



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2014

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*The Cleveland Law Library is located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Cuyahoga County Courthouse.*



Kathleen M. Dugan, Esq., MLS, Librarian & Chief Administrator

## Board Members

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Benjamin C. Sasse - Tucker, Ellis LLP, Treasurer  
Hon. Mary J. Boyle - Eighth District Court of Appeals  
Thomas A. Cicarella - Calfee, Halter & Griswold LLP  
Derek E. Diaz - Hahn Loeser & Parks LLP  
Ruth E. Hartman - Baker & Hostetler  
Hon. John P. O'Donnell - Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court  
Philip M. Oliss - Squire Patton Boggs  
Patricia A. Poole - Baker & Hostetler\*  
Ronald Stansbury - Ulmer & Berne  
Scott E. Stewart - Stewart & DeChant  
Christine M. Stouffer - Thompson Hine LLP

### **Cuyahoga County Law Library Resources Board**

Sheryl King-Benford - RTA General Counsel and Deputy General Manager, Chair  
Ralph Kolasinski - Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office, Vice-Chair  
Hon. John P. O'Donnell - Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court, Secretary  
Hon. Charles L. Patton, Jr. - Cleveland Municipal Court  
Steve Wood, Retired Director of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Library

## Strategic Planning Committee

Ronald Stansbury, Chair  
Sheryl King-Benford  
Patricia A. Poole\*  
Steve Wood  
Kathleen M. Dugan

\* Former Board Member



## Executive Summary

### Mission

The Cleveland Law Library's mission is to provide high quality legal research, education, reference and other related services to its various constituencies in an efficient and cost-effective manner utilizing its extensive collection in print and electronic format.

It is organized and managed by two entities, the Cuyahoga County Law Library Resources Board (CLLRB) and The Cleveland Law Library Association (CLLA). The CLLRB is a public body constituted under the Ohio Revised Code to serve county government, municipalities, the courts and the general public. The CLLA is a private, not-for-profit membership organization whose members are law firms, lawyers and businesses in the greater Cleveland area.

### Strategic Priorities

1. Promote continued cooperation between the CLLA and the CLLRB for the benefit of the Cleveland Law Library's diverse patrons.
2. Clarify the Cleveland Law Library's mission to support the delivery of services its patrons need in an ever-changing digital landscape.
3. Continue to integrate technology into the Cleveland Law Library's operations and services.
4. Develop new marketing strategies to promote the Cleveland Law Library, its services and its collection.
5. Enhance communication with the Cleveland Law Library's members, partners, and other interested stakeholders.
6. Explore new sources of members and venues for programming.
7. Introduce new products and services to enhance the Cleveland Law Library's value to patrons.
8. Explore collaborations with local partners who share the legal community.



## Identity & Services

**History:** The Cleveland Law Library was originally established in 1869 by the Cleveland Law Library Association (CLLA), a non-profit organization created by leading members of the bar in Cuyahoga County for the promotion of the science of law. Over the course of time, Ohio statutes carved out an additional role for the Cleveland Law Library in serving the local judiciary, elected officials in Cuyahoga County, and members of the Ohio

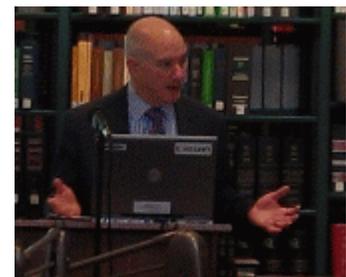


*Main Reading Room Mural*

General Assembly. More recently in 2009, legislation expanded these statutory responsibilities to include all local courts and governments and created a new entity called the Cuyahoga County Law Library Resources Board (CLLRB) to oversee services to court and governmental offices and provide a venue for public access. The CLLRB is supported at the state level by the Consortium of Ohio County Law Libraries, which negotiates contracts, catalogs resources, creates guidelines, and suggests best practices for all of Ohio's 88 county law libraries.

