2017 Annual Report

PUBLIC LAW LIBRARY OF KING COUNTY

Without access to information, there is no justice.

Public Law Library of King County

Letter from Executive Director Barbara Engstrom

At the conclusion of my first full year as Executive Director of the law library, I'm pleased to report that the law library has made significant progress on the financial front and on the services front. As has been the case for the last several years, court filing fees (the primary source of county law library funding under chapter RCW 27.24) have been dropping precipitously. This is not just an issue in King County, law libraries nationwide that have the same funding model are struggling. Managing the law library involves striking a balance between providing services for the needs of our growing and divergent patron populations, while tightening our belts to maintain financial stability

On the financial front, we eliminated a staff position that was a holdover from an outdated service model, we upgraded to an open source Integrated Library System (ILS) for significant annual savings over our very expensive legacy ILS, and we secured pro bono services from Perkin Coie law firm to assist with establishing a foundation to enhance support for the law library. We updated our public printing to a release on demand system which not only creates cost savings, but helps us improve our environmental impact by drastically reducing the amount of paper we put in the recycling stream. Looking to the future, we engaged in long-term financial sustainability analysis and planning using Business Model Canvas tools. This planning will help inform our future financial decisions.

On the services front, we partnered with SU Law School to provide student volunteers to help increase the effectiveness of the Legal Help

Center, we completed a major overhaul of our website to enhance ease of use for both computer and mobile phone users, and we migrated much of the content from the defunct waprobate.com website to keep it available to users throughout Washington. For our subscribers, we added three new benefits that significantly enhance the value of membership. For the $78.50 annual membership fee, subscribers now get three free document deliveries (a $60 value), one hour of additional Westlaw time, and access to our subscribers-only Let Us Do Your Research program, in addition to the current member benefits.

This year also saw significant changes to our board. Two long-time board members, Judge Andrea Darvas and attorney Steve Ellis both stepped down. Judge Darvas and Steve each served for eight years, providing guidance and oversight for the law library in times of major change. Their passion for the mission of the law library and commitment to its longevity is greatly appreciated by me and the staff.

2017 Board of Trustees

- The Honorable Susan Amini
- James L. Brewer, Esq. (Designee of County Council Chair Joe McDermott)
- The Honorable Monica Benton, Vice President
- Miriam Gordon, Esq.
- Joseph Bringman, Esq., President

2017 Financial Report

Income	
Filing Fees	$757,417
Fee-Based Services	$91,348
Other Income	$404,856
Total	**$1,253,621**
Expenditures - Seattle	
Books & Periodicals	$370,838
Operating	$79,566
Payroll/Benefits	$517,728
Capital	$547
Total	**$968,680**
Expenditures – MRJC	
Books & Periodicals	$53,751
Operating	$27,791
Payroll/Benefits	$172,333
Capital	$0
Total	**$253,875**

Public Law Library of King County

Seattle Courthouse
516 3rd Avenue, Suite W621
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 477-1305

Kent Regional Justice Center
401 Fourth Avenue N., Room 1N
Kent, WA 98032
(206) 477-1316

2017: HIGHLIGHTS

Koha:

Using ByWater Solutions as our hosting and support service, we migrated our online catalog records into Koha, an open-source integrated library system used by thousands of public and private libraries around the world. With migration complete, the move to Koha will save the law library over $25,000 annually and enable us to use the data within our catalog system more efficiently and effectively.

Website Redesign:

We completely overhauled the law library website switching to a more intuitive interface that allows an improved user experience for both desktop and mobile users. Website scalability is an important access to justice issue, with racial minorities, older people, and those with less education more like to rely solely on a mobile device for internet access. We now facilitate conference room reservations, CLE and workshop registrations, and requests for form packets through our website.

Legal Externs and Volunteers at the LHC

We began a partnership with Seattle University Law School to establish the Legal Help Center as legal externship host site. The law students perform patron intake, interviews, legal counseling, and data collection. They are also involved in post-client review to determine areas for improvement. In addition to law student externs, we also have a Limited Legal License Technician (LLLT) volunteer to assist with family law questions during the Kent clinic hours. The LHC patrons consistently comment on the expert level of help they receive from the LLLT volunteer.

Reintegrating the Archival Collection

We reintegrated the entirety of our Washington archival collection from the Yesler storage facility back into the Seattle law library. We now have ready access to our Washington Supreme Court Briefs and Washington Bills historical collections.

Reclaiming Underutilized Space

We performed an inventory of our space and found several underutilized areas that we reclaimed and repurposed. The storage and archives room is now the CLE training space, the room being used for the LHC was opened up to conference room use and the LHC was moved into a more appropriately sized office space. We also created several private seating areas throughout the stacks with beautiful Puget Sound views.

Pro bono Assistance to Help Establish a Foundation:

Perkins Coie has graciously agreed to assist the law library in the process of establishing a non-profit entity to support the law library and insure its survival into the future. We are in early stages but hope to have a foundation established in 2018.

CLES AT PLLKC

In 2017, the law library started a lunchtime CLE series. CLEs are offered for a low price with an additional discount for subscribers. The programs are presented live in-house and simultaneously via webcast.

Noteworthy CLEs presented in 2017:

- WestlawNext from Start to Finish
- Washington's PRA: An Overview and Common Questions
- Getting It Right: Know Your Fiduciary Responsibilities Under ERISA
- Heroes of the Common Law: Bracton, Coke, and Blackstone
- Ethical Online Sleuthing

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILTY PROJECT

The law library engaged with the office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget to analyze our long term sustainability. We used the Business Model Canvas process and analyzed the law library's key partners, key activities, value proposition, cost structure and revenue stream. The process culminated in a stakeholder workshop, the goal of which was to define three action items for consideration. The resulting stakeholder workshop action items are as follows:

- **Pursuing a 501(c)(3) foundation to tap into charitable revenue streams**
- **Pursuing an increase in the amount of the filing fee allocated to the law library from $20 to $30 per RCW 27.24.070**
- **Pursuing a cost-effective alternative to the LHC**

BY THE NUMBERS

Patrons Served

85,015

Questions Answered

10,291

Meeting Rooms Reserved

748

Public PC Sessions

11,677

THE COLLECTION

2017

Materials Available

39,792

Volumes Added

601

Volumes Discarded

218

Missing or Lost

24

Notable New Books: 2017

- IP Essentials for the Business Lawyer: Know Enough Not to Be Dangerous
- The Fundamentals of Guardianship: What Every Guardian Should Know
- Friedman on Leases, 6th Ed.
- Tell the Client's Story: Mitigation in Criminal and Death Penalty Cases
- Electronic Evidence for Family Law Attorneys
- Enhancing Justice, Reducing Bias

Westlaw for Government Upgrade

We upgraded to Westlaw for Government. In addition to the content of our prior subscription (which included all state and federal primary materials, Washington practice, WA jury verdicts, and law reviews) we now have access to Westlaw's treatise collection, forms and practice sets, national jury verdicts, state and federal court filings, current awareness tools, directories and much more.