

NETWORK OF ALABAMA ACADEMIC LIBRARIES FISCAL YEAR 2005 ANNUAL PLAN

The history of Alabama academic libraries is marked by an exceptional commitment to improving resources and services for students and faculty. When a statewide assessment found that Alabama's academic libraries could not adequately meet their users' information needs, the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries united wisdom and forged a collective vision to achieve excellence: in students, in research, in library resources and services. By working together, Alabama's academic institutions have transcended institutional boundaries to build an information infrastructure that assures **EVERY** student, faculty member, and other researcher with access to the information resources needed for study and research.

The two decades of NAAL are noted for advances in the use of technology which have changed the way librarians identify, select, and deliver information for their users. Innovations such as the Internet, World Wide Web, online indexing and abstracting databases, electronic text, and digital images – unthinkable strategies just a decade ago—have placed the library at the fingertips of faculty and students researching from their own workstations.

In this environment, the library has grown in its importance in academe. Libraries have been able to use technology to shift personnel from performing repetitive tasks to increasing services for library users. Some of these seem invisible, such as understanding the organization and transmission of knowledge to assure effective selection of information resources and to manage their retrieval and use. Some seem simple but are quite complex such as understanding technology and its rapid rate of innovation to transform knowledge management. Some are more readily visible, such as traditional library reference services, supplemented now by online or “virtual” reference services. Academic library users are increasingly oriented toward “self-service,” but turn to librarians for help with complex questions needing logical thinking skills and a deep understanding of how knowledge is organized and archived. As a result, today's academic reference services are noted for their increased and more intensive use of staff time.

Librarians are more fully engaged in the teaching responsibilities of their colleges and universities. They assist in planning and teaching information literacy and “writing across the curriculum” programs. These curricula focus on teaching critical and logical thinking skills and require students to analyze and synthesize information. Students are expected to improve their skills for interpretation, comprehension, and communication. Librarians are valued partners in these programs because they have knowledge of information sources; knowledge of information technologies and how to maximize their use; and knowledge of the information needs of their users and the environment in which they operate.

In FY2005, NAAL will continue to build on accomplishments of the past twenty years. Its members are committed to:

- sustaining the statewide online catalog of university libraries' holdings—searchable from any Alabama library to determine what materials are owned in-state,
- lending library materials among all academic libraries without charge to the borrowing students or faculty,
- maintaining rapid delivery of requested materials through interlibrary loan,
- achieving financial savings through shared acquisitions of online research databases, and
- supporting the Alabama Virtual Library to assure equity, economy, and excellence in the provision of information services for **ALL** Alabamians.

Also in FY2005, NAAL will emphasize:

- recruiting and retaining professional librarians to sustain the high level of services provided to Alabama students and faculty
- increasing the ability of users to find information about Alabama by contributing digital materials to *AlabamaMosaic*, the web portal for Alabama history, and
- developing a distributed archival program to assure long-term access to Alabama state publications posted online by state agencies

NAAL has achieved notable recognition as an exemplary model for providing information services required for excellence in education. This excellent reputation continues, even as Alabama's traditional underfunding for higher education and libraries also continues. Most important, NAAL's remarkable success has been earned through the unfaltering dedication of its member institutions – and their librarians – to excellence.

The FY2004-2005 Annual Plan reflects NAAL's vision to continue successful initiatives to share existing resources, plan for an increasingly digital information future, and collaborate with other groups to assure every student, faculty member, and other researchers access to information resources and services needed for education, research, and lifelong learning.

**NETWORK OF ALABAMA ACADEMIC LIBRARIES
FY2004-2005 ANNUAL PLAN**

1. EXPAND ACCESS TO GLOBAL INFORMATION

- 1.1 Alabama Virtual Library: NAAL will work with the Alabama Virtual Library Council to assure universal access to core education materials and library-based resources regardless of the user's geographical location or economic status.
- 1.2 Alabama Virtual Library: NAAL will seek state funding to add research-level databases to the Alabama Virtual Library to support advanced scientific, medical, and technical research in colleges and universities and their efforts to advance statewide economic development.
- 1.3 Online Interactive Network: NAAL will continue implementing recommendations from "An Electronic Gateway to Information: A Virtual Library for the Millennium," a statewide vision to develop an online interactive library network linking library catalogs for seamless access by users, supporting patron-initiated interlibrary loan requests, sharing electronic databases, and assuring access to external information resources.
- 1.4 Shared Databases: NAAL will evaluate online databases for shared use and negotiate group licenses whenever possible to achieve discounts and improve licensing terms.
- 1.5 Education: NAAL will coordinate training opportunities as needed to assure that library staff and other information users attain the knowledge and skills necessary to support effective and efficient use of online databases.

