, keeping patrons, libraries, and the general public aware of MLC's activities and accomplishments. On YouTube, MLC's 170 videos have been viewed **12,404** times.

Stacks and Stories, MLC's podcast, features conversations about books, reading habits, and public library news and trends.

**IN FY21, 23 STACKS AND STORIES EPISODES WERE RELEASED, WITH 1,482 DOWNLOADS.**



## CONTINUING EDUCATION

CONTINUING EDUCATION programs at MLC strengthen public library services by increasing the skills, knowledge, and expertise of public library staff members. Continuing education workshop subjects in FY21 included: accounting for librarians, E-Rate, federal and privately sponsored grants, readers' advisory, social media, researching black ancestry, and literacy gardens. Although COVID-19 interrupted plans for in-person trainings, live and recorded webinars and meetings meant that all Mississippi library workers were able to access each event.

**IN FY21, MLC PRESENTED 19 LIVE VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS, 43 RECORDED WEBINARS, AND 23 STAFF TRAININGS.**

## CONSULTING

CONSULTING SERVICES are provided by professional library staff to disseminate advice and guidance on library services, policies, planning, and management to strengthen and enhance public library service throughout the state. In FY21, the consultants made 34 visits to public libraries in order to provide consulting advice, attend programs, and provide trainings.

**MLC'S CONSULTANTS PROVIDED 3,968 HOURS OF CONSULTING TO MISSISSIPPI'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN FY21.**

# LIBRARY SERVICES

## SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

MLC offers non-traditional items for checkout to libraries and schools for use in programming, such as book club kits, Santa suits, button makers, board games, LEGO kits, puppets, digital cameras, and several types of coding and STEM kits. These non-traditional items allow libraries to expand their programming offerings to the public.

**MISSISSIPPI LIBRARIES AND SCHOOLS BORROWED 44 KITS IN FY21, INCLUDING 32 BOOK CLUB KITS FOR GROUP DISCUSSIONS.**



MLC's collection of historical public library photos is housed at the Mississippi Digital Library. In FY21, visitors to [www.msdiglib.org](http://www.msdiglib.org) viewed 1,501 of MLC's digital images.



**THE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES BUREAU HAS SIX DIVISIONS THAT PROVIDE PLANNING, DIRECTION AND COORDINATION OF SUPPORTIVE SERVICES. THESE INCLUDE HUMAN RESOURCES, OPERATIONS, BUSINESS SERVICES, PUBLIC RELATIONS, AND TECHNOLOGY.**

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

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MLC's Human Resources guides the recruitment and retention of staff, performance development assessments, employee benefits, compensation assistance, and staff development.

## **OPERATIONS**

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MLC strives through its operations department to maintain the MLC building and its grounds through preventive maintenance and regular inspections. It is also responsible for all mail services and fleet management.

## **BUSINESS SERVICES**

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Business Services oversees fiscal management, purchasing, and inventory control.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

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Public Relations helps provide strategic communication that assists in building better relationships between the Mississippi Library Commission, the public libraries it supports and their communities.

# TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

## TECHNOLOGY SERVICES WENT ON 193 SITE VISITS AND RESOLVED 985 HELP DESK TICKETS IN FY21.

The highlight of the year for our technology services was the completion of the upgrade to high-speed internet for most public libraries as part of Contract 5000. The change offered public libraries in the state higher internet speeds at lower prices.

- The minimum speed at public libraries is now 100 Mbps
- The upgrade was completed on September 10, 2021
- Planning took place with collaboration with CSpire, MLC Staff, ITS, and public libraries for almost a year in advance.

**BECAUSE OF THIS CHANGE, LIBRARIES HAVE FASTER INTERNET SPEEDS WITH SOME RURAL AREAS GOING FROM 1.5 MBPS TO 100 MBPS. THE FASTER SPEEDS WILL ALSO ALLOW LIBRARIES THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE NEW INNOVATIVE PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES FOR THEIR COMMUNITIES, WHICH WILL OPEN A WHOLE NEW CHAPTER TO RURAL AREAS OF THE STATE.**



# GRANTS

Federal grants received from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) assisted Mississippi's public library systems to strengthen and enhance library services provided to Mississippi residents.

Additionally, the Grants division reimburses public libraries for the health and life insurance premiums of full time public library employees. The Personnel Incentive Grants Program (PIGP), established in 1971 and administered by MLC, helps public libraries to ensure qualified personnel in Mississippi's public libraries are available to assist patrons.

