

Legal Instruction and Resources at the Law Library of Congress: Recent Developments - Transcript

Please stand by for realtime captions.

I am giving you a chance to set the volume on your speakers. We will be starting at 2:00.

This is Ashley coming in for an audio check. We will get started in two minutes. 2:00 eastern.

Good afternoon and welcome to the FDLP Academy webinar . Legal instruction and resources at the law library of Congress. Before we get started I will walk you through a few housekeeping reminders. If you have questions, or if you have technical issues, feel free to use the chat box. For most people on desktop computers will be located in the bottom right-hand corner of your screen. I will keep track of the questions. At the end of the presentation the presenters will respond to each of them. We are recording today's session and we will email a link to the recording and slides to everyone who registered. We will be sending you a certificate of participation using the email -- we will let you know when the survey is available. The URL will appear in the chat box . We would appreciate your feedback after the session including comments on the presentation style and the value of the webinar. Let me introduce are three speakers today. James Sweeney is the chief of digital resource division at the Law Library of Congress. Barbara Davis is an instruction and reference librarian at the Law Library of Congress. And a technician for metadata at the Law Library of Congress. I will and the microphone over to James.

Good afternoon. I am from the law library. [Indiscernible-Muffled] In the program today Barbara Davis [Indiscernible-Muffled]

Thank you. Welcome everyone. As mentioned earlier I am and instructional librarian at the Law Library of Congress. Today I would like to discuss one of the newest offerings on a website. The Law Library of Congress legal research Institute. The law library of congress legal research Institute was released earlier this year to easily connect current and prospective law Library of Congress users with our educational presentations and resources. Before I delve into the details of the resource, I would like to give everyone some background about the law library's educational offerings and how these offerings were previously displayed on law.gov our website. This is an image of the law library's website about five or six years ago. About 2015. When I arrived at the law library, approximately eight years ago we focused largely on offering intricate in person classes. For members of the public we taught one class, orientation to legal research and the use of law library collections. Which is a mouthful. It was also 2 1/2 hours. It covered not only the specifics of the law Library of Congress offerings but also had to do legal research generally. On case law, statutes, etc.. Around 2012 when the Thomas website begin to be replaced with Congress.gov we added the Congress.gov webinar which is offered every two months. Which was designed to provide a basic overview of the content of the website and to show how basic searches could be conducted and highlighting new features. But in 2018, we

decided that maybe a 2 1/2 hour public class is a little too much for people. So we decided to split it into two classes. Orientation to legal research which focused on basic legal research. And orientation to law library collections, which focused on law library collections. But we decided in 2019 to work on even bigger changes. First, we wanted to do more outreach. We wanted to reach people not in KC. And maybe not even in the United States. We could not do that simply via in person classes, which is pretty much what we had done before. We decided to focus on online classes called webinars. The topics we offered in person. The problem is the longer classes don't work very well online. As I am sure you know. So we decided to winnow down the times of the classes down to one hour. We also decided that shorter classes would allow us to offer classes around patrons lunch hours. There was an increased likelihood that people could actually log on and attend our webinars without taking time off of work. And finally we wanted to expand the horizons and take advantage of our extensive foreign, international and comparative law collections. One thing a lot of people don't know about the law library, almost 50% of our overall collection is made up of foreign, international, comparative law materials. We have a staff of very knowledgeable foreign legal experts. So we wanted to be sure they got a say and they got to teach in our program as well. In 2020, we decided to go a step further and launch a pretty ambitious educational program. Where we had both in person and online classes. In person, before the pandemic, we offered two classes per month. And orientation to law library collections class which would go over the unique offerings at the law library. And an orientation to legal research series class. We decided to do the laws of the three branches of government, statutes and legislative history materials. Case law and then regulations in cycle. One of those each month. And then twice a year we also did a Saturday orientation collection. Collections orientation. We also offer those classes online. In addition to those public classes, we also keep offering the Congress.gov webinar because we are updating Congress.gov all the time. And we decided to add a one hour foreign and comparative law webinar class each month. So the foreign legal experts each month give a class on a topic they have written a report on recently or have done research on recently. In addition to these programs we also have special events like Constitution and citizenship day, law day and the Kellogg lecture on your spirits. -- Jurisprudence. Once we introduce the new classes we want to make sure people knew they existed and could come to them. So we want to make sure the website reflected these user friendly offerings. And to make the website more appealing and user-friendly, we decided to focus on the features that you see listed. We wanted to be sure that people could see what is being offered in person and what is being offered online. We also wanted to be able for people to have a one-stop shop for accessing those online offerings. Links to the WebEx page where we would be actually giving the webinar. We also wanted to highlight that we were providing both U.S. a lot and foreign, comparative and international law offerings. We wanted to give people a jumping off point for Richter for further research. The library has a large amount of legal research guides and a great blog that we like to send people to for further research. We wanted one place people can find those offerings. And finally, we want to do make sure people could access these webinars asynchronously. If they cannot make the webinar in person, they can find some recordings of those webinars that they can use at their own speed. Earlier this year we put out the law Library of Congress legal research Institute. You can see a screenshot of the homepage on this slide. The homepage is divided into four sections. U.S. law webinars. Foreign, comparative and international law webinars. On-site classes and

