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Tribal and Rural Libraries Exist by the Will of the People

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The Oregon Collaborative Project:

Tribal Libraries, Archives, and Museums and the Oregon State Library

by **Mary Kay Dahlgreen**
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In 2004, the Oregon State Library undertook a number of efforts to strengthen our relations with Oregon tribes and to work with them in the development of tribal libraries to serve their communities in a variety of ways. Much of this activity was stimulated by our partnership with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla and the Arizona State Library in a multi-state grant project funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) entitled "Preserving our Memory, Language, and Lifeways." The Oregon component of this project was called, simply, "The Oregon Collaborative Project." It was primarily this project, led by Malissa Minthorn of Tamástlikt Cultural Institute and Denise Davis of the State Library, that motivated us to listen to the needs of Oregon's emerging tribal libraries and explore how tribal libraries could work with other libraries, archives, and museums in the state to improve services to their communities, and eventually, to all Oregonians. The activities of the Collaborative Project included a focus group, in May of 2004, which brought together tribal representatives with representatives from major Oregon libraries, archives, and museums to identify needs that could be addressed through collaboration and to begin building collaborative relationships.

The next step was to hold the Oregon Collaborative Conference on October 21–22, 2004, at Tamástlikt Cultural Institute. Forty-one people attended the conference, including representatives from seven of the nine Oregon tribes. The conference included general sessions for all participants and break-out workshop sessions on topics such as preservation, archive management, and digital collaboration. The results of the Oregon Collaborative Project were presented as one of the three model projects that resulted from the IMLS-funded multi-state

grant project at the National Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums Conference at Mesa, Arizona in May, 2005.

During 2005 and 2006, we continued our efforts to promote and support tribal libraries in Oregon. The 2005 Oregon Legislative Assembly passed HB 2674, which included tribal libraries in statutes authorizing the provision of financial assistance and resource sharing grants to Oregon libraries. The Oregon State Library supported the bill, and the State Librarian testified for it in both the House and Senate subcommittees.

The State Library is a partner in an IMLS grant to the Western Council of State Libraries, which will host two Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museum Conferences. One will be in Oklahoma in 2007 and one in Oregon in 2009. We are also a partner in an IMLS grant to Emporia State University to train minority librarians. The State Library will act as mentor and sponsor for qualifying tribal library employees who wish to complete a grant-funded Bachelor's or Master's degree in Library and Information Sciences through the Emporia State University distance education program.

In 2006, tribal libraries were invited to participate in the Gates Staying Connected program, which provided reimbursement for one public access computer to each tribal library. Four tribal libraries participated in the program.

Our plans for the remainder of 2006 include posting our *Bibliography of State Library Holding Related to the Oregon Tribes* on the State Library Web site and holding another focus group to share information between the library and archive staff who attended the Oregon Collaborative Conference and focus group in 2004. On October 22–25, 2007, the National Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums Conference will take place at the Sheraton Hotel in Oklahoma City. The conference is funded by the



Services to American Indians, chaired by Kelly P. Webster.

Special thanks to Carlene Engstrom, Director, Salish-Kootenai Tribal College Libraries, and Dr. Lotsee F. Patterson, School of Library and Information Studies, University of Oklahoma.

Warm Springs Library

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Today, the library employs a part-time Library Aide and is administered by the K-12 Education Support Services department. Funding continues to be a challenge. The facility is provided at no cost by the tribal government. Our primary funding source is IMLS. We have received cash support for personnel from the Warm Springs Community Action Team. Thanks to generous book donations from Sunriver, Tygh Valley, Maupin, and Jefferson County libraries, we have books on our shelves. The Willamette Writers organization and private donors from New York City and Connecticut

frequently send new or nearly new books and donations. An organization, Libraries of Eastern Oregon, donated equipment for loan to our patrons.

Now, my dream is that our library will provide the opportunity for tribal community members to access information and apply knowledge in order to reach their full potential for the benefit of our reservation and future generations. 🌿

IMLS Native American Library Services Grants: <http://www.ims.gov/applicants/grants/nativeAmerican.shtml>

ALA and Tribal Libraries

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suggestions. Finally, please consider nominating yourself or a colleague to serve on an ALA committee. You will find my online

committee appointment volunteer form at <http://cs.ala.org/roy/volunteer.html>. 🌿

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Institute of Museum and Library Services, sponsored by the Western Council of State Libraries, and hosted by the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. 🌿

For more information about the Oregon Collaborative Project, please contact MaryKay Dahlgreen at: marykay.dahlgreen@state.or.us or (503) 378-5012.

