

**TO:** ALA Executive Board

**RE:** *Office for Research & Statistics (ORS) Update*

**ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:**  
*Information only.*

**ACTION REQUESTED BY:**  
*Denise M. Davis, Director, ORS*

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**DATE:** *December 10, 2009*

**BACKGROUND:**  
*Update on activities of the Office for Research & Statistics since October, 2009.*

*Attachments:*  
*ORS Report*

# ALA American Library Association

**Update to ALA Executive Board  
Midwinter 2010  
Office for Research & Statistics  
Denise M. Davis, Director**

The following projects were underway since October 2009:

## **1. Member Demographic Survey: ALA Demographic Studies**

Beginning in May 2005, ALA invited members to participate in a brief demographic survey. As of December 17, 2009, 49,757 members have participated (about 75%).

Membership remains largely unchanged since ALA began collecting these characteristics. Not dissimilar from the library profession overall, ALA members are:

- Predominantly female (80.3% female to 18.9% male)
- Predominantly white (86.5%), and
- Hold an MLS or other Master's degrees (64.4% and 26%, respectively).

Baby boomers – born between 1946 and 1964 – represent 37.4 percent of the ALA membership responding as of the December 2009 analysis of the ALA Member Demographic Survey. About four percent of members in the early portion of this range have retired. Members already at retirement age (over age 65 and born in years up to 1944) represent 5.3 percent (2,559) of those who provided a date of birth in their response. If we estimate retirement age beginning at age 62, then about 11.3 percent of members reporting their date of birth fall into that range (approximately 5,435).

Members born between 1965 and 1987 (the most current year of birth reported) represent 44 percent of the ALA membership reporting date of birth. Of these, about 80 percent are women and 19.5 percent are men, aligning with the overall membership distribution by gender.

More information about the survey is online at

<http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/membershipsurveys/index.cfm>

## **2. Public Library Funding and Technology Access Studies**

*Libraries Connect Communities 3: Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study 2008-2009* was released on September 15, 2009. The Executive Brief from the study is attached.

More information about the 2009 key findings, press materials, the overall project and published reports are online at <http://www.ala.org/plinternetfunding>. Detail of the revised issues briefs is appended to this report.

**3. 2008 Academic Library Data** was released by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) on December 9, 2009 (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2010348>).

This represents the fastest turnaround of data, about 9 months from the survey close, and NCES library program staff should be commended for their work. Some key findings include:

- Academic libraries' expenditures increased considerably in FY2008 from FY2006 for electronic books, serial back files and other materials – from \$93.8 million in FY2006 to

\$133.6 million in FY2008 – and for electronic current serial subscriptions – from \$691.6 million in FY2006 to \$1 billion in FY2008.<sup>1</sup>

- During FY 2008, 3,827 academic libraries reported 138.1 million circulation transactions from the general collection. This is an overall decline of 6 million from FY2006, and more than half (3.3 million) are attributed to institutions at the Doctor's level. Institutions at the Less than 4-year level saw a decrease in FY2008 circulation of more than 62,000.<sup>2</sup>
- While FY2008 circulation declined, academic libraries reported more than 11 million books, journal articles and other materials through interlibrary loan transactions, an increase of 294,000 from FY2006. Academic libraries reported receiving from other institutions 10.6 million items, an increase of nearly 430,000 from FY2006.<sup>3</sup>
- Visits to academic libraries increased about 1.5 million from FY2006, as did services to groups by about 27,000.

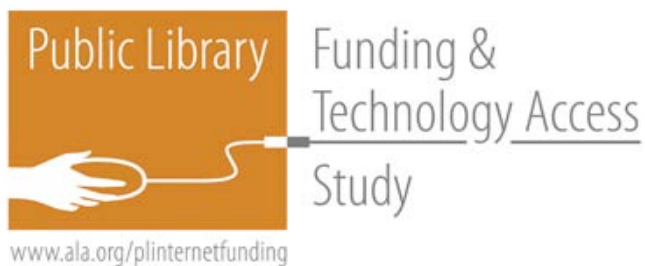
**4. Library Trends Overview 1999-2009** was prepared by ORS for ALA senior management and unit directors and will be made more widely available in January 2010.

