**TO:** PLA Board of Directors

**RE:** PLA Initiatives Combined Report

**DATE:** October 18, 2022

**ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:**Information

**ACTION REQUESTED BY:**N/A

**DRAFT OF MOTION:**N/A

**PROJECT OUTCOME**

*Submitted by Sara Goek, Project Manager, Data and Research*

427 new users signed into Project Outcome between June 8 and October 11, 2022. The PLA and ACRL continue to work together to maximize impact and share updates with users. In August, PLA and ACRL hosted a joint webinar to introduce new users to Project Outcome. It sold out with 999 registrants and 395 live attendees. PLA staff also presented on a panel on “Measuring Your Library’s Impact with Project Outcome” at the Ohio Library Council Convention in October 2022. Work is still ongoing to address underlying problems with the server configuration. A new vendor has taken on both the server reconfiguration project and regular maintenance work going forward. This is a top priority to improve site performance and avoid service interruptions.

A new [resource guide](http://americanlibraryassociation.informz.net/z/cjUucD9taT0xMDc3OTQ5MyZwPTEmdT0xMTE5ODIxOTYzJmxpPTk3NjQ1Njcz/index.html) and [case study](http://americanlibraryassociation.informz.net/z/cjUucD9taT0xMDc3OTQ5MyZwPTEmdT0xMTE5ODIxOTYzJmxpPTk3NjQ1Njc0/index.html) (log in required to access) also are now available from [Project Outcome](http://americanlibraryassociation.informz.net/z/cjUucD9taT0xMDc3OTQ5MyZwPTEmdT0xMTE5ODIxOTYzJmxpPTk3NjQ1Njc1/index.html) to help libraries effectively measure the impact of small business programs. The guide covers using the Project Outcome Economic Development survey and other monitoring and evaluation tools developed by [ALA's Libraries Build Business](http://americanlibraryassociation.informz.net/z/cjUucD9taT0xMDc3OTQ5MyZwPTEmdT0xMTE5ODIxOTYzJmxpPTk3NjQ1Njcy/index.html) (LBB) program. In the case study, Topsham Public Library, Maine, reflects on advancing their work supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs and developing the Employment and Business Entrepreneur Center.

Over the coming two years, Project Outcome data and staff will be central to a [new project](https://www.imls.gov/grants/awarded/lg-252313-ols-22) led by the [Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR)](https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/web/pages/). Funded under the National Leadership Grants for Libraries program from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), this effort will aggregate and disseminate a one-of-a-kind dataset documenting public library programming outcomes and providing related training and resources to improve data literacy in the library field. This effort is a collaborative venture between ICPSR, PLA, the University of Missouri’s [School of Information Science and Learning Technologies](https://education.missouri.edu/information-science-learning-technologies/), and the [Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services](https://www.abos-outreach.com/).

**BENCHMARK & ANNUAL TOPICAL SURVEYS**

*Submitted by Sara Goek, Project Manager, Data and Research*

Benchmark: Library Metrics and Trends (librarybenchmark.org) launched in October 2021. It provides both a platform for administration of our annual topical surveys as well as dashboards where users can access and visualize data for peer comparisons. All libraries have free access that allows them to complete surveys, see their past survey responses, access resources, and view a summary page with selected visualizations. Subscribers have access to additional features including a robust set of interactive data dashboards, a custom report builder, and the ability to create custom peer groups. 160 public libraries have active subscriptions as of October 11, 2022. A primary focus of our work in FY23 will be on marketing and promoting subscriptions.

In August 2022, PLA published a report on the findings of the 2021 Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey. It updates information on beginning librarian and library director salaries; documents traditional and emerging staff roles; explores staff diversity, recruitment, and retention efforts; and captures information about public library equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) goals and activities. The report is freely available on the [PLA website](https://www.ala.org/pla/data/plasurveys). A free webinar on the survey results drew 723 registrants and had 334 live attendees.

In fall 2022, PLA is administering the third in our new series of topical surveys, the Public Library Services for Strong Communities Survey. Developed in conjunction with the Measurement, Evaluation, and Assessment Committee, the survey focuses on how libraries utilize their unique programs, services, partnerships, and facilities to support community needs. The survey opened on September 16 and remains open through December 10, 2022. All US public libraries (administrative entities) are invited to participate. In the first three weeks, the survey has already received 335 responses.

