

# Okaloosa County Public Library Cooperative News Release

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## **Okaloosa County Public Library Cooperative and the Florida Library Association Recognize Senator Don Gaetz and Senator Greg Evers**

Library Directors from Okaloosa County Public Library Cooperative member libraries met with Senator Don Gaetz on November 10 and Senator Greg Evers on November 30, to present them with Legislative Awards on behalf of the Florida Library Association (FLA). Plaques are awarded annually by FLA to recognize the legislators and state leaders who advocated for Florida libraries in the 2011 legislature. By honoring Senators Evers and Gaetz, FLA encourages local library supporters to recognize the hard work done by their leaders in maintaining state funding for public libraries.

Okaloosa County Public Library Cooperative (OCPLC) received \$75,571 in FY2011 from the State Aid to Libraries Grant Program. These funds are used to provide courier service between OCPLC's six member libraries, which allows patrons to reserve books, DVDs, and audio books and have them delivered to the library of their choice. State Aid grant funds also pay for OCPLC's new language learning database *Rocket Languages*. This database offers more than ten different language software programs that patrons can access from any computer- anywhere in the world.

State Aid to Public Libraries grant funding is a priority issue for Florida libraries and the communities they serve. Although the 2011 Legislative session brought another challenging budget process, many legislators and state leaders contributed to the effort to save library funding. The awards given to Senators Evers and Gaetz recognize that these legislators went out of their way and made special efforts to ensure that libraries were funded.

The Florida Library Association is a non-profit organization of libraries, library staff and those who support libraries with more than 1,000 members across the state. FLA advocates for excellence in all types of library service throughout Florida. FLA also develops the skills of librarians and support staff who work closely with the information industry.

To learn more about the Okaloosa County Public Library Cooperative and the services they provide, visit [www.readokaloosa.org](http://www.readokaloosa.org). OCPLC libraries include Crestview (Bob Sikes), Destin, Fort Walton Beach, Mary Esther, Niceville and Valparaiso. More information about the Florida Library Association and its advocacy efforts is available online at <http://www.flalib.org/advocacy.php>

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