

**LSTA Special Grants 2010  
Final Project Reports  
Choose to Read Ohio**

**Cardington-Lincoln Public Library**

Project Coordinator: Lisa Ebert

Federal Award \$2,984

**Project Purpose:** The purpose of this project was to promote a community-wide reading and discussion of titles by Ohio authors. The community-wide read lasted 6 weeks. This project was a collaborative project between the Cardington-Lincoln Public Library and the Cardington-Lincoln Local Schools.

**Project Activities/Methods:** Two Choose to Read Titles were chosen to support social studies content standards for students. The selected titles were "Trouble Don't Last" by Shelley Pearsall and "Copper Sun" by Sharon Draper. An additional title, "Beyond the River" by Anne Hagedorn, was chosen to involve adult readers. Class sets of "Trouble Don't Last" and "Copper Sun" were purchased for the seventh and eighth grade classrooms. The reading emphasis at the schools and community began in late January 2010 and the program continued through March 2010. Planned tie-in events included a special presentation by members of the school choir featuring music of the Underground Railroad at the public library, a visit to eighth graders from a volunteer from the Marion Historical Society, an art show of quilts at the high school, and a Civil War presentation at the public library. The adult services librarian held a special book discussion group for "Beyond the River." Federal funds were used for library materials and for marketing/promoting the community-wide reads and activities.

**Project Outputs:** Ten copies of "Copper Sun," eleven copies of "Trouble Don't Last" and 24 copies of "Beyond the River" were purchased and used in the program. The classroom sets will remain in the school media center for use in future years.

**Project Outcomes:** This project has led to closer communication between the public library and the local school district. Those participating in the community reads have a greater understanding of the role Ohio played in the Civil War and the Underground Railroad.

**Cincinnati Public Schools**

Project Coordinator: Annette DiGirolamo

Federal Award: \$1,139

**Project Purpose:** The School Librarian and a third grade teacher worked closely on this project. They determined that "Where the Steps Were" was an appropriate Choose to Read Ohio title for third and fourth graders. Their decision was based on the following reasons: 1. There are many parallels between the situation described in the book and the lives of Rothenberg students. Like the students in "Where the Steps Were," the school is located in inner city Cincinnati; in many ways, the lives of these students mirrored the lives of the five characters in the book. In addition, Rothenberg will be moving into a new building once construction is completed. Also, the population at the school is predominantly African American, and the issues of racism would resonate with students. 2. "Where the Steps Were" reinforces the school's African American history unit which is taught in third and fourth grade classrooms during the month of February. Classes study the history of the civil rights movement, focusing on famous African Americans mentioned in the book including Harriet Tubman, George Washington Carver, Langston Hughes, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Rosa Parks. 3. This title provided a wonderful opportunity for numerous activities for third and fourth graders including readers' theater performances of the verses, time lines of the events, and art projects which reflect the woodcuts in the book. 4. The school librarian could use activities associated with the title to inform the students of other library resources and the assistance that is provided by library staff. Some classes also focused on Andrea Cheng's other titles including "Grandfather Counts," "The Key Collection," and "Tire Mountain" as part of this immersion in library services and programs.

**Project Activities/Methods:** All third and fourth grade students read "Where the Steps Were" over a four week period during the month of March. Each classroom did a number of activities (depending upon the class) including: Making a timeline of the historical events mentioned in the book. Making a timeline of their own lives. Writing essays linking the themes of the book to their own lives. Discussing the events at the theater and writing letters to the theater director as the students did in the book.

Studying and writing free verse poems. Doing science activities relating to George Washington Carver (mentioned in book). Creating basic electrical circuits (mentioned in book). Reading the poems of Langston Hughes and Eloise Greenfield. Presenting the fables (Tortoise and the Hare) and fairy tales (Cinderella) mentioned in the text. In the school library, third and fourth grade students practiced doing a Reader's Theater performance of the book. The author of the book, Andrea Cheng, visited Rothenberg Preparatory Academy in April. She did three presentations to students. Federal funds were used for the author visit. In-kind contributions were a copy of "Where the Steps Were" for each of the students participating in the project.

**Project Outputs:** 90 students read "Where the Steps Were" and participated in several related activities. Fourth grade students did a series of block prints and poems related to "Where the Steps Were" and the third graders made a book called "Rothenberg Poems." All students wrote several pieces which were part of their writing portfolios.

**Project Outcomes:** Students at Rothenberg were enriched by the experience of meeting an author and working with her on the Rothenberg Poems project. Students now have a greater appreciation of literature and the role of the library in assisting them with school projects.

## Clark State Community College

Project Coordinator: Amy Korpieski

Federal Award: \$4,029

**Project Purpose:** Clark State Community College Library (CSCC), Project Jericho (PJ), and the Clark County Juvenile Detention Center (CCJDC) wanted to connect with teens in their community through literature. PJ is a collaboration of the Clark State Performing Arts Center and Job and Family Services of Clark County to provide positive, in-depth arts experiences for at-risk youth in the community. One PJ program brings in-depth arts experiences to youth in the CCJDC. This Choose to Read Ohio (CTRO) project involved a community read of "The Death of Jayson Porter" and an author visit from Jaime Adoff. These two literature experiences served as the starting point for a teen poetry slam, original artwork by teens, written conversations between teens, and an art show for the college library.

