

Library Seeks \$872 Million for Fiscal 2023

The request supports modernization and public engagement.

BY WENDI A. MALONEY

Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden has asked a House Appropriations subcommittee to approve a budget of \$871.8 million for fiscal 2023. The request aims to advance public engagement and modernization of the Library's information technology systems and financial infrastructure, Hayden testified on April 27.

The hearing before the Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch delved into the specifics of the request as well as cyberthreats directed at the Library and challenges to collections storage.

The Library is proposing an increase of \$32.8 million, or 3.9%, over enacted funding levels for fiscal 2022, including \$24.4 million for new initiatives focused heavily on expanding staff expertise and modernization. These initiatives, Hayden said, are necessary for the Library to continue to fulfill its mission.

The balance of the increase represents mandatory pay and price-level increases and nonrecurring monies to implement phases of previously funded initiatives.

"Over the past few years, the Library has made significant strides in the areas of modernizing essential technology and optimizing operations to facilitate easier and robust access to its collections for Congress and the

BUDGET, CONTINUED ON 5



Shawn Miller

Joy Harjo celebrated her landmark three-year tenure as U.S. poet laureate in the Coolidge Auditorium on April 28.

Joy Harjo Concludes Term with Joyous Song and Music

The poet laureate ended her laureateship with a showcase of Native art and peoples.

BY SAHAR KAZMI

The crowd in the Coolidge Auditorium was already in jubilant spirits when singer-songwriter Jennifer Kreisberg kicked off last Thursday's closing event for U.S. poet laureate Joy Harjo with a soaring honor song. "Think about something good in your life," Kreisberg began, and by the time she concluded her powerful performance, the audience was on its feet in celebration.

Standing backstage during the opening song, Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden noted that she and Harjo could feel the elec-

tricity of the evening coursing through the room. "We had to hold hands," she said when she arrived onstage to welcome the audience. "Music is unifying and universal."

Ancestral music was a central element of Harjo's inaugural reading in 2019, when she performed on saxophone accompanied by a three-piece band. This year's closing event recalled both the emotion of that first reading and the continuing vitality of Native storytelling traditions.

An enrolled member of the Mvskoke Nation and a promi-

JOY HARJO, CONTINUED ON 8

NOTICES

DONATED TIME

The following employees have satisfied eligibility requirements to receive leave donations from other staff members. Contact Amy McAllister at amcallister@loc.gov.

Christopher Arellano
Lynette Brown

Michelle Dubert-Bellrichard

COVID PROTOCOL UPDATED

The District of Columbia reported last week that the level of COVID-19 transmission in Washington, D.C., has fallen from medium to low. Following this change, the Library is no longer requiring unvaccinated employees to complete weekly COVID-19 screening tests [as reported in the April 22 Gazette issue](#).

Given the variability in infection rates, local conditions are likely to change regularly, and the Library will adjust its preventive measures accordingly. Questions? Send an email to hso@loc.gov.

CAPITOL HILL TENNIS CLUB

The Capitol Hill Tennis Club, an informal organization of Senate, House, Supreme Court and Library staff members and former staffers, begins its 53rd season on May 8 with social doubles, drills and lessons from 3 to 6 p.m.

The club will meet every Sunday through Sept. 18 and welcomes players of all levels, from beginner to advanced, to play on the clay courts at the tennis center in East Potomac Park. Membership for permanent, full-time Library staff is \$100 for the season.

For information, contact Marc Levinson at mlevinson@crs.loc.gov or (202) 707-7240.

GAZETTE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

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The Library's central mission is to engage, inspire and inform Congress and the American people with a universal and enduring source of knowledge and creativity.

ABOUT THE GAZETTE

An official publication of the Library of Congress, The Gazette encourages Library managers and staff to submit articles and photographs of general interest. Submissions will be edited to convey the most necessary information.

Back issues of The Gazette in print are available in the Communications Office, LM 143. Electronic archived issues and a color PDF file of the current issue are available online at loc.gov/staff/gazette.

