

Challenges & Opportunities (Post-its)

Continuing move to automation through centralized network servers

Attempting to increase and foster correctional acceptance of new technologies

Departmental illumination of personal computers while implementing "thin client" terminals

Inmates transition to tech community

Hoping to do more stimulating programs for educational purposes for inmates

Lack of funds

Less funds each year while expenses increase

Opportunity: Community outreach for funding, donations and program opportunities

Fishkill C.F. has 1700 inmates we have a great demand for newspapers and magazines. We need steady donations of periodicals. On current EBSCO subscription we are spending 4-5 thousand and this might be cut.

Maintaining ILL service from MHLS. High demand for outside books exceed limit of 100 books per month.

Technology

- Not enough opportunity to use facility Internet: research requests, reference, orders
- Without up-to-date reference sources, how to coordinate supplying reference without working outside of work hours.
- Need to introduce inmates to computers
- Reference requests are varied: sometimes current, sometimes senior. Some would be available in print others not. General print reference resources sometimes insufficient
- D.O.E. (fund for homeless people and prisons inmates) fund computers: Law materials. Practicing Internet emulator. Also some access for Department of Labor job information, job application simulation (a lot of interest in this). Potential to get a lot of resources centralized. MHLS online catalog in real time mirrored on the server in Albany.
- Hard to get inmates excited about pre-release work if they have long terms
- Providing library access from recreation. GED assistance sometimes provided but sometimes is role of educational department. Demand for library services is great.
- Library period combined with gym period

Outreach

- Can be internal or external
- Want local community to know more about what goes on in the facility. To feel more comfortable, provide services.
- Always new people
- Send out monthly schedule of when open and programs
- Orientation program and manual. Would need to close the library to participate.

Facility

- Library is safe place and place to meet.
- Attitude of administration to library very important. Attention to library needs.
- May be more flexible in the facility library than in other areas of the facility
- Keeping up with influx of people – constant scheduled rotation.
- Meeting needs in varied parts of the facility: protective custody, general population, SHU, medical units
- How to physically handle the rotation of materials – involving other staff.
- Mandates. A challenge of enough books

Materials

- Keeping reference collection up-to-date

- Meeting inmate demand for items
- Continuing need for discarded books
- How to manage ILL materials so they are not lost in transition
- Reading generally matches what public library patrons want. Also urban fiction and true crime. Non-fiction: health, bios, rap culture, starting business, NOLO guides.
- ILL – non-fiction, business books, graphic novels, how to get rich.
- Literacy becoming more of an issue
- More need for night hours
- Capacity vs. demand: less funds mean more need for ILL
- As funds come all at once, hard to keep meeting demand.
- Increase in inmate donations due to rule change
- Instituting in-kind donations in the library to replace missing, stolen items
- Lack of funds has affected: periodicals, books, also meeting mandates
- More access to state connections
- Transitional services of increasing importance
- Good books no longer on tape. Language on tapes. CDs not able to be used. Future for downloads on kiosk in library? Potential on network server?
- Potential for free standing computer with games. Timing out software.
- How inmates can know what public libraries do
- Programs – working with coordinator of Volunteer Services. Brining outside people in for programs. Public speaking, poetry volunteers, author workshop and debate, association, health care, local talent and poetry slam, Martin Luther King Day speaker, sometimes new speakers are initiated internally.
- Managing with parole. Library will be critical to success.
- New shift to all inmates having a plan from day one, geared towards release. Mental health, education, vocational.
- Libraries posed to play a more pivotal role. What can the general libraries do to support this?