

Testimony: Joint Finance Committee of the State of Wisconsin

Re: BadgerLink Funding

Date: 4/14/99

From: Carol Amundson, MT (ASCP)

Quality Coordinator

Osceola Medical Center

Osceola, WI 55020

715-294-2111 (x3030)

Carol A Amundson

Welcome to Osceola and thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today. I am a Medical Technologist, currently working as the Quality Coordinator for Osceola Medical Center (a Clinic, Hospital Nursing Home here in town.) I am happy for the chance to speak in favor of state funding for BadgerLink because of the tremendous resource this supplies to our community and similar communities throughout Wisconsin.

Recently, Governor Thompson announced a plan to fund BadgerLink with surplus money from the TEACH initiative. This plan was the result of talks with State Superintendent John Benson and Administration Dept. Secretary Mark Burgher. This is a sound plan, very important to the spread of accurate health information to the citizens of Wisconsin.

Osceola Medical Center was introduced to BadgerLink through Northern Wisconsin AHEC (Area Health Education Center) and Northwoods Healthnet, a grant-funded education program that supplied us with a computer and internet access for health care information services. In slightly over a year, our small health care library has been expanded to include the resources of health libraries throughout the state. We have gotten information to train employees, provide diet information to our Diabetic and Parkinson's patients, and researched a variety of disease conditions – giving our physicians and patients the latest health information from a reliable source. My own efforts at quality improvement have been enhanced by the benchmarking data found through this resource.

This program also reaches the rest of the Osceola Community in many ways. Our students here at Osceola High School, as well as other schools, can access information for projects. We have school-to-work students that are interested in health careers that come into Osceola Medical Center. They can use BadgerLink to further educate themselves on health related fields. Our Nursing Home recently became computer enhanced through a program that teams students from this school and residents in our home to use the Internet. Of course, health topics are of interest to some of these individuals and are available instantly – without a trip outside the facility.

One of the beauties of BadgerLink is the reliability of the information. On the Internet, anyone with support from advertisers can put up a website with information about any topic. They put up spurious information based on personal prejudices, lack of informed knowledge, or for personal profit. Some of the misinformation spread through these seemingly accurate sites is truly frightening. BadgerLink, funded through Library Services Funds, has no reason to put out information other than the education needs of its users. Those of us who access this resource (and others from Northwoods Healthnet) can be assured that the information is reliable and has references to support it.

BadgerLink is also very cost effective. The money needed to support BadgerLink for 2 years is \$2.5 million. Contrast that with the cost to individual libraries of approximately \$50 million if they each accessed these services individually. \$47.5 million saving in state funds is substantial!

If you haven't had the opportunity, please take the time to access either BadgerLink (www.dpi.state.wi.us/badgerlink) or Northwoods Healthnet (<http://home.dwave.net/~ahec/nwhn/index.html>) on your computer and see what is available to any citizen of Wisconsin – not matter how small their community, or how limited their income. All

they need is a library, school or health facility with a computer and Internet access to transport them into a seemingly unlimited source of accurate health information.

Thank you so much for your time and attention. I cannot stress the importance of BadgerLink to the citizens of Wisconsin and our community of Osceola enough. BadgerLink is cost effective, reliable and truly a resource for all educators, libraries and health facilities. It touches each individual through supporting accurate, up-to-date health information in the rapidly changing field of medicine. Thank you for your support of BadgerLink.



Indianhead Federated Library System

1538 Truax Boulevard, Eau Claire, WI 54703-1569
Phone 715-839-5082 ■ **Fax** 715-839-5151

TESTIMONY (4/14/99)

Hello, and welcome to Osceola. My name is Phil Sawin. I am a citizen member of the Indianhead Federated Library System board of trustees. I am here representing that board and west-central Wisconsin libraries. I want to speak today about two important issues for libraries in this part of the state. Those two issues are BadgerLink and public library system aids.

For 20 years our System has worked to raise the level and quality of service at libraries, both big and small, across our 10-county area. At the risk of sounding immodest, we believe we have been successful. If that is true, it means you have been successful, because you had the foresight to create and support the public library system program in the 1970s.

We need your help to continue this record of success. Here is what I and my fellow trustees hope you will do.

First . . . BadgerLink, the electronic magazine, newspaper and database service, is terrifically popular in our libraries and schools. It enables small libraries to offer the resources of a much larger library to its users. As you know, the Governor did provide funding for this program last Friday, in a supplemental budget request to the Committee. BadgerLink represents a new frontier in providing information for libraries, and we appreciate the Governor's funding proposal.

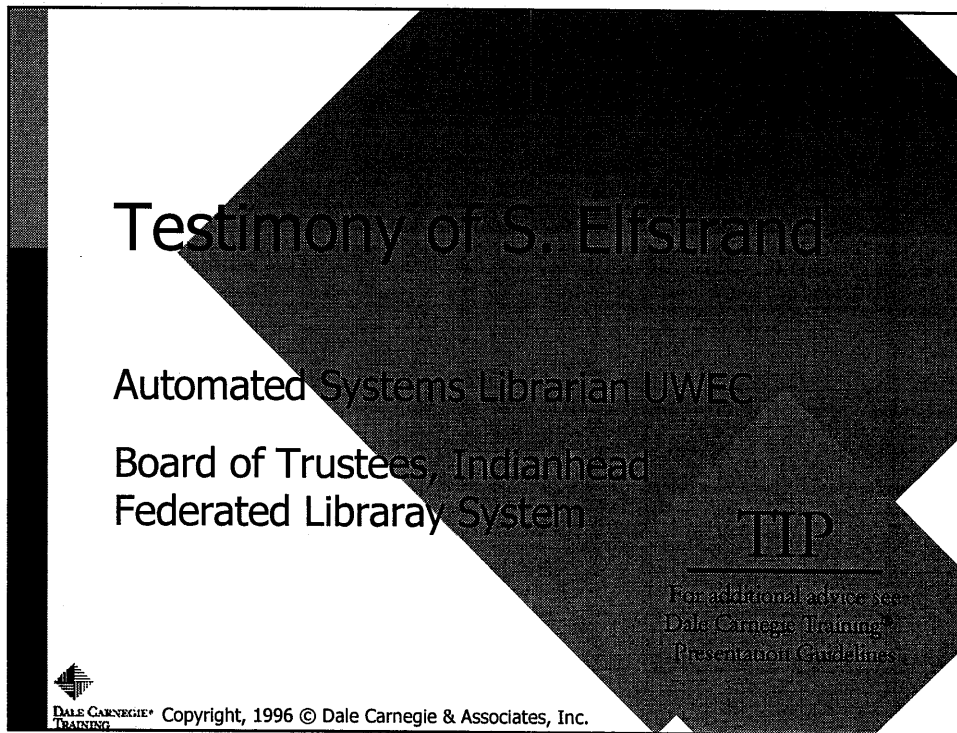
Second . . . For some time yet, books will remain an important source of information for most people. Library systems must build delivery networks that will provide speedy and extensive delivery of both print and electronic information. The cost of this network for the Indianhead Library System will be shared with our member communities. The System part of the cost will be about \$100,000 per year for as long as the network exists. We don't have these funds. Information delivery is one of the reasons why the Indianhead Library System board of trustees is requesting an increase to public library system aids.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you. I will be happy to take any questions. If you have future questions, my name and that of our system director and board president are on my written testimony.

Phil Sawin
Trustee
520 - 17th Street North
Menomonie, WI 54751
715-235-2451

Milton Mitchell
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1538 Truax Boulevard
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Testimony of S. Elfstrand

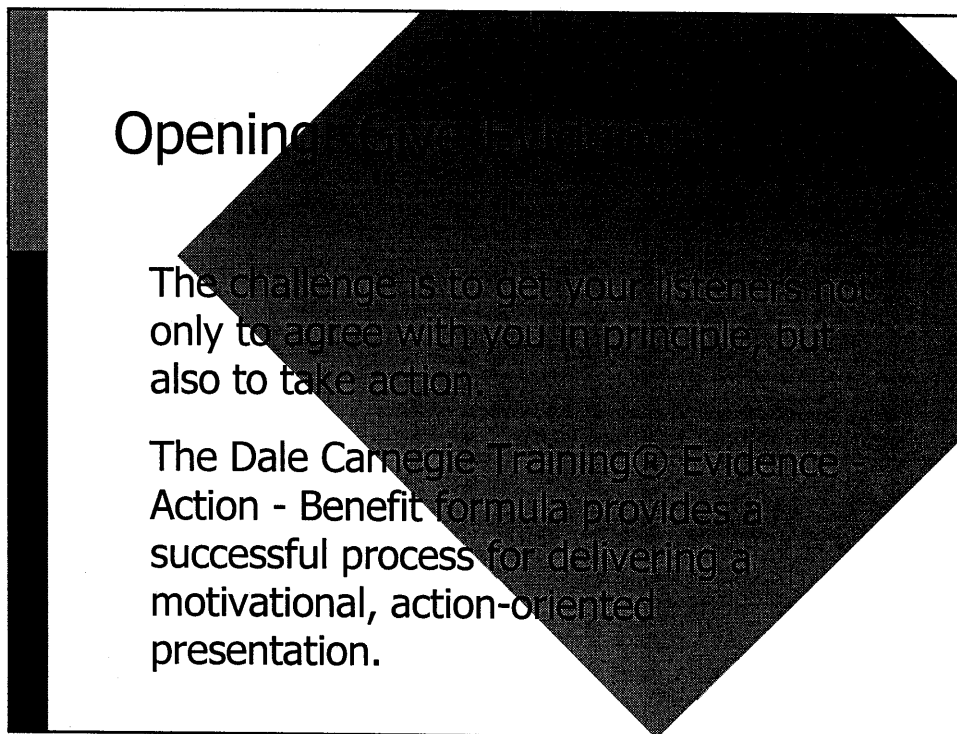
Automated Systems Librarian UWEC

Board of Trustees, Indianhead
Federated Libraray System

TIP

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*To: Joint Finance Committee
Wednesday, April 14, 1999, Osceola High School Gymnasium, Osceola*

*Speaker: Pat Schmidt
2764 150th St.
Luck WI 54853
715.472.2491*

*Member:
Polk County Board of Supervisors
Polk County Federated Libraries Board of Trustees
Indianhead Federated Library System Board of Trustees*

Good morning. Thank you for coming to Polk County. We of Northwestern Wisconsin have felt very left out of our state's legislative happenings in the past. Ask anyone. We can tell you what's going on in Minnesota but know very little about Wisconsin's politics. In fact, Hubert Humphrey once claimed to be Wisconsin's third senator. Your presence here this morning gives us hope that this is the beginning of a new, inclusive era in our state's politics.