**Joint Operation:** The CLLRB and CLLA work cooperatively to provide a law library for the constituents of both organizations. Both entities share the expenses of running the Cleveland Law Library and contribute staff and resources to its joint operation. This successful partnership enables the Cleveland Law Library to remain an outstanding research institution on the cutting edge of technology. Its fourth floor offices in the Cuyahoga County Courthouse continue to serve as Cuyahoga County's hub for legal and business information, and it offers services beyond the Courthouse walls through a virtual reference desk, remote access, and traditional document delivery options.

**Staff & Services:** The Cleveland Law Library employs five staff members, including an attorney/professional librarian, two other professional librarians, and two paralegals. These staff members provide resources and services through a number of means. On a daily basis, many lawyers, judges, clerks, county staff, and *pro se* patrons utilize the Cleveland Law Library's services and resources on-site. Over the past several years, the Cleveland Law Library's



*CLLA Board President Joseph Gross at December 2014 CLE Program*

wireless access, CLE programs, and expanding services have helped to increase foot-traffic and bring in new members. Since July of 2011, the Cleveland Law Library has also been open to the public every Wednesday.

All of the Cleveland Law Library's members enjoy free reference assistance. This encompasses a multitude of services, including locating forms, retrieving cases or statutes, performing journal and law review searches, verifying citations, searching dockets, investigating companies, gathering background data on experts, selecting books or chapters in a book on a particular topic, compiling legislative history materials, locating news articles, searching public records databases, and running verdict and settlement searches. For CLLA members who need someone to conduct in-depth legal research for them, the Cleveland Law Library also offers research services for an hourly fee.

Although the Cleveland Law Library provides traditional legal reference and research in person and by phone, email, and fax, it is one of only a handful of law libraries in Ohio to offer chat and Skype reference services. In addition, its "Borrow a Librarian" initiative is the sole program in the Country to offer assistance with legal research and computer issues at members' offices.



**Collection:** The Cleveland Law Library maintains a large, print collection of circulating materials which include treatises, form books, practice guides, law journals, frequently-used statutes and rules, and other materials. It also provides free, in-house access to Lexis, Westlaw, Ohio Capital Connection, HeinOnline, the OSBA Casemaker Online Library, and many other legal research databases. Cleveland Law Library staff can also access specialty databases such as Openonline for driving and criminal records and D&B for comprehensive business reports. In addition, through the Library's long-standing affiliation with CLEVNET, a consortium of public and special libraries in Northeast Ohio that is operated by the Cleveland Public Library, it is able to utilize and provide access to non-traditional research databases covering business information, medical resources, and literature. When patrons need resources beyond what the Cleveland Law Library offers, it is able to borrow these materials from other libraries nationwide through a process known as InterLibrary Loan.



**Website:** The Cleveland Law Library maintains an Internet gateway to web-based legal resources, plus over 40 Subject Guides to its print and electronic resources and over 50 Research FAQ's. It also offers multiple current awareness services to keep patrons apprised of brand new cases from Ohio courts, and its blog provides timely access to news of interest to the local legal community.

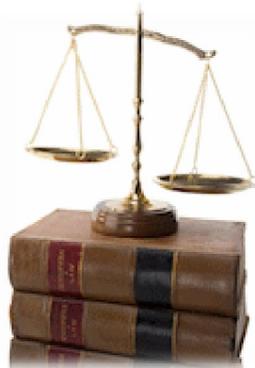


Scan QR Code to view the  
Law Library's Subject Guides

**Members Only Resources:** The Cleveland Law Library's website is also the door to its Members Only page, where all of its private, court and governmental patrons can remotely access key legal research databases 24x7. These resources currently include:

- Loislaw National Primary Law Library: Federal and state cases, codes and regulations
- Loislaw Treatise Libraries: E-books on over 25 topics
- CCH Business and Finance Library: E-resources on banking, bankruptcy, blue sky laws, franchising, commodities, consumer credit, IP, energy, securities, government contracts, IRA's, insurance, NASD, and much more
- CCH Health and Human Resources Total Connect: E-resources on labor and employment, human resources management, payroll, benefits, pension, safety/OSHA, environmental compliance, health care reimbursement, food, drugs, and devices
- CCH Tax Research Network: Standard Federal Tax Reporter, 50 state tax reporters, plus Puerto Rico
- LegalTrac: Index of over 1,500 major law reviews, newspapers, specialty publications, bar association journals and international legal journals, including many titles in full text
- Index to Ohio Legal Periodicals: Database created by Cleveland Law Library staff to provide an index to Ohio legal periodicals that are not collectively indexed anywhere else

**Funding:** The Cleveland Law Library supports its operations through funding from both the CLLA and the CLLRB. The CLLA contributes dues from local lawyers and law firms, as well as revenue from reference and research services and CLE programming. CLLRB funding flows from statutes under which the CLLRB receives a portion of traffic ticket and liquor fines imposed by Cuyahoga County courts. The CLLRB does not currently receive any general revenue funds from the County.





## The Strategic Planning Process

At a joint Board meeting in the Fall of 2011, the CLLA and the CLLRB created a Strategic Planning Committee to begin the process of developing a new vision that would guide the Cleveland Law Library into the future. In its Fall Newsletter, the Cleveland Law Library solicited suggestions for ways in which the Library could better support its members.

Throughout 2012, the Committee met several times to review and discuss various matters affecting the ongoing operations of the Cleveland Law Library. The Committee also experimented with a structure for defining both short and long term goals to help the Cleveland Law Library continue to meet the expectations of its diverse group of patrons and the challenges of delivering reference and research services over the Internet. The Committee provided the Cleveland Law Library's members and friends with progress updates at the Annual meeting in April and again in the Fall 2012 Newsletter.

Committee work really began in earnest in the Fall of 2012 when the CLLA retained a consultant and facilitator named Cathy Geib of Authentic Focus Consulting. With Mrs. Geib's expert assistance, the Committee first reviewed the landscape in which the Cleveland Law Library operates and identified current and future trends affecting both the practice of law and the field of law librarianship. This task included reviewing legal and library science literature, networking with the Librarian's connections, identifying existing and potential services, brainstorming what makes the Cleveland Law Library unique, examining its governance structure, and interviewing several local librarians to test assumptions.

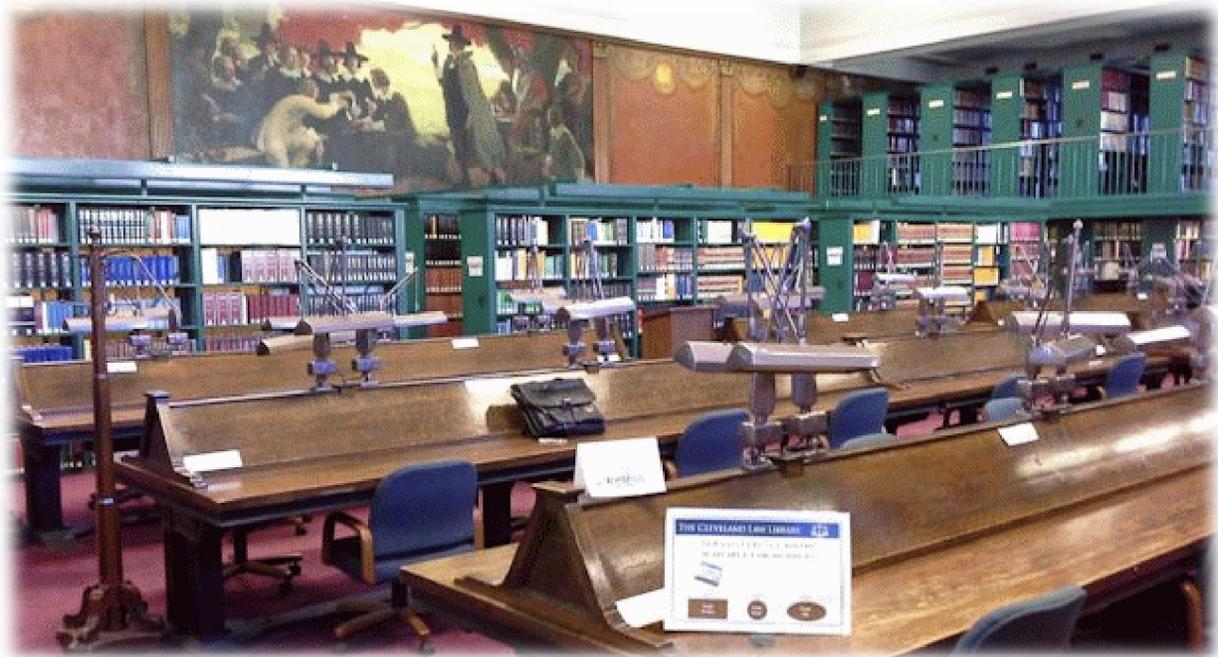
Preliminary data helped the Committee create electronic surveys which were distributed in the Summer of 2013 to members, including local law librarians, as well as potential partners and other interested parties. After analyzing the survey results, the Committee summarized the data and its initial responses in the Fall 2013 Newsletter. Having learned what members wanted and expected, the Librarian and the Committee began implementing some new programs immediately while crafting a more detailed blueprint for the future delivery of services at the Cleveland Law Library.