GAZETTE WELCOMES LETTERS FROM STAFF

Staff members are invited to use the Gazette for lively and thoughtful debate relevant to Library issues. Letters must be signed by the author, whose place of work and telephone extension should be included so we can verify authorship. If a letter calls for management response, an explanation of a policy or actions or clarification of fact, we will ask for management response.—Ed.

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GAZETTE DEADLINES

The deadline for editorial copy for the May 20 Gazette is Wednesday, May 11.

Email editorial copy and letters to the editor to mhartsell@loc.gov and wmal@loc.gov.

To promote events through the Library's online calendar (www.loc.gov/loc/events) and the Gazette Calendar, email event and contact information to calendar@loc.gov by 9 a.m. Monday of the week of publication.

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Talking Books Narrators Win (Another) Award

BY MARK LAYMAN

What do “The Collected Poems of Bertolt Brecht,” “Dave Barry’s History of the Millennium (So Far)” and Dr. Seuss’ “If I Ran the Circus” have in common with “The Complete Western Stories of Elmore Leonard,” John Updike’s “Villages” and Erich Maria Remarque’s “The Night in Lisbon”?

Besides being among the 150,000-plus audio books and magazines on BARD, the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled’s (NLS) Braille and Audio Reading Download website, all are narrated by Michael Kramer.

So are nine books by fantasy author Brandon Sanderson, including “Rhythm of War,” for which Kramer and his wife of 30 years, Jennifer Mendenhall, recently won an Audie Award.

Presented by the Audio Publishers Association, Audie Awards recognize outstanding achievement by the authors, narrators, publishers and producers of audiobooks. This was the second shared Audie Award for Kramer and Mendenhall, who records professionally as Kate Reading. A former NLS media lab employee, Mendenhall has won three solo Audie Awards.

Kramer and Mendenhall “are two of the finest narrators with whom I have ever worked,” Celeste Lawson, head of NLS’ media lab, said. “Michael’s dedication to the Talking Books program is evidenced by the grace and industry with which he tackles any genre of literature and any project. We’ve been fortunate to have narrators of such high caliber working with us in the media lab.”

Kramer has been a narrator in the media lab since 1993. He spends eight to 15 hours a week at NLS, while also narrating books for commercial and independent publishers at the home studio he and Mendenhall share. Kramer and Mendenhall recorded “Rhythm of War” for Macmillan



Mark Layman

Michael Kramer in a recording booth in the NLS media lab.

Audio; it is in the NLS collection as a commercial audiobook, to which NLS has added navigation features and encryption.

Working in the NLS studio gives Kramer the opportunity to narrate a wider range of material than in his commercial recordings. Recently, for example, he narrated an issue of Piano Technicians Journal, one of more than 50 magazines in audio available to NLS patrons.

The audio version of “Rhythm of War” runs 57 hours, with Kramer and Mendenhall taking turns behind the mic depending on whether a chapter was

written from a male or a female character’s point of view.

Kramer said he particularly enjoyed “Rhythm of War” and is glad it was added to the NLS collection because “it really takes on disability – what it means to be broken and what it takes to heal.”

From his decades of experience, Kramer has learned “there’s a difference between getting the words right and telling a story.” In narrating a book, he said, “The goal is to engage the reader’s imagination with an author’s story in the clearest way – to, in effect, disappear.” ■

 An advertisement for the Library of Congress Alumni Network. It features a black and white photograph of a man in a suit shouting into a megaphone, set against a red background with a white outline. The text is arranged around the image.

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Cheryl Livingston

Kevin Livingston

Kevin Livingston is the primary driver for Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden.

Tell us about your background.

I was born and raised in the District of Columbia. I graduated from Paul Laurence Dunbar High School and attended the University of the District of Columbia.

In the 11th grade, I landed a part-time job at Giant Food to help defray the cost of some of my high school expenses. I ended up working there for 26 years and five months until I retired in 2016.

During my tenure, I provided team support and consistent and exceptional customer service. I worked in both the deli and the dairy sections, so I can tell you a thing or two about meats and cheeses. It was a wonderful experience working with my co-workers and meeting all the terrific customers along the way.