I am requesting your support for library funding. Funding for BadgerLink and increased system aids are needed badly in our rural county. The needs of rural folks have long been ignored. We are simply too far from Madison and the population centers of our state to be considered. Yet, this is the information age and rural folk must also have access to it. Opportunity to access information is crucial. Technology has made it possible.

Using computers and BadgerLink, we can have access to a large, wonderful library right in our homes if our state will budget funds to support BadgerLink. In addition, with a shared automated system our small town libraries can provide access to those books and periodicals, etc., that they cannot afford to keep in their own holdings. With increased system aids, it would be possible.

Polk county has 10 small town libraries. They each operate on a small town library budget. My village of Luck, population 1,000, provides a library for its citizens and the people of the surrounding rural townships. I consider it a fairly good library, but it operates on a total annual budget of \$22,000 including wages! We need a shared automated library system within the Indianhead Federated Library System where all of our system libraries can access one another's holdings. But our small libraries do not have the budget to afford it. Start up costs for a shared automated system for Luck Public Library would be about \$8,000—remember their total budget is \$22,000. Ongoing annual costs would be about \$1,600. Again, our small town libraries in Polk County simply do not have the budget to implement this. However, if the state would fund the public library systems at a higher level, they could in turn pass this on to our small town libraries to assist in acquiring a shared automated system.

Rural people want and need access to information. With BadgerLink and a shared automated system in all of our libraries, information can be accessed. Increased funding to public library systems will enrich offerings to all citizens and promote literacy and lifelong learning.

Thank you.

April 14, 1999

Members of Joint Finance Committee
Wisconsin State Legislature
Madison WI

Dear Committee Members:

My name is Linda Adams, and I am employed as a Family Health Benefits Counselor at St. Croix County Department of Health in New Richmond. I appreciate very much this opportunity to offer my written testimony on behalf of the BadgerLink initiative of the Department of Public Instruction. I was introduced to BadgerLink through a program of Northern Wisconsin AHEC (Area Health Education Center).

Through Northwoods HealthNet, a program of NAHEC, our agency was connected to the internet and instructed on how to locate up-to-the-minute health information for our clients, students and community residents. BadgerLink is a wonderful program whereby full-text periodicals, rather than abstracts, are available on such topics as consumer health and education. BadgerLink makes it possible for anyone with access to the internet to search databases and view full-text articles from their homes, schools or offices.

BadgerLink is an especially valuable tool in the more rural areas of northern Wisconsin, since access to large libraries is difficult for many people. Often, those of us in this part of the State feel out of touch with current information in the Madison and Milwaukee area. BadgerLink really does what its name implies- linking all of Wisconsin together with up-to-date information.

Public health professionals spend a great deal of time educating our communities about the importance of various health issues. Every day it becomes more and more critical to have the best and most current data at hand to share with young families, elderly, single parents, and other health professionals, and the continued funding of BadgerLink is vital to this mission.

I realize that any and all programs require funding, but the numbers indicate that if services provided by BadgerLink throughout the State at approximately 2 million dollars were to be purchased separately by Wisconsin libraries and schools, the cost would be almost \$50 million! This is \$48 million saved- surely a wise investment for all Wisconsin communities!

All of us in Wisconsin can be proud of the top-notch health care and quality of life in our state. We must continue to be progressive and visionary, providing the best method of gathering information for all citizens through BadgerLink.

Thank you very much for your consideration of my request.

Sincerely,



Linda Adams, ART

St. Croix County Department of Health

Statement presented to the State of Wisconsin
Joint Legislative Committee

March 26th
Brown County Public Library

My name is Karen Peterson. As the Director of Berlin Public Library in Berlin, Wisconsin, I am here to speak to the issue of library system funding.

Berlin Public Library is a medium-sized library but our membership in a library system allows us to provide the same quality information service to our community as a much larger library.

Our system provides invaluable support in the area of technology—from writing a technology plan including computer system requirements to purchase and installation of computer equipment and software. Anyone with computer experience knows how important and how expensive computer service and maintenance can be. We receive those services through membership in our system. The system bears the cost. The system also makes it possible for member libraries to stay on top of technological changes. It would be very difficult to accomplish the same quality of information service on our own.

The system also provides staff training in a wide variety of areas. We would not be able to afford our staff the same opportunities to learn new techniques and technologies without the system's efforts. A trained staff is better able to serve the public.

System organization makes it possible for us to offer 3-5 day delivery service for people needing materials from another library within the system. Our society is a mobile one and our system-wide delivery allows people to borrow and return items at any of the member libraries. It is an important convenience in today's busy world.

When I was a Youth Services Librarian, I told my visiting kindergartners that libraries are about *sharing*. They understood. Well, library systems are about *sharing* also. I hope the members of the Committee understand that. I am asking the State to help us *share*. Please fund our systems.

Thank you for your time.

Karen M. Peterson
121 W. Park Ave.
Berlin, WI 54923

920-361-5420

BadgerLink: Tell us your story!

Your Name: Sue Meziva
Title: N/A
Institution: N/A
Address: P.O. Box 204
Casco, WI 54205
Email address: MIEZIVA4@aol.com
Phone: 837-7594

Tell us your story!

I went to the Algona Library to obtain some information and graphs - any type of visual aid - for my daughter's report on *Bulimia nervosa*. On the BadgerLink we were able to find, immediately, what issues ~~and~~ ⁱⁿ what magazine might help. I especially liked how it would tell you if the article had a graph in it. I feel this is a very useful tool for any age. My daughter received an A on her report.

IF YOU USE BADGERLINK, PLEASE HELP US LET GOVERNOR THOMPSON KNOW HOW VALUABLE IT IS TO YOU. PLEASE TURN IN COMPLETED EVALUATION AT THE MAIN DESK. THANK YOU!!!

ATTN: Terrie Howe

BadgerLink: Tell us your story!

Your Name: Becky Kindsch.

Title: Rev.

Institution: United Methodist Church

Address: 804 Lacker

Algoma WI 54201

Email address: kindsch@itol.com

Phone: 920 487-2727

RECEIVED
FEB 25 1999

Tell us your story!

*We are in the information age! This resource is of
tremendous value and yet the government
has refused any funding
This program has made access possible
Please reconsider*

**IF YOU USE BADGERLINK, PLEASE HELP US LET
GOVERNOR THOMPSON KNOW HOW VALUABLE IT IS TO
YOU. PLEASE TURN IN COMPLETED EVALUATION AT THE
MAIN DESK. THANK YOU!!!**

1 920 446 4420

BadgerLink: Tell us your story!

Your Name:

Kris Briski

Title:

Educational Advisor

Institution:

NWTC

Address:

P.O. Box 152Algoma, WI

Email address:

KBriskix@wpsr.com

Phone:

920-487-5600**Tell us your story!**

Badger link has been useful in preparing ^{for} adult
education seminars. It offers linkage to
current info in a fast efficient way.

Its access is so easy. It has encouraged
* amateur users to get on for their own
access to information.

Please support the funding of this
valuable, useful tool that encourages
adults to seek information independantly.
Its relevant, flexible, independent, and
cost free on the internet.

It supports lifelong learning!!!

**IF YOU USE BADGERLINK, PLEASE HELP US LET
GOVERNOR THOMPSON KNOW HOW VALUABLE IT IS TO
YOU. PLEASE TURN IN COMPLETED EVALUATION AT THE
MAIN DESK. THANK YOU!!!**

ATTN:

BadgerLink: Tell us your story!

Terrie Howe

Your Name:

Laura Kennedy

Title:

Institution:

Address:

REC'D

FEB 25 1999

Email address:

Phone:

Tell us your story!

Badgerlink was a real savior for me as my daughter, 14 months, had destroyed an article from an old issue of the mag. "Mothering" that I was saving in anticipation of our next child. I had a medical problem even the doctors couldn't give me any info about. This article is very encouraging and really makes me feel good about the coming birth of my next child. I can also show the article to my OB to give him some insight to my particular problem.

P.S. With the aid of Badgerlink I was able to quickly + successfully find the "lost" article which would have otherwise taken 1

Sincerely, Laura Kennedy

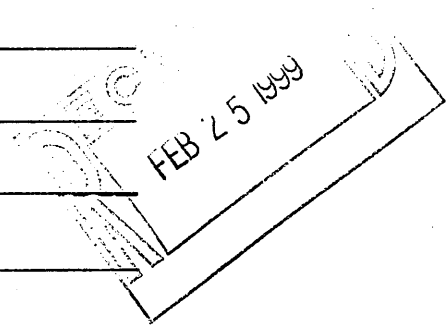
IF YOU USE BADGERLINK, PLEASE HELP US LET GOVERNOR THOMPSON KNOW HOW VALUABLE IT IS TO YOU. PLEASE TURN IN COMPLETED EVALUATION AT THE MAIN DESK. THANK YOU!!!