online resources. So let's jump into each section and see what is what. First I will start with the U.S. law webinars page. I am biased because I teach some of the US law webinars. But you can see on the side of the page, this is just a screenshot of the page of about a week ago. The page includes a summary of each offering. A summary of each class series and each class. A list of dates for each class. And then a link to the event bright registration page for each class. So the way we handle our webinars as we have people sign up via event bright. And then through event bright we provide people with a link to the WebEx page where they can go to access the website at the right time. When we add special events, law day or that Kellogg lecture, those will be added to this U.S. laws webinar page. Next, we have the foreign, comparative and international law webinars page . It is set up similarly to the U.S. laws webinar page. We also provided usually a summary and an image in case you want to share that image with your friends, so they can see what our offerings are. We like to focus on presentations given by foreign law experts and we will typically let you know in the description and in the link who is giving that presentation, which foreign law expert and what they focus on. Next, the on-site classes page. Set up similarly to the US law webinars page, instead these are classes that would be offered in public. At our Washington DC site. When we are back from the pandemic, we will be updating this page to let you know. And let you know how you can sign up for these classes and what the dates will be. As you can tell, the buildings are closed to the public. But as soon as they reopen, this is where we will update that information. To come into the on-site classes you will have to get a registration card and we will give you links to you to go about how to get to this page.

The last of the four sections is the online learning page. On this page we picture it as a jumping off point for you. You have come to the webinar or you're interested in the topic of the webinar and you want to see what is available online that I can use to further my research. So here we have linked you to some of our online research guides, including the law libraries legal research guide page. Where you can actually access different subjects to see if we have covered your topic of interest. Digitized legal connections and a comprehensive index of legal reports. And many more. We are refreshing this online learning page as we add more things online. To find further research guides regarding your topic of interest. Last but not least, I want to highlight our archived webinars page. You can see an image on the left hand side. Even though we have attempted to make our webinars as user-friendly as possible, we know to time zones, work schedules and other hurdles, users may not be able to attend the webinars when they are offered. We have heard you if you have given us feedback. So we started to add recordings to our webinars to the archived webinars page. You can access the archived webinars page on any legal research Institute page. If you go to the top there is a link to webinar recordings and that will bring you right here. To make these webinars more accessible, we have added closed captioning to ever recording before it is put in the archive. That is actually, we are working on that now. We are trying to make as many webinars available as possible. As they are processed and captioned, you will find them on this website. That is my overview of the law library of Congress legal research Institute. I am now going to pass it on to Elina to talk about the foreign legal cassettes.

Thank you.

