



Library Department Business Plan

Fiscal Years: 2012 and 2013
(10/1/11 through 9/30/13)

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Raymond Santiago".

Raymond Santiago, Department Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Martinez".

Lisa Martinez, Senior Advisor to the Mayor

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DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Department Mission

To maintain and improve public library services reflecting the informational, educational, and recreational needs of our diverse community.

The Miami-Dade Public Library System provides library services to one of the largest and most diverse populations in the United States. Over 2 million residents of Miami-Dade County enjoy access to a collection of almost 4 million physical items, in a wide variety of formats and languages; a wealth of virtual resources that includes full-text access to magazines and newspapers, encyclopedias, business information, downloadable audio and video, and much more; and a high quality computer system and network consisting of approximately 1,850 public computer workstations and 600 laptops with full Internet access. The Library System has 49 branches and 2 bookmobiles. The Library System's service area covers most of Miami-Dade County, a geographical area of 1,924 square miles

The public library serves a significant role in the intellectual, emotional, and social life of the community. Because numerous opportunities are happening in one location at the public library (parents exchanging experiences while their children participate in lively story times; ... teens engaging with one another in poster contests, game tournaments, book clubs, and college fairs; ... job seekers assisting one another at computer skills classes; students of all ages receiving homework assistance; ... art and music lovers sharing in the excitement of art exhibitions and musical performances...free access to books, DVDs, computers and Wi-Fi ...), the library is becoming a compelling neighborhood space where people can meet and interact in ways that are not otherwise likely or even possible in today's society where much is done online and less is done in-person. The Library Department is the "community space" for Miami-Dade County.

All libraries are open for five or six days a week. They provide a full array of traditional services and resources that support the life-long learning needs of the community. While providing excellent customer service, neighborhood libraries contribute to the civic, cultural and economic vitality of Miami-Dade neighborhoods. Branch collections reflect the character and unique needs of their neighborhoods. The Main Library offers extensive collections in the areas of business, local history, genealogy, languages, government information and art.

A variety of programs and special events are offered yearlong throughout the Library System. Programs for adults, teens and children are free of charge and serve the primary purpose of supporting and enhancing the overall mission of the Library to better meet the informational, educational and recreational needs of our diverse community.

During these difficult economic times, the Library System has focused Adult programming on showing patrons how to develop resumes and access job search information. Other adult programs feature author presentations, book discussions, concerts, plays and a variety of special commemorative events. Young Adult programs include SAT and other test preparation workshops, college funding seminars, poetry readings, chess clubs, and book discussion groups. The celebration of Teen Read Week is an annual event that includes a Read-a-thon by teens at area malls, contests, and prizes

Miami-Dade Public Library System provides all of the traditional children's programs held regularly in libraries throughout the country, such as story hours for toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children, puppet shows, arts and crafts, bilingual story times, homework help, and more.

Reading Ready is the Miami-Dade Public Library System's early literacy program. It is geared to parents, caregivers and educators of children from birth to five years old. Early literacy is about skills children need to know before they learn to read and write. The Library plays a crucial role in providing the ideal environment and the resources for early literacy development. Library staff works closely with parents, caregivers and educators to introduce the six early literacy skills and model ways to reinforce them through specific early literacy activities and materials.

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The *Art of Storytelling* (AOS) is Miami-Dade Public Library System's signature event. The purpose of this annual event is to explore the unique ways in which storytelling is used by librarians, educators, parents and caregivers throughout the world to impact the lives of their communities. Each year the Library System partners with a library system in another country for this cultural exchange. The ultimate goal of this program is to foster a love of reading, the cultural arts, and libraries among children and their caregivers.

The main products and services of the Library System fall within five areas: (1) Providing collections and lending materials; (2) Providing information on request (Reference); (3) Providing both early childhood literacy through the Reading Ready program and literacy through Project L.E.A.D.; (4) Providing cultural, informational, and recreational programs; (5) Serving as a community space.