W.C. number

ATTN: Terrie Howe

BadgerLink: Tell us your story!

Your Name: Ms. Marsha Marguerat
 Title: Special Education Teacher
 Institution: Algoma Middle School
 Address: 801 B Lake st.
Algoma, WI 54201
 Email address: none
 Phone: 920-487-3944



Tell us your story!

I am certified to teach Regular Education
1st thru 8th and special Education Cognitively
Disabled Prek - thru 12th. However, I am
teaching Emotionally Disturbed and Learning
Disabled in the middle school. I am taking
classes through Silver Lake College in order
to add LD certification to my license.
In these classes I am required to do
MANY journal critiques and evaluations.
Algoma Public Library workers have
been EXTREMELY helpful with showing me
how to use the Internet to look up these
articles on BadgerLink. Without this service

**IF YOU USE BADGERLINK, PLEASE HELP US LET
 GOVERNOR THOMPSON KNOW HOW VALUABLE IT IS TO
 YOU. PLEASE TURN IN COMPLETED EVALUATION AT THE
 MAIN DESK. THANK YOU!!!**

I really need to print out the journal articles.

BadgerLink: Tell us your story!

Your Name: Sally Jacobson
Title: Director
Institution: The Ephraim Foundation Inc.
Address: PO Box 165, 3060 Anderson Lane
Ephraim, WI 54211
Email address: sjacobso@mail.wiscnet.net
Phone: 920-854-9688

Tell us your story!

I am a former librarian, now a museum
director. I use Badgerlink to provide
information on interloans as well as government
contacts, academic articles and historical
background.

I and my family also use it at home
for general internet research. It's
an amazing resource, and I fervently
hope the state realizes how useful it is to
nonprofit organizations like ours, as well as public
libraries, schools and government.

**IF YOU USE BADGERLINK, PLEASE HELP US LET
GOVERNOR THOMPSON KNOW HOW VALUABLE IT IS TO
YOU. PLEASE TURN IN COMPLETED EVALUATION AT THE
MAIN DESK. THANK YOU!!!**

Statement presented to the State of Wisconsin
Joint Legislative Committee

March 26th
Brown County Public Library

My name is Karen Peterson. As the Director of Berlin Public Library in Berlin, Wisconsin, my primary focus this morning is funding for the BadgerLink statewide database.

You have heard a lot of numbers relating to this issue. I have come to remind you of the faces behind those numbers.

Berlin is a small community of working people—people working hard to provide for their families. Many of them are unable to pay for information access from budgets that are already tight.

BadgerLink provides them with access to information needed to improve the quality of their lives, whether they are students writing reports on current events or consumers evaluating a future purchase, victims of Alzheimer's looking for the latest treatments or mothers looking for current information on children's health issues.

At a cost of \$2.5 million for information access for every citizen in the State, regardless of age, sex, ethnic or socioeconomic background, BadgerLink is a bargain. My community of 6,000 will have to fund their library at an additional \$30,000 annually to provide the same service to our citizens alone. Our entire 1999 budget for materials is less than that at \$23,000.

Without state funding, BadgerLink will only be available in the largest and wealthiest communities. We depend upon the State of Wisconsin to equalize opportunity, whether for a job or education. Public libraries have traditionally served as "the people's university." Please help us to continue serving our communities in that role. Fund BadgerLink at its current level.

Thank you.

Karen M. Peterson
Berlin Public Library
121 W. Park Avenue
Berlin, WI 54923

920-361-5420

**Testimony Before the Joint Finance Committee
Ken Hall, Coordinator
Winnefox Library System
March 26, 1999**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for taking the time to travel to Green Bay and for giving us the opportunity to express my views concerning upcoming legislation. I am Ken Hall, I am employed as the Coordinator of the Winnefox Library System. I appear before you today to comment on three items relating to the next state budget. In my work as a library system coordinator I have the opportunity to work closely with small rural libraries. My comments are framed by direct knowledge of how these libraries, and the services they provide, effect the people of Wisconsin.

Increase Public Library System Aids: Aid to public library systems has been stagnant for the last several years leaving systems to cope with rising costs with little or no increase in funding. The result, for many systems, has been a reduction in non-mandated services. ACT 150 passed by the legislature in 1998 mandated that DPI present a budget to the Governor that would increase funding to systems from a present level of 10% of the total of local funding of library services to 13%. The governor choose to cut this request and freeze funding at current levels. Providing full funding for library systems is vital if systems are to adequately serve the needs of local libraries
Possible uses of funds at Winnefox could include:

- Support for automation and new technologies, especially for training librarians in the use of electronic communications. Through TEACH and other programs, the Governor and the Legislature very wisely have invested in the technological future of the state. However it makes little sense to fund a technology infrastructure if no-one knows how to use it.
- Increase aid would allow systems to help local libraries replace computers and other necessary components of the communications infrastructure as they become outdated.

TEACH is only seed money. Small communities need help maintaining the tools that access the information superhighway. It is this access that gives residents of small communities and rural areas the same opportunities as those who live in our big cities.

Another component of ACT 150 was a mandate to the counties to reimburse municipal libraries for serving rural residents. Failing to fulfill the mandate of state funding while requiring counties to do their part seems a slap in the face to county boards. It seems that in order to continue the local, county, and state partnership the state must provide full funding of library systems at 13% of local appropriations as required by Act 150

Grant the DPI Request for Increased Funding For State Resource Contracts:

No community or library can provide all of the resources that parents, children, businesses, and government agencies require. DPI contracts with four major library services to supplement materials held in local libraries. Electronic resources such as Badgerlink, as good as it is, do not offer full access to book materials or material for the blind or physically handicapped, so library resources are still very much needed.

Libraries around the state depend on The Regional Library for the Blind, The Cooperative Children's Book Center, and interlibrary loan provided by Milwaukee Public Library and Wisconsin Interlibrary Services. The state has long funded contracts with these organizations, but again, funding has been frozen. DPI requested a small increase in funding costing less than \$112,000 for the biennium. I respectfully urge the committee to grant this request.

Fund Badgerlink: *Badgerlink* provides funding for statewide licenses to make over 4,000 magazines, journals, and newspapers available to Wisconsin citizens over the Internet. While most people with home Internet accounts can access *Badgerlink*, primary access is gained through Wisconsin's public libraries and schools. The program cost for the biennium is just over \$2.5 million. *Badgerlink* is currently paid for with federal funding which expires in December 1999.

- State funding of the project saves taxpayers money. If every library in the state were forced to subscribe to these resources on their own the cost to local taxpayers would be about \$50 million because of the loss of consortium discounts. Only the largest libraries in the state could afford the \$30,000 per-library price tag.
- The wealth of up-to-date information available on *Badgerlink* is of vital importance to students throughout Wisconsin. *Badgerlink* vastly increases the amount of material available to them aiding their studies and thus boosting their educational achievement.
- *Badgerlink* currently offers 24-hour access in the home. Because of licensing issues, home access to students and taxpayers would likely be lost if individual schools and libraries were forced to pick up subscriptions on their own. Access to information would be lost when schools and libraries were closed.

Budget Hearing
Joint Committee on Finance
Brown County Library
March 26, 1999

Sen. Burke, Rep. Gard, Members of the Joint Committee on Finance:

My name is Richard Krumwiede, and I am the Director of the Outagamie Waupaca Library System.

I've come here today to testify in support of the library initiatives contained in the budget request submitted by the Department of Public Instruction, specifically the departmental requests for public library system aid, state resource library service contracts, and BadgerLink full-text database access. I believe that all of the library initiatives included in DPI's budget request are in the best interests of the citizens of Wisconsin, and I urge you to support them. However, I want to focus my remarks today on the public library system aid budget.

Public library service in Wisconsin has traditionally been provided by units of local government including cities, villages, towns, and counties. While local libraries were generally responsive to the needs of local residents, many Wisconsin citizens lived in communities without libraries and, therefore, had no access to public library service. Furthermore, many municipal libraries lacked the resources necessary to adequately meet the demand for library services. Consequently, "to address the limitations of relying solely on municipalities to provide library services, the Legislature created the library system program" in 1971 (Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau 1988).

State supported public library systems were established in order "to improve and extend public library services, promote resource sharing among libraries, and increase access to library materials and services by the state's residents" (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction 1991). It was the intent of the Legislature that state aid funds be used by systems "to coordinate and supplement library resources and services beyond what could be provided at the local and county levels" (Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau 1988).

To put it another way, the public library system program was designed to equalize the opportunity for all state residents to enjoy a reasonable level of public library service. State-funded public library systems were created as an incentive for municipal and county libraries to open their doors to non-residents and share their resources. The result has been a long-term partnership between the state and local units of government to provide accessible public library service in the state.

An obvious question that was asked when systems were first established the seventies, and is still being debated today, is: What is the appropriate level for the state's contribution to this public library partnership?

The original system law contained a statutory funding formula. It was fully funded one year. In 1978, a legislative council study committee recommended that public library system aids be set at a level of 20% of the previous year's local and county library expenditures. After considerable discussion and debate, the Legislature adopted an 11.25% funding level in 1981. In 1986, following another major study of public library service by a State Superintendent's task force, the Legislature agreed that state's share of funding for public library service should equal 13% of local effort. While this was repealed in 1993, another legislative council study committee recommended in 1997 that the appropriate amount for the state to spend on public library system aid should be 13% of local library expenditures. 1977 Act 150 directs the Department of Public Instruction to submit a budget request based on 13% of local expenditures for library service.