Hello this is Elina . I am responsible for data analysis and presenting the floral league -- [Inaudible-poor audio] I want to explain how we came up with a strategy and how we achieved the transferring of holdings into the database. Goals in creating the database were to consolidate all data into one place. And able real-time view of recent updates. View statistics and overall collection and build a strong function. After collecting all the data including records, we build to consistency and we built a function in the system which I will show you later. In our system there are two different entry levels. Staff and public version. We followed the software development cycle. Planning, analysis, design, implementation, testing and integration and maintenance. We cleaned up the data and imported all data into the database. We used a program to create the database. One can have as many as we need. [Indiscernible-Muffled] To have it in one place with a automated data management system. This is the main page. -- Reducing human errors and allowing users to update in real time. This makes it easy for us -- reports, statistics and other references such as -- intranet page link and -- on the right. This database is customized for team members -- let's take a look at legal gazettes data overview page. We decided how to display the information. We have it displayed in a table format on the bottom. And information is displayed on the top. To use the search -- inventory history and a powerful search function. It is -- a way to help members track who has -- tracking inventory history -- it is updated in real time. We make them available -- we are monitoring records while checking for duplicated information and combining them. We can monitor statistics and print or email to colleagues create PDF files. -- We can build -- and keeping everyone on the same page. This is one example of a report created in the system. Information from -- we can visually check -- this is for -- it is a fully functional dashboard for staff and page rounds. It is user-friendly. -- The difference is -- let me explain the search function. -- It provides how you can display interactive -- multiple jurisdictions on the top left, the map in the table on the right are automatically into the view. The country appears on the map in the table. It lets you define country names -- and narrows down the data you want to search. -- Updates with Python code - - this comes from the database -- we monitor the data and keep them clean and consistent. This is the public version of interface. All data links -- we launched this last week. Please visit the law.gov -- here are the links. Thank you for listening.

Thank you. [Indiscernible-Muffled] We are grateful for our partnership. Creating full demographic records. These reports are also discoverable in the catalog of government publications. Here is a snapshot [Indiscernible-Muffled] where they can identify reports -- the index provides access to all the reports [Indiscernible-Muffled] to digitize reports. There are three categories. -- Dating from 2004 until the present. -- The law library -- in storage. Dating from 1943 until the 1980s. And a number -- largely inventoried -- and then we have -- since 1989 -- [Indiscernible-Muffled] the initial release -- occurred earlier this year -- from the Law Library of Congress -- this collection consists of over -- [Indiscernible-Muffled] you can see results which include webpage -- when you filter -- reports that you publish -- as well as a few contemporary PDFs. The easiest way to search -- [Indiscernible-Muffled] during the past fiscal year -- legal reports by preparing 2000 reports. -- In preparation for display -- since March the legal report team is focused on -- comparing -- will we return [Indiscernible-Muffled] we are

refreshing the webpage. -- Of these reports. [Indiscernible-Muffled] I will be happy to hear questions.

I don't see any questions that have come in yet. If you have any questions, now would be a great time to chat them in. While those questions are coming in, I will let you all know about some upcoming webinars we have in the works. On the 14th, tomorrow, we have a webinar on cataloguing behind the scenes. We also have next week our big fall depository of library conference. If you go to FDLP .gov, you can register for numerous programs we have. The process will be virtual this year. I do not see any questions having come in yet. Can you please put out the survey? There's a link to the survey. If you would please take the time to fill the survey out, it helps us identify training for after. We do have a question. On the foreign legal cassettes page are the links to digital gazettes?

Yes.

I may have missed it but the foreign gazettes, will the link to the -- I'm sorry. I think it is the same question but phrased different.

Perhaps if I can further explain. Right now there is a link. The law library is undergoing digitizing -- [Indiscernible-Muffled] we are undergoing a program to digitize -- those that are not restricted -- eventually they will be links from this database to them. What you will find in this database is the inventory and where the holdings are in the link to the record.

We have another question. The used to be a database with gazettes, but it seems to be defunct. Will this project replace this?

It is an initiative to make available of legal gazettes better in the collections. The first up is to inventory -- the purpose is to make this available. Not related to it but to make the collections available. This is one collection -- may benefit from. This is the initiative --

I am not seeing any more questions. We have the link to the webinar survey in the chat log. Laura just pushed out the survey link. Thank you. I just need to thank our presenters. Thank you everyone for presenting on the law library of Congress and the newer initiatives going on. We appreciate you reaching out to us and asking to present. Thank you to all the attendees. I appreciate your chiming in. Come back to our FDLP Academy webinars in the future. I am looking forward to meeting with you.

Thank you.

[Event concluded]