

MEMO

To: Montana State Library Commission
From: Tracy Cook, Lead Consulting & Learning Librarian
Subject: Annual Federation Reports
Date: September 29, 2025

Annual Federation Reports

The [FY 25 Federation Report dashboard](#) is now available. Staff have reviewed the individual reports. The federation coordinators will be available to answer any questions and to discuss the use of funds for trustee development.

Staff request the Commission move to approve the FY25 Federation Reports as presented.

Use of funds for trustee development

Federation coordinators will be able to discuss the use of these funds and their value in more detail. Here is a summary of how each federation spent their \$4,000 allotment to support trustees.

- **Broad Valleys** – originally intended to be used for the annual face-to-face meeting and training. Due to concerns about federal funding and travel restrictions placed on MSL staff, the group voted to send each library in the federation \$190.48. Libraries used this funding to attend online trainings, to supplement reimbursement of travel costs for face-to-face training, and to pay for costs associated with bringing training to board members.
- **Golden Plains** – funds were used to pay for Ara Megerdichian to give an in-person training in northeastern Montana. Ara brought his experience as a former Marine, non-profit leader, and business leader to the session. Board members and library directors found it engaging, helpful, and practical. Librarians and board members have used Ara's training with strategic planning and building better relationships with local government officials and community leaders.
- **Pathfinder** – funds were used by libraries to pay for online training and to pay for travel costs for board members to attend Pathfinder meetings to receive training at the meetings.
- **Sagebrush** – each library received \$400 for trustee development. Funds were used to pay for online training, to print Trustee Manuals for board members, and to pay for travel costs to attend face-to-face training.
- **South Central** - \$1450 of the funds were used to arrange regional trainings where board members from the area could attend a face-to-face session about topics of interest to them. The remaining \$2550 was divided between the 18 libraries to be used locally.



Libraries used the funding to reimburse travel expenses to statewide training sessions and the South Central federation meeting.

- **Tamarack** – funds were used to provide training at the annual Tamarack federation meeting. Topics included parliamentary procedure, local government relations, working with friends and foundations, and MSL resources for board members.

Value of funds for trustee development

“The training provided at the meetings is a great tool for our trustees and for them to meet the Public Standards requirement for training.” – Broad Valleys

“Ara’s training was so impactful I recommended him to other hospital board members when we were planning our annual hospital board retreat.” – Golden Plains

“Federation meetings are often the only time our trustees have a chance to meet trustees from other libraries and receive in-person training.” – Pathfinder

“Support for board member training and development has led to improved attendance at board meetings.” – Sagebrush

“We were able to get our newest trustee to the Federation meeting and she was grateful to see how our larger library world worked.” – South Central

“The training provided at our federation meetings is valuable for helping our trustees understand opportunities and challenges facing libraries, as well as the best practices for conducting certain aspects of library business (open meetings, budgeting, policies, etc.).” - Tamarack