Illinois Heartland Library System

MARCH 2025

DIRECTOR & STAFF ACTIVITY REPORT

Illinois Heartland Library System
IMAGINING TOMORROW - DELIVERING POSSIBILITIES TODAY

ADMINISTRATION STAFF ACTIVITIES

Submitted by Leslie Bednar, Executive Director	*Report Month:* January–March 2025
Prepared by Dr. Carol Hogan-Downey, Communications & Advocacy Administrator	

Department Activity & Accomplishment Highlights

Op. Plan Objvs(s)	Activity	Description of Purpose & Progress/Results
3.M3, 4.M4, 5.A13	**Marketing Microgrant**: Judged anonymized applications (5 total), announced winners (2 total) at Member Day, arranged award checks with Finance ($600 total), and met with one winner for a consultation.	The FY2025 cycle is complete. Winners have received their awards--$200 for Fairview Heights PL & $400 for Mississippi Valley PL. The FY2026 grant is already funded. Our focus has shifted to raising more funds via the IHLS Store for FY2027.This grant uses the money raised to help libraries with little to no outreach/marketing funds complete innovative marketing or outreach projects.
1.A1, 5.A13, 6.A14	**Advocacy & Crisis Communications:** Created new schools-focused infographic using the SHARE Dashboards & presented it to the Board; handled messaging to staff and members about the threat to IMLS funding; began collaborations with colleagues at IHLS & statewide on advocating to legislators.	The new SHARE infographic will help school libraries (as well as others who adapt it) demonstrate their ROI to their communities and legislators. Customization is very quick and easy with the SHARE dashboard. The graphic itself has not been shared with members due to MarCom capacity issues. IMLS advocacy is just beginning.
1.A1, 4.A12, 4.RS4, 5.D5	**AMHS Naming Contest Support:** Collaborated with Operations to plan, promote, and run the AMHS Naming Contest with staff & members.	The contest is meant to help members and staff feel even more included in the AMHS project. Members suggested names for round 1, and staff narrowed the suggestions down to 10 for round 2. The final round, when members select the three winning names, starts April 11. The names will be revealed at the final ribbon-cutting event, and the members who suggested them will receive small prizes.
1.A1, 3.A9,	**iLEAD Support:** Designed & ordered a new postcard/card to promote iLEAD's board orientation sessions; created & sent targeted promotional emails.	This campaign is ongoing. These sessions help introduce new trustees to the iLEAD portal & their legal responsibilities from the start. Promotion is essential for wide adoption.
1.A1, 2.A5, 2.A6	**Board Nominations & Elections Support:** Engaged in usual promotions & ballot/form building; continued work on a new concerted & targeted trustee representative recruitment effort, which includes printed letters & flyers sent to member libraries for inclusion in board packets, increased targeted emails, & an engaging social media video.	Board nominations & elections require dedicated promotional efforts to ensure a ballot full of qualified nominees & robust participation in the voting process. This year posed a special challenge with four openings in our hardest-to-recruit category: trustee representatives. Thus we knew we'd need to carefully strategize to fill the ballot. Our efforts seem to have paid off with the maximum number of trustee representative nominees on our ballot!

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HUMAN RESOURCES STAFF ACTIVITIES

Submitted by Jill Trevino

Report Month:
January – March FY2025

Prepared by **submitter**

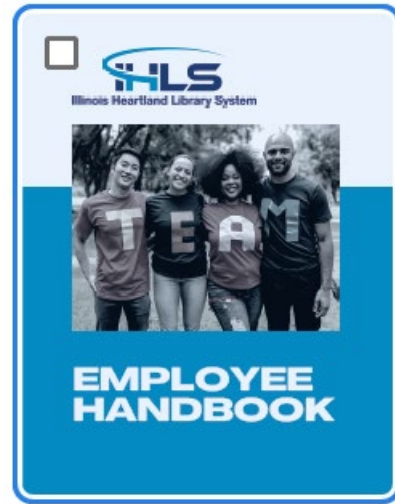## Department Activity & Accomplishment Highlights

