

## Johnson County Library Receives National Award at White House Ceremony

Posted by Marsha Bennett, Johnson County Library

Johnson County Library was presented with a 2005 National Award for Museum and Library Service in a ceremony at the White House in Washington D. C. at 10:30 a.m., Monday, January 30, 2006. Three libraries and three museums received the awards, the nation's highest honor for extraordinary public service provided by a library or museum. The award was accepted by County Librarian Mona Carmack, Library Board Chair Terry Goodman and Overland Park resident and businesswoman Denise Upah, who researched and planned her \$50-million technology company at the Johnson County Public Library.



The awards are conferred annually by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to museums and libraries that have demonstrated a long-term commitment to public service through innovative programs and community partnerships. They include prizes of \$10,000 to each recipient and help raise public awareness of the good work the institutions are doing in their communities.

“We are so proud of these libraries and museums,” said Mrs. Laura Bush. “They are centers of excellence that reach out to everyone in their communities. They are lifetime partners in discovery, imagination and learning that we can call on again and again throughout our lives.”

“These libraries and museums are cornerstones of our democracy. They help to create and sustain a nation of learners,” said IMLS Acting Director Mary Chute. The Institute of Museum and Library Services, an independent federal agency, fosters leadership, innovation, and a lifetime of learning through support to the nation's 10,000 museums and 122,000 libraries.

A myriad of successful programs that benefit all areas of Johnson County, Kansas, from the Kansas City suburbs, to small towns and rural communities, distinguish the work of the Johnson County Library. The Johnson County Public Library continually seeks new opportunities to serve its community, and in partnership with community organizations, the library has created innovative and exceptional programs while enhancing traditional services.

Other museums and libraries receiving the award include:

- COSI Toledo, Toledo, Ohio
- Levine Museum of the New South, Charlotte, North Carolina
- Mathews Memorial Library, Mathews, Virginia
- Pratt Museum, Homer, Alaska
- Saint Paul Public Library, Saint Paul, Minnesota

The National Award for Museum Service was established in 1994, and the National Award for Library Service in 2000. Recipients of the awards are chosen for their innovative approaches to public service and for their success in improving communities and making a difference in peoples' lives. All types of museums, from anthropological to zoological, fine art to folk art, urban, suburban, rural, large and small are eligible for the award. Public and private nonprofit libraries are eligible to receive this award, and nominations of libraries of all sizes are encouraged.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services grows and sustains a "Nation of Learners," because life-long learning is critical to both societal and individual success. Through its grant-making, the agency empowers museums and libraries nationwide to provide leadership and services to enhance learning in families and communities; sustain cultural heritage; build 21st Century skills; and provide opportunities for civic participation. For more information, visit [www.imls.gov](http://www.imls.gov).

Johnson County Library was established in 1952 and serves a population of more than 391,500 in the metropolitan Kansas City area with 12 branch libraries and a Central Resource Library. The mission of the library is to provide access to ideas, information, experiences and materials that support and enrich people's lives. The Johnson County Library's strategic plan, entitled *Connections: Enriching Lives, Building Community*, emphasizes traditional library service while challenging the institution to build partnerships, to encourage patron involvement, and to expand the library's presence throughout the community and on the World Wide Web. The Johnson County Library has won several national awards, many for programs related to outreach to the disabled and the incarcerated, diversity practices and community building. For more information, visit [www.jocolibrary.org](http://www.jocolibrary.org).

The Institute of Museum and Library Science is an independent federal grant-making agency dedicated to creating and sustaining a nation of learners. The Institute fosters leadership, innovation, and a lifetime of learning by supporting the nation's 15,000 museums and 122,000 libraries. The Institute also encourages partnerships to expand the educational benefit of libraries

and museums. To learn more about the Institute, log onto: [www.ims.gov](http://www.ims.gov).