

# COLLABORATION AND TEAMWORK



## Minnesota State Law Library Annual Report 2003

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The essence of exceptional library service comes from collaboration. Teamwork is essential in this time of budget cuts and limited resources. In order to serve library patrons in the best ways possible, the Minnesota State Law Library (MSLL) collaborates with the judiciary, the legal community, the broader library community, and the general public.

## **Within the Judicial Branch**

### **❖ Getting the Word Out**

It continues to be vital to get the word out about the work of the Library. In 2003, a Library page was added to the court's intranet (CourtNet) describing services for the judicial branch, how to access online materials and how to contact the Library. The Library's goal is that judicial employees throughout the state will begin their legal research projects with CourtNet. Featured on the Library's CourtNet page is a new table of contents service (managed by Debbie Kitmann). Judicial branch employees can request scanned images of the most recent table of contents to law reviews. Regular articles in the *Court Communicator*, tutorials offered to MJC employees, Power-Point introductions to the Library for all new judicial employees, and regular publications (including "cheat sheets" for common questions) all form a communication plan to inform our primary users about the Library and its many services.

### **❖ Meeting Our Users in Focus Groups**

As the judicial branch has been undergoing enormous change due in part to the unification of the court system, departments within the Minnesota Judicial Center have done the same. In mid-2003, MSLL began a series of meetings with judicial departments to discuss how the Law Library can better serve its core clientele. MSLL met with the Court Information Office and the Supreme Court Commissioner's Office and discussed ways to partner with those departments.

### **❖ Providing More Online Services to the Judicial Family**

*LEXIS*, *RIA Online Tax Service*, *HeinOnline* (access to periodical literature and the *Federal Register*) and *Minnesota Judicial Directory Online* were added to the Library collection. Some of these products

are available to judges throughout the state; others are only available in the Law Library.

### ❖ **Honoring History**

Thanks to Washington County Court Administration, the Minnesota State Law Library acquired an August 13, 1849 copy of “Rules of



The 1849 Rules of Court.

Court” filed by the clerk “in the County of St. Croix...also as a Circuit and District Court of the United States.” The document is handwritten and signed by Harvey Wilson, Clerk. Minnesota became a territory in 1849 and these rules are a legacy of one of the first territorial courts that sat in Stillwater. This document is on display in the Library. Also, intern Pat Connelly provided reference and research assistance to Library patrons and

wrote a historical article for *Loquitur*, confirming that Louisa F. Goodwin was the first female state law librarian in the United States (Minnesota State Librarian, 1865-1867).

### ❖ **Assessing the Collection**

MSLL analyzed the citations listed in briefs submitted to the Minnesota appellate courts. A high percentage of cited items owned by the Minnesota State Law Library would indicate a high relevance of the Library’s collection. A sampling of 2003 briefs revealed that the Law Library owns 100% of primary law cited and 86% of non-primary titles. Many of the items not owned were particular editions of general dictionaries. The Law Library plans to repeat this study each year to make sure that the collection continues to meet the needs of the courts.

### ❖ **Proposing to Preserve the Work of the Courts**

A legal journal article, “On the Internet No One Knows You’re a Judge,” 4 *The Journal of Appellate Practice and Process* 417 (2002), prompted the Library to investigate how many times the appellate courts have cited websites in their opinions. MSLL’s study reveals that since 1997, 21 decisions have cited 29 distinct Internet sources. Of those sources, 44.8% are no longer available on the Internet. The Library proposed preserving the documents referred to in appellate

decisions in order to maintain a record of what the court was citing at the time of the written opinion.