**PLA ONLINE LEARNING**

*Submitted by Angela Maycock, Manager of Continuing Education (CE)*

Since our last CE update to the Board in June 2022, PLA has offered the following free webinars:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Title** | **Date** | **Registration** | **Attendance** |
| Fundamentals of Social Emotional Learning (SEL Series) | October 11, 2022 | 549 | 207 |
| Public Library Staff and Diversity: Results from PLA’s 2021 Survey | October 4, 2022 | 723 | 334 |
| Rainbow Connections: Celebrating LGBTQ+ Kids and Allies in Your Community and Beyond | September 28, 2022 | 368 | 142 |
|   |  | **1,640** | **683** |

PLA also offered the following three paid webinars:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Title** | **Date** | **Registration** | **Attendance** |
| Advancing Access for Library Customers with Sensory Needs | September 7, 2022 | 214 | 152 |
| Brave Voices, Brave Choices | July 27, 2022 | 83 | 70 |
| Libraries as Climate Resilience Hubs: Working With Your Community to Take Action to Build Resilience | July 13, 2022 | 71 | 60 |
|   |   | **368** | **282** |
|  |  |  |  |  |

These three paid webinars generated $23,346 in total revenue, with all registration and payment processed through the ALA eLearning site.

PLA’s next call for webinar proposals will close on November 30. The PLA Continuing Education Advisory Group will review the proposals received by the deadline, and those accepted will be scheduled as paid webinars for February – June 2023.

**SOCIAL WORK TASK FORCE**

*Submitted by Kathleen Hughes, Manager Publications*

As of 2022 ALA Annual Conference, the PLA Social Work Task Force was sunset, with an plan to toward reformulating the group into a new type of PLA Working Group. Prior to that, in 2022, the group published a book, “A Trauma-Informed Framework for Supporting Patrons, which now has sold 600 copies. The book explores Trauma-Informed concepts and allows readers to work through various scenarios using social worker tried and tested techniques. In addition to authoring this book, the group produced a PLA 2022 preconference program entitled “Social Work-Inspired Best Practices to Support Patrons” (<https://www.placonference.org/preconferences.cfm>). In addition, they facilitated conversations in the PLA Social Work Interest Group, guested on the FYI Podcast, and contributed to *Public Libraries* Online.

We are now working with some members of the original group and new members to define and organize the new Social Work Working Group. This year we plan to develop CE based on the “Trauma-Informed” book and begin work around de-escalation

**PROGRAMMING INITIATIVES & INCENTIVES**

*Submitted by Mary-Clare Bietila,* Program Manager, Programming Initiatives

AT&T is currently PLA’s primary partner in developing its Digital Learn PLA Digital Literacy Workshop Incentive, supported by AT&T:

The Digital Literacy Workshop Incentive program supports libraries in providing the necessary funds to conduct DigitaLearn workshops that build basic digital literacy skills and confidence using technology. Initially, PLA member volunteers selected 60 libraries to be part of the program. After seeing the large pool of applicants, and profound need, AT&T expanded their support with an additional gift of over one million dollars, and our cohort now includes 153 libraries.

Beginning in August, PLA has been engaged in onboarding the cohort. Much of our staff has been supporting this large program from creating marketing templates, to training the cohort on evaluation tools and proving one on one service for individual libraries planning their workshops. At this time libraries are beginning to host virtual and in person workshops using the updated DigitalLearn materials. This program will be ongoing and conclude in April of 2023.

Digital Connections, supported by AT&T and Common-Sense Education:

PLA collaborated with AT&T and Common Sense Education to create a video series for 5-8th graders on topics related to being safe, caring and respectful online. For the 7-video series, “Digital Connections,” PLA developed a guide for librarians to use in conducting workshops with the videos. The next step of this project is to launch an incentive program to fund a small group of libraries in leading these workshops for tweens. The videos and guide will be a part of DigitalLearn once complete.

Digital Navigators Research, supported by AT&T:

With the support of AT&T PLA conducted research on public libraries and Digital Navigators. Urban Libraries defines Digital Navigators as “individuals who are positioned to provide phone-based (or in person) support to community members for issues related to the full spectrum of digital needs, including home connectivity, tech support, skill building, and device access. Digital Navigators can be either volunteers or professionals” A final draft of the report along with recommendations on best practices will be available by the end of 2022.

ACP DigitalLearn Module, supported by AT&T:

AT&T has made a commitment of $250,000 to fund a new self-paced DigitalLearn module which will support folks applying for The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). This work is in the early stages.