**Project Activities/Methods:** The following activities took place during the grant period: There was a community read of Jaime Adoff's "The Death of Jayson Porter" in: the CCJDC, the PJ Poetry Slam workshop, and participating English classes at the high school and CSCC. Jaime Adoff worked with PJ teens in the community and in the Detention Center. Workshops were two hours long and included an author reading, question and answer time, writing prompts, guided sharing, and performance practice for the poetry slam. Jaime Adoff gave a reading at the CSCC library. The reading was attended by CSCC students and faculty but also by students and staff from the public high school. Pen pal "discussions" took place between detained teens and teens at the high school. Professional artist Sarah Strong worked with CCJDC teens to create original artwork based on the novel. Adoff's visit with PJ was documented by a photojournalist. Springfield High School students in Art II created bookmarks based on the novel. Student volunteers at the high school library gave book talks to all interested English classes. Federal funds were used for the speaker honorarium, the purchase of books, and for the chapbooks created by PJ teens.

**Project Outputs:** The following outputs occurred as part of the project: Digital poetry slam "commercials" were created by PJ teens. These can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihlKzv5O6Xc> or <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJw-TNxMdxs>. Original teen poetry was collected into chapbooks - both printed and audio versions. Framed poems are on display at the CSCC library. Teens performed their poems at the annual poetry slam. Twenty-four teens "talked" back and forth in journals. They also gave each other encouragement on a personal level. Teaching staff at the CCJDC, the high school, and CSCC gave passing grades for all student journal writing. Collaborative artwork panels created by CCJDC teens were on display in the CSCC library during spring quarter. The panels will be part of the permanent art display at the detention center. Almost everyone going in and out has stopped to look at the art - more than with any other art display they have had. Some students and faculty/staff have left comments in an art display notebook. Photos of Adoff's visit and a description of the project are on display in the main corridor at CSCC. Of the thirty-six bookmarks created by high school students, Jaime Adoff chose four "winners" to be reproduced. The resulting bookmarks (with an "If you liked 'Jayson Porter' you might also like" book list) were distributed at Springfield High School, at the CCJDC, at the PJ Poetry Slam, and in the CCSC library.

**Project Outcomes:** 100% of the 53 PJ teens (in detention and in the community) read the novel and aced a comprehension test. This is not a group of teens who routinely read or "ace" tests. Twenty-seven adults working with PJ teens read the novel - including case-workers, probation officers, counselors, and a magistrate. Pre- and post-reading surveys show almost 100% of students reading "The Death of Jayson Porter" reported an increased appreciation of reading, an

increased value of writing, and an increased feeling of connection with a book. Every comment card from the public reading reflected the audience's feelings of inspiration and connection with the book. For example: "The different style of writing was interesting and I don't see that in books very often." "He makes you want to write!" "I applaud Jaime for daring to be real and for sharing with youth who need to believe in something." "Jaime Adoff is good with what teens are going through." "It really spoke to me cause it's a big part of life."

**Other Results:** After CTRO, PJ teens worked with the Clark County Mental Health Board to create suicide prevention film PSAs for teens. PJ took a risk with this novel and was richly rewarded for doing so. PJ usually seeks to be a "safe haven" or a "break" from the dark realities in the lives of the teens involved. By embracing this novel and project, PJ found teens opening up and engaging in writing and art in a whole new way. Counselors in the CCJDC reported having the most productive sessions ever with teens in response to this novel. PSAs may be viewed at:  
<http://www.youtube.com/projectjericho#p/u/1/cfh583pbk-A>  
<http://www.youtube.com/projectjericho#p/u/2/8Liq89eMjgk>  
<http://www.youtube.com/projectjericho#p/u/3/WJLLIDGxSD0>  
<http://www.youtube.com/projectjericho#p/u/4/68V3SBT9lgc>  
<http://www.youtube.com/projectjericho#p/u/5/knRAjtpuo3c>  
<http://www.youtube.com/projectjericho#p/u/6/-UgKeh7FWIE>

**Anecdotal Info:** Comments from CCDC teens include: Your recent visit was unimaginable, inspiring and once in a lifetime for me. ... Meeting you was so much of a honor your more than a author you're a real life super hero. I have told many people about your book when I write them back home. I tell them how your story has inspired a juvenile delinquent. I could relate to a lot about the book, especially the abuse and stress that Jayson went through. The book let me know that I ain't the only one in the world that goes through stuff like that and it made me feel like I am not alone I just wanted to thank you for coming and I read your book and it helped me out a lot, cuz usually I feel like I'm the only one out there in the wrong. I'm excited to read your book called Names Will Never Hurt Me. My name is ----. I'm 17 and I'm the one that woke my cell buddy in the middle of the night when I finished reading The Death of Jayson Porter. Your book absolutely opened my eyes in so many ways. Well, um... I thought it was cool of you to come and explain your life and this book. This was the best book I ever read. It also reminded me of my life because I've been through it all, my mom used to beat me. I was picked on, stressed and felt like killing myself. ... I hope you come out with new books like The Death of Jayson Porter. I really would like that. I'll also be looking for all the of the books you've already written. You have inspired me to set a lot of goals when I get outta here. That book makes me want to write my own book of poetry and stuff like that. I have even came up with my own title.