Table of Organization

<u>OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides overall direction and coordination of departmental operations and management 	
<u>FY 10-11</u> 3	<u>FY 11-12</u> 3

<u>ADMINISTRATION</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees implementation of departmental policy and manages the departmental budget 	
<u>FY 10-11</u> 14	<u>FY 11-12</u> 15

<u>SUPPORT SERVICES</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Processes financial transactions and personnel actions; oversees the Library's capital expansion plan; develops and prints educational and promotional materials for the Library System; manages maintenance security, fleet services, and human resources throughout the system 	
<u>FY 10-11</u> 68	<u>FY 11-12</u> 49

<u>OUTREACH SERVICES</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops and implements special events and programs for targeted populations, such as children or patrons with difficulty accessing services at branches 	
<u>FY 10-11</u> 30	<u>FY 11-12</u> 25

<u>PUBLIC SERVICE</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides informational and lending services to users of branch and regional facilities, programs and events to encourage literacy, library usage, and life-long learning; formulates and administers the Collection Development Policy and Materials Budget Plan for the Library System; coordinates all library automation efforts and online services, including short- and long-term technical planning, e-government, web portal initiatives, network infrastructure, network security, and all central site and remote computer equipment and applications, for staff and the general public 	
<u>FY 10-11</u> 506	<u>FY 11-12</u> 374

Strategic Alignment Summary

The Department's efforts align with the following Miami-Dade County Strategic Plan Goals:

RC1-1 Ensure parks, libraries, and cultural facilities are accessible to residents and visitors.

RC2-1 Increase attendance at recreational and cultural venues.

RC2-2 Ensure facilities are safe, clean and well-run.

RC3-1 Provide vibrant and diverse programming opportunities and services that reflect the community's interests.

RC3-2 Strengthen and conserve local historic and cultural resources and collections

Our Customer

The Library customer base includes all of the residents of Miami-Dade County; the reciprocal borrowers from Hialeah, North Miami, and North Miami Beach; and state, national and international visitors. The Library provides books and other materials and services to patrons of all ages and ethnic backgrounds.

Miami-Dade Public Library System is the seventh largest public library system in the United States. Last year over 8 million people visited the Library System in person and over 5 million visited virtually via our web page and catalog. Registered borrowers numbered over 1 million. The total circulation of materials was over 8 million items and the total information/reference questions answered was also over 8 million.

The Library Department is a customer centric organization that believes feedback from customers is critical in order to provide 5-Star Customer Service. The Library uses a variety of methods (including surveys, patron communication forms, and direct communication at all service desks) to obtain customer feedback. This feedback is used by the Library Administration to develop and improve goals, objectives and services and is recorded in Active Strategy and the Business Plan. The Library has been one of the highest ranked departments each time the County's Secret Shopper Report has been issued.

The Department also provides materials and services for people with special needs. The Talking Books Library loans Braille and audio books and magazines, along with a player, free by mail to persons who have difficulty reading or using printed books and other materials because of blindness, or visual, physical, or reading disabilities. An outreach service of the Miami-Dade Public Library System and the Library of Congress National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, the Talking Books Library serves all of Miami-Dade and Monroe counties.

Connections: Library Service for the Homebound provides books-by-mail service to individuals of all ages who are unable to visit the library in person due to chronic illness, physical disability and frailties of age. Special outreach programming services to facilities and groups who serve the elderly are also available.

Jump Start is a "storytime kit program to go" for all licensed preschool and kindergarten childcare centers. The kits contain all the tools to present fun, high quality storytimes on a variety of themes. Each kit includes books, fingerplays, a flannelboard story, a puppet and a music cassette tape or CD. Jump Start is available to all eligible preschool and kindergarten childcare centers which are physically located within the library's taxing district. The center may be either a private, public or church school. Parent co-ops, licensed family care providers and homeschoolers can also participate.