What brought you to the Library?

Growing up, I always used to hear people say, “Man, you better try to get you a government job and retire from there.”

While still employed at Giant, I talked to people in the federal

government to find out if they were hiring. One day, an opening came up for a 120-day detail in the mailroom at the Library. I applied, and the rest is history.

I started in 1993 and have been here for almost 30 years. I worked my way from the mailroom to the Transportation Services Section. I started out driving shuttle runs and delivering materials. When the driver for James Billington, the former Librarian of Congress, retired, I decided to apply for the position. I got the job!

I have had the privilege of serving both the late Dr. Billington and Dr. Hayden. I strive to provide courteous transportation service for the Librarian, senior-level managers and special guests, transporting them to various meetings and special events. I have come to realize my role in the strategic plan and value the part that I play.

What are some of your standout job moments?

There are plenty of exciting stand-out moments to choose from. But providing transportation services for the great, world-renowned author Stephen King and the late, great Hank Aaron especially stand out. They’re two of the most down-to-earth gentlemen one could ever meet.

Another special moment would be graduating from the Career Development Program in 2015 and serving as one of the student keynote speakers for my class. I also received the Marjorie and James Billington Staff Recognition Award in spring 2018 for outstanding contributions and distinguished service to the institution.

What do you enjoy doing outside work?

What don’t I enjoy doing outside work? I enjoy a lot of activities, but my favorite is basketball. Back in 2018, I started officiating local basketball games. As a result of officiating and taking on a leadership role in my community, I have met some talented and promising basketball players as well as dedicated and respected officials that have changed my perception of the game on both sides of the ball.

I also enjoy traveling, dancing, bowling and bike riding.

What is something your coworkers may not know about you?

As a junior in high school, I took up acting and starred in a rendition of the hit play “A Raisin in the Sun” by Lorraine Hansberry. I portrayed the main character, Walter Lee, best performed by the late Sidney Poitier. ■

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public,” Tim Ryan (D-Ohio) stated at the start of the virtual hearing.

New funding requested for fiscal 2023, he observed, is targeted at initiatives “to increase your investments in IT and ensure the safety of the Library and provide the best visitor experience.”

Ryan presided over the hearing as the subcommittee’s chair. Also present were Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-Washington), the ranking member; Mark Amodei (R-Nevada); Ed Case (D-Hawaii); Katherine M. Clark (D-Massachusetts); Adriano Espaillat (D-New York); and Dan Newhouse (R-Washington).

Joining Hayden at the witness table were Mark Sweeney, principal deputy Librarian of Congress; Judith Conklin, the Library’s chief information officer; Mary Mazanec, director of the Congressional Research Service (CRS); and Register of Copyrights Shira Perlmutter.

Hayden testified that the Library seeks budget increases to optimize and further modernize the technology it uses, building on the modern IT infrastructure it now has thanks to the subcommittee’s support.

The cloud, she said, has become an important part of the Library’s IT planning, and the fiscal 2023 request includes \$1.5 million to establish a Cloud Management Office within the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO). The monies would cover the addition of seven staff specialists in cloud operations.

The new program, Hayden said, “will enable us to integrate cloud solutions into our traditional IT infrastructure while supporting all of our business needs.”

The fiscal 2023 request adds a total of 59 new staff positions in support of proposed initiatives.

“These positions will add to the expertise of our staff members that we currently have,” Hayden testified.

To adapt and optimize the Integrated Research and Information

System (IRIS) of CRS, the Library is asking for \$7.2 million, including 12 new employees. IRIS will improve the way CRS publishes reports, manages data and provides timely analyses to Congress.

To expand the Library’s IT planning and project management as demand grows for new and enhanced technology, the request seeks \$4.1 million, including five new employees.

Several proposed initiatives relate to stabilizing the Library’s financial infrastructure. “That is essential to all our operations,” Hayden said.

The request includes \$1.5 million, including one staff member, to optimize the financial management system of the legislative branch, which has migrated to the cloud. The financial system supports eight legislative branch agencies, including the Library, and the Library’s Financial Systems Division manages its hosting.