**Exemplary Reason:** The three institutions involved in the project came together to use literature to connect with teens in the community. Jaime Adoff's "The Death of Jayson Porter" is a powerful novel with an appealing teen protagonist, contemporary subject matter, and a great reading format for avid and reluctant readers. The CTRO project targeted those teens in the community who are finding a second chance, like Jayson Porter. At-risk teens are the population served by PJ's youth programming. CSCC students were introduced via literature and real-life to at-risk teens. They also had the opportunity to serve as positive role models while engaged in activities with the detained teens. Along with "The Death of Jayson Porter," PJ received copies of Adoff's "The Song Shoots out of my Mouth" to be used in family programs. They also selected another CTRO title, "Make Way for Ducklings," for their family program. This project had a profound impact on all participants. Some of the most meaningful changes in responses from pre- to post-surveys can be seen in the following statements: "Books interest me," "Books have characters that seem like me," "I feel less alone when I read," "Writing helps me express myself," "I feel hopeless a lot," and "I think about hurting myself." Those students (from CSCC, the high school, and the CCJDC) who wrote in journals all shared feelings of amazement about the novel. "The Jayson Porter Novel was the first Novel or book I have ever finished with full attention on the book." "I read and finished it the same day I got the book." "I finished the book in one day because I couldn't put the book down once I picked it up." "Not being an avid reader I was surprised that I finished Reading the book in only three sittings. Mr. Adoff was the first author to keep my interest so that I would finish." And, not least of all, the project had an impact on Jamie Adoff himself. He was so moved by his experience at the detention center that he proposed using "The Death of Jayson Porter" as a regular part of their curriculum. He was so amazed at how the story impacted those teens that he volunteered to visit with no charge during the time his book is used in the future. Adding this book to the official CCJDC curriculum is a work in progress with the whole concept being called "The Jayson Porter Project." This project was unique in that it brought together a college library and a juvenile detention center, with support from the high school and public library as well as other organizations, in a collaborative partnership project geared toward promoting reading and the love of literature to all types of individuals. Most importantly, through the PJ/CCJDC component, this project underscores the impact a book can have on an individual. As Jamie Adoff said in his blog, "Project Jericho is one of the best programs of its kind in the country, [it] is a shining example of how determined people who value our youth can really make a difference in changing the course of a teenager's life. Setting them upon a path of hope instead of destruction." This CTRO program was an example of instilling that path of hope.

## Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library

Project Coordinator: Nancy Levin

Federal Award: \$5,211

**Project Purpose:** The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library selected two Choose to Read Ohio titles, "The Journey that Saved Curious George" by Louise Borden and "You Remind Me Of Me" by Dan Chaon, that have special meaning to the community. Additionally, two books allowed the Library to align the program with the local school initiative to allow varied reading levels. The Borden book was selected because the Jewish experience resonates with many members in the community who proudly claim Jewish heritage. Chaon's book was selected because he resides in the community and is a customer of the library.

**Project Activities/Methods:** The following activities took place during the project • Book discussions on "You Remind Me of Me." • Presentation by staff from the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage. • Author visits by Louise Borden. She made six school visits and did a public talk at the Library. As part of her school program, a school memoir writing contest was held. A costumed Curious George attended the schools as well to promote the Summer Reading Program. • A bike ride honoring H.A. and Margaret Rey. Unfortunately the event was rained out but publicity was excellent and community members were excited about the event. • A scrapbooking program was held at the Library, reminiscent of the pages in "The Journey that Saved Curious George." • Author visit by Dan Chaon. Federal funds were used for speaker honorariums and books for both the school library media centers and the public library.

**Project Outputs:** A total of 50 people attended one of the events held at the Library. A total of 600 students participated in the school visits. Sixty-nine books were purchased for the participating library's circulating collections.

**Project Outcomes:** Participants in the book discussions indicated that hearing the variety of thoughts and opinions about Dan Chaon's work made them appreciate the work more.

## Columbus City Schools

Project Coordinator: Tracey Graham

Federal Award: \$2,214

**Project Purpose:** For this project, students read "Trouble Don't Last" by Ohio author Shelley Pearsall in order to better understand the events, causes, and effects of the Underground Railroad and slavery. Students used the book as the cornerstone of the Indian Spring Elementary School's unit on this curricular area of social studies, reading and writing.

**Project Activities/Methods:** This project focused on 4th and 5th grade students and was a collaborative effort between social studies teachers and the library media specialist. The students read the book in class and completed a variety of different activities, including: figurative language sheets, comprehensive questions, quote analysis, cover analysis, analysis of primary and secondary sources, and multiple writing prompts. Students had daily class discussion about the events in the book and how the book reflects and connects to the historical events of the time period. Students also created a wide variety of projects like scrapbook pages, quilts, and their own reward posters and other mock primary sources from the time period. During the author visit, students participated in several writing projects led by Shelley Pearsall. Students also visited Kelton House Historical Site and toured the house and grounds, watched a play and heard a story about the Underground Railroad read aloud. Indian Springs Elementary School partnered with the Whetstone Branch of Columbus Metropolitan Library. The Whetstone Branch displayed artwork completed as one of the projects associated with reading the book. Federal funds were used to purchase library materials, for the speaker honorarium and for program supplies.

**Project Outputs:** Books were purchased for students and for the school library media center collection, an author visit took place, and 160 students went on a field trip to Kelton House Historical Site.

**Project Outcomes:** Students gained a much better knowledge and understanding of the Underground Railroad and slavery. They were given multiple opportunities to show what they learned in an authentic and meaningful way. Teachers were able to use literature to integrate social studies and language arts.

**Other Results:** Students were very engaged and interested in this unit of study much more so than a normal social studies unit since they were able to produce so many projects. They thoroughly enjoyed the book and the author visit, as well as the projects they completed. The project allowed

students to study a topic in multiple ways, through field trips, reading quality literature, an author talk, and by completing projects.

## **Cuyahoga County Public Library**

Project Coordinator: Molly Syphard

Federal Award: \$9,375

**Project Purpose:** The purpose of this project was to provide educators and other adults in the community with the tools to encourage literacy in the tween community by providing them with interactive, multimedia ways to bring "After Tupac and D Foster" to life. Through an introduction to hip hop culture, book discussions, book trailer creation and an author visit, participants received the tools to develop a book discussion group and associated extension activities in their own classroom or youth group to encourage reading in the tween age group.