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Project L.E.A.D. (Literacy for Every Adult in Dade) is an adult literacy program designed to reach out to English speaking adults who are functionally illiterate and have reading and writing skills that are inadequate to cope with the demands of everyday life. They have difficulty or are unable to fill out forms, read to their child or read the instructions on a medicine bottle. Project L.E.A.D. provides free, one-on-one, confidential tutoring to help improve their reading and writing skills. We match adult learners with volunteer tutors who help them achieve self-determined literacy goals.

KEY ISSUES

Public Service

The Library is a public service organization. Every day at 49 locations, staff work directly with residents of Miami-Dade County to assist them in meeting their educational, recreational and informational needs. Personal contact is the key to successfully meeting the needs of library users; therefore, staff are the Library's most valuable resource. Skilled, knowledgeable staff, who embody the Library's 5-Star Customer Service philosophy, are critical to the success of the Library's mission.

Due to the present difficult economic times, there is a greater demand from the public for access to the Library's informational, educational, and recreational resources and services. However, with the reduction in the Library's millage rate, 155 full-time staff and 153 (all) part-time staff positions were eliminated, resulting in a reduction in the hours and days of operation at all Library facilities. The total number of public service hours cut system wide was 382 and, thus, there is less access.

The major responsibility of part-time staff has always been the shelving of the books and materials. The loss of 153 part-time staff equates to 2907 hours of shelving time a week. Full-time staff have assumed the shelving responsibility. They are spending a large portion of their time shelving materials yet they are unable to keep up with the large volume of shelving needed. There is a backlog of materials to be shelved and delays in processing reserves. A recent survey of Branches indicated that there were over 300 trucks of materials system wide remaining to be shelved at the end of the day. Since materials continue to be checked out and returned, at the current staffing level, there is no reason to believe the backlog can be significantly reduced any time soon. This impacts public service, as people must wait longer to get materials they want.

Public service full-time staff was reduced by 25 percent. Besides for shelving, public service staff are almost exclusively working face-to-face with customers and, therefore, have little to no opportunity for off-desk tasks such as the daily reserve reports and the weekly reports that involve searching for missing and claims-returned items; making patron address corrections, and other database cleanup issues—all of which have significant customer service repercussions.

The Library does a rather brisk phone reference business, but the speed of response to phone queries has also dropped; with fewer staff doing more things at one time, it is taking longer to locate the answers to questions as well as to find the time to return phone calls.

System wide, librarians are experiencing an increase in complaints from the public regarding lack of materials, reduction of library hours, wait times for library book/DVD holds, and system wide customer service issues. Some of these complaints warrant an investigation, and each of them requires a carefully worded response.

System wide, children's and adult programming has been cut back by 13 per cent.

For many Miami-Dade County residents, the Library System has been the face of their tax dollars working for their benefit. The public has come to rely on their public library for crucial information on job

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opportunities, career planning, resume writing, accessing e-government information, small business management and learning vital computer skills. It is essential for the well-being of Miami-Dade County and for the public's perception of County government that the Library System continues to be able to provide excellent services so vitally needed by all of its residents.

Staff Restructuring

At the beginning of FY11/12, the Library Department went through significant restructuring. The elimination of full-time positions created a bumping scenario, which led to demotions and transfers to other County Departments, in addition to layoffs. Also, many staff were moved to different positions within the Library System. The Department now faces the challenge of re-training all staff on their new duties and ensuring that we continue to provide 5-Star Customer Service.