## **In the Broader Legal Community**

### **❖ Shaping the General Rules of Practice**

The Library staff assists pro se patrons daily; consequently, the Library is interested in any effort to enhance service to pro se litigants. Recently proposed amendments to the “General Rules of Practice for the District Courts” addressed pro se programs, but failed to mention public law libraries as a resource for learning about the law. A concerned county law librarian contacted the State Law Library about this oversight, and the State Law Librarian drew upon a network of law librarians, asking them to submit suggested language to include public law libraries in the rules. As a result, the newly adopted “General Rules of Practice for the District Courts” (Rule 110.04) states:

#### **110.04. Role of Self-Help Personnel.**

**(a) Required Acts.** Self-Help Personnel shall

(1) Educate Self-Represented Litigants about available pro bono legal services, low cost legal services, legal aid programs, lawyer referral services and legal resources provided by state and local law libraries...

### **❖ Participating in the Minnesota State Bar Association Pro Se Committee**

Daniel Lunde and Karen Westwood have joined the Minnesota State Bar Association [Pro Se Implementation Committee](#), which is exploring the concept of “unbundled legal services.” In unbundling, only specifically agreed upon services are provided by the attorney, and certain services - such as legal research - may not be provided. If unbundling is adopted by practicing attorneys in Minnesota, law libraries will see an even greater increase in pro se patrons. Therefore, the Law Library is taking a leadership role in the exploration of this concept.

### **❖ Minnesota State Bar Association Funding**

The Library website includes a searchable database of legal issues presented in Minnesota appellate briefs. For the second straight year, the MSBA has provided funds to help pay student employee Dia Lor

to produce this database. [“Issues in Minnesota Briefs”](#) is one of the most visited pages on the Library website.

### ❖ **Teaching and Participating**

State Law Librarian, Barbara Golden, participated in two legal research CLEs for the Hennepin County Bar Association and attended the Minnesota Association for Court Management Winter Conference. The Library participated in the Hennepin County Urban Youth program in its final year, and our Urban Youth intern, Sia Moua, enthusiastically contributed to the Library’s programs during the summer. Anna Cherry and Susan Larson provided training on Internet legal research to attendees of the National Administrative Hearing Officials National Conference in Minneapolis. The presentation was well received and showed not only what is available on the Internet, but also demonstrated the importance of law librarians to legal research.



Sia Moua with her UYII Outstanding Intern of the Year award.

## **Within the Library**

### ❖ **Personnel**

Daniel Lunde returned to the Library as Head of Library Development and Special Projects after an extended leave of absence. Intern Maryse Curie worked on the Library’s collection development plan and other projects. In the Law Library Service to Prisoners program interns Sherri Huppert, Daniel Walsh and Jolien Munsterhuis responded to inmate requests and Joan Overgard volunteered as a photocopy assistant. Charles Ballenger and Jan Watson retired after many years of service to MSLL. Fortunately for the Library, however, Jan Watson has agreed to continue providing accounting support on a part-time basis. Alison Doane received a Master in Library and Information Science degree from Dominican University/The College of St. Catherine. Bill Erlandsen celebrated fifteen years of employment as the Library’s shelver.

### ❖ **Staff Training**

The purchase of many new online resources prompted a series of training sessions for Library staff. These sessions were so popular that training has continued and expanded to cover older print materials, as well as reference desk technique and phone skills. A fully trained and informed staff is essential to providing quality library services to a diverse group of patrons.

### ❖ **Assessing Library Policies and Procedures**

In Barbara Golden's first full year as State Law Librarian, the Library began a systematic review of policies and procedures. With the information explosion created by the Internet, patrons' needs and expectations have radically changed. The policy review and training sessions provide an opportunity to evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of library policy decisions. The Library [mission statement](#) and [electronic resources policy](#) were revised, as well as others.

## **In the Broader Library Community**

### ❖ **Supporting County Law Libraries**



County Law Library managers at the Annual Workshop. In the front row are MSLL librarians Karen Westwood, Barb Golden, and Susan Larson. (Photo: Judy Flader)

At the Annual Workshop for County Law Library Managers in November 2003, managers from around the state met to discuss online legal research subscriptions and pricing, using the new online library catalog, and promoting county law libraries. The Library designated a password-protected portion of its website for the County Law Library Program, and the *Manual for County Law Library Managers* was published online for the first time.

