



2010-2011 ALA CD#28.6
2011 ALA Annual Conference

**2010-2011 ASCLA Annual Report
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Diana Reese, President**

It has been an honor and privilege to serve as President of the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA) from 2010-2011. This was a year of major change for ASCLA, as members voted to reshape the association to provide increased opportunities for participation and engagement and reduce barriers to performance. As it moves forward, ASCLA will strive to improve its membership value to those who are interested in the work and future of state library agencies, library cooperatives, independent librarians, and libraries serving special populations – including the incarcerated and other institutional residents, and those with different physical, mental and emotional abilities.

Respectfully submitted,
Diana Reese, ASCLA President
June 13, 2011

Advocacy, Funding and Public Policy

ASCLA administered a grant project to revise the 2005 *Revised Standards and Guidelines of Service for the Library of Congress Network of Libraries for the Blind and Physically Handicapped*. Since the last standards were developed, there have been a number of significant changes in the operation of Network libraries and in the development and use of new technologies. An open forum to discuss the first public draft of the revised standards was held in conjunction with the 2011 Midwinter meeting. Input was incorporated into a second public draft, released on April 4. The working team and the advisory team held a joint meeting in May to finalize the document. The ASCLA board of directors will review and approve the final document at Annual Conference. ASCLA will publish the revised guidelines and standards in October 2011. The project is funded by a grant from the Library of Congress/National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LC/NLS) to the American Library Association

Building the Profession

Emerging Leaders - ASCLA continued to invest in our leaders of tomorrow by sponsoring an Emerging Leader again in 2011. Tiffany Mair joined Project J, "Learn *what happens, when* at ALA." The team's task was to develop a visual guide to "Deadlines ALA," with a calendar of ALA budget, committee work, conference, election, publication and other time-based cycles. Their work includes a section on where to go for action items that would provide quick access to all those hard-to-locate forms. The team ultimately recommended Drupal modules to accomplish these goals, to be put in place when ALA migrates to the new Content Management System in the Fall of 2011.

ASCLA's Executive Committee asked our Emerging Leader to conduct a quick survey of the 2011 EL cohort to determine what personal goals they were seeking to achieve in an EL project and what are the most important elements to be included in the "ideal" Emerging Leader project. Tiffany will submit her findings to the Board at Annual 2011, and they will be posted to Connect.

Century Scholarship - ASCLA again awarded a scholarship of \$2,500 to a library school student with disabilities who was admitted to an ALA-accredited library school and needed services or accommodation not provided by the university. Samantha Lee Wickman is the 2011 recipient; the scholarship will enable her continue her graduate library school studies at Simmons College, with an emphasis in preservation. As an undergraduate student at Connecticut College she was able to integrate physical and bibliographic knowledge of a special collection into a research project; as well as receiving specialized training in book preservation techniques.

Given the increasing financial and administrative burden that the Century Scholarship poses to ASCLA and in light of the value such a scholarship provides to the profession and the American Library Association, the Offices of Diversity and HRDR proposed a reorganization of the Century Scholarship from a division-level scholarship to an association-level scholarship. As part of this reorganization, Diversity and HRDR would assume the fundraising and administrative responsibilities for the Scholarship beginning in June 2011 at the conclusion of the current scholarship cycle. The scholarship would remain an ASCLA initiative in name only until a formal proposal is made to and approved by the ALA Scholarships and Study Grants Committee. The reorganization is subject to board approval at Annual Conference. ASCLA continued to provide continuing education and networking opportunities to ALA members, holding its first “virtual convergence,” a successful two-day session of 22 continuing education webinars. ASCLA’s highly successful preconference, “Assembling A Consulting Toolkit,” will be offered for the final time at Annual Conference 2011. The content will be repurposed into online learning modules.

Member Engagement

ASCLA awards –

ASCLA Exceptional Service Award: Hennepin County (Minnesota) Library Outreach Services for their creative and outstanding service to County residents who cannot visit and use the library due to age, illness, disability or incarceration.

ASCLA Leadership and Professional Achievement Award: Diane Walden, Colorado State Library, for exemplary statewide leadership with correctional facility services and programs in Colorado and Florida, and in the creation of the new ALA policy [Prisoners’ Right-to-Read Statement: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights](#)

ASCLA Cathleen Bourdon Services Award: Elizabeth Ridler, Brooklyn (New York) Public Library, for her tireless work to strengthen ASCLA and to ensure that ADA provisions continue to be applied and endorsed as ALA policy.