The staff restructuring included the reduction of one Library Services Supervisor (LBS). With the elimination of this position, the Branch Division was reduced from 5 to 4 clusters of service and each LBS is now managing more branches and schedules than ever. One LBS manages two regional size libraries where beforehand each LBS managed only one facility of this size and several satellite branches. Clusters were formed by geographical area to facilitate the ability for one person to manage more than one Branch. The concept of service area management was created when it became necessary to eliminate 13 Librarian 3 positions to meet sufficient monetary reduction in the budget. Service areas are neighborhoods adjacent to each other with patrons who may share use of facilities. Librarian 1s supervise daily operations of the smaller Branches and report directly to a Librarian 3 who is the Branch Manager. Branches with managers on FMLA or medical leave are managed by a Manager or Supervisor at the higher level. With the loss of so many positions, there was not enough staff to assign 4 staff per Branch, which was the staffing level norm at small libraries. Storefront Branches are now staffed with 3 staff persons, making it necessary to send coverage in case of annual leave, illness and other operating necessities. System wide program direction is done by the Branch Operations Administrator in the case of Young Adult Services and by the Assistant Director, Branch Operations, for Children Services.

In order to continue staffing all service desks despite reduced staff, the Main Library is cross-training staff to be able to cover all service desks. Although this dilutes the quality of the reference service, as each area is no longer covered by a specialist in the subject area, it does ensure coverage at all desks most of the time.

The services and programs provided by the Outreach Services Division are in higher demand because individuals with special needs are often the hardest hit during times of economic decline. Taking a proactive approach to budgetary changes and staff shortages, the Division created a comprehensive work plan that outlines the requirements, processes and skills necessary to sustain day to day operations. This plan allowed for effective cross training of staff across the Division, including Connections, Talking Books, Jump Start, and Project L.E.A.D. However, each unit is experiencing delays in service delivery such as responding to patrons' phone and e-mail requests, processing of materials to be mailed to patrons, and fulfilling requests for volunteer adult literacy tutoring services. The Mobile Library Service had to reduce the number of bookmobiles from four to two and the number of weekly stops from 48 to 28. Usage statistics for each stop were analyzed to determine priorities. Despite these challenges, the Outreach Services Division strives to maintain its vitality by consistently reassessing the needs of its customers and the effectiveness of its operation.

As part of the reorganization, the transportation schedules for the Library System were analyzed and revised. Due to the loss of one driver position and the part-time staff who sorted the materials to be transported, deliveries to all Branches have been reduced to only four days; in the past, the busier facilities received five or six-day delivery. Drivers were put on a four ten-hour day schedule, which is more efficient as it allows the drivers to have time to sort materials.

All non-public service areas of the Library, such as Automation, Maintenance, and Collection Development /Technical Services, also had staff reductions despite the fact that their work load may not

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have been reduced. Each of these areas is faced with finding ways to streamline processes and eliminate less important tasks in order to keep up. However, as a result of the reduction in back room staff, there are delays in completing maintenance work orders, completing computer repairs and replacements, and cataloging and processing materials.

Materials

The traditional library collection started out as a collection of print materials and then expanded to include audio-visual materials in a variety of formats. With new advances in technology, and as more and more people own and use computers and hand-held devices, the advantages of electronic formats have strongly impacted the way libraries are used and the content of library collections. Electronic books, fully-indexed online periodical collections, downloadable and streaming music, and online audio books and videos can be accessed 24/7 from any library facility or from the library patron's home, business, or portable devices. Over the last three years, the Materials Budget has been reduced from 7 million dollars to 1 million dollars and this cumulative reduction has impacted the Library's ability to meet the public demand for both print and virtual materials.

In order to cope with the reduced budget, we have analyzed the most pressing community needs and set the purchasing priorities as: (1) popular (High Demand) adult books, (2) Children's books, and (3) DVD's for both adults and children. In order to meet basic needs for these materials, we have had to reduce or eliminate funding for other materials. We are not purchasing some material types such as: any new print encyclopedias, adult paperbacks, language instruction materials, children's foreign language materials, children's audiobooks, games, music on cd. We will no longer be able to subscribe to periodicals for any but the largest facilities. Even the Miami Herald will only be available in paper at Main and the Regional Libraries; patrons at other locations will need to use the online version. In addition, we have already eliminated several electronic newspaper, magazine and informational products and will be dropping others when the subscriptions come up for renewal.

