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***LIBRARY JOURNAL* IDENTIFIES STAR LIBRARIES, INCLUDING 63 NEW STARS, IN THE LATEST ROUND OF THE *LJ* INDEX OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE**

[Full article at www.LibraryJournal.com/ljindex2010.](http://www.LibraryJournal.com/ljindex2010)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW YORK, New York, 4 October 2010—*Library Journal* has named the newest group of America's Star Libraries, as rated by the *LJ* Index of Public Library Service, a national rating of public libraries. The *LJ* Index, sponsored by Baker & Taylor's Bibliosats, ranks libraries based on how their performance compares to peer libraries. It also provides guidance on how all public libraries can better assess and improve service to their users.

America's Star Libraries 2010 identifies 258 libraries nationwide that are delivering exceptional levels of service. Overall, the *LJ* Index 2010 scores not just the Star Libraries but 7,407 public libraries—up from 7,268 in the last round—with total expenditures of \$10,000 or more that serve populations of at least 1,000 according to four per capita output measures that indicate public service—circulation, visits, program attendance, and public Internet uses. The top libraries in each category, organized by ranges of operating expenditures, are assigned five, four, or three Michelin guide-like stars.

Sixty-three libraries received their first star ratings this round, including Dry Point Township Library, IL; Skidompha PL, ME; Battle Creek PL, NE; Sheldon PL, IA; Bee Cave PL, TX; Sanibel PL, FL; Ligonier PL, IN; Birmingham PL, AL; Lower Marion Library System, PA; and larger urban systems such as the San Francisco Public Library and Denver Public Library.

Based on 2008 data released by the Institute of Museums and Library Services (IMLS) several months ago, this is the first round of statistics collected since the onset of the economic recession in December 2007. It shows that while libraries nationwide are facing broad, ongoing budget cuts, they continue to provide the important services their communities require.

In fact, overall, figures for the four service outputs measured by the *LJ* Index rose during this data collection period. When asked to reflect on the reasons for the increase in usage, the star libraries identified several common issues including the recession, funding, facilities, staffing, collections, technology, programs, policies, strategic planning and internal research, extraordinary circumstances, and data collection methods.

For a more detailed discussion of the issues affecting increased usage, more about new star libraries, factors that made a difference for the libraries that achieved star status, a state-by-state view of the stars, and full coverage of the new round of America's Star Libraries and the entire *LJ* Index go to www.LibraryJournal.com/ljindex2010.

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