**Project Activities/Methods:** 1. Face-to-face book discussion sessions for educators, led collaboratively by children and teen librarians, were held at the Cuyahoga County Public Library (CCPL) Fairview Park, Maple Heights, Mayfield, North Olmsted, Parma South and Strongsville branches. 2. An author visit by Jacqueline Woodson occurred where Ms. Woodson spoke with educators about her book, connecting media-savvy kids and books in the 21st century, her writing craft, and more. 3. A hip hop/rap instructional session with local talent Jimi Izrael was held. Mr. Izrael earned a baccalaureate degree from Cleveland State University and a Master of Fine Arts degree from Spalding University. He is a leading scholar on hip hop culture. Mr. Izrael's presentation provided participants with a 90 minute session on hip hop culture to help educators better relate with the book. 4. CCPL hosted a 90 minute interactive videoconference with the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum featuring their Distance Learning class: "Hip-Hop Technology: From Turntables to Computers." This class provided participants with the history of hip hop culture and included a live demonstration in which participants helped to create a new musical composition using the latest computer music software. 5. Participants were trained in how to create a video book trailer using small hand-held digital video cameras provided by CCPL. Computer educator Stephanie Sutton trained participants in the use of these cameras and technique in book trailer creation. These exercises resulted in participants' creation of book trailers on the featured book or others from the Choose to Read Ohio booklists for youth. This will also equip participants with the ability to work with and train youth in the creation of book trailers and their use as a literacy development tool. 6. During the duration of the grant program, CCPL staff conducted and moderated an online book chat, "Cuyahoga Conversations," concerning Ms. Woodson's "After Tupac and D Foster." 7. A final celebration, "It's a Wrap!," gave participants a chance to come together to discuss their experiences, view colleagues' book trailers created during the course of the programming and also participate in a brief hands-on book discussion session on one of the alternative titles found on the Choose to Read Ohio 2010 booklist. Federal funds were used for speaker honorariums. In-kind contributions were staff costs associated with the project.

**Project Outputs:** Six face-to-face discussions were held. An online book chat was developed. Four programs were held with a total of 115 persons attending at least one of the sessions.

**Project Outcomes:** Participant outcomes included: Increased skills in creating book trailers Appreciation/positive attitude towards the works of Jacqueline Woodson Increased understanding and appreciation for hip hop culture Increased skills in leading book discussions

**Other Results:** Some of the participating teachers from local school districts were interested in offering similar experiences and training for their tween students. Conversations have begun with library staff to facilitate an age-appropriate extension of particular subject matter covered within the grant programming. In addition, CCPL staff created and distributed a book discussion leaders' packet for participants to use in future settings.

## **Lane Public Library**

Project Coordinator: Gratia Banta

Federal Award: \$4,442

**Project Purpose:** This project allowed the students at Cleveland Elementary School in Hamilton to express their grief and other emotions about the loss of their school in written and visual form.

**Project Activities/Methods:** The School Librarian read "Where the Steps Were" to the students at Cleveland Elementary in grades four, five and six in preparation for three visits by the author and illustrator of the book, Andrea Cheng. On January 29, 2010, Andrea visited the public library and was interviewed and filmed. Andrea brought her original woodcuts for "Where the Steps Were" to be used in the film. The Project Coordinator and the School Librarian brought all of the other titles that Andrea wrote

for a background book display. All three of the author visits were filmed and are posted on the public library's website, [www.lanepi.org](http://www.lanepi.org), the Hamilton City Schools' website <http://www.hamiltoncityschools.com/>, and on WebJunction Ohio, <http://oh.webjunction.org>. During the first visit to Cleveland Elementary on March 19, 2010, Andrea led three grade level presentations on her writing process of "Where the Steps Were" and offered writing tips to students. 180 students came into the school library in three groups of 60 students each. The students were then asked to return to their classroom and write poems inspired by the reading of the book and based on their memories of Cleveland Elementary. At the end of the day, copies of "Where the Steps Were," previously signed individually, were distributed to each student. Each student seemed honored and there was a hushed silence with lots of smiles when they received their own copy of "Where the Steps Were." In addition, copies were given to each school library in Hamilton, one signed copy went to the Hamilton Lane Library, and one personalized autographed copy went to each teacher, the librarians, and the principal. On April 16, the second visit to Cleveland Elementary, Andrea demonstrated her printmaking techniques, brought her original woodcuts, and led two groups of 30 students in a simple printing process using plastic meat trays, pencils, paper and ink. The students each completed a print that illustrated their poem. They were hung to dry. On day three, May 21, copies of the poems and prints by the students, which had been collated with the help of volunteers into a 136 page spiral bound book called "Our Final Steps," was ready. On this day, each student received his/her own copy of the book. Andrea read selected poems aloud and asked them questions about their process of writing and printmaking and about the feelings they now had about their poems, each other's poems, their new school and the loss of their current building. Federal funds were used to purchase books, for the author honorarium and for costs associated with printing the students' poetry book.

**Project Outputs:** 250 copies of "Where the Steps Were" were purchased and distributed. Andrea Chang made three visits to the district.

**Project Outcomes:** During the reading by the School Librarian of "Where the Steps Were" to grades four, five, and six prior to the first presentation by Andrea Cheng, numerous discussions were held regarding the lives and home situations of the children in the book. Coincidentally, during that time the Cincinnati Enquirer ran a special report on homeless children in the greater Cincinnati area. The School Librarian wove the newspaper report into the discussion of the book. Many students who attend Cleveland Elementary do not experience some of the issues and traumas that befall the students in "Where the Steps Were," such as living in a shelter. During this time, students became aware of the world outside their school, developed more compassion, and learned to be tolerant of those who look and act different. This grant made a difference in the lives of children and their understanding of writing and will continue to make a difference when future generations read the poems. This project has led to more cooperation and partnership activities between the Lane Public Library and the Hamilton City Schools.