Based on models from exemplary law libraries and other organizations around the country, the Committee also drafted a new mission statement, which it tweaked many times before the Boards finalized and adopted it at their joint October 2013 meeting.

Strategic planning efforts culminated in a full-day Retreat in November of 2013 for both the CLLA and CLLRB Boards. During an intense day of discernment, the Librarian and Board

members reviewed and discussed the brand new mission statement, technology changes for the future, communication with members, population shifts in the legal and law library industries, and possible collaborations with local partners. After resolving what the Cleveland Law Library could or should do differently, the Librarian prepared a list of action items to build the Library's future, enhance member services, and create sustainability in spite of rapidly changing technologies.

This year, the Cleveland Law Library implemented many of the important suggestions from the Fall Retreat. As the timeline contained later in this report demonstrates, some initiatives started much earlier in the strategic planning process, and some will take additional time and ongoing effort.



*Main Reading Room*



## Strategic Priorities

1. Promote continued cooperation between the CLLA and the CLLRB for the benefit of the Cleveland Law Library's diverse patrons.
  - Understand that the Cleveland Law Library's continued viability depends on the joint operation of a law library.
  - Reinforce that the existing public-private partnership enables the Cleveland Law Library to provide services of the highest quality to the patrons of both entities.
  - Emphasize that all residents of Cuyahoga County benefit when the financial resources available to both entities are used jointly to acquire legal research materials and hire staff to provide assistance.
2. Clarify the Cleveland Law Library's mission to support the delivery of services its patrons need in an ever-changing digital landscape.
  - Recognize that although the Cleveland Law Library is not the only law library in town, it offers unique services that its members value.
  - Acknowledge that the Cleveland Law Library serves a diverse group of patrons who want services provided in the most expedient and cost-effective manner possible.
  - Understand that part of the Cleveland Law Library's mission includes providing education about the law and legal research.
3. Continue to integrate technology into the Cleveland Law Library's operations and services.
  - Explore cloud-based services which improve services to patrons.
  - Acquire new resources that can be made available remotely to members.
  - Provide patrons with access to digital books for seamless legal research.
  - Maintain the Cleveland Law Library's relationship with CLEVNET, a consortium of public and special libraries in Northeast Ohio that keeps the Cleveland Law Library on the cutting edge of library technology.
4. Develop new marketing strategies to promote the Cleveland Law Library, its services and its collection.