### ❖ **Participation and Leadership Role in Statewide Library System**

The Law Library implemented MnPALS, a new integrated online library system in 2003. Chosen as a beta site, the Library represents the interests of state government agency libraries within the statewide network. The Law Library and the other beta sites "switched to production" on August 18. MSLL provided leadership in helping other

libraries change over to the new system, which will include all types of libraries by the time it is fully operational. Dennis Skrade, Robin Horowitz, Cathleen Knoke and Laurel Stiebler reorganized the workflow in the processing and cataloging of library materials as a result of the new system.

#### ❖ **Connecting with Public Libraries**

Karen Westwood led an effort of the Minnesota Association of Law Libraries (MALL) to obtain grant funding for a series of legal reference workshops to be given at public libraries throughout Minnesota in 2004. In addition to securing the grant funding, she worked on developing curriculum for the workshops. Karen and Susan Larson traveled to Slayton and Mankato (in the Fifth Judicial District) to present a workshop to public librarians on recommended legal titles for public library collections.

#### ❖ **Hosting Colleagues**

The Library alternately hosted monthly educational exchanges with the staff of the Legislative Reference Library to discuss current library issues of mutual interest. The Library also held a tea for visiting Moldovan librarians in May. Supreme Court Justice Helen Meyer welcomed the group, and we introduced them to our beautiful space and acclaimed services. The Library hosted a reception for library school and law school students as part of a MALL series of events designed to introduce students to the field of law librarianship.

#### ❖ **Contributing to the Profession**

Barbara Golden taught a graduate legal research course at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the College of St. Catherine during fall semester. She also taught an evening class on Minnesota legal research at the MALL Legal Research Institute in March. Karen Westwood continued on the MALL Executive Board as President and Past President. Other staff served on committees in MALL, the Capitol Area Libraries Consortium, the American Association of Law Libraries, MnLINK and MnPALS. Several Library staff members monitor professional listservs to keep informed of library trends and issues, as well as to stay in touch with other librarians.

## In the Public Arena

### ❖ **Providing Reference Service in Cyberspace**

E-mail reference questions increased dramatically in the past year after the Library moved the link for the service to the top of the homepage. In 2002, 177 queries were received by e-mail. That number jumped to 491 in 2003. Questions ran the gamut from patrons trying to locate a Minnesota statute on the Internet, to those wanting to untangle complicated legal problems. E-reference questions are typically answered within one business day and are a primary way of serving the general public.

WOW. I am most impressed! I really didn't expect to hear from you so soon, much less with the 1917 Act as an attachment itself. TREMENDOUS THANKS!

*Patron comment,  
August 4, 2003*

### ❖ **Expanding the Library Catalog**

Dennis Skrade, Robin Horowitz, and Laurel Stiebler embarked on a project to link the records of print primary law resources in the online catalog to the official primary law websites for each state. Links have been created for statutes, administrative law, and court rules (if available) for Wisconsin, North and South Dakota, Michigan and Iowa. This type of cataloging allows patrons to access primary law directly on their computers without having to visit the Library. Work will continue on this project during 2004.

### ❖ **Improving the Library Website**

One of the most important and visible outreach efforts is the Library website, especially the "Opinions of the Minnesota State Appellate Courts Archive." The Library website is constantly monitored and adapted to assure accurate, current and vital links and services to our users. Anna Cherry and Barbara Golden consolidated web pages, added a [self-help page](#) and rearranged the [homepage](#). The website averaged nearly 13,000 unique visitors each month. The archived opinions segment accounts for 83% of the searches and hits on the website.