During the past twenty-five years, there have been many studies and considerable debate over the merit of, and funding for, the state public library system program. These efforts have almost always resulted in the same conclusions: 1) that the public library system program has made significant progress toward achieving the broad goals established by the Legislature, 2) that there are still deficiencies in the provision of statewide public library services that need to be addressed, and 3) that the state should provide a greater share of the support for public library service. While the Legislature has regularly defined the level of funding that it should provide for public library services in its partnership with local government units, it has just as regularly failed to provide that funding. This year state aid for library systems will be less than 10% of local expenditures for library service, and with the Governor proposing no aid increase in either year of the biennium, the state's role in this partnership could continue to diminish.

So why, you might ask, is it important to increase state funding for public library systems? I believe that systems need increased funding in order to pursue their original charge of developing programs and services to ensure open access to local public libraries, to facilitate the sharing of resources, and to encourage local library improvement. I believe that there are four reasons.

First, while public library system members receive the benefit of state-funded programs and services, membership also brings many obligations, some with significant costs. Local public libraries are required to serve all residents of their system areas. For many libraries this means providing a significant level of service for which no direct compensation is received. For example, in 1997 Outagamie Waupaca Library System member libraries checked out over 250,000 items for which they received no compensation other than state-funded system services. This represented about 13% of their total circulation. In 1998, these libraries interlibrary loaned over 92,000 items to other libraries. Again, they did this mostly in exchange for receiving public library system services.

My point here is that local library boards have to be able to tell their municipal governing bodies that the state-funded services they receive from public library systems are of an equal or greater value than the cost of the services that system membership obligates them to provide. Without increases in funding, systems will be unable to offer an

acceptable level of service to their member libraries. Evidence of this growing problem is increasing. Counties have already left one system to join another in search of a higher level of services, and currently, there are libraries and counties exploring the possibility of changing systems. Some libraries have threatened to quit systems, and a significant number of libraries have indicated that their systems are no longer able to offer an acceptable level of services to balance those that the libraries are obligated to provide. Without increased support, systems will face crises in their ability to satisfy their member libraries. If member libraries drop out of systems, access will be reduced, and the state will be unable to achieve its goals.

Second, while public libraries across Wisconsin have significantly improved the services that they provide, there is still improvement needed. This is especially true when it comes to new technologies. As the public has become increasingly sophisticated in the use of technology, they have come to expect more, and demand more, from their public libraries. Public libraries, in turn, need more, and are demanding more, from their library systems. For example, the Outagamie Waupaca Library System provides automated library services to more than 40 libraries throughout Northeastern Wisconsin. Most of these libraries are relatively small, would not be automated on their own, and rely on us to provide a full range of support including training, technical expertise, and troubleshooting during all their open hours. We do this with a very limited staff. In addition, we are providing our member libraries with Internet training, assisting them with Web development, and helping them implement electronic reference services. Our member libraries also rely on us to provide them access to relevant state and federal programs. It was the system staff that completed TEACH Wisconsin data line applications and federal E-rate applications for our member libraries. Many libraries in the state would be unable to participate in these programs without the help and leadership of library system staff.

Yet, lack of staff regularly forces us to turn away requests for help, especially in the area of technical support for microcomputers. Our first priority for the use of additional funds would be to hire a microcomputer support technician to assist our 16 member libraries at their locations.

Please keep in mind that technology is only one area where demands on systems are growing. Coordination of resource sharing has become a significant task in our region, where public libraries will interlibrary loan some 170,000 items to each other this year. Systems are also called upon to provide other services mandated by state statutes, including consulting services, continuing education, collection development planning, and coordination of library services to persons with special needs. Without additional funds our task is impossible.

Third, as the recent legislative council committee concluded, the public library system funding formula is not equitable. The formula has always contained a local expenditure factor that produces undesirable consequences that are exacerbated in years when funding is not increased. When the funding pot has stayed the same, some systems have gotten a

bigger slice of the pie and other systems have gotten a smaller piece. This result has been especially difficult for the more rural areas of the state.

Northeastern Wisconsin provides a good example. With no increase in system aids, the Outagamie Waupaca Library System is projected to receive a 1% increase in aids each year of the next biennium while the Nicolet Federated Library System is projected to receive nearly a 1% decrease each year of the biennium. Funding at the 13% index level will allow for implementation of a more equitable system aid distribution formula while providing additional funding for all systems to improve their services.

Finally, DPI's library system aid budget request should be fully funded because it's the right thing to do. The Legislature has regularly studied and come conclusions about the appropriate level of public library systems funding, but you have almost never followed through. DPI, public library systems, and the Legislature have been repeating this same song and dance every biennial budget since Rep. Gard was in high school. Frankly, we've spent a lot of time and energy over the years studying the issues and coming to the same conclusions without implementing them. We need to move on. It's time for the Legislature to accept responsibility for providing the level of system aid that it says is necessary.

I do want to point out that, at least in our system area, your partners have done a commendable job of funding library service. I think they've even gone the extra mile. Municipalities in our area have done an excellent job of supporting their libraries. In fact the cities and villages in Waupaca County are among the best in the state at supporting their libraries, and Outagamie County municipalities aren't far behind. Both of the Counties have also accepted their responsibilities to be partners in the provision of public library service. However, it's unrealistic to expect them to do any more. It's the state's turn to make an adequate contribution to this partnership by increasing system aids.

In conclusion, I urge you to support the Department of Public Instruction's request for increased public library system aid in the amount that your own committee has determined is appropriate, i.e., 13% of local expenditures for library service. I also urge you to support funding for BadgerLink and state resource provider contracts. Failure to fund these requests will create another example of costs being shifted by the state to local units of government. Please be a strong partner in the effort to provide Wisconsin citizens with the access to information and knowledge they need to achieve their personal, professional, and educational goals as we move into a new century.

Thank you.

TESTIMONY TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

by Dale E. Bartkowiak, Director
Marshfield Public Library

April 13, 1999

Co-Chairpersons Burke and Gard, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to address you today. I am here on behalf of the Marshfield Public Library Board of Trustees to express support for an important library initiative on public library system aids that was not included in the Governor's budget and support for a bill on library lending incentives that is now pending before the legislature.

Public Library System Aids

Public library systems enable individual libraries to offer greater options to customers, above and beyond what is available within the confines of their own walls. Our system, the South Central Library System, provides us delivery service, which saves us thousands of dollars in postage each year; interlibrary loan which allows for access to library collections state-wide; resource library services; consultant services; continuing education opportunities for our staff; and more. The current public library system infrastructure enables local libraries to better meet the information needs of their residents in a cost-effective manner.

However, state funding for public library systems has eroded over the years and the state has never fully funded its commitment to public library systems. Last year the legislature passed and the Governor signed SB 269 (Act 150) which, if funded, would rectify this problem. Unfortunately, the funding requested by the Department of Public Instruction for increasing system aids was omitted from the Governor's budget.

All over the State, public library systems are finding it harder and harder to complete their mission and local libraries, and their customers -- your constituents, are the ones who suffer. Without the continued assistance and services of the South Central Library System, our library would be crippled in our ability to provide for the needs of our residents. We need assistance with developing computer technology and with computer system connectivity with other library resources in the state. Without increased system funding, this is not going to be in the cards in the near future.

Senate Bill 59 – Public Library Lending Incentive Aid Program

Currently before the legislature, the Public Library Lending Incentive Aid Program (Senate Bill 59) encourages public libraries to continue to make their collections and services available to people who live outside their municipal boundaries. The program would provide approximately \$.50 per circulation outside of the municipality (to give you some idea, our current cost per circulation is about \$2.29).

Our library has continuing problems obtaining adequate reimbursement for the services we provide to persons residing outside of our municipality. The program would assist in making up for inadequate reimbursement from our county -- counties being only mandated by recent law to provide 70% of the cost of service. The program would also assist our library and the Marathon County Public Library in developing a workable solution for current cross-border problems.

While far from solving some of the more serious cross-border inequities in the state, the program would encourage a goodly number of areas to maintain open access.

We encourage restoration of DPI's original request for system funding in this budget as well as passage of SB 59, the Library Lending Incentive Program, as investments in the informational well-being of the citizens of Wisconsin.

I thank you for your time.

April 13, 1999

Testimony to the Joint Finance Committee
Stevens Point, WI

My name is Heather Eldred. I am Director of the Wisconsin Valley Library Service, a seven county library system serving residents of the north central Wisconsin counties of Clark Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida and Taylor...and beyond. While I have many library-related concerns this session (and I urge you to support them all) I will focus my comments today on only one of them....system aids.

Wisconsin's librarians worked hard last year to explain the needs of Wisconsin's 17 library systems to our legislators. We thought our concerns were understood when Wisconsin Act 150 (which required DPI to budget for 13% system funding) was passed in the last legislative session and signed by the Governor.

You can imagine our dismay when we learned that even though the Governor signed Act 150, his budget doesn't include ANY increase in system funding. So we're back again - trying to explain the importance of an increase in system aids.

The Governor's TEACH Wisconsin program is laudable and appreciated and we're very pleased that he is proposing to include funding for BadgerLink in the TEACH budget - but it doesn't go far enough! The schools only deal directly with about 20% of this state's population. What about the other 80% who also need access to information and who generally get that information through their public libraries?

Most of this state is served by rural library systems which are generally far behind their counterparts in the more populous areas of the state in terms of technology. TEACH Wisconsin and the e-rate are providing us with the opportunity to catch up with our more geographically compact (and generally more prosperous) colleagues in terms of high-speed telecommunications. While we have the will and the expertise to move ahead technologically, shared automation is still out of the question financially for many of the small libraries in this state. The world around us is moving from print to electronic information. If public libraries aren't able to provide this type of access, there will be islands of under-served people throughout this state.

13% funding will also allow for implementation of a more equitable system aid distribution formula. This is urgently needed for the larger, more rural systems who, under the current formula, are falling further behind. As an example, without increased funding and the new formula, my system is scheduled to receive less state aid in 2000 than in 1999. SB66 is currently being forwarded to achieve this much needed change in the distribution formula.

