

**HSLANJ REMEMBERS**



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**CELEBRATING 25  
YEARS OF  
EXCELLENCE  
IN HEALTH  
SCIENCES  
LIBRARIANSHIP**

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2 April 1997

## **HSLANJ REMEMBERS - 1987-1997**

During the past ten years, HSLANJ has developed as an organization by pursuing the objective it has held since its inception: to improve health care in New Jersey by providing information services in health care organizations and to the public. To this end, HSLANJ was an active participant in the development of the New Jersey multi-type library network during the 1980's. Automation has always been an interest, and the Association responded to the New Jersey State Library's Final Report on Automation by generally supporting its direction for the future.

### **HSLANJ PARTICIPATES IN THE FORMATION OF THE REGIONAL LIBRARY COOPERATIVES**

When the six Regional Library Cooperatives (RLC) were formed in New Jersey, HSLANJ established an RLC Committee to encourage HSLANJ members to join their local cooperatives. The committee's goal was to have 100% participation and also to have a significant number of members in leadership positions in each of the RLCs. Members obtained grants to offer consumer health information and MEDLINE searching to other libraries in their RLCs. The RLCs also offered opportunities for our members to make educational presentations to public librarians on health information.

Many HSLANJ members enjoy the benefits of the free statewide COMET delivery system. Members also can use the Access Center of the NJ State Library, or OCLC directly for Interlibrary Loans. HSLANJ has continued to support the funding of the NJ State Library Network. The Government Relations Committee monitors New Jersey Legislative activities and organizes letter writing campaigns to maintain funding for this valuable State program. Throughout the ten year period, HSLANJ has reminded the State of the importance of providing access to health information for the public, and the role that health sciences libraries have in providing this service.

### **AFFILIATION WITH THE NEW JERSEY HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION**

HSLANJ has also benefited from its affiliation with the New Jersey Hospital Association (NJHA) during the past ten years. HSLANJ became an Allied Member in January of 1984. Not only has the relationship provided excellent meeting facilities at a very reasonable cost, but over the years, many of our speakers on New Jersey health care issues have been from the staff of the Association. Moreover, Corporate Librarian Michelle Volesko has been an ever present resource and provided much needed continuity for a volunteer organization.

A good example of the benefits that our relationship with NJHA have provided is the 1994 retrospective conversion grant. During

the past ten years there have been initiatives within HSLANJ to find ways to provide access to books that are as effective as those available for journal resources. In 1991, a survey was conducted by the Interlibrary Loan and Networking Committee to determine the electronic capabilities of members, the size of their collections, and their interest in such a database. While there was a great deal of interest in having this resource available, it was apparent that obtaining a grant and administering it was not an undertaking for a voluntary organization. In 1994, Volesko and the NJHA applied for a retrospective conversion grant which was offered by the New Jersey State Library. The \$53,000 grant allowed 27 HSLANJ member libraries to have a total of 25,087 records converted to full OCLC-MARC format, including 23,427 monographs, 1,432 audiovisuals, and 228 serials. These records were added to the OCLC database and are accessible to all New Jersey libraries via OCLC or the New Jersey State Library's OCLC Access Center. In addition, each participant received MARC records for their collection on a diskette which they could then use for their own retrospective conversion projects.

#### **HSLANJ PARTNERS WITH NJLA TO PROVIDE HIV/AIDS INFORMATION**

Public librarians recognized the need for timely and accurate information on AIDS and HIV for librarians, staff members and the general public. This need lead to an

important initiative and cooperation between NJLA and HSLANJ. Initially, the NJLA Aids Task Force was formed in 1990. Shortly thereafter, the original NJLA group merged with HSLANJ to form the joint Task Force. This represents the first time the two Associations collaborated to address an information issue critical to the citizens of New Jersey.

Seven years later, the AIDS Task Force remains a vital, productive group working tirelessly as a resource for all New Jersey libraries to provide current and accurate HIV/AIDS information. The Task Force's accomplishments include:

- \* A multimedia continuing education program "HIV/AIDS: Knowing the Issues, Getting The Answers." This program was presented to hundreds of library professionals and paraprofessionals throughout New Jersey between 1990 and 1994.

- \* A one-day professional development program for HSLANJ entitled "Overcoming Barriers to Providing AIDS Information". Seventy people attended the program held in December 1995.

