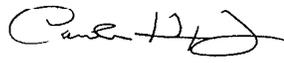




**TO:** The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents  
**FROM:** Carole F. Huxley   
**COMMITTEE:** Cultural Education  
**TITLE OF ITEM:** Deputy Commissioner Report  
**DATE OF SUBMISSION:** March 3, 2003  
**PROPOSED HANDLING:** Information  
**RATIONALE FOR ITEM:** Review of Recent Work  
**STRATEGIC GOAL:** Goals 1-5  
**AUTHORIZATION(S):** 

Below are brief descriptions of recent activity across the Office of Cultural Education. We have had a very busy February, and the work summarized below gives you some sense of what has been going on.

**Public Broadcasting:**

On Feb. 28 WNET/Buffalo hosted Chancellor Robert Bennett and several Regents in a discussion with public television station managers and education managers. The purpose was to explore how public television's evolving digital capacity could best serve the needs of the State Education Department in addressing the Regents priorities. The Regents were provided an overview of a number of the stations' educational services and a tour of the Buffalo Professional Development and Technology Center. WNET recently received a large grant from the Oishei Foundation to develop a digital-based learning channel in western New York and the progress with this project was also discussed.

The merger of WNET and WLIW was completed, and WNET will now operate both stations. The stations anticipate significant cost savings while maintaining or even increasing the public broadcasting services provided to residents in the New York City/Long Island area.

**State Museum:**

February 21-23 was a State Museum's blockbuster weekend. It featured the annual "New York in Bloom" event, at which both amateur and professional flower arrangers interpret various exhibits in the Museum. This touch of spring in February was a much-anticipated occasion during this dark and frigid winter. There were more than 80 arrangements throughout the Museum. At the same time, another big happening, the James Campbell Memorial Gem Mineral and Fossil show got under way, bringing many

people from all over the State and beyond. Together the two programs drew nearly 25,000 visitors to the Museum in two days.

There were also a number of very well attended programs and exhibits in honor of African American History Month. The annual Kick-off celebration for African American History Month was hosted at the Museum on February 4<sup>th</sup>. The Commissioner was a featured speaker, and it was attended by more than 500 people. Over the next week, the Museum presented preview screenings of *Unchained Memories: The Slave Narratives*, an HBO/Library of Congress documentary.

The "New York in Bloom" gala evening supports the Museum Club and the Discovery Squad, after-school programs for children and young teens, respectively. At the benefit two Discovery Squad members showed a video they had created in honor of Black History Month. It was a "rap" video on the history of the civil rights movement, and it was of remarkable quality.

Meanwhile, Charles Darwin's birthday was well and truly celebrated in a series of very popular lectures on evolution, and featuring a birthday cake on Darwin's actual birthday, February 12<sup>th</sup>. In addition, the Museum sponsored a teacher's workshop on evolution that received very positive evaluations by the attendees.

### **State Library:**

Delivering information in new and faster ways is the objective of libraries, and it is what their customers expect. The State Library can now send "PDF" files of information from both print and microform sources to our customers via their email addresses. Electronic delivery is faster for customers and saves the Library paper, toner, and staff time.

The Library has begun to produce bibliographies available at different Museum exhibits for visitors who would like to learn more about the subject of the exhibit. In addition, it is sponsoring a variety of interesting and useful programs during the noon hour. The February programs featured experts on varied topics: identify theft, a new archaeological discovery of an 18<sup>th</sup> Century rum distillery in Albany, and using internet search engines more effectively. All of these events were well attended, and others are planned.

Carrying through on the advocacy plan for restoration of library funding and for New Century Libraries has been a major focus during February. Regional library leaders meetings in Buffalo and on Long Island featured the Chancellor and Regent Johnson, respectively, as well as the Commissioner, and drew strong participation in both venues despite a Buffalo snowstorm that kept many from attending. The encouraging momentum at the local level indicated the usefulness of additional meetings later in the spring.

## **State Archives:**

The Local Government Records grant season is well under way. The Archives has received 550 grant applications, requesting a total of about \$10 million. Fundable projects include a range of records management activities from creating inventories to establishing electronic records program and using records for educational purposes. The process is competitive. Peer panels, with a total of 54 reviewers, will review all the applications on May 7<sup>th</sup> and make award recommendations to the Commissioner. Throughout the review day, a fully automated system keeps track of the decisions of the 18 panels in real time. It is, therefore, possible for panels to keep track of recommended funding against available funding and to make recommendations for partial funding if warranted because of funding limitations.

The renovation of the 11th floor continues on schedule. When completed, the facilities for the Archives collections and the Library's Manuscripts and Special Collections will be state-of-the-art. They will feature compact shelving, a preservation lab, exhibit space, various research rooms, a map room, a classroom for school visits and a separate HVAC system to ensure optimum environmental conditions for paper conservation. Completion of the project will be in 2004.

The Archives Government Records Services unit has recently completed work on two technical publications: Managing Imaging and Micrographics Projects and Inventory and Planning for Records Management Programs (the basic tutorial). These will be available from our website and in hard copy. These are 2 of approximately 65 publications created to support State and local government records management programs. The Archives also provides a varied curriculum of workshops, both regionally and online, related to all aspects of government records management.