

June 9, 2006

To: Minnesota Digital Library Coalition Members

From: Bill DeJohn, Director, MINITEX Library Information Network

Re: **Minnesota Digital Library – An Update**

The Minnesota Digital Library Coalition (MDLC) Steering Committee decided this spring to make MINITEX the administrative home of the Minnesota Digital Library (MDL). MINITEX will administer a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant, awarded by the Minnesota State Library Services (a unit of the Minnesota Department of Education), to continue the work of developing the MDL as a statewide resource. Members of the MDLC represent academic and public libraries, state, county and special historical societies, K-12 education, and state and educational agencies.

There will be changes in the administration of the Minnesota Digital Library. The \$221,000 grant, with an additional \$30,000 from MINITEX reserves, will fund continued collection development for the MDL, which includes digitized maps, documents, and images. It will also support MDL outreach efforts to work with libraries, historical societies, municipalities, and other interested organizations to identify statewide needs that MDL can help meet. Additional project goals project include assessing the status of existing digital projects currently unavailable to the general public and preparing a five-year plan for MDL's development.

After two successful years of gathering digitized images to develop the database of MDL's signature project, "Minnesota Reflections," the MDL will use the upcoming LSTA grant to move into a new phase in the future of digitization and preservation projects in Minnesota. Changes in personnel will occur at the end of the current Fiscal Year (June 30).

The MDLC gives its thanks to Jim Dildine who has served as Project Manager for "Minnesota Reflections" since its inception two years ago; Jim, who will complete his work at the end of June, has worked to bring more than 8,000 images into the collection. We appreciate Jim's contributions and dedication to developing "Minnesota Reflections" and putting in place several of the processes and procedures that will assist us in working with local historical societies, museums, libraries, and other institutions. Jim's work has helped MDL to build a strong foundation and has provided experience we will use to work closely with other Minnesota organizations.

As we start this new phase for MDL, MINITEX will contract with St. Cloud State University for the services of Marian Rengel, who will become the Minnesota Digital Library Outreach Coordinator. To this point, Marian has overseen day-to-day administration of MDL grants as part of her responsibilities as Grant Projects Developer/Communication Coordinator, Library Resources and Technology Services, at St. Cloud State. We are happy (and fortunate) that she will continue with MDL in her new full-time role. Keith Ewing, Professor of Information Media and Coordinator of Library Systems and Collection Management at St. Cloud State, will continue as MDL Project Director.

We will continue to bring digitization projects into the "Minnesota Reflections" database. But, we also will carry out additional objectives during the project year, and Marian and Keith, along with MINITEX staff, will be instrumental in completing the following activities during FY07 (July 1, 2006-June 30, 2007):

- Maintain and upgrade the technical infrastructure, including servers, applications, databases, storage back-up and recovery, and data that support the MDL;
- Create additional content for users of the Minnesota Digital Library;
- Create new products, such as curricular materials for teachers and students in grades 4-12 who use the Minnesota Digital Library to support history and social studies instruction to meet state and national teaching standards;
- Expand established projects and develop new projects to broaden the scope of the MDL;
- Work with current and potential institutional and individual users of Minnesota Digital Library to better understand their needs and to plan the future of the MDL more precisely.

Our signature project, “Minnesota Reflections,” has met a tangible public need, which was anticipated by the MDLC Steering Committee.

Now, our development and planning must be responsive to the needs of and directly informed by the public and participants in MDL projects. We will work closely with the Minnesota Historical Society in further development of “Minnesota Reflections” as they work closely with cultural heritage institutions. We will carry out assessment activities along with more visits with MDL participants and working closely with staff at the Minnesota Historical Society and the University of Minnesota, the two current scanning sites for MDL.

For more information on the Minnesota Digital Library, visit [www.mndigital.org](http://www.mndigital.org) or contact Bill DeJohn ([w-dejo@umn.edu](mailto:w-dejo@umn.edu)), Keith Ewing ([kewing@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:kewing@stcloudstate.edu)), or Marian Rengel ([mrrengel@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:mrrengel@stcloudstate.edu)).