Mid-Hudson Library System/Poughkeepsie Public Library District
Central Reference Service Plan - 2010 Results

Goal 1: Improve the ability of library staff to answer or refer reference requests
Intended Results:

1. Member library staff will be competent in core reference knowledge.
    - 2 evaluation tools developed and administered:
        - Information collected from 35 member library staff, representing each of the 5 counties, regarding *"What do you struggle with on a daily basis"*
        - Administered a Central Library Training Survey two times in 2010 (in Spring [94% of libraries participated] to establish a baseline, in Winter [95.5% of libraries participated] after related training was provided). The intent was to measure improvement in staff skills as result of the training presented on 3 topics, between the two survey periods. In each of the 3 areas it was shown that participants who attended training did increase their skill level.

2. Member library staff will have reference education opportunities provided locally.
    - # of sessions given: 3 topics ('Have a Great Day – Customer Service That Works for You & Your Patrons'; 'Helping Patrons Find the Answer Through great Reference Resources'; Helping Patrons Find Genealogy Information') with a total of 14 sessions held in locations all around the service area.
    - # of staff attending: 176
    - Workshop evaluations:
        - 97.3% of attendees said the workshop was worth their time.
        - Comments included: *"Good refresher plus new ideas about customer service." "I realized how much I did not know!" "I feel confident now in dealing with people's questions."*

3. Virtual resources will be improved to provide comprehensive reference support.
    - BookLetters purchased system-wide to provide provides readers' advisory tool:
        - Featured in the online catalog, providing patrons with book suggestions in categories they choose.
        - Featured on over 50% of member library webpages.
    - 10 Pathfinders were developed:
        - Fitness and Exercise
        - Grants for Individuals
        - Grants (Funds) for Small Businesses
        - How to Write a Novel and Get It Published
        - Job Hunting & Career Exploration
        - Martin Luther King, Jr.
        - Resources for Choosing a College
        - Resources for Locating Mental Health Information
        - Resources for Small Businesses
        - Resources on Nutrition

4. System wide Electronic Database collection will be enhanced.

- Databases funded in part (through a cost share of CLDA/CBA and member library funds) or fully through CLDA/CBA funds:
  - Chilton's Auto Repair manuals: 3,705 uses in 2010.
  - HertiageQuest online: 73,279 searches in 2010.
  - GaleTesting & Education Reference Center: 3,279 uses in 2010.
  - Mango: 5,340 sessions in 2010.
  - BookLetters: added to the online catalog
- All databases reviewed by MHLS Central Library / Collection Development Advisory committee (made up of member library directors) for usage and satisfaction.

5. Direct support will be provided for member library reference service
   - 1 issue of The Central Library Bulletin newsletter was produced, highlighting studies.
   - 26 subject searches were performed.

Goal 2: Build a strong system-wide non-fiction collection
Intended results:
1. The overall non-fiction collection will be professionally evaluated and gaps reduced
   - Analyzed system-wide ILL requests to determine underrepresented areas of the collective collection.
   - Developing a plan with the Central Library / Collection Development Advisory Committee (made up of member library directors) for analysis of member library non-fiction collections by looking at use and age of the materials, followed by specific recommendations and guidelines for weeding.

2. Reduce gaps in Nonfiction collection.
   - Strengthened system-wide collection with new materials purchased from Central Book Aid funds in targeted areas, including downloadable audio language materials.

Goal 3: Support Access to nationwide collections
Intended results:
1. Patrons will have requests placed and filled through OCLC.
   - Total OCLC requests from member libraries: 1,372
   - OCLC fills: 951
   - Fill rate = 69% *Note: OCLC fill rates are influenced by several factors: owning libraries can choose not to fill a request, some requests are for items that do not circulate, requesting patrons may be unwilling to pay the borrowing fee (this is a normal surcharge that helps offset OCLC and postage costs).*

2. Contributed $40,000 from CLDA funds to offset system charges to member libraries, approved by a vote of MHLS Directors Association.