ASCLA/KLAS/NOD Award: Queens (New York) Library Mail-a-Book Program for using interactive technology to enrich the lives of persons with disabilities in their community and bring regular social interaction and lifelong learning opportunities to the living rooms of the homebound.

ASCLA Francis Joseph Campbell Award: Jamal Mazrui, Federal Communications Commission, for his pioneering innovation model for library programming and services, which opened paths to employment and self-determination for individuals with print disabilities. Mr. Mazrui is a leader in the adaptive technology and web accessibility communities.

Interface, the division’s professional publication, was without an editor for more than a year. The position was finally filled in September 2010. Editor Anne Abate took steps this year to strengthen the publication, made recommendations for members-only content, and worked with ASCLA office staff to restore vendor advertising to the publication. Liz Markel, ASCLA marketing specialist, did a superb job acting as the de facto editor in the interim.

ASCLA’s Web Presence Committee was charged to identify six activities to encourage members to increase their use of ALA Connect, as well as strategies for recruiting new members using ASCLA’s web presence. The primary recommendation that should be worked on in 2011-2012 is to work with ASCLA’s web services manager to use the Home Page to diffuse the confusion of “What does ASCLA mean” or “Who is or should be involved with ASCLA” and use the web site to sell and establish a connection with potential members with similar interests or who are looking for resources dealing within the ASCLA service scope.

The past year saw major improvements to ASCLA’s website. ASCLA lost its web services manager subsequent to Midwinter 2010, and the position was finally filled in 2011. Andrea Hill implemented updates to the pages, which

resulted in increased member engagement with the ASCLA site. Most notably, she created an “Access ASCLA” web page that provides one-stop access to the most useful tools. She also removed old content and prepared ASCLA’s site for ALA’s Drupal migration.

Organizational Excellence

ASCLA Restructuring to be future-friendly and future-ready - The Executive Committee, the Board of Directors, an ad hoc by-laws revision committee and a transition working group worked tirelessly this year to accomplish ASCLA’s reshaping. The changes provide a new structure that allows for more member participation and collaboration. Groups of individuals with mutual issues and interests can generate spontaneously, evolving or devolving as the future changes. The new structure streamlines ASCLA’s governance, reducing formally elected positions by 50%.

Impetus for the restructuring came from members’ input over the last two years. Members indicated they want to spend more time on products and results and less time on the process of governance. They want a high return for the investment of their personal time and want their involvement to be project-based, not position-based. By approving the new structure as set forth in the revised bylaws, the ASCLA board of directors heard these voices and are positioning ASCLA to be a 21st century association — one that can adapt and thrive in today’s challenging environment.

Strategic Planning - ASCLA members began work on a new strategic plan that aligns with ALA Ahead 2015. Leadership met at Midwinter to conduct a SWOT analysis, and the Membership Promotion Committee completed a review and analysis of the benefits, costs and value that ASCLA delivers to its customers. The MPC created a draft value proposition that the board will review and incorporate into its strategic planning activities at Annual Conference 2011. Immediately after Annual 2011, ASCLA will conduct a member satisfaction/loyalty survey to further inform the division’s strategic planning process. The goal is to have a completed strategic plan in place by Midwinter 2012.

Business Plan – The Executive Committee approved a four-year business plan to improve ASCLA’s financial stability and support the division’s new structure. Plan objectives include branding, providing online CE, continuing ASCLA’s tradition of offering excellent Pre-conferences and Institutes, sponsoring library trips abroad, and developing a new strategic plan that maximizes the benefits of the new structure and generates reliable streams of revenue.

Inter-unit collaboration – Given the similarities between federal libraries and the types of libraries represented in ASCLA, this year was one of exploring potential collaboration efforts with the Federal and Armed Forces Libraries Round Table. ASCLA offered FAFLRT the infrastructure to present online training; they responded with webinar proposals that were subsequently approved for inclusion in our Virtual Convergence. The joint leadership is also exploring opportunities for a joint 2012 Emerging Leader project, and will attend each other’s board meetings to discuss future collaboration efforts.