Library systems operate as backups to libraries. They provide the human and electronic connections to access the world of information. Without systems, those connections would not be there. Most library users are not aware of the services they use which are provided by library systems to and through their local libraries. If

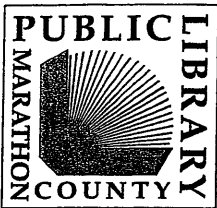
people knew about the services they will lose if systems fail, legislators would be flooded with pleas to adequately support systems.

Systems have not traditionally spent much money to explain their services to library patrons. Instead, they choose to spend their limited dollars on services. This makes for good use of tax dollars but it doesn't help systems garner support in the legislative process. Then, when it's mostly library personnel who come before you and plead for increased funding, it looks very self-serving. It's not! If library personnel don't stand up and plead for adequate funding, not many others will...not because it's not important but because average library users just don't know enough about what library systems do.

The Legislature created the system program in Wisconsin. Those of us who have been a part of that program from its inception are proud of what we have done - we hope you are too...

Please support 13% funding for Wisconsin's library systems.

Thank-you.



Headquarters Library
300 North 1st Street
Wausau, WI 54403-5473
715-261-7200

LIBRARIES IN: Athens, Edgar, Marathon, Mosinee, Rothschild, Spencer, Stratford, Wausau

STATE OF WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING April 13, 1999

I urge you to include funding for these important library initiatives in the next budget.

- **BadgerLink**

The recommendation has been made by DOA and DPI that funding be added from the TEACH program. I would reinforce this recommendation as it would keep this invaluable online resource in libraries and maintain access to this resource for all citizens.

Funding required:

2000: \$836,000

2001: \$1,700,000

- **Funding for public library systems**

In 1998 the Legislature passed Act 150 which required the DPI to request funding for library systems at 13% of local and county expenditures for public library service. The library systems promote sharing of resources among member libraries and provide additional services which local libraries cannot fund. These include delivery of requested items between libraries, consultation, continuing education, automation guidance, and collections for all members to use. I am asking you to support the DPI request for increases in the library system aid as stipulated in Act 150.

Additional funds requested to meet the higher level of funding:

1999-2000: \$5,141,200

2000-2001: \$6,244,700

Total both years: \$11,385,900

- **Establish a public library lending incentive aid program**

This initiative would provide a per-loan incentive payment to local libraries for maintaining open access to library service for all Wisconsin citizens, despite political boundaries.

Currently, 31% of the total number of public library loans in Wisconsin were to residents outside of that municipality. The incentive aid program would assist local libraries in recovering the cost of providing service to Wisconsin citizens who do not reside in that municipality.

This funding would help Marathon County Public Library to resolve the cross border issue which currently exists with Marshfield Public Library.

Based on a current incentive payment of approximately 50 cents per loan, the recommended funding for this program is:

2000: \$7,459,000

2001: \$7,570,000

Thank you for your attention to these critical library issues.



Mary Bethke, Director
Marathon County Public Library
300 N. 1st Street
Wausau WI 54403-5473

Home address:

Mary Bethke
1822 Spring Street
Schofield WI 54476

Testimony of Audrey O'Harrow Concerning Public Library System Funding

Hello, my name is Audrey O'Harrow, and I am a resident of Oconto Falls in Oconto County. I am also a member of the Oconto County Library Board, and serve as the Oconto representative on the Nicolet Federated Library System Board of Trustees. I welcome the Joint Finance Committee to Green Bay, and am very pleased that this meeting is being held in a public library. Quite often our public libraries serve as meeting places, not only for sessions such as these, but for educational programs for children and adults. Libraries are places of lifelong learning, and an important part of a free and open democracy.

My concern with the budget as presented by Governor Thompson, is that increased funding for Wisconsin's 17 public library systems has not been increased. As mandated by the 1997 Act 150, which was passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor, library systems in Wisconsin are supposed to be funded by the state at 13% of local library expenditures. The Department of Public Instruction had to present a budget that included this 13% funding for library systems. The Governor's budget had no increase.

For many years, Wisconsin's library systems have worked to provide a "level playing field" for the numerous small libraries in the state. In our own Nicolet Federated Library System, there are 43 public libraries in an area covering nearly 5500 square miles. We are pleased that the Brown County Library is our Resource Library. However, the majority of the libraries are small, as are their budgets. Yet it has been possible through the funding made available by the Nicolet Federated Library System, for most of our libraries to automate, allowing for a sharing of books among many libraries. Just recently the Door County Library joined the shared automation system that the Nicolet System and the Outagamie-Waupaca Library System share. In Oconto County, funding from Nicolet will help automate the libraries in Lena and Gillett this year. In Marinette County, the Peshtigo Library is also in the process of getting into the automated system. All of these projects are being made possible by funding that Nicolet has been able to provide.

Last year, the Nicolet System provided computers for all the member libraries, and helped to make Internet access possible in these libraries. Living in a rural area like Oconto, the ability of the small libraries to add this kind of technology has been extremely limited. Without Nicolet, many of our libraries would not be able to afford access to the Internet, or have the computers that are such an important part of the information world today.

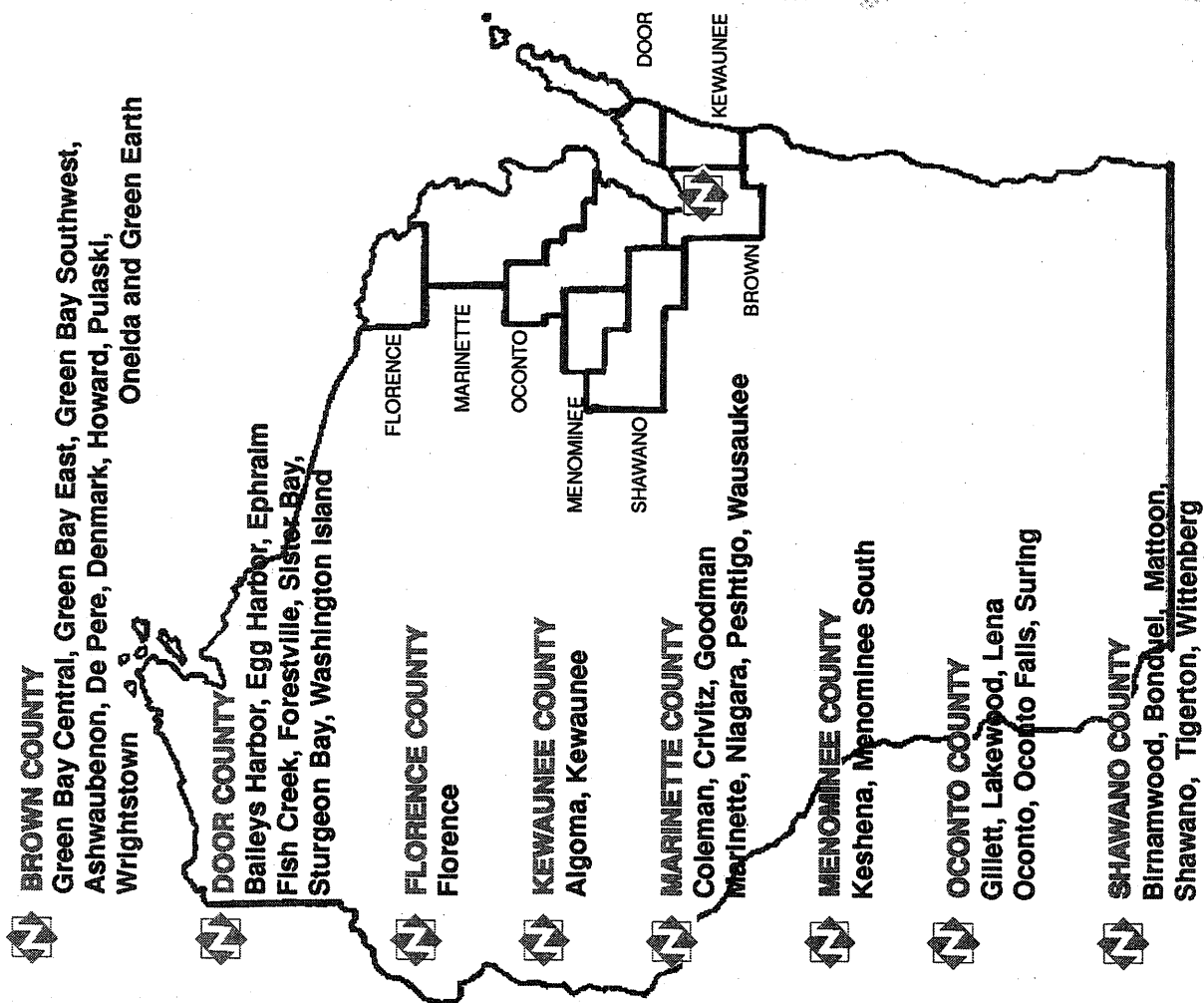
Library System financial support is more than just computers and the Internet. In our System, Nicolet provides a wealth of services and activities for member libraries. Among some of the things done for us by Nicolet are:

- Van delivery, carrying requested items to and from other libraries.
- An annual library services cash grant, used by most libraries to purchase needed books for their collections.
- Technology training.
- Continuing education opportunities for staffs and trustees. Classes, workshops, and special training are offered.
- Assistance with the all-important Summer Reading program for children. The System provides member libraries with a planning workshop and promotional materials.
- Continued support of OWLSnet, the online system of the Outagamie-Waupaca Library System, that is supported by Nicolet, which provides the opportunity for libraries to share more than 1.3 million items freely.
- Interlibrary loan service from Nicolet staff, who search for items needed by library users, request them from libraries all across the country, then deliver them to library users at no cost.

