

Challenges & Issues:

• **Training**

- Seeking assistance in training for “both sides of the desk”: job training for and the training staff needs to train patrons
- In particular, staff are seeking training and assistance in keeping up to date with Millennium, technology in the library and patron's gadgets.
 - Millennium
 - Keeping up to date with the Resource Sharing Standards
 - Create Lists
 - Customized Hold Slips
 - Computer Basics for staff
 - Managing the library's technology: standardization, troubleshooting
 - Downloadable content: Ebooks & audiobooks
 - Internet Basics – searching, email, online job resources
 - Helping Spanish speaking patrons, particularly helping them with the computer
 - Helping patrons manage what they request through the System
- Many libraries reported that the majority of their staff is part time (“fractional”) which makes the delivery of training difficult.
- Given the frequent reliance on volunteers at the circulation desk in northern libraries, staff and directors, see a clear need to have very solid training for them.
- Lack of cross training amongst staff. “She's the only one who knows how to do that.” Creates inconsistent customer service.
- There has been an increase in the amount of stressed out patrons coming in, staff would like help in knowing how to deal with diffusing tensions between patrons and patrons and staff.

• **Funding**

- Lack of funding is hitting staff levels, ability to offer programs and properly advertise what the library has to offer
- Stagnant and reduced funding is causing more libraries to have to rely on volunteers at the circulation desk which they feel is not ideal. “We look incompetent at times.”; “[There are] Inconsistencies in how patrons are treated or how procedures are carried out. Animosity can build – negative to the feeling of community. “
- “We're just struggling to keep up.”
- “Staff are wearing many hats.”
- Continually seeking ways to make operations more efficient.

• **Outreach**

- Looking for ways to draw in people who do not currently use the library
- Seeking ways to communicate the value of the library; answer the question of where tax dollars are going when spent on the library

• **Space**

- Many libraries report a lack of space is hindering
 - operations/work flow

- ability to offer programs
- adding new formats: DVDs, Books on CD
- no quiet space
- **Trends**
 - Many more patrons are looking for individualized help with technology: internet searches, email, ebooks, personal gadgets; "People rely on us, we are the go-to place for technology help."
 - Library is the "third place"; community hub; a community center
 - Less borrowers, more people just coming in to use our space and technology/connectivity
 - Many more DVDs are being circulated
 - Increased popularity in books on CD

What do you hope people say about your library?

- Library is important in my life
- Staff is fabulous and friendly
- Everyone is helpful
- Comfortable – like home
- Valuable resource - Helps me save money
- Can't wait to come in
- It's worthwhile
- Good value
- "Put libraries back in your life."