In addition, the Library seeks \$1.8 million to continue to optimize the Library’s financial infrastructure. The monies, which would support six new staff members, would allow the Financial Reports Division to respond to substantial recent growth in accounting and financial reporting requirements.

To automate and integrate payroll operations, some aspects of which are still paper-based, the Library seeks \$2.4 million, including two employees, to implement a new integrated personnel and payroll processing system managed by the Department of the Interior’s Integrated Business Center.

The request also includes \$3.1 million for the next phase of the enterprise planning and management program initiated in the fiscal 2022 enacted budget. Those monies supported testing of new cost management and data analytics capabilities. The request for fiscal 2023 would enable hiring of seven staff members to help stakeholders across the Library acquire and analyze data associated with business processes.

Also in the realm of data analytics,

the request asks for \$1.7 million and six new staff members to build the Copyright Office’s ability to carry out economic research and fee and cost analysis. If approved, the monies would come entirely from Copyright Office service fees, or offsetting collections.

As the Library prepares to unveil its new visitor experience, the request also seeks \$1.1 million to hire 13 employees to enhance visitor engagement. These staff members will support the Library’s postpandemic operating model in an expanded public space – the initiative will open 12,000 additional square feet in the Jefferson Building.

“The Library expects a significant increase in visitors in the next three to five years,” Hayden testified.

During a question-and-answer exchange, Ryan asked for an update on the new visitor experience.

Hayden reported that the project is on schedule and within budget, as verified recently by an Office of the Inspector General audit. The project’s treasures gallery will open in late 2023, she said, followed by its youth center in spring 2024. A welcome center and orientation gallery, the project’s final component, will open in fall 2025.

Hayden also told the subcommittee that the Library anticipates completing private fundraising for the visitor experience soon – the Library committed to raising \$20 million in private monies to complement appropriated funds. Led by David Rubenstein, chair of the Madison Council, the Library has secured \$15.7 million in pledges and has \$5 million in hand.

Ryan and Case inquired into the Library’s ability to counter cyberthreats.

“Cyberthreats, particularly coming from nation states, have targeted federal IT systems,” Ryan said. “They’re using very sophisticated and ever-changing cyberattack techniques.”

BUDGET, CONTINUED ON 6

Breakdown of Appropriations Request

The Library's fiscal 2023 budget request consists of four separate appropriations: Library of Congress, salaries and expenses, which includes the Office of the Librarian and other service units; Congressional Research Service (CRS), salaries and expenses; Copyright Office, salaries and expenses; and Books for the Blind and Print Disabled, salaries and expenses.

Library of Congress

The request seeks a total budget of \$579.9 million for Library of Congress salaries and expenses, including the Office of the Librarian, the Office of the Chief Operating Officer, the Office of the Chief Information Officer, the Library Collections and Services Group and the Office of the Inspector General.

That figure represents an increase of \$29.3 million, or 5.3%, compared with the fiscal 2022 operating plan.

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"The Library is a constant target," Conklin responded, "as evidenced by the nearly 200,000 attempted cyberattacks a year, including many from the advanced nation-state actors."

That said, the Library has "invested smartly" in cybersecurity over the past few years with the committee's support, and it integrates IT security into all of its modernization projects, Conklin said.

"Our main challenge is that we can never rest on these accomplishments," she added. "The threats are constantly evolving, and we must adapt in real time to thwart them."

In the fiscal 2023 request, support for cybersecurity is folded into the base funding sought for OCIO, Conklin said.

Clark, Espallat and Newhouse asked about the status of the

The request seeks funding for 2,272 FTEs, including 45 new FTEs compared with the fiscal 2022 operating plan.

CRS

For CRS, the Library is requesting a total of \$132.6 million for fiscal 2023 salaries and expenses, an increase of \$3.5 million, or 2.7%, compared with its fiscal 2022 operating plan. The CRS request funds 641 FTEs, an increase of 8 compared with the fiscal 2022 budget.