### **Other Results:**

**Anecdotal Info:** Andrea Cheng remarked that she overheard a student saying, while hugging her copy of "Our Final Steps," "I will keep this book forever!" Highlighted below are four character traits used in the Hamilton City Schools with anecdotal information about how the students processed this project: TOLERANCE/PATIENCE Interestingly, the poem "Testing" written by a sixth grade student, was about state testing causing her distress. By writing the poem, she was able to process her anxiety. COMPASSION One student revealing compassion spoke to the public and school librarian about the sadness in another's poem "Cleveland Elementary 4th Grade." SELF-ESTEEM When Andrea Cheng read "Hang On" by a sixth grade student, it was a major confidence boost for the student. Her home life is turbulent and school is a place of stability and security for her. Being recognized in front of classmates and peers for her writing and printmaking validated her sense of self-worth. "She left the session with a huge smile on her face," remarked the School Librarian. RESPECT 210 copies of "Our Final Steps" were distributed to students in the project at the conclusion of Andrea's third presentation. Students read poems and shared their feelings with each other, teachers, staff, and Andrea Cheng. Some opened the book and enjoyed finding and reading the poems their sibling wrote for the first time that day, unaware of their contribution at home. Anecdotal comments about the value of owning your own book: After each student received a personalized copy of "Where the Steps Were" signed by Andrea Cheng, an interesting event occurred. Teachers observed that many students took their book with them to the playground during lunch recess to read. Having never seen them take a book to the playground, it was cause for enthusiastic comments. The art teacher overheard a student comment that "Where the Steps Were" was "the first book I have ever owned." "The point of an author or illustrator visit to the school or library isn't to glamorize them into something distant and famous; it is to share in the writing process. This grant allowed our Hamilton children to participate in the creative process, led by a talented author/illustrator. The production of the book "Our Final Steps" will allow future generations to view their efforts. I am pleased to have been a part of this creative process. My hope is that the students having made their own books are now empowered by the act of writing and creating art. And, will continue to create more of their own. Also, they will now know that books are created by people just like them," stated the project coordinator.

## Licking Valley Local School District

Project Coordinator: Theresa Boehmer

Federal Award: \$7,268

**Project Purpose:** The purpose of this grant was to provide summer reading books to each student to promote teen reading in the Licking Valley School District and to follow up the summer book reading with an author visit and activities. This grant allowed each student to have his or her own book to read over the summer. The books were theirs to keep, highlight, and have signed by the author.

**Project Activities/Methods:** Every high school student was provided with a copy of Sharon Draper's book, "Copper Sun," in May. Library staff chose the Choose to Read Ohio (CTRO) title, "Copper Sun," and the other three titles by Sharon M. Draper for their diversity and historical fiction aspects. One title by Sharon M. Draper was assigned to each grade. These titles include: "Tears of a Tiger" for the freshmen to read, "Battle of Jericho" for the sophomores to read, "Copper Sun" for the juniors to read, and "November Blues" for the seniors to read. The CTRO title "Copper Sun" was an excellent addition to the diversity topics promoted in the school. It also provides access to multicultural materials to students and the community. The social studies and English classes also benefited from the historical information in the book and the extensive research provided by the author. The culmination of the project occurred when the author of these books, Sharon M. Draper, came to the school at the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year. She spoke to the sophomores and seniors about their books during first and second periods. She then spoke to the freshmen and juniors during third and fourth periods. When not listening to Ms. Draper, students were sent to break-out sessions focusing on themes from their assigned book. The students who read "Tears of a Tiger" listened to a speaker who discussed underage drinking, depression, and suicide. The students who read "Battle of Jericho" had a presentation from the Mental Health Association's PAVE group that did a "walk the line" activity in regard to who has experienced harmful actions toward them or someone they know. PAVE also had music and a PowerPoint on obstacles in life. The group who read "Copper Sun" had a presentation from the social studies teacher about several aspects of slavery, past and present. Rita Jackson from the Licking Valley Heritage Society also brought artifacts from slavery that included a quilt that depicted the routes of the underground railroad, a quilt with replica patches that had meaning for the slaves as they were traveling, shackles, posters, and several other items. The final group that read "November Blues" listened to a speaker who had a personal account as a teen father and how his life was turned upside down. Each of these break-out sessions reinforced the message from the books and the students were able to connect to the stories. After the break-out sessions, Ms. Draper signed copies of the books in the library during lunch periods. The students had an opportunity to get their books from the summer signed and talk to Ms. Draper one-on-one. At the end of the day, she had a small group writing workshop for students. The follow-up for the book included a test that counted as five percent of their quarterly English grade and additional activities that corresponded with each book title. Federal funds were used for book purchases and the honorarium for the author visit. In-kind contributions included \$1,500 from The Licking County Foundation. This covered an after school workshop for teachers. Additionally, Follett donated 12 books (valued at \$72) for the library media center.

**Project Outputs:** A total of 763 books were purchased, the author Sharon M. Draper visited the school and spoke to students, and a billboard about summer reading books was put up as a reminder for students during the month of August.

**Project Outcomes:** The grant provided each student with a book based on their grade level. The author of the books, Sharon M. Draper, spoke to the students and brought the stories alive. She also spoke to them about reading and writing and students are actually talking about writing their own stories. One of the immediate results of this program was the exposure of this author to the students. The content is diverse in nature and students have been receptive to the content and the books. The library media center cannot keep Ms. Draper's books on the shelf. They are constantly checked out and library staff is receiving requests for information about her and her books. This is a wonderful problem to have in any library.