These are just a few of the things the Nicolet System does for our member libraries. As we look to the future, the technology needs of our libraries continues to increase. We look to Nicolet to help us develop plans for adding new technology. We know we'll need the help of Nicolet to help provide funding to purchase the equipment we will need, and access to the online databases that will give our rural users the same advantages as people in Wisconsin's largest cities.

I urge the Joint Finance Committee to implement the 13% System Aids formula as voted by the Legislature and approved by the Governor in Act 150. Our public library systems need the support to allow our small libraries to serve the people of Wisconsin with information that can strengthen our communities and our families.

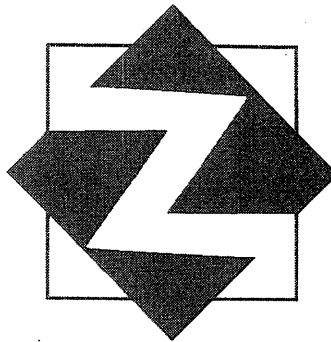
**Nicolet Federated Library System
serves public libraries in eight counties
of northeastern Wisconsin**



NFL599-500

*Just keeping
in touch. . .*

**WITH LIBRARIANS
LIBRARY TRUSTEES
AND FRIENDS**



**NICOLET
FEDERATED
LIBRARY
SYSTEM**

PHONE 920.448.4410

FAX 920.448.4420

THIRD FLOOR, 515 PINE ST.

GREEN BAY, WI 54301-5194

MARK MERRIFIELD, DIRECTOR

Wisconsin library systems

There are 43 public libraries in northeastern Wisconsin which are members of the Nicolet Federated Library System.

And the Nicolet System, funded by our state taxes, is one of 17 library systems in the state. The purpose for these "systems" is to assure equal access to public library service by all state residents, no matter where they may live.

How are they governed?

Each of the 17 Systems is governed by a citizen Board of Trustees which represents that particular geographical area.

What do they do?

Each System serves its member *libraries* (not their customers) according to a plan created by its Director and Staff, following guidelines of Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction, Division for Libraries and Community Learning, with the approval of the System's own Board of Trustees.

How does the Nicolet Library System help your library?

We provide services, equipment, monetary grants, professional consultation and educational opportunities. . .and coordinate your library's services with those of other public libraries in northeastern Wisconsin for the benefit of all the residents.

Your library receives

- ◆ Van delivery, carrying requested items to and from other libraries.
- ◆ An annual library services cash grant.
- ◆ Hands-on technology training.
- ◆ Planning advice, consultation and assistance from professional staff in areas of:
 - budget preparation and bookkeeping
 - collection development (selection of books and other materials)
 - space planning/building
 - publicity/ public relations/ printing and design
 - programming/ displays
 - computer/ software trouble shooting
- ◆ Continuing education opportunities (classes, conferences, workshops) and reimbursement for attendance by library staff.
- ◆ Educational opportunities for your library's trustees.
- ◆ An annual printing budget.
- ◆ Opportunities to give input into System planning via regularly-scheduled meetings with other member librarians.
- ◆ Assistance with the annual Summer Reading Program children's programs, by underwriting the cost of posters, reading records, buttons and other promotional items, as well as providing a planning workshop for staff.
- ◆ The benefits of NFLS' participation in OWLSnet, a partnership linking libraries' computerized catalogs: Your customers may select from millions of items and borrow directly.
- ◆ Interlibrary loan service from Nicolet System staff who search for your library's customers' requests in libraries located at universities, business firms, hospitals and at government offices across the state and nation.
- ◆ Assistance with new technology. Recently, each library in the Nicolet System received an Internet-accessible computer and printer specifically for use by your customers.



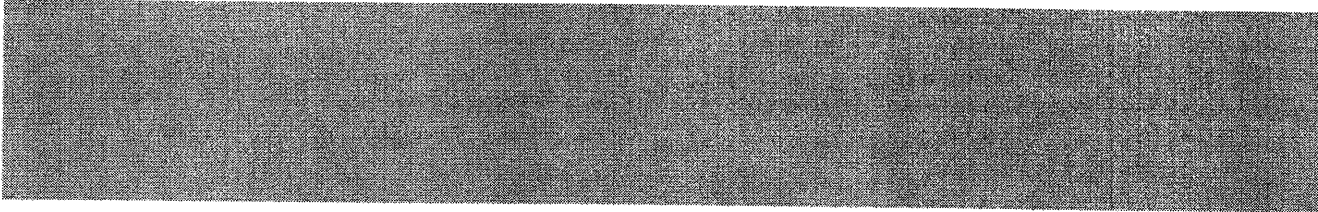
STUDENT TECHNOLOGY SERVICES
A Division of I&MT

Presentation to the **Joint Finance Committee**

of the **Wisconsin State Legislature**

in support of **UW System Student Technology Training**

April 8, 1999



Information & Media Technologies

April 8, 1999



Members of the Joint Finance Committee
State of Wisconsin

Re: UW System 1999-2001 Biennial Budget (Instructional Technology/Distance Education)
Governor's recommendation on IT Support Staff

"There exists an acute shortage of qualified individuals to maintain the computer and instructional technology (IT) infrastructure throughout the UW System. Currently, UW institutions reallocate \$6 million annually to meet growing IT needs. However, additional resources are necessary to address support staff shortages." *UW System Budget Request, 1999-2001, Instructional Technology*

This is certainly a true statement, but represents only a portion of the problem facing the information technology industry nationwide and globally. Conservative projections indicate the number of technology related jobs available will double in the next 5-6 years. In addition, current projections indicate the conventional education systems relying upon computer science, information science, information resources, and similar academic programs will be able to graduate only about 35% of the people needed to fill these jobs. It is clear we need to do something new.

It is our opinion that the vast majority of the total number of jobs available in 5-6 years will be jobs requiring excellent interpersonal skills combined with a knowledge of technology sufficient to assure the highest levels of customer service. In other words, 35% may be enough to satisfy the demand for very high competency and so called "hard skills" positions available. The remaining 65% of the positions of the future will fall into the "soft skills" dominant, or customer services area. At UW-Milwaukee (UWM), our student employee program is directed toward both types of future employment opportunities and has been quite successful in engaging students from all campus disciplines in technology based support roles.

At UWM we have implemented a student empowerment initiative within our Information & Media Technologies (I&MT) division specifically designed to address the expanding support staff needs of the campus. Student Technology Services (STS) is a functional unit within the division dedicated to the professional development of our student work force. The I&MT division employs about 140 students in a variety of technology related support positions. About one third (33%) of our STS student staff members are pursuing technology related academic degrees such as computer science, management information systems and information resources. About two thirds (67%) of our STS student staff members are pursuing academic degrees in literally every other discipline on campus, art, business, architecture, music, philosophy, education, health, sciences, social welfare, engineering and languages to name a few.

We provide a great deal of training in both the hard skills and soft skills needed to be successful student employees at UWM supporting campus technology users. We also provide real world experience by delegating responsibility and authority to our student staff appropriate to the role each student plays in delivery of our services. The STS organization is managed and staffed solely by student employees.

Students at UWM receive an excellent education in their respective academic programs. Students working in the STS program receive professional and personal development opportunities in addition to on-the-job training. This training is non academic (i.e. no college credit) and is intended to produce capable workers with real added value for positions in both the public and private sectors upon completion of their academic degree programs. Our experience indicates STS workers fare extremely well when searching for that first full time job after graduation.

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MATERIAL HANDLING

315 West Forest Hill Avenue • Oak Creek, WI 53154
P: 414-764-6200 • F: 414-764-8446 • www.morriscranes.com

March 29, 1999

Dear Members of the Wisconsin Joint Finance Committee,

I am the Director of Information Systems with Morris Material Handling located in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. We are a manufacturer of overhead cranes and hoists. Our Oak Creek facility is not only one of our larger manufacturing sites but is the corporate headquarters for our worldwide operations as well.

I am writing to you today to express our support for the Information Technology Initiative, which appears in the state budget, as proposed by Governor Thompson.

As you know, there is a huge demand for IT workers in both the public and private sectors. Many of these jobs are unfilled due to a lack of trained workers. Many employers are looking to the colleges to produce more graduates with technical skills.

The Governor proposes to hire 800 student IT workers and provide them with training and experience. Student IT workers would assist faculty and staff with integrating technology into the classroom and maintaining administrative systems, as well as providing customer support to students. This program would create a labor force of trained IT workers, and thus strengthen Wisconsin's ability to compete in a global economy.

The Student Technology Services program in place at UW-Milwaukee is a great model to follow. Expanding this program here, and across the state, has the following advantages for Wisconsin:

1. It opens technology training to a broader range of students than the traditional technically oriented training does. It is increasingly important for business to have people who are involved in Marketing, Human Resources, Economics, foreign language, etc. to have a strong technology background.
2. It integrates technology directly into the learning process. This is not just an abstract class these students take but it is practical, real-world, exposure to how technology is used.
3. This program is also a great model that business should study. There is a situation here where you are dealing with a workforce, the students, who are working part time, with very flexible schedules, and the workforce churns every semester. As businesses move towards outsourcing more operations to specialized service providers and as businesses try to cope with the labor shortage via flexible hiring programs, we can learn a lot from these type of programs. We can study which management techniques and organizational structures work and which don't work.


Having moved from Northern Wisconsin to the Milwaukee area in just the last two years, I was able to see how the distance learning initiatives brought educational opportunities to

March 29, 1999

rural Wisconsin. I also saw how rural schools profited from internet connections.. As a past member of the Universal Service Fund Council I was very pleased to be able to be a part of helping the Public Service Commission draft rules on universal access to telephone service for all of Wisconsin's citizens. All of these initiatives have been very positive steps in raising the level of opportunity for all citizens.

