

THE ICONN TIMES

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ICONN MAKES
CTNOW.COM'S WEB
100 LIST

iCONN made ctnow.com's list of the top 100 websites in Connecticut. It is listed in both the Education and Government categories. To increase the visibility of this listing, we posted a link to the list at the main iCONN home page. For information about how this list is compiled, see www.ctnow.com/news/custom/web100/hc-web100.htmlstory (select "About the Web 100") This listing should help to increase the awareness of



Kids InfoBits Now Available on iCONN

iCONN has been upgraded to include Kid's InfoBits, a new K-5 database from the Gale Group that will replace InfoTrac Kid's Edition on July 1, 2003. Until then, both the new and previous versions of this resource for K-5 students will be available. Kids InfoBits targets the research needs of students in Kindergarten through Grade 5. It features a developmentally appropriate and visual graphic interface, a subject-based topic tree search and full-text, age-appropriate, curriculum-related magazine and reference content.



Kids InfoBits—Main Search Page

Kids InfoBits features:

- A drilldown subject topic tree for users who need helping identifying a particular topic
- A simple and visually appealing graphic interface on the GaleNet platform
- Full-text proprietary reference content from Blackbirch Press that supports the K-5 curriculum
- Approximately 75 full-text, age appropriate magazines
- Over 3,000 searchable, indexed images
- A 5-year backfile that offers relevant and manageable results lists

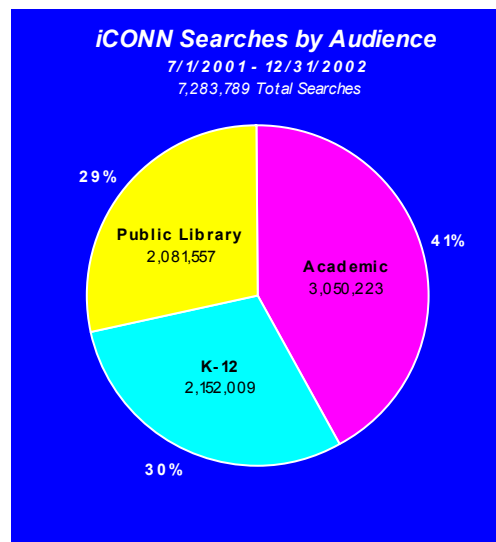
Reference content in Kids InfoBits includes:

- Kidbits, 2nd Ed. (Blackbirch Press)
- The Blackbirch Encyclopedia of Science and Invention
- The Blackbirch Kid's Almanac of Geography
- The Blackbirch Kid's Visual Reference of the World
- The Blackbirch Kid's Visual Reference of the States
- The Columbia Encyclopedia, 6th Edition
- Merriam-Webster's Elementary Dictionary

\$\$\$ and Sense

iCONN Funding: Governor Rowland released his proposed FY2003-2005 Biennial budget on March 4th. The Governor recommended funding iCONN at \$1,897,200 for FY2004 and \$ 1,894,322 for FY2005 which is very close to what the State Library requested and should be enough to keep the current database offerings. In addition, reQuest was level funded for FY2004 and FY2005.

This budget must now work its way through the legislative process before it is finalized.



STAFF CHANGES

Precipitated by the recent state agency layoffs and bumping, Gail Hurley, the reQuest statewide library catalog coordinator since June 2000, transferred to the State Library's Law & Legislative Reference Department on February 24, 2003. Gail was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation that recognized her many valuable contributions to improving the statewide library catalog service, and her reputation for outstanding customer service and professionalism.

On March 3, 2003, Bruce Stark from the Connecticut State Archives joined the iCONN staff as her replacement. Until Bruce becomes acclimated to his new responsibilities, William Sullivan, as Administrator, will assume the responsibilities of statewide library catalog coordinator.

Your patience during this period of transition is greatly appreciated.



The iCONN Times is a quarterly publication of the Connecticut Digital Library. Find it on the Web at www.iconn.org/staff/support.html.

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iCONN Testimonials and Cost Savings

The library/staff portion of the iCONN home page at www.iconn.org/staff/index.html features two menu buttons:

Testimonials links to a page that lists all comments we have received concerning how iCONN resources are being used and their value -- in the classroom, for professional development, or by library patrons in general.

Cost Savings links to a page that describes the impact that iCONN is hav-

ing on individual library budgets -- in the form of cost savings, cost avoidance, or the ability to access resources that would otherwise be unavailable due to budget limitations.

We created a new link to the Testimonials from the main iCONN page to increase its visibility to the public. If you would like to add your comments to either or both of these sections, please send them to Bill Sullivan at: wsullivan@cslib.org. Thank you!

The Role of iCONN in Defining College and University Libraries for the Future

The Board of Governors for Higher Education licenses and accredits public and independent colleges and universities in Connecticut as well as all new degree programs at those institutions. The Board makes its decisions based on approval standards, which provide the foundation for evaluations of the quality of academic programs and of academic institutions. Because educational expectations change -- over time and in response to revolutions in technology -- the Board reviews its standards from time to time to affirm how current and how reflective of institutional and of state needs they continue to be.

The establishment of iCONN has strengthened the Board's commitment to providing rich and broad resources for teaching, learning, and research to all of Connecticut's college and university students and faculty. The result has been an immensely useful and widely used "virtual library" that has brought a wide array of informational resources to all of Connecticut's public and independent institutions of higher education. The new availability of these on-line library resources has begun to change the idea of what a college or university "library" may in fact be. The Board of Governors, therefore, thought it an appropriate time to reconsider its standard on Library resources.

To that end, the Board has charged the Department of Higher Education to conduct a first stage review of the Board's quality stan-

dards. That first stage will be a review of and recommendations about two of the Board's approval standards: on General Education and on Library Resources. The Department has been asked to report back to the Board on the results of these reviews in the fall of 2003. The review of these two standards will be followed by reviews of all of the Board's quality standards, in a sequence to be determined jointly by the Board of Governors and its staff.

The Department of Higher Education is currently in the process of organizing a series of regional meetings that will provide opportunities for all interested constituencies throughout Connecticut to advise the Board of Governors on its standards. Individuals and organizations interested in participating in those meetings, and especially those interested in commenting on what a library should look like, may do so by sending an e-mail to the Department of Higher Education: jzdanys@ctdhe.org. This is an exciting time for all of us who rely on libraries and information resources for our studies, our jobs, and our personal interests and needs. The Board of Governors looks forward with gratitude to any and all advice on how libraries, whose resources have been specially enriched by iCONN, can best continue to make those essential contributions.

By Jonas Zdanys, Associate Commissioner for Academic Affairs & Chief Academic Officer, Department of Higher Education