



**HOWARD COUNTY  
LIBRARY SYSTEM**  
Public Education for All

**MEDIA RELEASE – for immediate release**

Date: November 19, 2018

Media Contact: Christie Lassen (410.313.7786 or 443.474.0740)

Victoria Goodman (410.313.7781)

**Howard County Library System**  
**HCLS Receives National Five Star Recognition**  
**For Delivery of Services to the Community**  
*HCLS Only Library System in Maryland to Earn Five Star Status*

ELLCOT CITY, MD – Howard County Library System (HCLS) was designated a Five Star Library by Library Journal for delivering excellence in public education for all. HCLS again earned the highest five-star ranking attained by fewer than one percent of public libraries in the U.S., and the only library system in Maryland to do so.

Reflecting on the designation, HCLS President and CEO Tonya Kennon said, “Every HCLS team member takes pride in delivering the highest quality customer service to our community, and this ranking is indicative of their work. We are particularly proud of the many eContent products we have added to the collection, and the usage numbers in that category show that our customers value and use them. Looking forward, we will expand our efforts even further by engaging the community in a variety of ways.”

The *LJ* Index rates U.S. public libraries based on selected per capita output measures. Five different measures determined this year’s *LJ* Index scores and Star status: overall borrowing, borrowing of electronic materials (eContent), library visits, class and event attendance, and public Internet computer use. Based on per capita results, HCLS exceeded in each category. The largest margins were reflected in both the per capita overall borrowing and the eContent borrowing categories.

According to Library Journal, “In order to make fair, apples-to-apples comparisons, each library is compared to its peers that have about the same amount of funding to spend. As a result, receiving a star rating not only means that the library itself delivers a strong return on investment, but that when graded on a curve, it is one of the strongest performers.”

HCLS per capita numbers (based on a population of 304,580) are as follows: overall borrowing (25.84), visits (7.15), eContent borrowing (3.10), class and event attendance (1.01), and public Internet computer users (2.65).

The 2018 Index derives from data recently released by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) for FY16.

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