## **FEDERAL GRANTS ASSISTED MISSISSIPPI'S PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEMS IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF THEIR COMMUNITIES BY FUNDING AN EXTENSIVE RANGE OF PROJECTS, SUCH AS TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS, EXPANDING ACCESS TO LIBRARY MATERIALS, AND LITERACY PROJECTS.**

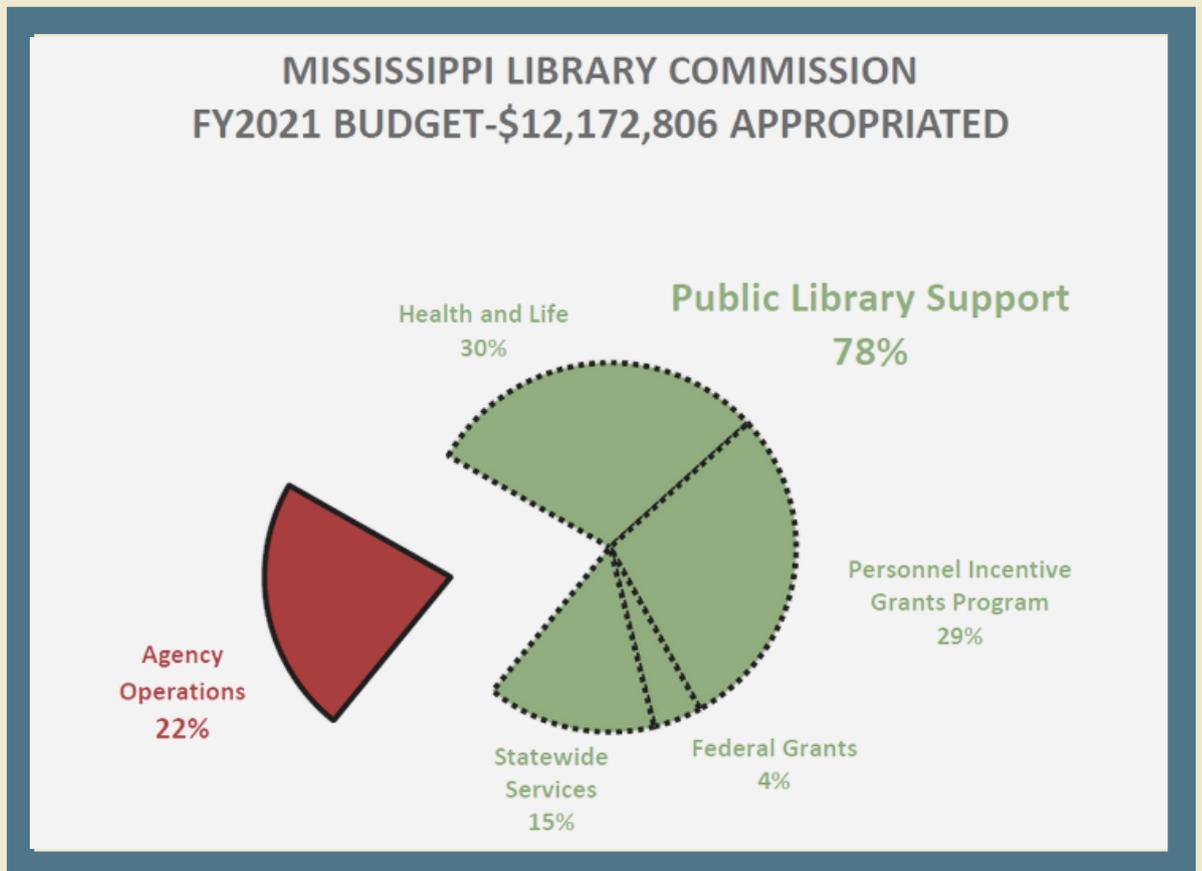
With the challenges posed by the COVID 19 pandemic through 2020 and 2021, many libraries utilized CARES funding to ensure that access to library services could continue through distanced programming and access to library services via the digital realm.

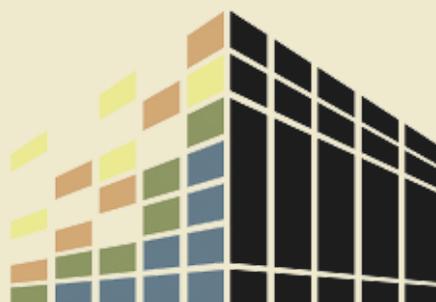


## AGENCY OPERATIONAL EXPENSES

- Health & Life Insurance for Public Libraries - **\$3,440,949.28**
- Federal Grants to public libraries- **\$481,580.88**
- Personnel Incentive Grants Program- **\$3,292,732.43**

### MLC FY2021 BUDGET \$12,172,806 APPROPRIATED





MISSISSIPPI  
**LIBRARY**  
COMMISSION

LEADERSHIP    ADVOCACY    SERVICE

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