

# From the Editor's Desk:

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## *Building Bridges Across Indiana*

It is with pleasure that we present this special issue of *Indiana Libraries* focused on such topics as information literacy, activities that adopt new and emerging technologies for outreach purposes, and programs that introduce students and adult patrons to library research tools. The articles featured here showcase the innovative approaches that librarians are developing across the state in order to strengthen the role of libraries in empowering and educating diverse communities of users. It is with respect and admiration for the authors that we put forward this issue full of their creative and ground-breaking ideas, as we recognize that innovation also requires risk-taking. We hope that these ideas will inspire others to embrace uncertainty and opportunity as a means of broadening the influence of libraries and librarians in Indiana.

Librarians must move beyond their traditional functions and actively seek out partnerships with patrons of all ages through creative projects and programs that address the learning needs and enhance the research activities of their constituents. Each paper in this special issue clearly shows the reciprocal benefits of library instruction and outreach. Projects such as “Using the Cause of Equine Welfare as a Platform for Teaching the Skills of Information Literacy” and the PLA Highsmith Library Innovation Award-winning, “KiPS – Kindergarten Prep School,” showcase the creativity with which librarians are making community connections and establishing their value as educators.

Increasingly, patrons' expectations of libraries' support and services have moved beyond traditional models. Public libraries, for example, have a long-standing commitment to assisting patrons in accessing information about government services. A notable project documented in this edition, “Connecting Communities with Health Insurance: Public Libraries and the Affordable Care Act” demonstrates the response of one public library system to the ever expanding needs of its clientele. Another example of the changing nature of libraries as a result of user needs and new modes of information access is evidenced by “Collaborating for Our Community: A Case Report” which elaborates on a partnership between a public library and two academic libraries merging resources and services to support their community. As you discover some of the many creative initiatives born out of libraries around Indiana, a common theme serves to express the very nature of library outreach and instruction in the 21st century – innovation through collaboration.