Op. Plan Objvs(s)	Activity	Description of Purpose & Progress/Results
1.A3	HR consulting for member libraries.	Provided frequent consultation to several libraries within the quarter. This included addressing immediate needs through email, and phone calls. These efforts assist our members in navigating HR matters effectively and enhancing staff support.
1.M1	Share HR knowledge with members by presenting in a joint presentation with IHLS and RAILS members. The SHARE Director and the Human Resources Director presented a live version of the joint presentation they presented at ILA at the annual conference titled Shining a Light on Managing Employees.	Libraries throughout Illinois gained benefits from increased efficiency, stronger teamwork, and enhanced organizational effectiveness due to well-managed and engaged employees.
2.A7	Streamline HR processes within Paylocity for a time and cost savings measure.	For the next fiscal year, we evaluated and negotiated pricing and process efficiency by integrating our performance appraisal system within Paylocity, saving processing time and money.
4.A12	Enhance Organizational Culture by providing policies and procedures through an updated legally compliant Employee Handbook.	The new Employee Handbook was rolled out via a webinar that was led by the Human Resources Director to discuss new Employee Handbook changes and answer any questions.
2.A7	Held an Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF)webinar for all employees to learn more about the pension benefits and to ask questions.	Implemented IMRF training for all employees.

"Shining a Light on Managing Challenging Employees"

IHLS Employee Handbook 2025 cover page

IMRF Webinar presented to staff on February 5, 2025, by an IMRF Representative.

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STAFF ACTIVITIES

Submitted by Troy Brown

Report Month
January-March 2025

Prepared by submitter

Department Activity & Accomplishment Highlights

Op. Plan Objvs(s)	Activity	Description of Purpose & Progress/Results
3.M3	Attend IUG conference	Select IT staff attended the Innovative User's Group (IUG) conference. This continuing education opportunity proves to be a valuable use of time, year after year. IHLS/SHARE staff presented at the conference this year, and other staff attended for the first time.
5.RS5	Cataloging Stats software developed for inhouse use	The development team at IHLS has created a new web-based program to help our catalogers keep track of their statistics. These statistics are used for various purposes, including billing libraries that utilize the express cataloging option.
2.RS2	Members Matter meetings	IT staff continue to help with our monthly Member's Matter events. This quarter, we updated the group on broadband initiatives and what we're doing statewide.
1.A1	Inform and actively promote statewide broadband opportunities to libraries.	Our cooperation with RAILS and CARLI continues this very large project. Grant applications are being prepared for the second wave of digital equity monies.

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Finance Department

Submitted by Rhonda Johnisee	*Report Month.* *January –* *March 2025*
Prepared by submitter	

Department Activity & Accomplishment Highlights

Op. Plan Objvs(s)	Activity	Description of Purpose & Progress/Results
6.A14	Completed FY2025 second-quarter grant reports.	The finance team completed the second-quarter OCLC grant report and finalized the financial sections of the CMC and iLEAD Library Trustee Training grant reports, successfully meeting the requirements for these grants with the Illinois State Library.
6.A14/ 6.RS6	Estimate the anticipated revenue and expenditure figures for the fiscal year 2025, providing insights into expected financial performance by year-end.	The Finance team conducted a thorough assessment of projected year-end outcomes for each fund, comparing budgeted figures to actual financial results for FY2025. This detailed analysis supports strategic planning by offering a clearer view of future cash balances, ensuring informed decision-making for upcoming fiscal periods.
6.A14/ 6.RS6	Updated the FY2026 budget in the OpenGov software.	The Finance team successfully updated the FY2026 budget within the OpenGov platform. This process involved collaborative discussions with budget managers, incorporating their insights and feedback to refine each budget proposal, ensuring a well-informed financial plan for the upcoming fiscal year.
6.A14/ 6.RS6	Created 2024 1099 tax forms for vendors and forwarded W-2 and 1095 to staff members.	Successfully processed and issued 1099 tax forms to vendors, ensuring compliance with reporting requirements. Additionally, W-2 and 1095 forms were delivered to staff members, providing them with the necessary documentation for tax filings and benefits reporting.
3.A10	Enhance member libraries' financial management practices through consulting hours.	Consulting hours were made available to assist member libraries in enhancing their financial management practices. During this period, one session was successfully booked, and an additional member sought guidance via email, demonstrating engagement with the service.