The Library can't purchase as wide a selection of titles as in the past, and will be purchasing fewer copies of each title. Even high demand items, which are a priority, have been reduced. Last fiscal year we spent \$444,973 on high demand items, which purchased approximately 28,745 items. This fiscal year we are spending \$199,940, for approximately 12,916 items. While we used to be able to purchase around 250 copies of a really popular title, we can now only purchase around 100 copies. Patrons will have to wait much longer for requested items.

In order to cope with the reduced number of staff to catalog and process materials, the Library is only purchasing materials from vendors who can catalog and process the materials. This affects the purchase of materials in world languages; we can only purchase English and Spanish materials, as the vendors do not catalog materials in any other languages.

Library staff have been encouraged to put out displays of older books and to use online sources such as NovelList and Books and Authors to assist patrons in finding recreational reading material that is new to them while they wait on longer waiting lists to receive the newer books.

The positions eliminated from Collection Development/Technical Services were those that selected, ordered, cataloged, processed and linked new materials, and clerical staff who entered invoices for payment. It will take much longer for the remaining staff to conduct these tasks and also to respond to suggestions for purchase.

The Library is also allowing non-cataloging staff to enter gift items, which we are now more dependent upon, into the catalog with brief records that do not meet cataloging standards because we can no longer create full bibliographic records for the catalog. Patrons will only find these materials by author or title, not by subject.

Collection maintenance activities such as mending or weeding of badly damaged materials are happening at a much slower pace—if at all.

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As reported in the 2011 Public Library Data Service, the average materials budget for a library system serving a population over 1,000,000 is \$6,633,150. The lowest reported materials budget was \$944,589, at Dallas Public Library which has only 26 branches; the second lowest reported materials budget was \$2,447,883, at the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library which has only 32 branches.

It is unavoidable that the quality of the collections at Miami-Dade's 49 branches is suffering as a result of the materials budget being reduced to \$1,000,000.

Aging Facilities

In order to provide 5-Star Customer Service to our customers, it is important that we protect the structural integrity of all existing facilities and ensure that the buildings and grounds of all branches are clean, safe, and inviting for all library users. Nineteen library facilities, 39% of the buildings, are more than thirty years old and have roofs and air conditioning systems which have reached their useful life expectancies. In addition, many facilities sorely need a complete renovation and modernization. At the same time, funding for renovations has been eliminated due to the decrease in the overall budget.

The Library has a schedule for replacement of roofs and air conditioners when they reach their maximum life span. However, we are no longer able to adhere to the schedule. This action could lead to significant costs to be expended on an emergency basis.

The following branches will not have their end-of-life air conditioners replaced:

1. Civic Center
2. Coconut Grove
3. Coral Gables
4. Culmer/Overtown
5. Homestead
6. Lemon City
7. Little River
8. Miami Lakes
9. South Dade Regional
10. South Miami

The Library is unable to replace the following roofs:

1. North Central
2. North Dade Regional

In addition, in 2009, a study by the Office of Elevator Safety concluded that the elevators at West Dade and South Dade Regionals were in need of major overhauling. The reduction in millage rate has caused an indefinite delay in the overhauling of these elevators.

All flooring, painting, landscaping, and parking lot black top and restriping projects are also on hold.

PRIORITY INITIATIVES

Key Issues Initiative

Recognizing that we don't have the funding to effectively address the key issues described above, we've established several committees of staff at all levels to investigate and bring forth ideas for further streamlining and for maintaining a high level of service at all Library Branches.

Understandably, everyone is experiencing a higher level of stress due to the lowered staff levels and increased workloads. The Committees will provide input and work on rebuilding morale so that the Library can continue to provide its 5-Star Customer Service.

High Emphasis or New Initiatives

YOUmedia Miami

The John S. and James L Knight Foundation has awarded the Miami-Dade Public Library System a one-time grant in the amount of \$805,755 to create an interactive learning space, at North Dade Regional Library, where teens can learn to use and create digital media. The YOUmedia Miami initiative will enable teens to create digital media projects and support them as they document their neighborhoods, city, and their world. The design of the learning space encourages individual and collaborative work and also provides a safe and open space where teens can come to create and explore.

