

file library

(R)

U ANDREW HEISKELL
TIME & LIFE BUILDING
ROCKEFELLER CENTER
NEW YORK 10020

Dear Madam,

17 few weeks ago
we chatted about the
importance of libraries
in the overall educational
future. As you know
they have been neglected
but are now regaining
their position.

I/ the First Lady or
the President saw fit to
use the word "libraries"
in pronouncements
about education it would

Increase their role &
usefulness very considerably
at the cost of just that
one word.

Just as background
I attach a fact sheet
on progress and future
possibilities.

This is just a modest
proposal but one that
could help millions of
kids.

I miss seeing you
Warm regards.

Andrew

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Warren regards,

Austin

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Audrey

Proposal for First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton Library Initiative

President Clinton and Vice-President Gore have provided extraordinary leadership towards ensuring that libraries are participants on the information highway.

■ “every single library in America connected to the Information Superhighway by the year 2000” (NII Advisory Council, Telecommunications Act)

■ “every eight year old can read every twelve-year old will be able to log-in on the Internet” (Address by the President to the Democratic National Convention)

■ “PRESCRIBE READING” initiative encouraging pediatricians, hospitals ... libraries to work together to make sure that infants and toddlers have access to books and are read to regularly.

When Mrs. Clinton talks about “taking a village to raise a child”, there is a direct link to libraries. The best villages are centered around their libraries. Libraries are critical to raising a literate child in our ever-increasing global village.

Technology bridges our communities by providing immense access to information and learning. Content and access to that content are the key issues that the country now faces. Libraries (and schools) need quality content for the potential of the information superhighway to be realized and libraries are critical players in providing both quality content and the ability to navigate the myriad electronic resources.

Specific next steps are to ensure that:

1. libraries are an integral resource in the Administration’s efforts to: increase our children’s reading ability; create a technologically literate society.
2. librarians are trained to help users navigate the Internet and electronic resources;
3. libraries are active in navigational and content development in the electronic environment;
4. ensuring that adequate Federal, State and local funding is available for equipment, connectivity, and user and librarian education;
5. telecommunications rates are affordable so that libraries can provide access.

Libraries need a national voice in order to sustain their role as agents of democratic and equal access to information.

Background on The New York Public Library.

- The New York Public Library is a network of 87 libraries: four world class research centers, and 83 branch libraries that circulate materials in neighborhoods in the Bronx, Manhattan and Staten Island. Over 12 million users annually.
- The Library implemented LEO (Library Entrance On-Line) a \$9 million integrated on-line catalog and information system that provides Internet access in every one of our 87 buildings. Every month, there are over 1 million electronic searches throughout the system.
- NYPL has over 350 public Internet microcomputers and 1,400 on-line catalog and database search terminals throughout the 87 buildings. In the next three years we hope to increase the number of public Internet computers to 1,000 and the total number of computer terminals to 3,000.

- NYPL has just secured over \$3.1 million from the City and State of New York, and the Department of Commerce, Telecommunication and Information Infrastructure Assistance Program funding to upgrade the NYPL telecommunications network to the capacity of T-1/T-3 lines.
- NYPL has just opened a new state-of-the-art library -- the Science Industry and Business Library. SIBL was designed to allow its users to take maximum advantage of the opportunities provided by today's information technology revolution. \$100 million public/private partnership with City, State and Federal funds. There is an Electronic Information Center, with 70 computer workstations and printers, which offers access to more than 100 stand-alone CD-ROM databases, networked CD-ROM files, on-line full text electronic journals, the Internet, and other electronic resources. Linked to the EIC is an Electronic Training Center which is a sophisticated facility where staff train the public in the use of electronic resources. Every day every one of these classes is fully booked. In addition, SIBL provides seating for up to 500 users with each reader position wired to support users' own laptop computers.
- The Library has been a pioneer in the creation of training curriculum aimed at retooling traditional librarians into 21st century information professionals who have a broad base of competencies with information technologies and electronic resources. Over the past three years, the WK Kellogg Foundation has provided \$500K to support the development of staff for the new Science Industry and Business Library. NYPL is now well positioned to provide leadership outreach programs for staff in other library settings.
- The Library has a privately funded Microcomputer Page program in which over 80 teenagers provide instruction and training to library patrons on both the hardware and software of the microcomputers in their branch.
- NYPL is committed to providing high quality content as well as the tools to navigate the Internet. NYPL is a leader in the nation's digital library movement. NYPL is a charter member of the National Digital Library Federation. Current projects include the creation of the "Digital Schomburg," a project which will allow Internet access to much of the spectacular and unique holdings of the Schomburg Center for Black History and Culture by the nation's educational communities (K-12, the Historical Black Colleges and African-American Studies programs). Other digital projects include an electronic Virginia Wolfe Archive and the conservation of photographs which document the early years of American Theater from the archives of the White Studios.

Recommendations:

- Make "21st Century Libraries" a First Lady initiative.
 - create a "21st Century Librarian" Project using the Clinton Administration model of "21st Century Teachers".
 - give incentives to libraries to develop navigational tools and content thereby enhancing cooperation and collaboration. This builds on libraries' historic role of collecting and organizing information.
 - endorse creation of a national digital library that will open the rich collections of the nation's great libraries.
 - Use The New York Public Library to demonstrate the leadership that the Administration has provided in making America competitive in the global information infrastructure.

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