- \*\* "AIDS Answers: a New Jersey Resource Guide." Now in its fourth edition, this guide provides sources of HIV/AIDS information specific for New Jersey residents. It is published by NJLA.

\*The Spring 1992 issue of *New Jersey Libraries*, NJLA's quarterly journal, was devoted to HIV/AIDS. It was edited and written by members of the Task Force.

\*Pamphlet Collection Project: A grant from HSLANJ provides funding for a collection of current pamphlets on HIV/AIDS from many sources. The set of 50 pamphlets was distributed to 100 requesting libraries.

\*Traveling Display titled "New Jerseyans Respond to the Challenge of HIV/AIDS" is currently being exhibited in libraries throughout the State. This professionally produced display was made possible through the support of both parent associations.

### **MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN WHCLIS CONGRESS**

In July 1991, three HSLANJ members participated in the White House Congress on Libraries and Information Services held in Washington DC. New Jersey had an opportunity to send sixteen delegates representing four categories: library professionals, library and information supporters, government officials and citizens. According to a formula based on membership numbers, HSLANJ was invited to nominate four delegates. Candidates agreed to participate in a two day Northeast delegate

education meeting, attend the three day WHCLIS conference and in the following year, participate in at least two state or regional meetings. Three members, Joan Fierberg, Kathy Moeller, and Michelle Volesko attended the conference. Less than a dozen medical librarians attended this three day event which is held every ten years.

The purpose of the Congress is to make recommendations to the President and the Congress regarding issues that affect libraries and information services in their communities. It was also an opportunity to meet with elected officials and professional colleagues. HSLANJ's representatives expressed the view that the speakers recognized the importance of information and libraries. This event provided the impetus for further dialog with legislators when MILA met in Washington DC in 1992. A number of our members took advantage of this opportunity to educate local legislators on the importance of hospital libraries and information services to the patients, and to the community regarding health care issues.

### **THE BHSL NETWORK SAVES MONEY WHILE PROVIDING ACCESS**

Providing access to information resources for our institutions has been another founding principle. In May 1986, the Basic Health Sciences Network (BHSL) was formed with 130 charter members. BHSL evolved from the extensive networking experience of health science librarians in New

Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania. In addition to HSLANJ, the charter members were from the Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island Librarians Consortium (BQSI), the Medical and Scientific Libraries of Long Island (MEDLI), and the Consortium for Health Information and Library Services (CHI) from Pennsylvania. The Interlibrary Loan and Networking Committee from HSLANJ set a 2% goal. This meant that if HSLANJ members received 2% of their ILLs from BHSL, the network would be deemed a success. The actual percentage for the first year was 7%.

The BHSL Network has provided participants with quick access to large number of titles with an impressive cost savings for individual libraries. For example the Fall 1991 issue of *HSLANJ Speaks* indicated that there were 320 BHSL Members who shared 226,415 free loans for a savings of over \$1.8 million. As time has progressed, these savings have become even more important because of the cost constraints emerging in the health care environment. In 1996, the BHSL network had 475 members and provided over 493,218 loans. The average saving per member was \$1,100 for 1996.

#### **A TIME OF DRAMATIC CHANGE IN HEALTH CARE DELIVERY**

The elimination of the DRG payment structure for hospitals in New Jersey, health care reform, and the emergence of managed

care have had a continuing impact on our institutions and libraries. Many HSLANJ members have experienced staff cut backs and reduced budgets. Mary Anne Toner, formerly of Helene Fuld Medical Center in Trenton, writing in the Fall 1995 issue of *Pulse*, stated, "we have been fortunate to date to have had very few health sciences libraries close in New Jersey. In one case where they closed a library in a medical facility, the decision makers were soon scrambling, to rectify their mistake. The library and staff were re-established." Even without direct cuts, health sciences libraries have grappled with inflation and the need to invest in computers and new services at a time when funds are difficult to obtain. At the same time, library users' expectations have risen and the length of stay has decreased. All of these factors have put a premium on the speed of information delivery.