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<sup>1</sup> *Academic Libraries*, various years. Table 10. Expenditures for different types of information resources at academic libraries, by control, level, size, and Carnegie classification of institution.

<sup>2</sup> *Academic Libraries*, various years. Table 1. Total circulation, interlibrary loan transactions, and documents received from commercial services at academic libraries, by control, level, size, and Carnegie classification of institutions.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



The Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study gathers a wide range of data related to computer and Internet access in U.S. public libraries – including the number of computers, barriers to high-speed Internet access, Internet services and trainings available, and funding for technology.

The Study research team is developing and publishing topical briefs related to issues affecting communities' access to technology in our public libraries. These documents are not intended to be comprehensive but rather to share key findings from the largest and longest-running study of Internet connectivity in libraries. At least two issues briefs will be published online every year.

Library staff are encouraged to use these briefing papers as educational tools with community stakeholders, including elected officials, funders and program partners, as needed to raise awareness of the specific – and sometimes unique – concerns of libraries around technology deployment. Staff may also use this format as a template for providing local data and examples related to a given topic.

The research team also invites your feedback about future topics we should consider and additional tools that would be useful in raising awareness around your library's technology needs. Please contact [Larra Clark \(lclark@ala.org\)](mailto:lclark@ala.org).

### Issues Briefs



#### [U.S. Public Libraries and E-Government Services](http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/issuesbriefs/IssuesBrief-Egov.pdf)

(<http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/issuesbriefs/IssuesBrief-Egov.pdf>  
*published June 2009*)

U.S. public libraries are on the front lines of connecting people with essential government resources – including unemployment benefits, federal and state emergency assistance, tax filing and more.

"U.S. Public Libraries and E-Government Services" describes the increased use of online government information and services, the critical role of public libraries in helping provide access and assistance using these resources and the challenges that must be addressed to improve e-government at the local, state and federal level.



### **[Supporting Learners in Public Libraries](http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/issuesbriefs/SupportingLearnersRev2009-NewR.pdf)**

(<http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/issuesbriefs/SupportingLearnersRev2009-NewR.pdf> updated October 2009. Published March 2009)

The public library is a key agency in supporting the educational and learning needs of every person in the community. Libraries offer vital resources for early literacy development, homework help, homeschool families, continuing education and lifelong avocations.

"Supporting Learners in U.S. Public Libraries" outlines many of the technology resources public libraries provide learners of all ages, challenges libraries face in meeting growing demand, and describes how sustained funding enables public libraries to offer increased assistance and services to their communities.



### **[Job-Seeking in US Public Libraries](http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/issuesbriefs/JobBrief2009_2F4.pdf)**

([http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/issuesbriefs/JobBrief2009\\_2F4.pdf](http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/issuesbriefs/JobBrief2009_2F4.pdf) updated October 2009. Published February 2009)

Library staff in 10 states report increased use of library computers for job-seeking as more and more employers – from grocery stores to casinos to state governments – require people to apply for jobs online. Americans are depending on libraries not only for free access to computers and the Internet, but also for the assistance and training library staff offer every day.

"Job-seeking in U.S. Public Libraries" discusses the range of library resources available to job seekers and challenges to maintaining these services.



### **[Internet Connectivity in U.S. Public Libraries](http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/issuesbriefs/connectivitybrief_2009_10_fina.pdf)**

([http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/issuesbriefs/connectivitybrief\\_2009\\_10\\_fina.pdf](http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/plftas/issuesbriefs/connectivitybrief_2009_10_fina.pdf) updated October 2009. Published April 2008)

Today's public libraries are thriving technology hubs that millions rely on for Internet access. In addition to providing free access to computers and the Internet, the majority of public libraries offer Wi-fi access, digital reference and downloadable media. As online services and programs become more sophisticated, the need for higher Internet access speeds for libraries grows.

"Internet Connectivity in U.S. Public Libraries" describes the varied opportunities and obstacles facing libraries in acquiring and providing high-speed Internet access in rural, suburban and urban libraries.

Contact the **[Office for Research & Statistics](mailto:ors@ala.org)** ([ors@ala.org](mailto:ors@ala.org)) for questions about content on this page.