### Other Results:

**Anecdotal Info:** The school Library Media Specialist recounted the following: "There were students absent on the day the books were passed out in homeroom. The absent students were then sent down to the library to receive their books. As a small group of students were leaving the library, I heard one student say, 'I've never had my own book.' At our high school, we have 35.5% of our students on free or reduced lunch. They often do not have the same opportunities as some of the other students and this grant provided equal access to all of them. The comment regarding this being the student's first book to own almost seems impossible to those of us who have had books read to us since infancy, but we often take things for granted. You do not know the impact you have made with this grant for our students. In the library I hear students talking about the author, see

students writing just for fun, and checking out more books than they had earlier in the year."

## **Pettisville Local School District**

Project Coordinator: Lorrie Miller

Federal Award: \$1,127

**Project Purpose:** As part of the Choose to Read Ohio program, the school library media specialist selected two books to be read, "Make Way for Ducklings" by Robert McCloskey for children in K-2 and "Trouble Don't Last" by Shelley Pearsall for students in grade 7. All children in the school attended Ms. Pearsall's author appearance. The 92 students in grades K-2 listened to and/or read "Make Way for Ducklings" and the school media specialist used the book as a means to encourage children to read. She also used the book to promote good literature and generate curiosity and excitement over reading. 49 students in grade 7 read "Trouble Don't Last." Once again, the school library media specialist used the book to encourage reading, promote good literature and generate curiosity and excitement.

**Project Activities/Methods:** In May 2010, the library media specialist shared "Make Way for Ducklings" with students in K-2. The week before Children's Book Week, she read the book to each class and explained that students across the state were reading the book as part of the Choose to Read Ohio program. She tied in library skills, teaching about the Caldecott award and showed the children how to find other Caldecott books in the library. Following up, the school library media specialist showed pertinent film clips from the video "Robert McCloskey," which included an interview of the author on creating the book. She also showed the children online photos from the Boston Public Garden, specifically of the swan boats and the duckling statuary in the park. The children were delighted to learn that fiction (the story) is based on fact (there are lots of ducks in the park). For "Trouble Don't Last," the library media specialist and the social studies teacher collaborated to plan activities based on the 8th grade social studies standard, "People in Societies: Citizenship Rights" and "Skills and Methods." After reading the book, students did research reports on Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad. In art class they researched the symbols of freedom and used them to paint handmade clay marbles. They also listened to and interpreted spirituals that pertained to the Underground Railroad. The project culminated with an author visit by Shelley Pearsall. Ms. Pearsall tailored her presentation to discuss specifically "Trouble Don't Last" with an emphasis on the writing process -- writing and rewriting. Federal funds were used for the author visit and for the purchase of additional books by Choose to Read authors.

**Project Outputs:** Materials were purchased for the library and all scheduled events took place. Young children learned how to find and check-out books from the library. The 49 seventh graders all completed a research paper and an art project.

**Project Outcomes:** Young children learned how to enjoy books and storytime, as evidenced by their rapt attention and chatter afterwards. For the older children, a pre- and post-test indicated that 70% showed an improvement of knowledge of the period after reading the book. 70% of students answered comprehension questions effectively and correlated the historical fiction to the History Standards. The school library media specialist found that student reports on Harriet Tubman used proper research techniques. Many junior high students were motivated to write both books and songs due to Shelley Pearsall's visit. They were very eager to have a copy of the list of opportunities and contests for student writing that Ms. Pearsall shared with the classroom teacher. At the beginning of the 2010 school year, Ms. Pearsall's books were flying off the library shelves as students want to read all of her works. This is not assigned reading, but students have become curious and engaged and are reading for pleasure.

**Other Results:** After introducing the project, other classroom teachers also joined in and read Shelley Pearsall titles to their students. Grades 5, 7, and 8 read "All the Above" and made tetrahedron structures. Grades 4 and 6 read "Crooked River." Ms. Pearsall gave presentations to these students on those books as well as a talk to grades 1-3 called "Stories of a Writing Kid." She also visited the kindergarten classroom, showed them stories she wrote as a child and told them a story.

## **St. Helens School**

Project Coordinator: Jacqueline Skiple

Federal Award: \$1,110

**Project Purpose:** The selected Choose to Read Ohio title was "Where the Steps Were." The purpose of this project was to get students and their extended families involved in reading together and to encourage an interest in life-long learning. The library media specialist felt that the planned

author visit would have more meaning for the students if they had a chance to study the author's work in-depth. Also, since several schools in the diocese have merged over the last few years, it was felt "Where the Steps Were" would be a book to which many of the students would relate.

**Project Activities/Methods:** The library media specialist purchased copies of "Where the Steps Were" to be shared between the 4th and 5th grade homerooms. The teachers worked with the library media specialist to tailor the curriculum ideas on Andrea Cheng's website with the Ohio Curriculum Standards. After the students studied the book, the author visited the school. Parents were invited as well, and several of them came and had lunch with Ms. Cheng. A week after the author visit, the 5th grade Reading Day was held in the library where the students read Andrea Cheng books with invited guests. The next week was the 4th grade's turn. Along with reading the books, the students engaged in a variety of different activities including creating timelines and drawing pictures of their favorite parts of the book. Federal funds were used for arts and crafts supplies and for costs associated with the author visit.

**Project Outputs:** 72 people participated in the 4th grade Reading Day and 48 participated in the 5th grade Reading Day. 265 additional people participated in the author visit. Copies of "Where the Steps Were" were purchased for the 4th and 5th grade homerooms for the project and they are now available for circulation in the media center.

**Project Outcomes:** An informal survey showed that none of the teachers or staff at St. Helen School knew of Andrea Cheng or her work prior to the event. After the event, teachers, staff and students were aware of a local author and also aware of the craft that goes into writing a novel and poetry.