This grant required no match or other fiscal outlay from the Library and included money to hire staff for the project.

YOUmedia Miami is in the process of being installed and recruiting for teen participants has begun.

KidSmart Young Explorer Computers

IBM has awarded the Miami-Dade Public Library System a grant which will provide 75 KidSmart Young Explorer computers equipped with educational software to help children ages 3-7 learn and explore concepts in math, science and language. These computers, which are housed in brightly colored, child-friendly furniture, will be distributed throughout the Library System so that every branch has at least one. Each unit comes with a bench where two children can sit together, encouraging the important social skills of working together and sharing. The KidSmart Young Explorer computers encourage an early love for learning that will help prepare children for future success in school and is a perfect match with the Library's ReadingReady program.

In addition to the KidSmart Young Explorer units, the Library will have access to two professional development webinars and one year of technical support.

The KidSmart grant from IBM is a one-time grant valued at \$187,500 that required no match or other fiscal outlay from the Library Department.

The computers are being distributed and set up at the Branches by Library staff. The rollout of these computers began in November 2011 and will be completed by February, 2012.

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Automation

The Library Department is moving towards a new image for both public and staff computers which, after the initial manual installation, will allow most software upgrades to be pushed from Automated Services and will not require a technician to physically go to the Branch. Since Microsoft is stopping support of XP in early 2014, the successful implementation of the image is critical in order to push the latest upgrades to all PCs and laptops in the system. With only two PC Technicians available to work on the upgrade projects at Branches, it currently takes over 12 months to perform major upgrades to software and hardware to the 2,450 workstations.

Once the new image is implemented, technicians will primarily deal with hardware repairs and upgrades at the Branches while the software upgrades will be pushed out by the network staff.

The library is working with Community Information and Outreach (CIAO) to have them redesign and manage the Library's website.

Community Service Centers

The Library Department is partnering with the Community Information and Outreach Department (CIAO) to leverage the 311 Service Center concept; using the 311 Answer Hub database, Library staff at the Main and Regional Libraries will provide information and referral services to patrons. In addition, patrons will also be able to purchase baby stroller permits and process applications for the Transit Golden Passport and Transit Patriot Passport at these Branches. Library staff will provide the services, with support, applications and training to be provided by CIAO.

Self-Service Facility Model

Realizing that the economic situation over the next few years will not allow the Library to add staff and reopen additional hours, we are working this year to design and develop a new self-service model, for future implementation, to provide additional operating hours to the public. The concept is to partition off a portion of an existing facility so that it can be used by the public during unstaffed hours of operation. Patrons would be given a key card which would be used to enter the self-serve portion of the facility. This area will contain books and self-check machines. This model could be used to extend hours of operation in existing facilities or replicated in other areas of the County to provide service where none exists.

Reading Ready

Reading Ready, the Library Department's early literacy program, will continue to be a major focus this year. The Reading Ready concept takes traditional library story hours to a new level. Each story hour, in addition to introducing children to the fun of books and reading, also educates parents, caregivers, and teachers regarding methods they can use to promote the development of early literacy skills among children from birth to age five.

Art of Storytelling

The Miami-Dade Public Library System's *Art of Storytelling (AOS)* is an international cultural and educational campaign focusing on the many ways in which storytelling is used to impact lives. The ultimate goal is to stimulate the imagination and help children develop a love of the cultural arts, reading and libraries. Now in its 12th year, AOS has grown into the library's signature campaign, spanning six months and including more than 15,000 participants. Among the various components of the project are

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an International Library-to-Library Exchange; Workshops for Teachers, Parents and other Professionals; Teen programs; Tales Under The Stars (evening storytelling for families); and an International Festival Day. AOS attracts a large audience with over 500 workshop attendees (parents, librarians, storytellers); more than 5,000 people attending performances at various Libraries throughout Miami-Dade and other community venues; all culminating in Festival Day at the Main Library, which draws thousands of attendees. All of these events are supported by the Friends of the Miami-Dade Public Library, community grants and the Library district funds. The year's AOS International Festival Day will be held on the Cultural Center Plaza on April 28, 2012.