HSLANJ has utilized its general meetings to provide education on topics pertinent to the changes in health care, emphasizing those taking place in New Jersey. Programs on the internet and new technologies have been sponsored. Several programs focused on changing JCAHO standards. The aim was to not only have our members meet the standards in their libraries, but to also be able to contribute to their hospital's overall information management plan. In the same article, Toner comments, "with the reality of the electronic library looming large in the twenty-first century, we librarians, along with our colleagues in other information areas, are the ones to shape the management of information in our institutions. Our expertise regarding

published (knowledge based ) information is unique and truly valuable. This information, which can be located quickly and cost effectively by well-trained librarians, does save lives. In a medical setting, librarians working with other health professionals, make an unquestionable and valuable contribution to patient well-being."

### **EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBERS**

Expanding the knowledge base of members has been another crux of HSLANJ's existence. Since March 1986, HSLANJ has offered 96 CEU credits approved by the Medical Library Association. This has been an important opportunity for members who are obtaining or continuing certification in the Academy of Health Information Professionals.

In 1992, the HSLANJ Board decided that educational programs should be developed on an annual basis. The Vice president is responsible for the three General Meeting programs. The Education Committee was formed to assist the Vice President, who chairs the committee. This committee surveys the membership for their interests and needs. Other programs, such as the MEDLARS Refresher and Reviewer courses, are also the responsibility of this committee.

In recent years, other HSLANJ Committees have developed and sponsored educational programs for the General Meetings. One of the most memorable was the one sponsored by the NJLA/HSLANJ Joint Task Force on AIDS/HIV held in 1995.

### **IMPROVING ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

As a volunteer organization, HSLANJ relies on a committee structure to accomplish its goals. Over the past ten years this structure has been redesigned and the missions of some committees has changed. From 1987 to 1989 the Finance Committee was a focus of development. The aim was to put the organization on a sound financial track to provide the funding necessary to achieve the Association's goals. For example, it was determined that HSLANJ did not have the resources to complete a benchmark study which had been one of the aims of the Long Range Planning Committee. On the other hand, the \$50 Institutional membership fee has provided the resources needed to improve our educational programs and to purchase computers and software to allow us to produce our own membership lists and directories.

In 1993, the newly formed Hospitality Committee suggested that a membership manual be produced to give new members an introduction to the many health and library organizations in New Jersey, information about HSLANJ, and the definitions of the numerous acronyms. Carla Tobias developed the manual which has benefited all HSLANJ members. In the same year, the membership directory, which is the responsibility of the Membership Secretary, was added to the manual. Prior to this time, Phillip Greene, and Alan Block, managers of the Shrewsbury and Tenafly Offices of EBSCO Subscription Services, had edited and printed the Directory for the Association.

In 1994, the HSLANJ Board decided to engage the services of the Support Center of New Jersey to assist in developing a strategic plan. Changes in health care, as well as rapid changes in technology in delivering information, were factors that contributed to the decision to invest in strategic planning at this time. Marie Ziegler facilitated a two-day retreat that ultimately resulted in a new mission statement, goals, and objectives, as well as some suggestions for a new committee structure to carry out the plan.

One of the most active committees has been the Information Technology Committee. The committee has surveyed members' needs and presented programs both at the General Meetings and locally. This committee has also been active in promoting electronic resources for HSLANJ use, including a Listserv and web page. The web page is found at <http://www.njcommunity.org/hslanj>

The Public Relations Committee has expanded its duties to include the responsibility of the Awards Committee. The committee mission includes publicizing Association programs and the accomplishments of its members. It also publicizes the awards to the New Jersey Health Care Administrator of the Year and the New Jersey Health Science Librarian of the Year given at the Spring annual meeting. Other new committees include the Value/Clarification Committee and the Consumer Health Committee. On the Board level, the office of Secretary has be divided into two responsibilities: Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary.

## **NETWORKING TO SUPPORT OUR MEMBERS**

The Presidents' reports of the past ten years indicate the dedication that individual members have to HSLANJ and to each other. The benefit that members receive from knowing each other and exchanging ideas has often been mentioned.

This dedication was highlighted during the tenure of Mary Anne Toner, who became ill while she was Vice President. Although her illness was severe, she stayed in office and was able to implement the strategic plan. Her thank you notes indicate the support she felt from the HSLANJ membership. Her death on May 7, 1996, came just as her presidency ended. This was a difficult and trying time for all HSLANJ members who knew her personally.

