



# Illinois Heartland Library System welcomes new SHARE Director

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EDWARDSVILLE – The Illinois Heartland Library System (IHLS) is pleased to welcome **Cassandra Thompson** as the new SHARE Director. Leslie Bednar, IHLS Executive Director, said *"The SHARE Director is a pivotal position within our*

*organization and I look forward to working with Cassandra on continued SHARE growth in terms of membership and financial stability."*

In the past ten years, Cassandra Thompson has worked in public libraries in Indiana, Virginia, and Alabama, with the majority of her time spent in adult reference and library administration. She is a graduate of Indiana University School of Library and Information Science, with a special concentration in Nonprofit Management/Public Affairs. Cassandra said, *"From the beginning, I knew I wanted to work in public libraries, where I could see how my work makes a positive impact on individuals and communities."*

SHARE (Sharing Heartland's Available Resources Equally) is the largest member funded network of libraries in North America and libraries and their patrons have access to approximately 10 million items (books, DVD's, audiobooks, and music cd's, to name a few). Using an online public access catalog ([www.illshareit.com](http://www.illshareit.com)), patrons of a member library can place a request on any of those items and on average the item will be delivered in 2-3 days to their local library to be checked out. Polaris is the automation software that makes all that work.

Cassandra first used Polaris as a branch administrator of the Potomac branch of the Prince William Public Library System in Woodbridge, Virginia. While there, she launched a branch-wide Polaris training program, and implemented policy and procedural changes to help meet today's challenges. In addition, she worked as a library director in Bloomfield, Indiana, and knows how demanding library administration can be. *"I am excited to start as the new SHARE Director, and provide support to member libraries and administrators, with opportunities for staff development and communication about program news. I'm looking forward to getting to know Illinois libraries and librarians!"*

Ms. Bednar said, *"IHLS facilitates the sharing of diverse library materials from our 518 system member libraries by supporting library materials delivery and our library automation program called SHARE. Our member libraries receive delivery up to five days a week--which means patrons have the fastest possible delivery service of requested items!"*

IHLS is a network of **518** libraries in central and southern Illinois developing partnerships and sharing resources. Within IHLS, **345** libraries participate in the local library automation program known as SHARE.