News Release

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
Public Instruction

DPI grants $3 million in ARPA library pandemic relief funding
Lending libraries, tribal outreach program, and bookmobile among projects funded by grants

MADISON —The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction announced today that 33 projects will be receiving newly awarded grant funding to help libraries meet the needs of their communities in the wake of the pandemic.

The DPI released the list of subawards for library relief funding, totaling over $3 million, as part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. The ARPA funds, awarded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, will be distributed to 10 public libraries and 15 library systems. The funds are to be used for supporting digital inclusion efforts, providing rapid emergency relief to libraries, and supporting library services that meet the needs of local communities.

"Public libraries have always been the heart of our communities," State Librarian and Assistant State Superintendent Tessa Michaelson Schmidt said. "During the pandemic, libraries became critical in providing internet access, workforce assistance, literacy programs, and more. These grants will help libraries provide hybrid services to library users, upgrade technology, improve library spaces, and promote community resiliency."

Some of the projects benefiting from the ARPA funds include the installation of lending libraries at community centers in Kenosha for afterschool and summer programs; a tribal outreach program to create a blueprint on how to best leverage community partnerships in the future for the Nicolet Federated Library System; and a bookmobile in Eau Claire in collaboration with the Feed My People Food Bank to bring food along with books to library users in need who are unable to travel to their local library.

For a full list of ARPA Grant subaward recipients visit the DPI's ARPA for Wisconsin Libraries website.

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NOTE: This news release is available online on the Wisconsin DPI's website.