Election Support

Elections have an enormous impact on the Library Department. Branches serve both as Early Voting and Precinct sites. The impact is felt in various ways:

Early Voting requires the Library Department to send staff members to open the Branches at 5:30 am. At the present time, Early Voting begins on a Saturday and runs until the next Sunday (8 days). Coverage is needed from 5:30 am to 8:30 pm. The Library staff turns on the lights and supervises the building, Parking and candidate worker management are two huge issues the Library staff has had to manage. Candidate workers arrive early in the morning, take up all the parking spaces and litter the entire parking lots. Library staff manage complaints about harassment and illegal signage posted throughout the Library property. In the past, Elections has selected 11 branches as Early Voting sites.

For the General Election, Library staff arrives at 5:30 am and works until the Clerk closes for the night. Depending on issues, staff may leave at 9:00pm or later. In the past year, Elections has used anywhere from 11- 16 branches.

Beyond the staff required to open and close Libraries, Elections also require Election Specialists to come from the Department. Once an employee signs up for Elections work, he/she cannot leave unless the Department finds a replacement person. Staff work as Election Specialists during both Early Voting and the General Election. Also almost all of the Automated Service Department work the General Election, both Monday and Tuesday.

The Library Department will continue to provide support for all elections. Eleven Library Branches will be polling places for early voting and 16 for the General Election this fiscal year; that is an increase of 5 facilities. Last fiscal year, in addition to providing staff to be poll workers, as all County Department do, the Library also provided 912.25 staff hours at the Branches that were used as polling locations in order to support the 11 elections. The Library Department added 2070.5 additional operating hours in support of elections. These hours include opening the branch before normal Library operating hours, staying open later than normal hours and opening on closed days in order to meet the needs of the Elections Department.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

Even in today's digital world where vast amounts of information are readily available online, public libraries continue to play vital roles in and be valuable assets to their local communities. A January, 2011 Harris Poll Quorum, created for the American Library Association, found that "Americans continue to value the importance of services provided by public libraries. In fact, when considering a list of 11 library services, two-thirds or more of the American public consider every factor to be very or somewhat important to them personally, surpassing the proportions in the 2010 study. The most highly valued services pertain to the provision of free information and services that promote education and lifelong learning. More than nine in 10 Americans (93 percent) believe that it is very important or somewhat important that library services are free, representing an increase of two percentage points from 2010."

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The residents of Miami-Dade County clearly value their Library System; the System continues to be heavily used. Last year, more than eight million visitors passed through the Library doors and another five million visited the Library's website. The Library remains a vital part of this community because it is a user-centric government department that is able to change and adapt to provide the resources, services, and programs most needed by this community.

As we look forward, the following are the most pressing issues:

Property Tax, Millage Rate and Depletion of Reserves

The Library Department is almost totally dependent on property tax-based revenue for operating funds. 94% of the budget is derived from property taxes, 2% from State Aid, 3% Fines and Fees, and 1% other. Thus, the ability for the Library to maintain the existing level of public service is dependent on both a stable millage rate and on an economy that allows the millage rate to produce at least the same amount of revenue from one year to the next. The Library budget is clearly tied to the community's economic health.

Over the last four fiscal years, the Library Special Taxing District millage rate has been reduced from 0.384 to .1795 and the revenue produced from \$81,000,000 to \$29,197,000. During the current fiscal year, the Library Department will be using \$24,803,000 from its reserves. The remaining reserves (\$26,306,000) are expected to be used as part of the Department's operating budget for fiscal year 12/13.