## **HSLANJ CHRONOLOGY 1987 - 1997**

**1986 - 1987 President: Patricia Regenberg**  
May 1986, BHSL (Basic Health Sciences Library) network began with 133 members. During the first year 7% of the total interlibrary loans for HSLANJ members were filled by BHSL participants. Tax exempt status was granted by the IRS. The first HSLANJ achievement award was given to Jack Conway, librarian at Jersey City Medical Center. 7.2 CEUs were offered.

**1987-1988 President: Jo-Anne Searle**  
HSLANJ members participated in the formation of the NJ six Regional Library Cooperatives. Our members' participation, leadership activities, and satisfaction were monitored by

the RLC Committee. A computer was purchased for committee work. The Board studied the Association's finances. Our members' UCMP journal holdings are input into the NJ Union List of Serials for resource sharing purposes. The Long Range Planning Committee investigates a union list for books. The 15th Anniversary Celebration was held at the Scanticon in March. 6.6 CEUs were offered.

**1988-1989 President: Cathy Boss**

The New Jersey Medical Society asked for input on health science library standards for their use in accrediting continuing medical education activities in hospitals. HSLANJ responded to the NJ State Library Final Report to Develop a Library Automation Blueprint for New Jersey. 9.6 CEUs were offered.

**1989-1990 President: Lee Hover**

A survey tool to measure the value of library services was developed by the Long Range Planning Committee. It was included in an MLA Docket. NY-NJ MLA Chapter and HSLANJ hold a joint Fall meeting in Princeton. Members had an opportunity to obtain 8 CEUs at this meeting. Massachusetts and Pennsylvania consortia were added to BHSL. During the year, BHSL participants saved over \$600,000 in ILL charges. 3 CEUs were offered.

**1990-1991 President: Mary Scanlon**

Institutional membership was defined and required for participation in the NJHSN which also allows access to the growing BHSL network. This decision improved HSLANJ's finances. The NJLA/HSLANJ Aids Task Force

was founded. Certificates of Recognition were given to active association members. 9 CEUs were offered.

**1991-1992 President: James Delo**

The 20th Anniversary Celebration was held in March. HSLANJ past presidents were honored. The White House Conference on Library and Information Services is held in July; Kathy Moeller, Joan Fierberg and Michelle Volesko attended. 7 CEUs were offered.

**1992-1993 President: Duressa Pujat**

A laptop computer was purchased and a membership database was created. The survey tool was completed and distributed to the membership. The HSLANJ banner was purchased. The AIDS Task Force distributed a pamphlet collection on AIDS topics to members and public libraries. HSLANJ funded this project. An ad hoc committee on library closing or staff reduction was formed. 12.75 CEUs were offered.

**1993-1994 President: Cathy Weglarz**

Carla Tobias and the newly formed Hospitality Committee produced HSLANJ Membership Manual. The Awards committee was created and the first Health Science Librarian and Hospital Administrator awards were given. The NJLA/HSLANJ Task Force produced the pamphlet *Aids Answers* and programs were given in all of the RLC regions. Three New Jersey Link Training sessions were sponsored. The Association's archives were reorganized. 9.75 CEUs were offered.



**1994-1995 President: Jackie Mardikian**

The Support Group of New Jersey was engaged to assist in developing a strategic plan for HSLANJ. A mission statement was developed and goals and objectives were established at a two day retreat. New Jersey Health Sciences Librarian of the Year: Michelle Volesko. 9 CEUs were offered.

**1995-1996 President: Mary Anne Toner**

The Strategic plan was implemented. The committee structure was reorganized and several new permanent committees were added. New Jersey Health Sciences Librarian of the year: Patricia Regenberg. 10 CEUs were offered.

**1996-1997 President: Claudia Allocco**

HSLANJ celebrates it 25th anniversary with a special meeting at the Shadowbrook Inn. Information Technology committee offers QuickDoc meeting. HSLANJ Web site debuts 13.1 CEUs were offered.

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#### IN SUMMARY

The founding principles of HSLANJ are important ones, and during the past ten years, the Association has had great success in advancing them. In the final analysis, it is the networking of colleagues and the support of an organization that unites members who are often the only librarian in their health care institution, that has made HSLANJ what it is. The future of HSLANJ rests on its continuing efforts to promote health care through information services and its corollary principle of improving the education of its members. The dedication of the individuals who have made HSLANJ what it is serves as inspiration for the future.

#### CREDITS

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