

Jesse White Awards Funds To Local Libraries Focused On Pandemic Recovery

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SPRINGFIELD - Illinois Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White has awarded nearly \$6 million to libraries, many in the RiverBend area, focused on responding directly to the COVID-19 pandemic by modifying services, transforming spaces, and developing resources for their local recovering workforce.

Some of the local libraries receiving funds:

- Alton's Hayner Library will receive \$24,317.00
- Bethalto Public Library District \$25,000.00
- Bunker Hill Bunker Hill CUD 8 \$23,149.00
- Edwardsville Illinois Heartland Library System \$25,000.00
- Granite City Six Mile Regional Library District \$50,000.00
- Jerseyville Public Library \$6,820.00

“During the ongoing pandemic, libraries have had to retool their services to match the needs of the community and I am honored to be able to provide funding to allow these libraries to expand access to their patrons,” said White. “I applaud the library community in Illinois for their hard work as they continue to provide essential services during this challenging time.”

A total of \$5,740,350 funded 211 academic, school, special, and public libraries, all of which received grants ranging from \$5,000 to over \$1 million. A combination of funding sources provided through the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), both from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and state technology funds were used to maximize the statewide impact.

Grants were awarded under three categories:

Bouncing Back from the Pandemic -- Developing Resources for the Local Workforce: Projects focus on providing essential resources so job seekers can access employment services and training to build the necessary skills to become job ready. Thirty libraries received \$730,730.

Expanding Digital Inclusion -- Transforming Library Services: Projects focus on restoring services and enhancing digital inclusion efforts focused on circulating internet hotspots, laptops and other devices that support pandemic recovery. Forty-seven libraries received \$809,409.

On the Road to Recovery: Transforming Library Spaces: Projects focus on academic, public, school and special libraries that prioritize health and safety while focusing on restoration of the library's capacity to operate and offer clean, safe library spaces while preventing the spread of COVID-19. One hundred thirty-four libraries received a total of \$4,200,211.

A complete list of libraries can be found [HERE](#).