### ❖ **Directing “EVERYBODY WINS!” Reading Program**

The Minnesota State Law Library sponsored judicial involvement with the “EVERYBODY WINS!” reading program for the 8<sup>th</sup> straight year. Susan Larson and Laurel Stiebler recruited over 100 volunteers from the Judicial Center, Federal Courts, the Attorney General’s Office, Education Minnesota, the Department of Transportation, Blue Cross/Blue Shield and the Worker’s Compensation Court of Appeals. Volunteers spend their lunchtime each Tuesday reading to third grade students at [Benjamin E. Mays Magnet School](#) in St. Paul. The program instills the pleasures of reading and provides the students with an adult role model.

### ❖ **Assisting Inmates**

Law Library Service to Prisoners (LLSP) continued its work in accordance with an agreement with the Minnesota Department of Corrections. LLSP librarians Timothy H. Baland, Stephanie Thorson and Susan Trombly noticed increasing demands for service as the Ombudsman for Corrections, Legal Assistance to Minnesota Prisoners and Offices of the State and District Public Defenders suffered budget cuts or were eliminated entirely. The Law Library continues to be committed to this unique program of providing legal reference assistance to adults incarcerated in Minnesota.

## **Collaborating for the Common Good**

By reaching out and reaching within to promote and improve services, the Minnesota State Law Library continues a long library tradition. It is by communicating with others that the Library strengthens its own programs. This conscious effort in 2003 to work within the judicial branch, the legal community, the State Law Library itself, the library community and the public arena has yielded new ideas and opportunities, new efficiencies and resource sharing, and new enthusiasm for the important work of the Minnesota State Law Library.

[Library department statistics](#)

# Minnesota State Law Library Department Statistics 2003

## Website Statistics

Average number of search queries through <http://search.state.mn.us/lawlibrary/> 12417

Average Visits\* per Month 25282

Average Unique Visitors per Month 12963

Average Visits per Month in Most Popular Directory: Appellate Court Opinions Archive at <http://www.lawlibrary.state.mn.us/archive/> 13503

Most Popular Pages: Average Visits per Month:

Homepage at <http://www.lawlibrary.state.mn.us/> 3708

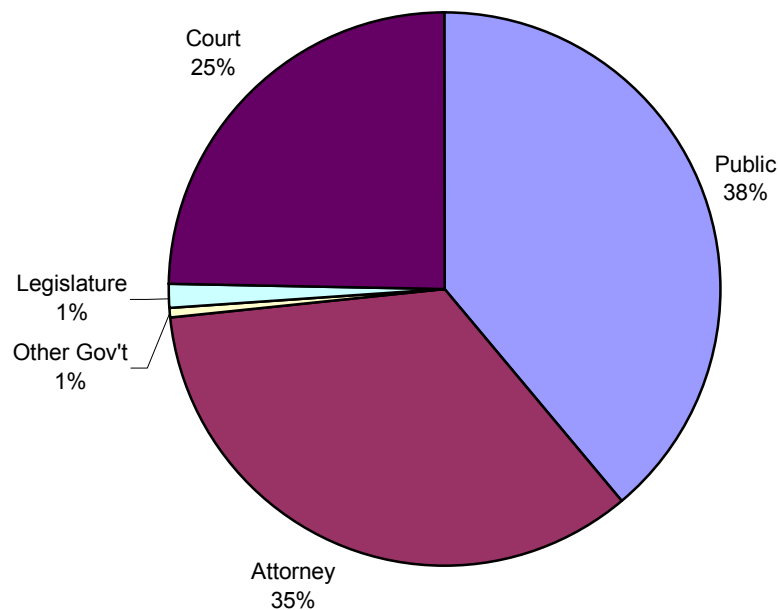
Internet Legal Resources at <http://www.lawlibrary.state.mn.us/mnlr.html> 1771

Ordinances at <http://www.lawlibrary.state.mn.us/ordinance.html> 989

\*Visits—A visit is a series of actions that begins when a visitor views their first page from the server and ends when the visitor leaves the site or remains idle beyond the time limit. The default idle-time limit is thirty minutes.