2. ASSURE ACCESS TO HISTORICAL ALABAMA RESOURCES

- 2.1 Assure Access to Historical Materials: NAAL will coordinate a statewide program to identify and digitize traditional scholarly materials held uniquely by NAAL institutions and other repositories and to make these electronically accessible to Alabama residents as well as scholars throughout the world.
 - 2.1.1 Sponsor *Alabama Mosaic* in cooperation with Auburn University Libraries as a central web portal supporting access to digitized Alabama history materials including those created during 2001 to 2003 as part of the Cornerstone Project.
 - 2.1.2 Assist Alabama repositories to contribute digital materials to *AlabamaMosaic*, including assessing needs to digitize their materials, selecting items for digitization, and implementing a digitization program.
 - 2.1.3 Implement a statewide training program to assure that librarians, archivists, and others attain the knowledge and skills to successfully plan, initiate, and complete digitization projects.
 - 2.1.4 Implement strategies for *AlabamaMosaic* to include digitized resources relevant to the *Alabama Social Studies Course of Study* and *Alabama Moments* and provide for statewide access via the Alabama Virtual Library.

2. *ASSURE ACCESS TO HISTORICAL ALABAMA RESOURCES, continued*

- 2.1.5 Seek partnerships and encourage initiatives to create digital publications related to Alabama, such as the *Encyclopedia of Alabama* (Alabama Humanities Foundation) and the *Literary Map of Alabama* (Alabama Center for the Book) to further enrich the information available through *AlabamaMosaic*.
- 2.1.6 As appropriate, seek external funding to support efforts to digitize historical materials and make them accessible electronically
- 2.2 Improve Access to State Publications: NAAL will support efforts to expand access to state publications and assure online publications are available electronically by coordinating efforts to create a distributed archival collection.

3. COORDINATE SHARING OF ACADEMIC LIBRARY RESOURCES

- 3.1 Bibliographic Database: NAAL will encourage academic libraries to contribute bibliographic and holdings records to shared databases to facilitate use of these materials by all students, faculty, and other researchers throughout Alabama.
- 3.2 Resource Sharing: NAAL will coordinate sharing library materials and expertise and encourage the use of appropriate processes and technology including electronic interlibrary loan messaging, electronic document transmission, commercial package delivery services, and virtual reference services.
 - 3.2.1 Coordinate sharing of library materials among NAAL participants to assure that every student, faculty, and other researchers can obtain needed information regardless of where it is held.
 - 3.2.2 Work with the Alabama Public Library Service to coordinate sharing library materials between NAAL members and public libraries to assure that any citizen of Alabama can obtain needed information regardless of where it is held.
 - 3.2.2.1 Support the Alabama initiative for economic development in the Black Belt region by encouraging, monitoring, and reporting on resource sharing with public libraries in this region.
 - 3.2.2.2 Encourage and evaluate interlibrary loan transactions between NAAL libraries and other participants in the STate of Alabama Resource Sharing (STARS) interlibrary loan consortium.
 - 3.2.3 Investigate, propose, or assist in the adoption of new technologies, services, or activities that improve or extend library and information services to authorized users and other researchers.
 - 3.2.4 Encourage participation in regional and national activities to facilitate the use of virtual reference services to extend online reference services to students, faculty, and other researchers.

4. DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS TO EXPAND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

- 4.1 Alabama Virtual Library: NAAL will support partnerships with the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education, Alabama Public Library Service, Alabama State Department of Education, and Alabama Supercomputer Authority to strengthen and expand the Alabama Virtual Library resources and services.
- 4.2 Affiliate Institutions Program: NAAL will coordinate the Affiliate Institutions Program to enable four-year colleges not eligible for NAAL membership to share online databases, participate in continuing education activities, and engage in joint planning for increasingly technology-based delivery of library services and resources.
- 4.3 HBCU Library Alliance: NAAL will encourage and support efforts by the Alabama Historically Black Colleges and Universities participating in the national HBCU Library Alliance to forge cooperative programs that will strengthen their resources and services.
- 4.4 Black Belt Economic Development: NAAL will support the Alabama initiative for economic development in the Black Belt region by seeking opportunities to provide workshops about the Alabama Virtual Library and other appropriate library and information related topics.
- 4.5 Professional Library Education: To help offset the predicted shortage of librarians, NAAL will seek opportunities to work with library education programs to recruit individuals to become professional librarians in academic libraries.
- 4.6 Alabama History and Culture: NAAL will support partnerships with the Encyclopedia of Alabama coalition and the Alabama Center for the Book to encourage an appreciation of Alabama's history and culture.

5. IMPROVE LIBRARY ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE

- 5.1 Assessment: NAAL will coordinate data collection and program evaluation to assist its members in developing effective and efficient library programs.
 - 5.1.1 Facilitate the collection of statistical data about academic libraries through the biennial Academic Library Survey compiled by the National Center for Education Statistics.
 - 5.1.2 Collect and evaluate data on the use of online resources to assure the most effective licensing models and expenditures for online information products licensed by NAAL.
 - 5.1.3 Encourage participation in the 2005 LibQual+ for assessment of library services in an electronic environment.
- 5.2 Other Management Information: Data may be collected, as needed, to monitor progress and performance of NAAL programs or to provide baseline data for planning future programs.
- 5.3 Enhancing Skills: NAAL will sponsor programs to enhance and strengthen the skills of library staff to ensure the provision of excellent library and information services in Alabama academic libraries.