

Library Funding and the County Fair

Librarians and library supporters will have the benefit of the August recess to call and visit local Congressional offices or see representatives and senators at the county fair. In this tight budget year, it is critical to ask them to support strong funding for library programs.

A conference on the differences between House and Senate bills usually occurs by mid-September. The FY99 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill is often finalized by October 1, the end of the fiscal year.

Below are details of the various national library funding streams, as well as funding for major library programs. Please use local examples of how funding for national libraries benefits your constituents. Don't forget there are federal depository libraries in every state where government information is available to the public.

Messages for Congress

Library of Congress (LOC): 1) Fund the LOC at the requested \$397 million for FY99. The LOC provides bibliographic, reference, preservation, and other services and expertise that support and coordinate with other libraries; 2) provide a permanent reauthorization for the Library's American Folklife Center (S. 1971); and 3) support the Library's bicentennial plans as a celebration of America's libraries.

National Agricultural Library (NAL): Fund the NAL at least \$2.5 million above the President's level funding request of \$19 million. NAL cooperates with a network of other libraries to provide key materials on which the rural and scientific communities depend. NAL has cut services because it has had to service its collections at 1991 budget levels.

National Education Library (NEL): Fund National Education Library adequately as part of the Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement budget. This key educational resource empha-

sizes electronic linkages and backup to other libraries and resources in the field of education.

National Library of Medicine (NLM): Fund the National Library of Medicine adequately. The requested level is \$174,725,000 for FY99. NLM has recently made its MEDLINE database available at no fee on the Internet. Usage has skyrocketed; public and other libraries find it a health resource very popular with the general public.

National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS): Fund NCLIS at the requested level of \$1 million. In addition to advising Congress and the President on library and information policy and partnering on library research and statistics, NCLIS serves as the library advisory body to the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Library Statistics and Research: Fund the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) at the requested level of \$689.4 million, especially its statistics/research component. OERI's National Center for Education Statistics, in partnership with NCLIS, conducts surveys and publishes basic data on libraries that is used by libraries, educational institutions, and all levels of government. Department of Education research institutes, such as the one on Postsecondary Education, Libraries, and Lifelong Learning, conduct needed research and disseminate results to improve practice.

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH): Fund NEH at the requested level of \$136 million. Library eligibility and involvement in NEH's public programming, preservation assistance, state-based assistance, and challenge grants helps spread and preserve America's literary, historic, and social traditions.

Elementary and Secondary Education Programs. Fund adequately ESEA, the Improving America's Schools Act, and other elementary/secondary education and technology programs. School library media centers and the librarians who staff them are a key part of student achievement efforts through provision of relevant reading materials, cur-

Lynne E. Bradley is deputy executive director of ALA's Washington Office; e-mail: leb@alawash.org

ricular support in print, audiovisual, and electronic formats, and the teaching of critical information skills.

Higher Education Act (HEA): Reauthorize and fund the HEA postsecondary education program. Academic libraries as a central part of advanced learning and a key support of academic research benefit from HEA. The college work-study program also provides library work opportunities, the opportunity to learn in-depth information-seeking skills, and potential career possibilities. The inter-

national education program assists some academic libraries in acquiring needed international and foreign-language materials.

Next Generation Internet (NGI): Fund NGI at the requested \$110 million. Just as the ARPANET and NSFNET and NREN initiatives led to today's Internet and benefited educational institutions, libraries, and the public, NGI activities will produce leading-edge innovation with broad public benefits, if NGI is focused on applications research as well as bigger "pipes." ■

(Federal work study cont. from page 492)

Fortunately for librarians who wish to take advantage of the work-study program, the nature of library work encourages the design of substantive student jobs.

nature, many supervisors tend to avoid the task of correcting employee mistakes. Although it may be tempting for these individuals to cite fear of complaints to financial aid officers as an excuse not to discipline work-study students, library supervisors should exercise fairness in their supervision of all employees. By doing so, and by keeping open lines of communication with the financial aid office, they prevent complaints from occurring and make those that do occur understandable to others.

Conclusion

Some of the criticism that scholars direct against the outcome of the work-study program is legitimate. Well-qualified and motivated college students may miss on-campus employment opportunities because they fail to meet the financial aid criteria. And, because the federal government pays the wages of work-study students, students may end up with "make-work" jobs designed to put them to work in the absence of any real need to do so. It is also true that supervisors sometimes hire poorly motivated or unqualified individuals who desire financial aid but have no real interest in working.

In spite of these potential problems, it is by following the common sense principles of job design and personnel management that librarians can make the program work as intended. Librarians who follow these commonly accepted principles will provide their departments with student help at little or no cost to the library's budget.

These principles include the creation of meaningful jobs and the practice of appropriate hiring, training, and supervisory techniques. In this time of financial hardships for institutions of higher learning, librarians should view the successful employment of work-study students in libraries as a challenge worth meeting.

Notes

1. Department of Education, *The Federal Student Financial Aid Handbook*, Chapter 7, p. 7.

2. Kenneth C. Petress, "A System in Need of Repair: The College Work Study Program," *College Student Journal* 28, no. 1:116-118.

3. Ibid.

4. Thomas V. DiBacco, "Colleges Should Restrict the Kinds of On-Campus Jobs that Students Are Permitted to Hold," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (July 8, 1987):38-39.

5. Petress, "A System in Need of Repair," 117.

6. Petress discusses the subject of employers who elect to "endure an ineffective work study student rather than suffer the agony of being placed on the discharging employer list" in "A System in Need of Repair," 118. ■

RARE BOOKS ONLINE:

WITCHCRAFT IN EUROPE AND AMERICA

Primary Source Media presents *Rare Books Online: Witchcraft in Europe and America*, edited by Mark Dimunation, Cornell University, and Edward Peters, The University of Pennsylvania.

On-line access to a selection of Cornell University's world-renowned witchcraft collection. Riveting primary source accounts of enchantment, sorcery and pandemonium presented in electronic text and digital facsimile images allows fast and easy entry into the historical, social, legal, religious and literary entities of witchcraft.

Explore the traditions, roots and rituals of modern European and American culture from the 16th to the 19th century.

Advanced technology and tiered pricing ensure that all institutions may encounter the rarest and most revealing monographs of their kind.

Choose your charm - ponder the pandemonium - perform a little magic

www.psmedia.com/witchcraft.htm



1.800.444.0799 • Fax 1.203.397.3893 • sales@psmedia.com • www.psmedia.com