Your support of Governor Thompson's budget for Instructional Technology will be another step in ensuring Wisconsin citizens and business prosper in a global economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas J. Lucas". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Thomas J. Lucas
Director of Information Systems



April 5, 1999

Dear Members of the Wisconsin Joint Finance Committee:

My name is Dave Galatte and I'm the District Manager of The Revere Group's Milwaukee office. The Revere Group is an information technology consulting firm with 5 offices nationally, over 400 employees, and approximately 45 employees in Milwaukee. I'm writing to inform you of The Revere Group's support for the Information Technology Initiative, which appears in the state budget, as proposed by Governor Thompson.

As part of Revere's business we hold several roundtable events where we bring together between five and ten information technology leaders from various Wisconsin businesses. During these events we discuss the problems and issues associated with utilizing information technology in today's businesses. A resounding and constant outcry, which was expressed in all four of our 1998 roundtables, was the need for people with information technology skills.

I too feel the pains of not having enough skilled resources to meet the demand for technology consulting services. Revere's revenue growth is restricted more by the lack of resources than a lack of demand. We are continually searching for skilled professionals to add to our staff.

The UW Regents propose to hire 800 student information technology (IT) workers who will receive both training and experience. These student IT workers will assist faculty, staff, and students with the maintenance and installation of information technology systems. These skill sets are exactly the kind needed by Wisconsin businesses. By increasing the number of skilled resources, Wisconsin businesses can become leaders in technology as well as improve their competitiveness in the marketplace. Both of which are healthy for the economy and residents of Wisconsin.

Throughout my daily interaction with Wisconsin businesses regarding technology issues I continually see the lack of skilled resources impeding revenue growth and productivity improvements. Please provide your financial support to the UW Regents Information Technology/Distance Education program.

Thank you for your time and should you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 414-944-3159.

Sincerely,

Dave Galatte
Vice President
District Manager, Milwaukee



Date: April 8, 1999

To: Members of the Joint Finance Committee, State of Wisconsin

From: Margaret Kennedy, Program Manager, Student Technology Services, UW-
Milwaukee

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margaret Kennedy".

Re: Allocation recommended in the Governor's Budget for hiring and training of
Information Technology student employees on UW System campuses

In this section of our presentation are letters from students employed at the UW
Milwaukee campus in the Student Technology Services Division.

For the past year and a half I have served as one of the primary staff developers of the Student Technology Services program on the Milwaukee campus, of which these students are a part. Based on the success of this model program, brought to reality by the labors of the students who have written to you and who testify today, I support the \$4.9 million allocation recommended in the Governor's Budget for hiring and training of Information Technology student employees on UW System campuses. It is a sound idea and we know it will bear fruit for the UW System, for the students, for their future employers and for the State of Wisconsin.

The Milwaukee Student Technology Services organization is composed of students who provide a wide range of technology support services to the UWM campus community, including Help Desk, Network Support, Web Design, Programming, Troubleshooting, Television, Graphics, Photography and Printing. The campus benefits by receiving support for these mission critical functions. The students benefit by receiving both financial support and added value to their academic work, across all disciplines. Wisconsin employers benefit by hiring our graduates who arrive on the job ready to use and learn the powerful technology tools in which companies have invested.

One unique aspect of our program is the degree to which we place student supervisors in charge of the management of their peers. These supervisors receive training and practice in the professional skills in demand by employers today, managing a budget, directing the day-to-day tasks of their employees, developing training plans for them and conducting performance reviews.

Another important feature of STS is that we have brought together a group of advisors from industry that meet with us regularly to provide feedback on our program. They are

Margaret Kennedy, mnk@uwm.edu
(414) 229-6635

interested in working with our students during summer internships, during which time they can assess skills and plan for future hiring.

The State of Wisconsin Departments of Workforce Development and Commerce issued a report last August, which supports this kind of initiative. (The report is available at <http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dwd/Forums/report.htm>) The report indicates that a labor shortage exists in all geographical areas of the state, and that one factor contributing to the problem is the number of new jobs being created that require formal training or extensive periods of work experience.

A trend discussed in the report is that there are more students taking a longer time to solidify vocational choices. Many students go to school intermittently or part-time, a national trend, but unfortunately the percentage of Wisconsin residents who eventually earn a baccalaureate degree is 20.6% versus the national average of 23%. Our student employees see their peers who graduate jump into a much higher wage bracket than they could command without a degree. This becomes even more dramatic within the first couple of years on the job. Thus we believe this initiative will help narrow the gap between Wisconsin and other states in terms of vocational choice and degree completion.

Another issue throughout the state is the high rate of turnover, especially during the first year on the job. This first year is the most expensive one for employers, since the investment in new employee training is high. The advantage to companies in hiring our graduates is that they will have had a chance to work with them in internships during previous summers and can identify those who best fit their particular needs. Furthermore, they can work with us to keep our training in line with the expectations of their companies, and, perhaps most importantly, they can be assured in hiring our graduates that they have proven themselves with work habits, which we rigorously enforce.

As the report indicated, in order to create the productive workplace of the next century, we need to enhance existing partnerships among business, labor, education and government to address the needs of employers and employees. It appears that this budget allocation is one such innovation in our enhancing existing partnerships. Thus I heartily recommend passage of this item in the Governor's budget.

Thank you for this opportunity to share with you the success of our program and for having this opportunity to testify.

3559 Cramer Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53211

Wisconsin Joint Finance Committee
Madison, WI

April 8, 1999

Dear Members of the Wisconsin Joint Finance Committee:

I am a junior at the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. I am majoring in Spanish and Latin American Studies with a minor in Spanish Business. My current position in Student Technology Services is as Peer Training Supervisor.

I am writing to you today to express my support for the Information Technology training initiative for student workers across the state, which has been supported by Governor Thompson in his proposal for the state budget. With this funding, students at other UW System campuses can receive the training and on-the-job experience that I have been fortunate to experience through Student Technology Services. The student workers will receive the opportunity to enhance both their life and professional experiences.

STS has greatly enriched my computer knowledge and experience working in a business atmosphere. I believe that having first hand experience in the hiring process, budget decisions, leading training sessions and supervisory skills will make me more marketable when searching for a career after graduation. As a foreign language major, I have had no academic training in or classes on computer technology. I have learned all of my computer knowledge from STS training sessions and on the job experience. In comparison with past campus employment, I have gained many skills and have risen above my classmates through my experiences with this organization. STS provides a solid job background in technical skills and customer service, from which the student and his/her future employer will benefit. I feel that this University, along with STS, has provided me with great job experience and technical knowledge. Similar organizations and opportunities for students throughout Wisconsin will prepare them with the confidence and experience upon graduation. With my experience in STS, I feel confident upon entering the job market.

Your support of Governor Thompson's budget for Informational Technology training across the state will be a positive step up in Wisconsin's future employees and will make this state a leader in education and technology.

Sincerely,



Regina Bard
STS Peer Training Supervisor
Student Technology Services
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee

Manjula Dammanna
2533 North Oakland Avenue Apt. #101
Milwaukee, WI 53211

Joint Finance Committee
Madison, WI

April 7, 1999

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Finance,

I am a graduate student here at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee studying Urban Planning and Geographical Information Systems. I currently work for Student Technology Services as a Student Supervisor for Classroom Support.

I support the Information Technology training for student workers throughout all the UW system campuses. The state funding Governor Thompson proposed will allow more options to smaller UW campuses for student training. The students will also be better prepared for future technology demands in Wisconsin and elsewhere.

Working for STS has been a positive experience for me. STS training tremendously enhanced my technical knowledge and customer service skills. I feel that there is no department here on our campus that can provide the skills offered by STS. The positive experiences with STS have complimented my education. I have been able to apply STS technology training in my coursework. An example of this is Powerpoint. I use the Powerpoint program for all my graduate presentations. In addition, dealing with students, staff, and faculty who have multimedia and technology needs on a regular basis increased my communication skills. I believe technical knowledge is important but communication skills are vital in any setting. STS teaches these skills to anyone who has the desire to learn. The students are then equipped with skills needed to succeed in technology or related careers.

Therefore, your support of Governor Thompson's budget for Information Technology training across the state is vital. It will bring many positive effects to Wisconsin and make this state a leader in education and technology. Thank you for your time and support.

Sincerely,



Manjula Rao Dammanna
Student Supervisor

2905 North Bartlett Avenue #2
Milwaukee, WI 53211
April 6, 1999

Joint Finance Committee
Madison, WI

Dear Members of the Joint Finance Committee:

I am a sophomore at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, double majoring in Art (drawing and painting), and Business. I have worked for Information and Media Technologies' department of Student Technology Services (STS) for the past 2 years as Switchboard Operator, Courier, Lab Consultant, and Assistant Human Resources Coordinator (all at different times). Currently, I am a Computer Lab Supervisor and Student Project Coordinator.

My time with STS has provided diverse and extensive training in many technical and related fields. Each position requires a certain amount of on-the-job training in customer service and technical support. I will be with this organization for another three years; imagine all the additional knowledge and training I will gain through their different programs as I move from one division of STS to another. The opportunities for students on this campus should be available for students on all UW campuses.

Thus, I support Governor Thompson's proposed state budget that would fund Information Technology training for student workers throughout the state at all UW System campuses. If every university in Wisconsin has a program like STS, UW graduates will be prepared to meet the high demand for technical skills with confidence and real-world knowledge.

Sincerely,



Nina Rosenberg
Student Technology Services
CCL Supervisor
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Student

3204 W. Alvina Ave
Greenfield, WI 53221

Joint Finance Committee
Madison, WI

April 5, 1999

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Finance,

I am a junior majoring in Management Information Systems here at the University Wisconsin-Milwaukee. I currently work for Student Technology Services as a Campus Computer Lab Consultant and Peer Trainer.