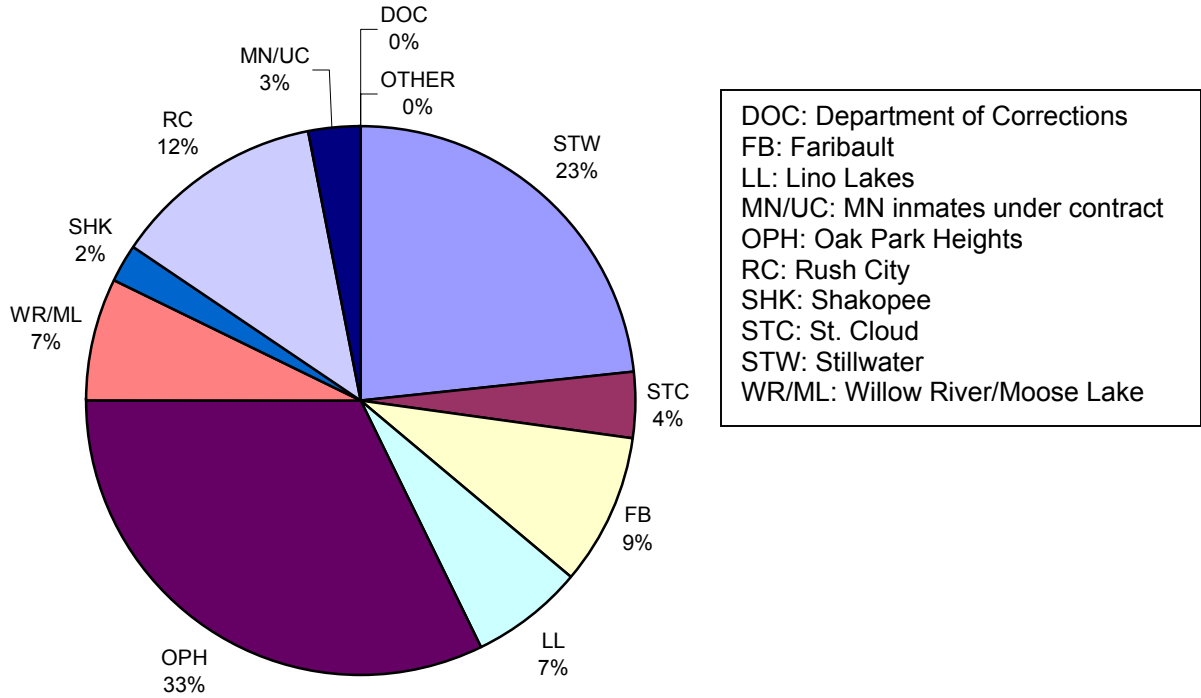
## Public Services Statistics

Patron Categories in 2003

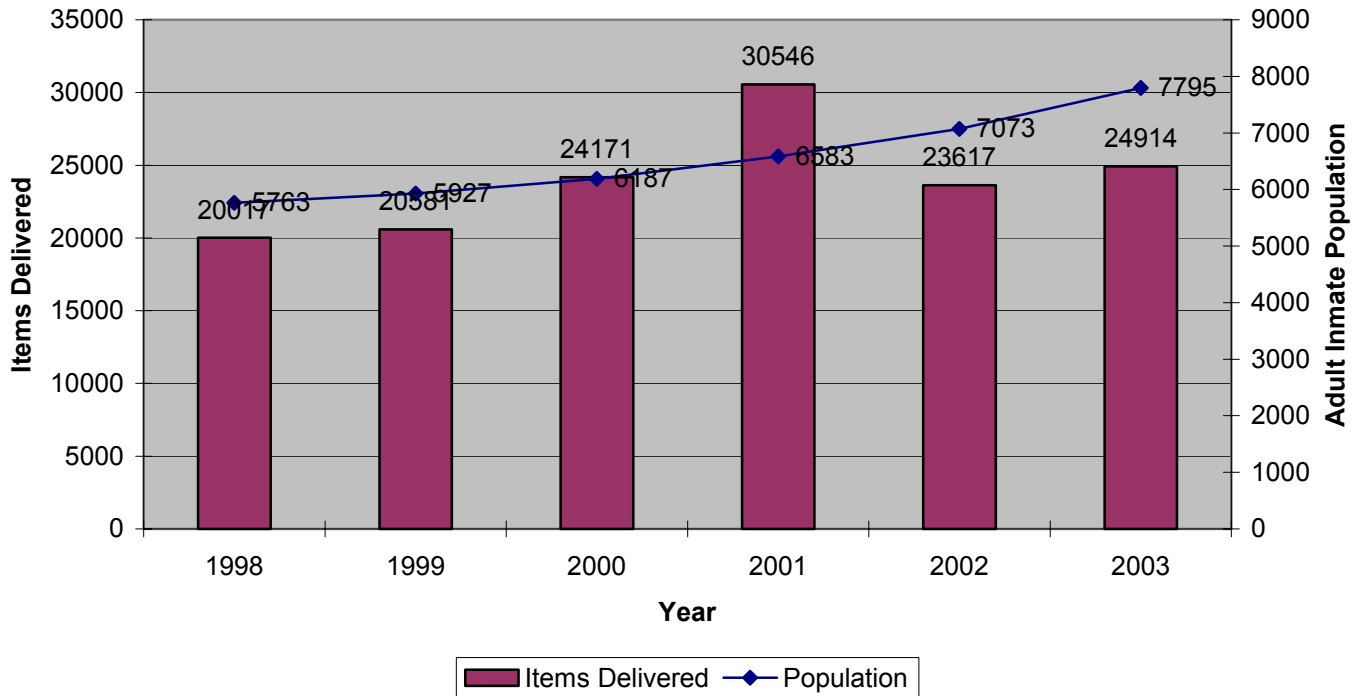


# Law Library Service to Prisoners Statistics

## 2003 Distribution by Institution



## 1998 - 2003 Items Delivered to Population Comparison



# Technical Services Statistics

## Volumes Added

Continuations	3272
Bindery	422
Briefs	66
Transcripts	1918
New Titles	350
Volumes Withdrawn	472
<b>TOTAL VOLUMES ADDED</b>	<b>6028</b>

## Serials Received

Continuations	522
Subscriptions	385
Standing Orders	45
Loose-leafs	45
Reporters	89
Session Laws	21
<b>TOTAL SERIALS</b>	<b>1107</b>

## Microfiche Added

GPO	4199
Briefs	855
General	4593
MnDOCS	332
<b>TOTAL MICROFICHE</b>	<b>9979</b>

## Exchanges

Requests Received	75
Items Sent	59
Items Requested by MSL	12
Items Received by MSL	3

## GPO Shipments

Electronic Format*	83
Microfiche	4199
Documents	1917
CALCO	716
<b>TOTAL GPO</b>	<b>6915</b>

## Briefs

Bound Volumes Added	66
Microfiche Produced	855
Briefs Processed**	1705

## New Titles Cataloged

Counties	997
MSL	367

## Catalog Edits

Online Catalog Edits	9807
MULS Records	2
Hotlinks Added	336

## PHYSICAL GROWTH

### Depository Collection

Paper	1917
Microfiche	4199
Electronic Format*	83

### General Collection

Paper	6028
Microfiche	5448
Electronic Format*	231

## Total Collection Growth

Paper	7945
<i>Volumes Withdrawn</i>	472
<b>Net paper growth</b>	<b>7473</b>
<b>Microfiche</b>	<b>9647</b>
<b>Electronic Format*</b>	<b>314</b>

\*Includes websites and CD-ROMs.

\*\*Includes briefs sets for unpublished opinions.