

Executive Director's Report to MHLS Board – July 2018

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as the MHLS Executive Director. With this final report to you, I am proud to highlight some of our many efforts since 2013 to strengthen MHLS services to member libraries and to enhance cooperation among MHLS stakeholders.

MHLS is an essential contributor to the services our 66 member libraries provide their patrons and communities, which are located across an almost 3,000 square miles region.

- Integrated Library System Services support the management of more than 3.2 million items owned by member libraries & the annual loaning of more than 3.8 million items to library patrons
- Delivery Services annually move more than 1 million items for sharing among member libraries/patrons/communities
- HelpDesk Services annually answer over 3,200 technical and technological questions from member library staff
- Consulting & Library Development Services works directly with member library staff and trustees on a wide range of library development and sustainability projects
- Professional Development and Continuing Education Services provide workshops for library staff, trustees, and friends on topics of critical importance to library success
- Shared E-Resources Collections includes e-Books, e-Audio, Consumer Reports, Mango Language, and Tumblebooks

It has been my intention to act primarily as a facilitator, supporting positive and productive discussions and actions by and among the MHLS Board, the Directors Association, and MHLS staff. It is my sense that MHLS has been increasingly successful in conducting focused and organized meetings, increasing productivity, and using data to inform decisions.

I am particularly pleased by the success of our collaborative planning efforts. First, the Moving Forward Assessment Project which included the development of detailed analysis reports on each of 16 system services. Second, the development, stakeholders' review and input, and the adoption of the MHLS Plan of Service 2017-2021. Third, the development and implementation of MHLS Action Plans detailing how the Plan of Service is being carried-out over the five year plan period.

Finally, it is commonly-stated that collaboration is an “unnatural act among non-consenting adults,” which recognizes the challenges that are encountered in virtually every collaborative effort. I suggest to you that the single most valuable MHLS asset is collaboration among MHLS stakeholders. Cooperating to provide shared library services, coordinating activities to maximize effectiveness and efficiencies, and maintaining a shared conception of how to work together for the benefit of all, are the underpinnings for ongoing MHLS success.

Thank you for your time, support, and wise council, which have been essential to my work and our efforts to support and improve MHLS services and operations.