Copyright

The Library seeks \$100.7 million for Copyright Office salaries and expenses for fiscal 2023, an increase of \$2.6 million, or 2.7%, compared with the fiscal 2022 operating budget.

The total budget figure includes an appropriation of \$53.8 million plus authorization to spend \$43.9 million in offsetting collections and

\$3 million in unobligated balances from prior years.

The request seeks funding authorization for 478 FTEs, an increase of 6 compared with the fiscal 2022 operating plan.

Books for the Blind and Print Disabled

The Library is requesting a total appropriation of \$58.7 million for National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled salaries and expenses for fiscal 2023, a decrease of \$2.6 million, or 4.2%, compared with the fiscal 2022 operating budget.

The request seeks funding authorization for 113 FTEs, the same number supported by the fiscal 2022 operating plan.

More information about Library budget requests is [available on the Library's website](#). ■

Library's Module 7 preservation and storage facility in Fort Meade, Maryland.

Funding for the project was approved in the fiscal 2021 budget of the Architect of the Capitol (AOC), which administers and awards design and construction contracts for Library storage facilities. The monies were subsequently reprogrammed to address Capitol campus security concerns in the immediate aftermath of Jan. 6, 2021.

"It's shovel-ready and desperately needed by the Library for our growing collections," Sweeney said of Module 7.

Once funding is established, since much of the design has been completed, AOC and the Library "could move very quickly to construction," he said. In the absence of funding, the Library would run out of space for collections at Fort Meade in fiscal 2025.

Herrera Beutler asked whether the Library has begun to plan for potential passage of a bill directing the American Folklife Center to collect stories of individuals' experiences of the pandemic (it has, Hayden said). And Clark asked if the Library has made progress toward enabling digital submissions to the Veterans History Project (Hayden responded affirmatively).

"This committee will continue to support the Library of Congress," Ryan said in concluding the hearing. "You are invaluable to this institution. We all believe that it's our duty to protect the collections and give a good-quality experience to the American taxpayers. So, we are going continue to support you on that." ■

Jewish American Heritage Month Kicks Off with Updated Website

Celebrate Jewish American Heritage Month this May by exploring the latest updates for the [multi-agency website](#) that honors Jewish history every year.

Enhanced by design and development staff in the Office of the Chief Information Officer in collaboration with Library partners, the 2022 additions to the site include connections to nearly 400 historical public television and radio programs from the Jewish American Heritage Collection at the American Archive of Public Broadcasting, as well as a host of other primary source documents and

research aids for teachers. Visitors can also find historical images of celebrated Jewish Americans, exhibits on Jewish humor and storytelling and audio interviews with Holocaust survivors.

The Library joined the National Archives and Records Administration, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Gallery of Art, the National Park Service and the Holocaust Memorial Museum in bringing this portal together to commemorate the lives and legacies of Jewish Americans.

11 WEDNESDAY

Webinar: In this virtual business research orientation, learn how to navigate the online catalog and resources specific to business research. 1 p.m., [register](#). Contact: nabu@loc.gov.

12 THURSDAY

Webinar: Join reference librarian Jason Zarin for an orientation to legal research focusing on U.S. case law. 11 a.m., [register](#). Contact: kgoles@loc.gov.

Live at the Library: Tracy K. Smith, former U.S. poet laureate, and composer Gregory Spears will discuss their new opera, "Castor and Patience," during performances of excerpts. 6:30 p.m., Coolidge Auditorium. [Get tickets](#). Contact: 7-8000.

Request ADA accommodations for events five business days in advance at 7-6362 or ADA@loc.gov.

See www.loc.gov/events

RIP JIMI



Karen Keninger, the retired director of the National Library for the Blind and Print Disabled, has shared that her guide dog, Jimi, recently passed away. Here, he sleeps at Keninger's feet during a congressional hearing. She is now working with a new guide dog, Dave. "He's doing well," she said, "but it's hard to replace Jimi."

Shawn Miller

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Report suspected illegal activities, waste, fraud, abuse and mismanagement in Library of Congress administration and operations to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). A link to all Library regulations is available on the staff intranet at <http://staff.loc.gov/sites/rules-and-regulations/>.

