

Director's Report – January 17, 2011

1. The AADL is host to several groups offering tutoring services. Tutoring and homework help assistance is available Downtown on Monday and Wednesdays after school with Circle K scholars from the UM. These college students tutor all ages on any subject on a walk in basis. In addition, Alpha Delta Epsilon, a Health Sciences Honors Program at UM, has tutors available on Sundays during the UM school year at the Downtown Library and they also tutor all ages on a walk in basis. There are over 120 families participating on Tuesday and Thursday evenings Downtown in PALMA, a family literacy initiative reaching Spanish speakers whose tutors are UM students in the Residential College. On Wednesdays, the Ann Arbor Public Schools host GED classes at Malletts Creek for adults, and Washtenaw Literacy leads ESL conversation groups and tutoring at Malletts Creek, Traverwood, and Pittsfield branches throughout the week on different days and at different times. All of these opportunities are offered at no charge. Brainfuse, the online homework help database available to library cardholders, also at no charge, has been used by over 1,100 unique users in the past six months. Most of the use is in middle and high school mathematics and in the writing lab. This database is available in English and Spanish. Users are communicating in real time with certified educators on any subject from Grade 3 through community college between 2:00 PM and 11:00 PM seven days a week. All of this is in addition to the unmediated tutoring that has always occurred in Library buildings by teachers, parents and scholars from the several universities and colleges.
2. Josie Parker has been invited to participate in a small initial working group meeting focused on key questions regarding the scope of a proposed Digital Public Library of America (<http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/research/dpla>) research and planning initiative. The meeting will be held in Cambridge, Massachusetts on March 1, 2011. The event will be organized and hosted by The Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University, with generous support from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

This working group meeting is part of a four-month long planning and research initiative under the heading "Digital Public Library of America" (DPLA). The Berkman Center will convene a diverse group of stakeholders to define the scope, architecture, costs, and administration for a proposed DPLA. They plan to bring together representatives from the educational community, public and research libraries, cultural organizations, state and local government, publishers, authors, and private industry in a series of meetings and workshops to discuss legal, policy, and technical issues surrounding public access to comprehensive online resources. The goal is in time to emerge with a concrete workplan and a governance structure that captures the consensus of representatives of the country's libraries, universities, archives, and museums for moving forward together with a shared vision.