

ILA's Vision of Idaho Libraries

Libraries exist for the public good. They promote reading and literacy, contribute to higher productivity of individuals and of society, and are a basic element of a democratic society.

In our vision of the future, a library is a dynamic entity with the mission of connecting people with the information they want or need. Local, state, and federal governments share the responsibility for funding library services, thereby contributing to a more responsible citizenry and a better quality of life for the individual. Because of broad-based government support, libraries are gateways to sources of information beyond their walls, and their resources are readily shared across jurisdictional boundaries.

The ideal library is based on a high degree of local responsibility, support, and self sufficiency. Each library defines its own roles based on dynamic community and clientele needs within an increasingly complex and diverse society. The librarian and governing body fulfill their ethical and legal responsibilities to provide educated staff who promote and facilitate the search for information and to ensure that the user has optimal access to diverse ideas, viewpoints, and expressions.

11-02

Idaho Library Association



Who do librarians ask when they have a question?

● Idaho Library Association
www.idaholibraries.org

Idaho Library Association

The Idaho Library Association helps libraries leverage their tax dollars to better serve Idaho citizens. We have over 500 members representing libraries of all sizes in all areas of the state.

Educating the Library Community

When you have a question about anything, you can ask a librarian. But who do librarians ask when they have a question?

That's where the ILA comes in. We provide continuing education opportunities for trustees and master's-level accredited librarians to library aides, from 20-year veterans to rookies and everyone in between.

Each year, we sponsor an annual conference, regional conferences, and workshops designed to help Idaho's librarians create better libraries.



Our quarterly electronic newsletter *Idaho Librarian* discusses topics of interest to the library community and includes Idaho-related book reviews. We also provide members access to our password-protected membership directory so that they can network with other librarians.

In addition, the ILA awards scholarships and grants, including the annual \$500 Gard Hanks scholarship, to help librarians and their staff further their education.

ILA Services

Promoting Literacy, Intellectual Freedom, and Access for All

The ILA works closely with Idaho's legislators to develop legislation and promote literacy and free access to information. For example, in 1998 we successfully encouraged state funding of the LiLI databases, which provide all Idaho citizens with free online access to thousands of full-length magazine, newspaper, and reference articles. And in 1996, we joined with like-minded politicians against the 1% initiative.

On a local level, ILA members support a variety of child, adult, and family literacy programs. And we work hard to make sure that every Idahoan has access to the full range of information available in print and electronically.



Linking Libraries Together

Libraries have limited resources. And those in small communities are particularly challenged to make the most of their limited funds.

One way the ILA helps is to support efforts to leverage tax dollars by linking school, college, university, and public libraries together into consortia and networks. These libraries cooperate to share collections through joint catalogs and delivery systems. And we're always looking for new ways that our members can work together to share resources and make our tax dollars go farther.



Recognizing Excellence

To recognize those who have made outstanding contributions to Idaho's literary community, the ILA hands out several annual awards, including Idaho Book of the Year, Legislator of the Year, Librarian of the Year, Trustee of the Year, Public Library of the Year, and the Service to Libraries Award.

Visiting Today's Idaho Libraries

If you haven't been to a library lately, you might be surprised to realize that today's Idaho libraries are much more than a place to house books. Libraries are Idaho's information headquarters, making printed materials, computer resources, recordings, and other resources available both inside and outside our buildings. We serve as community centers, offering programs that enrich the lives and provide education for adults and children. And we contribute to our communities' economic development by attracting new businesses and homeowners and encouraging lifelong learning. Idaho's libraries fall into four main groups: academic libraries serving colleges and universities, school libraries serving elementary and secondary students, public libraries serving the community at large, and special libraries serving hospitals, corporations, and other entities. The ILA represents all four groups.



While some special libraries receive financial support from their parent organizations, the bulk of the funds for Idaho's libraries comes from tax dollars (primarily property taxes) and grants from foundations and friends of libraries. Our members strive to be sensitive to the needs of their communities and fiscally responsible with taxpayer resources.

The ILA is here to support all of Idaho's libraries in their efforts to make the best use their funds and to open up the world of knowledge for all Idaho citizens.



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