## University of Dayton Libraries

Project Coordinator: Ann Raney

Federal Award: \$7,549

**Project Purpose:** The project's goal was to acquaint University of Dayton's (UD) undergraduate students and local middle school students with an age-appropriate title and author. Students learned about the author's process for researching and writing a novel. For the pre-service teacher education students, the experience helped them learn how to integrate literature in the classroom. The cross-curricular activities and Freedom Center visits helped the middle school students make connections between the book, their lives and America's past. As part of the project, Shelley Pearsall, author of "Trouble Don't Last," visited UD and three Dayton area schools. Additionally, students from four schools participated in guided tours of the Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati. From their participation, it is hoped the literature and experiences will positively influence their thoughts and life.

**Project Activities/Methods:** In January, UD's middle level teacher education students and faculty, first-year UD students who plan to become urban educators, seventh grade students and teachers at Holy Angels Elementary School, fifth and eighth grade students and teachers at Patterson/Kennedy (P/K) Elementary School, sixth, seventh and eighth grade students and teachers at Mary Queen of Peace (MQP), and Dayton Early College Academy (DECA) students who plan to become teachers read "Trouble Don't Last." To accommodate learners with special needs, two Braille copies and three large print copies of the book were purchased and made available. The project coordinator also purchased a site license for access to an audio recording of the title for P/K students with visual impairments and learning disabilities. Students and faculty/ teachers received copies of the Shelley Pearsall brochure and bookmarks and Choose to Read Ohio bookmarks. UD faculty and classroom teachers received copies of the study guides for "Trouble Don't Last" from the Choose to Read Ohio toolkit and from Shelley Pearsall's introductory package. On January 28th, Dr. Herbert Martin, UD Professor Emeritus, visited the three elementary schools for the book launch. He provided background information about dialect, spirituals and the Underground Railroad. He read and explained an excerpt of the "Old Master Hackler's Ghost" chapter from "Trouble Don't Last" accompanied by a moving baritone a cappella solo of select verses of Negro spirituals. He answered student questions. (What is a foot sack (tow sack)?, Why did you choose that chapter?, etc.) His presentation was a profound and emotional introduction for the book. From January 29th – February 17th, students read the book, completed activities independently, in small groups and as a class, and prepared questions for Shelley Pearsall's visit (February 18th and 19th). On Thursday, February 18th, Ms. Pearsall presented to Holy Angels' seventh grade students in the morning and did two afternoon presentations for UD students. Approximately 50 individuals attended each presentation. The next day, Ms. Pearsall presented to MQP's sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students in the morning and did two presentations at P/K in the afternoon. Holy Angels' students, MQP students, and P/K fifth and eighth grade students visited the Underground Railroad Freedom Center on separate days. Federal funds were used for library materials and speaker honorariums. In-kind contributions included staff costs associated with the project and outside funding received by Bank One to cover entrance fees to the Freedom Center.

**Project Outputs:** The project coordinator designed and printed the Shelley Pearsall brochures and printed and laminated the Shelley Pearsall and Choose to Read Ohio bookmarks for distribution with the books. The project coordinator also designed and printed the promotional flyers and signs for Ms. Pearsall's visit. Copies of "Trouble Don't Last" were purchased for individual students as well as multiple copies for the participating school's library media centers and the UD Curriculum Materials Center (CMC). UD's CMC and P/K also own Braille editions. The project coordinator compiled an annotated bibliography of recent Underground Railroad fiction and nonfiction books and websites to complement "Trouble Don't Last" activities.

**Project Outcomes:** University of Dayton undergraduate middle-school licensure students became familiar with an age-appropriate historical fiction selection. They received a variety of activities to use with this and other novels. They met and questioned the author and learned how an author visit can complement their teaching. Visits have the potential to motivate students, improve their story comprehension, enhance their reading experience and help them understand the writing process. One student intern shared a personal insight from the author presentation. She saw how to connect "Trouble Don't Last" to science content. A nontraditional UD student expressed an interest in writing grants. The CTRO experience provided a practical application of teacher preparation theory and knowledge for UD's students. Students from the three elementary schools increased their knowledge about slavery and its impact on history and their lives. From their book discussions and activities, history became alive with people as well as facts. Through their interactions with an Ohio author, they learned the complexities of the writing process and how research informs the story's content. Their Freedom Center visits allowed them to more authentically experience this time in American history. They actively participated in each grant-related component, connecting the learning to their lives and providing them with inspiration to practice the lessons they learned—never give up, writing requires many revisions, rejection is a part of life, and every human being has value. The CTRO event supported Ohio's middle school content standards.

**Other Results:**

**Anecdotal Info:** MQP's students purchased copies of Shelley's other titles. For students from low income households, to choose to spend their money on books to own and read reflects the impact of their exposure to "Trouble Don't Last" and to Shelley's presentation. One of these students is a "nonreader." Shelley Pearsall asked one of the DECA future teachers to be a reader for her next book on World War II. For this young man, Shelley's gesture acknowledges her respect of him as a critical reader. What an affirmation for this DECA student!

## Urbana University

Project Coordinator: Julie McDaniel

Federal Award: \$9,980

**Project Purpose:** "Trouble Don't Last: Underground Railroad in Champaign County" was a project to involve Urbana University students, public school students and community adults in reading Shelley Pearsall's book, "Trouble Don't Last," a story of an eleven-year-old and a seventy-year-old slave from Kentucky who escape on the Underground Railroad (UGRR) through Ohio to reach freedom in Canada. "Trouble Don't Last" was used to start a community wide discussion about the UGRR and the role Champaign County residents played in it.