| 6.A14/ 6.RS6 | Accurately recorded accounting transactions and provided reports to the IHLS board and SHARE committee members. | The finance team ensured the accurate recording of financial transactions, enabling the preparation of monthly financial reports for the IHLS board, SHARE committees, and the Illinois State Library. These reports promote transparency and support informed decision-making. |

3rd Quarter Statistics for Accounting Transactions

Transaction Type	Items Count	Total Value
Accounts Receivable Cash Receipts	323	$1,523,422.88
Accounts Receivable Invoices Generated	508	$448,749.24
Accounts Payable Invoices Received	223	$1,007,271.68
Accounts Payable Payments Disbursed	223	$2,337,497.80

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SHARE STAFF ACTIVITIES

Submitted by Cassandra Thompson

Report Month:
January-March 2025

Prepared by submitter

Department Activity & Accomplishment Highlights

Op. Plan Objvs(s)	Activity	Description of Purpose & Progress/Results
2.RS2	Hosted the SHARE Annual Members' Group Meeting to discuss new or updated policies.	The vote was completed, with all proposals approved by members.
4.RS4	Coordinated travel and budget information for SHARE, as well as activities to plan for the FY2026 Operational Plan.	The team is well-prepared for projects in FY2026.
6.RS6	SHARE team members attended IUG in Denver, CO. They also presented on consortium management, showing off the resources we use to be successful.	This is an opportunity to learn Clarivate priorities, including upcoming development. It is also a great way to get additional training on our systems and network with vendors and others doing similar work.
2.RS2	SHARE E-Resources Committee and SHARE Finance & Policy Committee both met to review FY2026 plans.	Based on committee guidance, SHARE will plan to support CloudLibrary in FY2026, with an additional $50K in funds to reduce lengthy hold times.
5.RS5	In February, SHARE exhibited at IDEAcon.	This was a great way to promote SHARE to educators, including principals and technology coordinators, in addition to school librarians.
3.RS3	The SHARE Circulation Specialist taught 6 training sessions.	There was a total of 12 participants, for a total of 37.5 continuing education hours for our member libraries.
1.RS1	This quarter, patrons borrowed 79,682 owned items and 5,441 pay-per-use items from CloudLibrary.	The CloudLibrary collection now has 56,276 owned items and 238,092 pay-per-use items, for a total collection of 294,368 items.

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BIBLIOGRAPHIC SERVICES STAFF ACTIVITIES

Submitted by Jennifer Baugh

Report Month:
January-March 2025

Prepared by submitter

Department Activity & Accomplishment Highlights

Op. Plan Objvs(s)	Activity	Description of Purpose & Progress/Results
1.BA1	Provided high-quality cataloging services to SHARE member libraries through copy and original cataloging.	Cataloged 1,193 items and imported 1,173 bibliographic records through the Express Cataloging for SHARE member libraries.
1.BA1	Increased the usability of the SHARE database to ultimately increase resource sharing.	Continued regular database cleanup by updating authority headings, cleaning up item and bibliographic records, and merging duplicate records.
2.BA2	Provided continuing education opportunities related to barcoding and cataloging for our member libraries.	SHARE Bibliographic Services staff provided three sessions of SHARE Your Cataloging Questions, which had 53 live attendees. Three Cataloger's Training Sessions were held with 139 participants.
2.BA2	Provided continuing education opportunities related to barcoding and cataloging for our member libraries.	SHARE NACO Funnel participants contributed 13 headings to the LC Authority File after review by the in-house NACO Funnel Coordinators.
3.BA3	Provided continuing education opportunities related to barcoding and cataloging for our member libraries.	Barcoding Refresher Training has entered its second year. Thus far this fiscal year, 179 individuals have completed the training. Certification reminder emails are sent monthly as barcoders enter their certification window.
2.BA2	Provided one-on-one cataloging review and training to catalogers-in-training at SHARE member libraries.	Reviewed 653 records for catalogers-in-training at 12 member libraries. 354 of these bibliographic records were imported into the SHARE catalog.

