



LEADING THE ADVANCEMENT OF ALL
MICHIGAN LIBRARIES THROUGH ADVOCACY,
EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

April 11, 2022

Michigan residents love their local and school libraries and as you probably know, these vital institutions have provided free access to information resources for all Michiganders for hundreds of years – books, movies, music, internet access, employment assistance, early literacy programming and so much more.

Libraries throughout Michigan are centers for learning and self-discovery, providing free and open access to information. Libraries are simultaneously community centers, tourist destinations, places to read, places to gather and socialize, places to study, and places to learn – cultural institutions in the heart of every community, and on every campus, throughout Michigan.

Since 1891, the Michigan Library Association has been a vibrant and dynamic service organization with a diverse membership of 1900 libraries and library professionals in rural, suburban and urban areas. Our oversight of professional development, education and advocacy services broadly assists library professionals who are invested in building healthy and dynamic communities in all 83 Michigan counties.

Our vision and mission...that MLA is an indispensable and valued leader, partner and advocate for Michigan libraries, leading their advancement and becoming stronger by working and collaborating together.

I've enclosed a brief flyer with up-to-date information and who to contact in case you have any questions about our school, public and academic libraries. We are here to provide any statistics or other information concerning libraries and library services that you require, and we hope that you will reach out if the need arises. We are here to help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Deborah E. Mikula'.

Deborah E. Mikula
Executive Director



MICHIGAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

ABOUT US

Libraries throughout Michigan are centers for learning and self-discovery, providing free and open access to information to all residents. Libraries are simultaneously community centers, tourist destinations, places to read, places to gather and socialize, places to study, and places to learn – cultural institutions in the heart of every community, and on every campus, throughout Michigan. Michigan residents love their local and school libraries. Michigan libraries provide free access to vital resources for all Michiganders, including our most vulnerable and disenfranchised citizens.

The Michigan Library Association (MLA) leads the advancement of all Michigan libraries through advocacy, education and engagement. As Michigan's oldest and largest library association, MLA has advocated for libraries on behalf of the state's residents since 1891. MLA is uniquely positioned to be a service and advocacy organization. Our membership is comprised of 1900 libraries, library professionals and library supporters who come from urban, suburban and rural areas from all throughout Michigan. We support the growth and professional development of library personnel; provide consulting and technical assistance; advocate for the value of libraries; and ultimately, unite all libraries through a shared ecosystem, giving Michigan residents the ability to connect to our vast wealth of knowledge and formation from cradle to grave.

KEY MLA CONTACTS



Deborah E. Mikula

Executive Director, Michigan Library Association
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Since June 2019, Debbie has served as MLA's Executive Director. For over 35 years, she has been a passionate advocate of arts and culture in the state and on a national basis – leading the Arts Council of Greater Lansing, ArtServe Michigan, Michigan Association of Community Arts Agencies, and the League of Historic American Theatres. Debbie has a bachelor's degree in Theatre from Michigan State University and a Graduate Certificate in Arts Management from The American University in Washington, D.C.



Bob DeVries

Lobbyist, Governmental Consultant Services Inc.
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Before joining Governmental Consultant Services Inc., Bob served for 10 years as Chief of Staff to Senator Arlan Meekhof, the former Michigan Senate Majority Leader. During his time in the legislature, Bob managed many difficult legislative issues and became one of Lansing's leading experts on the legislative process. Bob has his bachelor's degree in political science from Grand Valley State University and his law degree from Thomas M. Cooley Law School.

GCSI was founded in 1983 and has been repeatedly recognized as Lansing's most effective lobbying firm. The firm employs nine lobbyists from diverse political backgrounds. GCSI has represented the Michigan Library Association since 2007.

GCSI

LIBRARIES ARE MORE THAN JUST BOOKS

Michigan libraries serve millions of patrons and continue to innovate, expand and evolve both in-person and virtual programs and services to serve Michigan communities. They are so much more than just lenders of books.

Libraries provide:

- High-speed internet access and digital literacy training
- Resources to facilitate remote learning for educators and students of all ages
- Employment assistance, from resume writing to job search and career skills training
- Support in applying for government services such as veterans benefits, unemployment assistance, and medical coverage
- Programs that foster early literacy, entrepreneurship, and lifelong learning

There are 396 public library systems in Michigan serving our more than 10 million residents (with more than 50% of Michigan residents possessing a library card). State aid to libraries is currently at \$15,067,700 (about .50 cents/capita). Your investment in public libraries helped them achieve these remarkable statistics across Michigan.

In 2020 Michigan's public libraries:

- Loaned out more than 57 million books, movies, music and other items
- Loaned out close to 6.3 million electronic materials like eBooks to patrons
- Had 33 million in-person library visits
- Had over 55 million virtual library visits during the pandemic
- Hosted more than 13,000 virtual programs
- Provided WiFi that was used more than 11 million times
- Employed more than 8,000 people
- Offered curbside services at over 75% of all libraries

FOR MORE INFORMATION



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