The Library has restructured staffing, hours of operation, and services this fiscal year in order to live within the reduced budget. Besides staffing, the materials budget, automation, and building maintenance have been significantly reduced. Additional investment in these three areas is critical in the coming years in order to maintain the quality of service currently being offered to the community. However, unless there is an upswing in the economy and an increase in the millage rate so that the property tax brings in additional revenue, this investment will not be possible.

State Aid to Libraries

The State Aid to Libraries program was established in 1961 (F.S. 257) to aid and encourage the establishment of free library service statewide. The program is administered by the Florida Department of State Division of Library and Information Services. State Aid dollars are divided among libraries based on their communities' tax base, local support, and participation in a multicounty system. Funding has been cut by 1/3 over the past nine years from \$33.4 million in 2001 to \$21.3 in 2010. Last fiscal year, the Library Department received \$1,655,398 in State Aid, which accounted for 2% of the Library budget. Since State Aid is based on a formula that includes local funding in a previous year and since the local funding for the Library has decreased, the Library Department expects to receive less money this fiscal year. In addition, if the State of Florida continues to face difficult economic times, there is no guarantee the legislature will allocate the same total amount for State Aid and, therefore, the Library Department's share could be further reduced. The money received from State Aid is used to supplement salaries for staff; any reductions in State Aid would mean further reductions in staff and, therefore, services to the public.

Security Issues

The Library Department strives to have a safe and secure environment for all patrons and staff at all of its facilities. Although the public perceives libraries as having very calm and quiet environments, the reality is that most librarians in public libraries throughout the country have to deal with disruptive adults, many of whom are mentally ill or using alcohol or drugs; teen behavioral problems; unattended youth; theft; inappropriate use of computers; vandalism and more. In order to assist Library staff in dealing with

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these issues when they arise, the Library Department worked with the County Attorney's Office several years ago to develop the *Library Rules of Conduct & Eviction Procedure*, which was approved by the Board of County Commissioners. Library staff report all incidents on *Incident Reports*, which are monitored by the *Library Security and Safety Manager* and other Administrative staff. The number of Incident reports has been rising for the last three years from 816 in FY08/09 to 843 in FY 09/10 and 973 in FY 10/11. Despite the increase in incidents, the funding available for security has decreased progressively over the past three fiscal years. Therefore, the number of security hours was reduced at most locations and the uniformed off-duty police officers' hours were reduced from North Dade Regional and Main.

Many of the incident reports are from repeat offenders. In order to reduce the number of incidents and maintain an appropriate atmosphere conducive to our mission, without increasing spending for security, the Library Department has been working with the County Attorney's Office to allow longer evictions for the more serious offenses and for repeat offenders. This revised policy will be taken to the Board of County Commissioners during this fiscal year.

Northeast Branch Library

Groundbreaking on the Northeast Branch Library should happen this fiscal year and construction will take approximately 18 months. The opening of this facility in FY 13/14 will impact the Library Department's operating budget. The anticipated operating cost will be about \$1,800,000. The current temporary location for Northeast Branch, which is about 1,000 sq. ft., has three staff; the new facility will be 28,000 sq. ft, including the courtyards and non-air-conditioned areas, and will need a minimum of 14 staff. Due to the major reduction in staffing levels at all Library facilities this year, it will not be feasible to add the additional Northeast positions from existing staff. 11 additional positions will need to be added to the Table of Organization and funded in order to operate the much larger facility.

Capital Expansion Plan

Due to budget challenges, the Library System has had to eliminate 10 remaining projects, four new facilities and six renovations, from the Library Capital plan. This, coupled with the reduction of bookmobiles from four to two, leaves many residents in the 1,924 square miles (most of Miami-Dade County) that make up the Library System's service area without easy access to library services. There have been inquiries from several Commissioners and community groups who are interested in having a local branch. As the economy improves, it will be important to explore ways of funding a new Capital Expansion Plan.