Note: Strategic plan goals have been abbreviated in places.

CATALOGING MAINTENANCE CENTER STAFF ACTIVITIES

Submitted by Dr. Pamela Thomas

Report Month:
January-March 2025

Prepared by **submitter**

Department Activity & Accomplishment Highlights

Op. Plan Objvs(s)	Activity	Description of Purpose & Progress/Results
	Cataloged 1,357 items (including 700 originally cataloged and 657 records enhanced), and created 48 authority records (40 names, three series, four titles, and one subject). The PrairieCat database cleanup project continues, where 442 bibliographic records were created, enhanced, or merged. The Alma cleanup project for the Consortia of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI) continues, where 1,749 bibliographic records were deduped (merged), deleted, or edited. The RSA Backlog cleanup project continues: 253 bibliographic records were enhanced, merged, or originally cataloged. Bibliographic records in world languages were in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Latin, Polish, Russian, Scottish Gaelic, Spanish, and Swedish. Three hundred and nineteen records were merged in OCLC Connexion. Eleven name authority records were reviewed.	Through cataloging new items and providing database cleanup, CMC staff improve user access to bibliographic records.
1,3573.BA3	At the January Online with the CMC: Mapping Our History, 35 attended live: 16, IHLS, 7, SHARE, 12, RAILS. At the February Online with the CMC: Fabricated Realms: Exploring Textile Realia, 27 attended live: 14, IHLS, 7, SHARE, 6, RAILS. At the March Online with the CMC: Cataloging Equipment: Gadgets, Gears, and Gallimaufry, 55 attended live: 14, IHLS, 8, SHARE, 33, RAILS. Offered Focus on Cataloging Binge Boxes with 6 completers, Cataloging Basics with 26 completers, and Focus on Deriving a Record	Online with the CMC webinars focus on a cataloging-related topic and educating attendees. The cataloging training courses offer library staff the opportunity to gain new skills or reinforce existing skills and knowledge.

Note: Strategic plan goals have been abbreviated in places.

	with 25 completers.	
4.BA4	Uploaded 27 simple and 36 compound objects to CONTENTdm, and transcribed 12 documents. Held Digitization Days at Dupo Schools on March 22 with three donors, 115 items, and 191 files. The Williamsville Public Library and Museum and Galesburg Public Library Digitization Day collections were published in IDA.	Continued progress on adding new documents and collections to the Illinois Digital Archives (IDA) website, making these collections globally available and searchable.

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DELIVERY & FACILITIES STAFF ACTIVITIES