- Refresh the Cleveland Law Library's web interface to make resources and information more accessible.
  - Promote Members Only resources, which are available 24x7, to all CLLA and CLLRB patrons.
  - Solicit assistance from organizations with marketing expertise to suggest new ideas for promoting the Cleveland Law Library.
  - Create promotions for law school graduates and new lawyers.
5. Enhance communication with the Cleveland Law Library's private, court, and governmental members, as well as local partners and other interested stakeholders.
- Utilize a sophisticated email service to distribute regular communications.
  - Modernize semi-annual newsletters to streamline the delivery of news and information.
  - Engage more heavily in social media to reach existing and potential patrons.
6. Explore new sources of members and venues for programming.
- Design outreach efforts to advertise services to law firms of all sizes, new lawyers, in-house counsel groups, bar associations, law schools, ADR groups, and other organizations.
  - Investigate opportunities for CLE outside the Cleveland Law Library.
  - Consider supporting extraterritorial depositions and legal practice.
7. Introduce new products and services to enhance the Cleveland Law Library's value to patrons.
- Launch competitive intelligence services at the Cleveland Law Library.
  - Support global law library services at law firms with offices in Cuyahoga County.
  - Renovate to provide meeting and deposition space for lawyers with virtual law practices.
  - Offer more CLE programs focused on technology, the practice of law and legal research.
  - Offer inexpensive CLE programs to new lawyers.
  - Evaluate new specialty databases which could support new services.
8. Explore collaborations with local partners who share the legal community.
- Identify synergies with local entities which enhance services to the Cleveland Law Library's members and the greater legal community.
  - Create economic and financial models in which to analyze potential partnerships.



## Deliverables Timetable

2012:

Created a Facebook page and began adding content.

Added Skype as a tool for live, interactive reference interviews with patrons.

Enhanced long-standing wireless access.

2013:

Launched the "Borrow a Librarian" Program to provide all members with assistance with legal research and computer-related issues at their offices.

Installed a wireless "Hot Spot" printer that allows printing from any computer, laptop, or mobile device, including smartphones.

Provided comprehensive iPad training on basics, functionality, security, and APPS.

Renewed and added significant content to the Library's online Lexis and Westlaw plans.

Began providing online legal research tutorials for members.

Announced an APP and mobile site for the Library's online catalog.

Added online payment options to the Library's online catalog.

Transitioned to a new interface for InterLibrary Loans.

2014:

Redesigned the Library's website and created a new logo for the Cleveland Law Library.

Chose Constant Contact to deliver regular email communications to members.

Communicated monthly with members about valuable services and new programs.

Created new competitive intelligence research services to provide corporate and financial information on public and private companies.

Initiated a beta program of providing global library services to national law firms with local offices in Cleveland.

Inaugurated a new "chat" service for patrons and website visitors.

Replaced and upgraded all servers.

Migrated the Library's Internet service from a T-1 line to a 10 mpbs fiber optic connection.

Expanded conference room facilities to offer 3 spaces for meetings and depositions.

Enhanced and promoted Members Only 24x7 resources to all private, court and governmental patrons:

- Purchased access to new CCH Business & Finance and Health & Human Resource databases
- Created a search terms Cheat Sheet for members
- Streamlined access to the Members Only page

Created 42 Subject Guides and associated QR codes as gateways to the Library's current books, databases and Members Only resources.

Updated banking practices to accept all major forms of credit cards in-person or by phone.

Regularly posted "Tech Thursday" updates to the Library's Blog and Twitter feeds.

Evaluated specialty databases and acquired financial services products that provide comprehensive information on businesses and companies.

Migrated to Office 365 email services.

Published the first article in a new column on legal research and writing for the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association Journal.

Created promotions for new members.

Marketed services to large law firms, mediators, arbitrators, new lawyers, and law students.

Future :

Acquire the Lexis Digital Library to provide members with access to ebooks.

Convert to VoIP for telephone calls.

Invigorate the Library's social media postings and presence.

Promote and market all services, including the Members Only site, to all private, court and governmental patrons.

Organize new member drives.

Explore partnerships with organizations that serve the local legal community.