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JOY HARJO, CONTINUED FROM 1

nent advocate for Native arts and people, Harjo was the 23rd U.S. poet laureate. She was the first Native American to serve in the office and only the second laureate to receive a third term since 1943. Her tenure, although disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, was characterized by her enduring love of language and passion for uplifting the distinctive voices of Native nations artists.

Her signature project for the Library, the interactive Story-Map and poetry collection "[Living Nations. Living Words.](#)" highlights original works from 47 Native poets featuring audio recordings and artist biographies laid out across an immersive map of the Americas.

At Thursday's closing event, David Hill, principal chief of the Mvskoke Nation, praised Harjo as one of his community's "most celebrated and esteemed citizens."

"Throughout her career and life, her work has honored our Mvskoke language, culture and tradition while connecting to the hearts and spirits of people around the world," Hill said. He concluded his speech with a reading from Harjo's reflective poem, "This Morning I Pray for My Enemies."

With all the light Harjo has shined on Native artistry and culture throughout her career, it was no surprise that when she took the stage on Thursday night, it was to thunderous applause, a standing ovation and cheers of "I love you!" from the crowd. "I love you, too!" Harjo laughed in return.

She began her closing performance with more music, playing a rich Native American flute composition written, Harjo said, "for the original keepers of this land." Harjo described her song as evoking connections to the origin stories of blues and jazz, musical styles with deep roots in the American South.

Harjo's artistic influences have always come from her ancestry, the stories and traditions of the Mvskoke and other Native peoples. "My allusions

and cultural references [are] Creek, not Greek," she said.

As she took the audience on a journey through the works that shaped her art, Harjo recounted reading Emily Dickinson's poetry for the first time as a child and feeling comforted by the distant voice asking her, "I'm Nobody! Who are you? Are you - Nobody - too?"

She spoke about one of the first poems she ever read by a Native artist, Phil George's "Battle Won Is Lost," and how the works of Mvskoke poet Alexander Posey and Kiowa writer N. Scott Momaday "turned [her] to the making of poetry."

Harjo also recalled her friends and family urging her to consider another discipline. "We needed doctors, lawyers and educators ... a profession that mattered to the betterment of our communities," she said.

But, she added, "Poets are also warriors of change. I decided that when I left this world, I wanted Native peoples to be seen as human beings. Poetry would be my way."

Harjo concluded her speech by inviting the young poet Portlyn Houghton-Harjo (no relation) to read one of her own works for the audience, an ancestor poem created in honor of the occasion.

Afterward, Harjo and Kreisberg came back onstage to perform a new musical version of the laureate's poem, "Remember." Harjo opened her inaugural reading in 2019 with the same poem, and just as she'd done then, Harjo decided to push the limits of her musical talents.

"I learned to play [saxophone] onstage," she recalled of her 2019 performance. "I'm learning to play harmonica onstage tonight."

Those in the room would be forgiven for thinking Harjo a seasoned harmonica player, however, such was the vibrancy of her performance.

As she sang in her final reading as poet laureate in both English

and Mvskoke, the words of her poem rang out like a reminder to her community, to all people:

"Remember you are this universe and this

universe is you.

Remember all is in motion, is growing, is you.

Remember language comes from this.

Remember the dance language is, that life is.

Remember."

Even as Harjo's term as poet laureate concluded, the Library embarked on a new tradition in honor of her formidable legacy. The [In-Na-Po-Indigenous Nations Poets mentorship program](#) and poetry community, for which Harjo serves as an advisory board member, held its first retreat at the Library last week in parallel with the conclusion of Harjo's term. The event was co-sponsored by the American Folklife Center as part of the Library's [Of the People initiative](#) and designed to support the ongoing contributions of both established artists and emerging Indigenous writers.

At Harjo's request, the Library also hosted a dance party Friday in the Montpelier Room, a moment of revelry and joy to formally conclude the laureate's tenure. Led by DJ Tryce (Haliwa-Saponi), the party featured music selected by Harjo as well as some of her own songs. ■

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