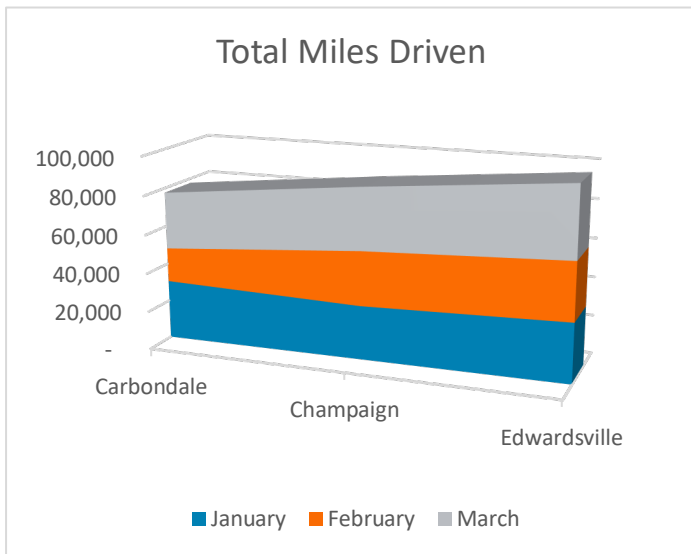Submitted by Colleen Dettenmeier

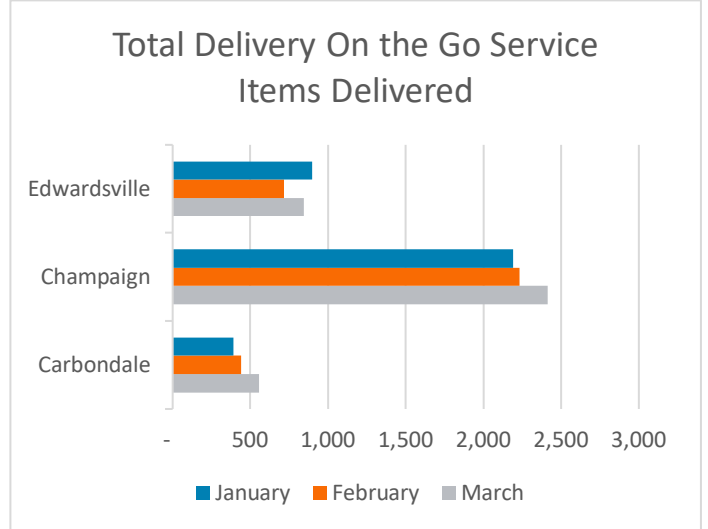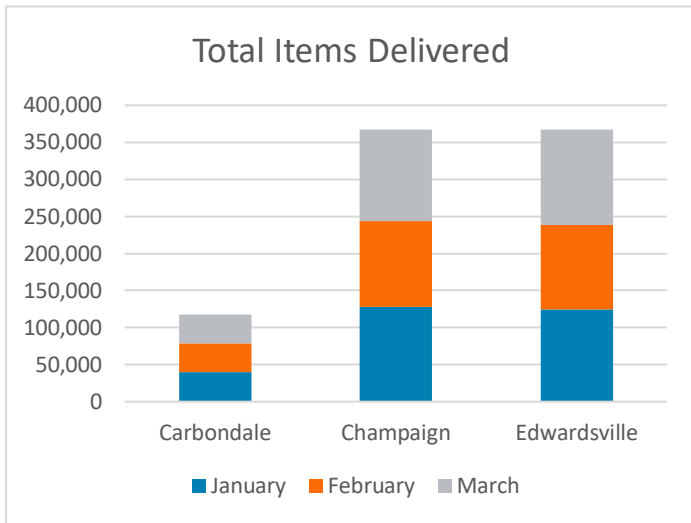*Report Month.*
January – March 2025

Prepared by **submitter.**

Department Activity & Accomplishment Highlights

Op. Plan Objvs(s)	Activity	Description of Purpose & Progress/Results
1.D1	Continue to provide access to 5-day-a-week delivery	IHLS staff provided contactless delivery of 852,291 items to all IHLS members. The same-day, same-route Delivery On the Go service (DOGs) was provided for 10,682 items.
1.D1	Continue to review, revise, and update standard operating procedures for Operations	IHLS staff developed and updated several standard operating procedures.
2.D2	Review/revise delivery pages on the IHLS website	IHLS staff submitted details for the Delivery webpages and Automated Materials Handling System updates.
1.D1	Continue the IHLS annual delivery stakeholder survey and evaluate the results	IHLS staff worked to prepare the annual Delivery survey.
3.D1	Continue to provide delivery staff with training on risk management and safety	IHLS staff worked to prepare the annual Safety handbook updates and staff training.
4.D4	Evaluate and implement recommendations for an Automatic Material Handling System (AMHS)	IHLS staff continued their work on barcode duplication initiatives, including in-house training on barcode duplication processes and facilitating the loan of barcode duplication equipment. We began the application of label protectors over top of the duplicate barcodes to address the issue of fading barcodes. IHLS staff continued collaboration with Lyngsoe staff to prepare for the AMHS installs. Edwardsville in April, Champaign in May, and Carbondale in June.
5.D5	Continue to monitor vehicle replacement availability	IHLS staff coordinated with Communication staff to finalize the van wrap details for the five replacement cargo vans. The wraps have been installed and the five vans have been picked up from the vendor and are in use. Four Enterprise-owned vans have been turned over to be sold, and one IHLS-owned van has been surplused and is ready for sale in April.
5.D5	Continue to optimize driver resources	IHLS staff continued development on the detailed driver's manual.