**Project Activities/Methods:** The Urbana University Library held six public events and offered a field trip to two museums in September - October 2010 to promote knowledge of the UGRR. Copies of the book were distributed to various audiences and seven book discussions were held. Library staff created two book lists which identified books about the UGRR for both children and adults. The book lists highlighted books available from all of the libraries in Champaign County. Lesson plans were created by Urbana University students for teachers to use when teaching "Trouble Don't Last." For the five county schools, the lesson plans were provided in print format and the lesson plans are also available as a webquest (<http://www.zunal.com/webquest.php?w=58167>) and on the WebJunction Ohio website ([http://oh.webjunction.org/ohctrotrouble/-/articles/content/101741722?\\_OCLC\\_ARTICLES\\_getContentFromWJ=false](http://oh.webjunction.org/ohctrotrouble/-/articles/content/101741722?_OCLC_ARTICLES_getContentFromWJ=false)). Photographs of known UGRR sites in Champaign County were taken and displayed. The exhibit consisted of 20 framed photographs of nine locations reported to have been hiding places for runaway slaves passing through Champaign County. Staff created an exhibit booklet that gives the stories about the Champaign County UGRR locations. The photographs were on display twice during the grant period and will continue to be made available in the area through the local historical society. Shelley Pearsall visited the community and met with students at three schools. During each of these presentations, she discussed the writing of the novel, emphasizing the research she did to make the book authentic to its time. She presented a group of photographs she took as she did her research. The students were very engaged with her presentations and she always left time for their questions about the book, writing, doing research, her other books, and what

she is working on now. A local cable show, "Urbana Leader," taped a half hour interview with Shelley Pearsall that has generated comments and questions about the book. The show can also be viewed on the "Urbana Leader" website (<http://urbanaleader.blogspot.com/>) or YouTube. In addition to playing five times a day locally, the web versions provided ongoing acknowledgement of the Choose to Read Ohio (CTRO) project and Urbana University's role in it. Federal funds were used for an author visit, speaker honorariums and book purchases for "Trouble Don't Last." In-kind contributions were staff time associated with the project and travel costs.

**Project Outputs:** 371 people attended the six public programs, 82 participated in the book discussions, 54 people went on the museum trip and 214 people visited the UGRR photograph display. During the author visits, Ms. Pearsall spoke to 515 students.

**Project Outcomes:** "Trouble Don't Last: Underground Railroad in Champaign County" started a community-wide discussion about the Underground Railroad and the role Champaign County residents played in it. Many people who participated in grant events commented, "I didn't know that," about a variety of details related to the UGRR. When viewing the photographs of reported UGRR sites, most people indicated that they had not previously heard stories about the Champaign County role in the UGRR. This project enabled three of the libraries in Champaign County to further their collaborative efforts. Urbana University's Swedenborg Memorial Library, Champaign County Library and Mechanicsburg Public Library had active participants on the planning committee. Staff from each library contributed to the creation of the book lists. Additionally, project coordinators believe this is the first time University departments outside of the Education Department have had contact with the public schools in the area. All of the schools that participated commented that due to budget cuts, they had not had an author in their buildings to meet with students in a long time. On the University campus, the Library was able to initiate a relationship with Miller Center for Visual Arts. This newly opened Center hosted the photograph exhibit as well as the Readers' Theatre performance. It was a learning experience for everyone to see how to use the space most efficiently and effectively. The events were considered a success and future Miller Center events are being planned with other campus groups.

**Other Results:** Urbana University was able to use the CTRO project in two other grant proposals. The History faculty wrote an Ohio Humanities Council (OHC) grant to support Expanding Visions, a project to draw connections between the arts and humanities. The UGRR events also lead to a Picturing America grant with Mechanicsburg Public Library. Wind turbine farms may be built in Champaign County. As part of the regulatory approval process, the State of Ohio asked one of the wind companies to conduct a historical and architectural impact assessment in the county. They asked to use the Library's research about local UGRR sites.

## Way Public Library

Project Coordinator: Nancy Kelley

Federal Award: \$2,470

**Project Purpose:** In April 2010, Way Public Library conducted a "Community Read" of Ohio author Ann Hagedorn's book "Beyond the River: The Untold Story of the Heroes of the Underground Railroad." The Choose to Read Ohio grant allowed the library to host a variety of book discussion sessions and informational programs including a visit by the author. The purpose of all these activities was to educate and inform the public about the historical significance of the Underground Railroad and to help participants learn more about the specific contributions of Ohioans to the courageous effort to move slaves to free states and Canada in the years leading up to the Emancipation Proclamation.

**Project Activities/Methods:** During the month of April 2010, the Way Public Library offered four discussions of Ms. Hagedorn's book. At least 50 people participated in each of these book talks. On April 15, the author spoke about her book which tells the story of John Rankin and other Abolitionists who helped slaves cross the Ohio River on the Ripley, Ohio branch of the Underground Railroad. In the weeks following Ms. Hagedorn's presentation, the library held three other talks which followed the Underground Railroad as it journeyed into northwest Ohio. These lectures were presented by Mary Stockwell, chairman of the History Department at Lourdes College; Judy Justus, author and president of the Perrysburg Area Historical Museum, and, in a special show for children and their families, Patrick Johnston of the Toledo MetroParks. This program included stories and information on the Underground Railroad in Northwest Ohio. The program was a hands-on program aimed at first through fourth-graders and their parents. The project was marketed through the library newsletter, in-house flyers and at library book discussion groups. Articles appeared in the Perrysburg Messenger Journal, the Bowling Green Sentinel Tribune, and the Toledo Blade. Two advertisements were placed in the Perrysburg Messenger Journal. Federal funds were used for speaker honorariums and materials for all reading levels related to the Underground Railroad.

**Project Outputs:** A total of 50 people attended all or part of the book discussion series. 170 people attended one or more of the lectures.

**Project Outcomes:** Local residents were able to delve into the topic of the Underground Railroad and Ohio's role in both the Underground Railroad and the Civil War. Residents expanded their knowledge and understanding of this critical period in our nation's history. Many program attendees indicated that they learned something new on the subject.