I support Information Technology training for student workers throughout the state at all UW System campuses, which Governor Thompson has proposed funding UW campuses to have more options in training their students, better preparing them to meet the demands of the ever-so-fast changing world that awaits them upon graduation.

Working for STS has added to my knowledge by giving me valuable customer service as well as hands-on technical experience. These experiences have also complimented and furthered my education. Majoring in a field such as MIS, the STS organization has provided me with the knowledge as to what is expected and will be expected of a student majoring with such a degree. From the skills and lessons that I learn here, I look forward to and feel confident for the future career that awaits me.

Your support of Governor Thompson's budget for Information Technology training across the state will bring positive effects to Wisconsin and make this state a leader in education and technology.

Sincerely,



Smriti Sharma
Campus Computer Lab Consultant/Peer Trainer
University Wisconsin-Milwaukee Student

2605 N. Prospect, Apt. 1
Milwaukee, WI 53211

Joint Finance Committee
Madison, WI

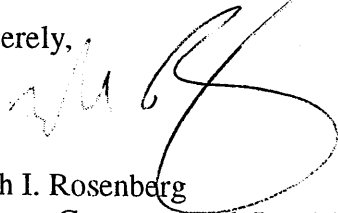
April 5, 1999

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Finance,

The biggest unspoken benefit of the Student Technology Services initiative is the sense of responsibility and ownership that students can receive from the program. By putting students in charge of every aspect of the labs, we learn how to run a major corporation. While MS Word classes are a dime a dozen, STS teaches real world, management level skills that are priceless and rare.

I know that coming out of the STS program, I will have a significant advantage over any other applicant in the field. Through the broad range of activities and training, I feel I am better qualified for a huge range of information technology jobs; more so than students who merely major in a specific field. The benefits STS has given to me, and more importantly to any of my future employers, is only beginning to gestate and will pay off more and more as I build on the solid foundation I have recieved from STS.

Sincerely,



Noah I. Rosenberg
Campus Computer Lab Lead Supervisor
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Student

Joint Finance Committee
Madison, WI

April 7, 1999

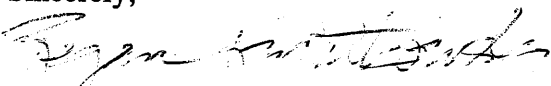
Dear Members of the Joint Finance Committee,

I am a senior graduating in May from the University Wisconsin-Milwaukee. I am majoring in Graphic Design and currently work for Student Technology Services as a CCL Supervisor as well as a Help Desk Consultant.

Working for STS of Information and Media Technologies has proved to be an irreplaceable experience for me. Seeing that I will be entering the professional job market very soon, I feel that my work done in the areas of management and consulting here with STS has trained me in areas I would never have been trained in from my academic courses alone. Adding in the extra skills I've learned here will certainly give me an advantage in the next couple months.

By supporting Governor Thompson's budget proposal, you are ensuring that future students of the University of Wisconsin system will have the opportunity to work first hand with current technologies as well as work in an environment that puts personal excellence and advancement first.

Sincerely,



Regan Kwiatkowski
Information and Media Technologies
MIT Lab Supervisor
Help Desk Consultant

Lorie Kieffer
STS Human Resources Supervisor
UW-Milwaukee

April 6, 1999

Dear Members of the Joint Finance Committee,

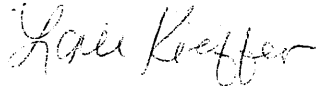
I am a first year graduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in the Masters in Human Resources and Labor Relations (MHRLR) program. Currently, I work for Student Technology Services (STS) as the Human Resources Supervisor while I attend classes as a full-time graduate student.

The purpose of this letter is to express to you my support for the Information Technology training for student workers throughout the state at all UW System campuses which Governor Thompson has proposed funding for in the state budget. The technical and soft skill training that can be offered as a result of this funding will serve to enhance work place performance for currently employed UW students and better prepare them as upcoming college graduates to meet the demands of the job market with skills not typically acquired through academic coursework.

Working for STS has provided me with the opportunity to participate in some of this training not typically offered as part of my academic curriculum. As a result, I can tell you first hand the technical skill building classes have already proven beneficial to me as an employee and as a future Human Resource Professional. I believe these skills and the first hand experience of performing in a Human Resources capacity for STS when combined with the strength of UW-Milwaukee MHRLR program will ensure success in current and future career endeavors.

Your support of Governor Thompson's budget for Information Technology training across the state will bring positive effects to Wisconsin and make this state a leader in education and technology. Thank you for your support!

Sincerely,



Lorie Kieffer

8133 South 36th Street
Franklin, WI 53132

Joint Finance Committee
Madison, WI

April 5, 1999

Dear Members of the Joint Finance Committee,

I am a junior at the University Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

I am majoring in Mechanical Engineering and I currently work for Student Technology Services as a computer consultant/technician.

I support Information Technology training for student workers throughout the state at all UW System campuses, which Governor Thompson has proposed funding for in the proposed state budget. This funding will allow the smaller UW campuses to have more options in training their students, better preparing them to meet the demands of Wisconsin when they graduate.

Working for STS has been very rewarding. The skills I learned from training and on the job experience have enhanced my education as a mechanical engineer. Also, I find it so much easier to complete my homework and other tasks now that I know how to use computer systems more effectively and efficiently.

Your support of Governor Thompson's budget for Information Technology training across the state will bring positive effects to Wisconsin and make this state a leader in education and technology.

Sincerely,

Justin E. Seipel
Student Technology Services
University Wisconsin-Milwaukee Student

441 West Bayfield Avenue
Glendale, WI 53217

Joint Finance Committee
Madison, WI

Wednesday, April 07, 1999

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Finance,

I am a sophomore at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. I am studying for a major in Electrical Engineering and a minor in Computer Science. While at UWM I am working for the Student Technology Services as a consultant in the computer labs.

I support Governor Thompson and his proposed funding of Information Technology in his proposed state budget. I believe that extra funding will not only help UW-Milwaukee but all Wisconsin state Universities. The extra funding will better equip the Universities to train their students to meet the demands of post graduation, which will benefit Wisconsin.

Working for the University in the Student Technology Services has given me experience that will aid me in the future. I believe that the problem solving techniques and technical customer support experience that I have received will greatly help me in my engineering career. I have received experience in a professional environment, which would otherwise have not been available to me.

In order to make Wisconsin a leader in education of technologies increased funding in technology training is a must. This is why I urge you to support Governor Thompson in his proposed budget for increased funding of Information Technologies.

Sincerely,

Brian Eggebrecht
Student Technology Services: consultant
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Student

3559 North Cramer Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53211

April 5, 1999

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Finance,

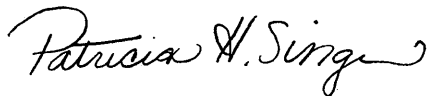
I am a senior graduating in May from the University Wisconsin-Milwaukee. I am majoring in Management Information Systems and currently work for Student Technology Services as the Student Manager.

I support Information Technology training for student workers throughout the state at all UW System campuses, which Governor Thompson has proposed funding for in the proposed state budget. This funding will allow the smaller UW campuses to have more options in training their students, better preparing them to meet the demands of Wisconsin when they graduate.

Working for STS has given me valuable experience in working for an organization that is trying to solve current technology problems and make the most reasonable decisions for future changes. Most importantly, these experiences have complimented my education. I have been able to stay on campus and have a flexible work schedule that fits in easily with my classes. As a soon-to-be graduate of UWM, I feel that this University has prepared me academically and given me enough working experience to feel confident to enter the job market that the State of Wisconsin has to offer.

Your support of Governor Thompson's budget for Information Technology training across the state will bring positive effects to Wisconsin and make this state a leader in education and technology.

Sincerely,



Patricia Singer
Student Technology Services Manager
University Wisconsin-Milwaukee Student

3229 N. Oakland Ave. #7
Milwaukee, WI 53211

Dear Members of the Joint Finance Committee,

I am a junior at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee. I am majoring in Elementary Education and currently work for Student Technology Services as the Technical Services Supervisor.

I support Governor Thompson's proposed funding for Information Technology training for student workers at all UW System campuses. This funding will allow all UW campuses to have more options in training their students.

Through STS training and my on-the-job experiences, STS has provided me with the experiences to combine technical and customer service skills. STS has enhanced my job skills as well as my computer knowledge. Majoring in Elementary Education I haven't learned the technical skills in my academic classes. The STS program can teach anyone technical skills and computer software. The value of STS lies in its ability to start with someone who doesn't have these skills, with a desire to learn and to finish with someone who is equipped with skills needed to succeed in any career.

Your support of Governor Thompson's budget for Information Technology training across the state will bring positive effects to Wisconsin and make this state a leader in education and technology.

Sincerely,



Tara Hoagland
Student Technology Services: Technical Services Supervisor
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee

Lou Ann Bohn
2572 N. Farwell Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53211

April 8, 1999

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Finance,

I am a student at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and am employed by its Information and Media Technology Division. As such, I am part of the Student Technology Services (STS) program and receive on-going training in technology, customer service and management.

I urge you to approve the funding that is in the governor's budget for training UW System I.T. student workers. This kind of training is necessary to help bridge the gap between the abundance of available high technology jobs in Wisconsin and the dearth of qualified people to fill them. Simply graduating with a degree in Computer Science these days will not do. Most technology-related jobs demand proficiency in customer service.

I will receive a Bachelor's Degree in International Studies from UW- Milwaukee in May. Because of the computer and on-the-job customer service training I received through the STS program, I am confident that I am leaving the academic world well equipped with technical and customer service skills to become a valuable worker in delivering technology-related services.

Please provide funding for training UW System I.T. student workers so they, too, will have the opportunity to enter Wisconsin's workforce ready to be productive citizens!

Thank you,



Lou Ann Bohn