Delivery Statistics
January – March 2025

Total Items Delivered

Total Delivery On the Go Service Items Delivered

Total Miles Driven

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Membership Services

Submitted by Ellen Popit

Report Month:
January,
February and
March, 2025

Prepared by Submitter

Department Activity & Accomplishment Highlights

Op. Plan Objvs(s)	Activity	Description of Purpose & Progress/Results
1.M1	Additional episodes of the *Can't Shelve This* podcast were produced through the cooperative work of RAILS and IHLS.	This statewide outreach to the school library community is consistently gaining followers.
1.M1	Several Members of the Membership Team serve as part of the newly formed Crisis Communications Group.	Membership is a vital component of this group to ensure that the needs of our members are being accurately communicated.
2.M2	Membership Staff participated in the following networking groups: MEPL on January 16, 2025, Mascoutah Public Library Small Publics Meeting on January 31, 2025, Greenville Public Library	Networking Meetings allow system staff to reach out to specific groups of libraries or geographic sections of the system. They also allow system staff to share information, hear our members concerns, and field questions.
2.M2	Eight Directors Chats were held during the 3rd quarter of FY2025.	The weekly opportunity for public library directors to chat online consistently reaches a healthy group of participants who either engage in the chat or watch as the chat happens. It is a consistent time slot that can inform people or remind them of upcoming events.
3.M3	A meeting of the Continuing Education Advisory Committee was convened.	Input from our membership in planning continuing education offerings is crucial to the program's success.
3.M3	Membership Staff served on the conference committee for the Illinois Youth Services Institute, which was held in Bloomington, IL, from February 27 to 28.	A targeted conference such as ICCY provides a unique opportunity for front-line workers to network and learn together.

3.M3	Membership staff facilitated an HR training session on January 13 titled "Shining a Light on Managing Employees," presented by Jill Trevino and Cassandra Thompson. Staff also facilitated a SHARE dashboard overview presented by Stephanie Hunt on January 28.	Our continuing education program is significantly enhanced by using staff expertise to share knowledge and skills with our members.
3.M3	Professional Development was provided by staff from the IHLS Membership Team at the following events: Book Repair Workshops: March 11/Granite City March 18/Effingham March 25/Marion Presentations were done in conjunction with RAILS colleagues for: Indian Prairie School District (Virtual) Plainfield Schools (in person)	We are fortunate to have skilled professionals on the Membership team, and they are happy to contribute when asked to share their expertise with colleagues throughout the state.
3.M3	Work on the iLEAD Trustee Learning Portal (iLEAD) continues through the development of new modules, the updating of existing modules, and promotion of the project and training. Presentations to individual boards have been conducted virtually and in person. Currently, more than 400 learners use the portal.	This project's growth is observable as interest and usage continue to grow. It is seen as a valuable statewide tool.
3.M3	Member Day on February 12, 2025, was successful despite the unpredictable February weather. Hats off to the entire team that made it possible. Registration did increase by 1 attendee! Planning for Member Day 2026 began before our 2025 event was held.	This is a major annual event for IHLS. Switching to a virtual format enables us to bring speakers in regardless of location and offers libraries a very low-cost professional development opportunity. It also offers the often hard-to-get PDH hours for the school library community.
4.M4	13 Site Visits were done by Membership Staff. New library directors were visited, and there was a focus on visiting libraries in the far southern and southeastern parts of the system.	Nothing matches that time spent one-on-one during a site visit at a member library. The conversations are always fruitful and always worth the staff's time. There is also a real benefit for staff to experience the communities in which our libraries are located.
5.M5	Members of the Membership Team serve on diverse statewide and national committees. These include: Directors University and Directors University 2.0 Illinois School Library Workers Symposium Illinois Youth Services Planning Committee ILA's Public Policy and Nominating Committees L2 Governance Group ILA Reporter	Each of these involvements gives IHLS a seat at the table for developing library services in the state and the country.