

## **2010-2011 ALA CD#29**

## **2011 ALA Midwinter Meeting**

### **American Library Association**

### **2011 Midwinter Meeting in San Diego, CA**

### **President-elect's Report**

### **Molly Raphael**

It's great to be back in beautiful and warm San Diego again for our Midwinter Meeting. This report will cover my activities as President-elect from July through December 2010 including:

- committee appointments, working with both the Council Committee on Committees (CoC) and the ALA Committee on Appointments (CoA);
- work on my Presidential Initiatives; and
- ALA-related travel and speaking engagements.

#### **Committee Appointments**

One of the most important responsibilities of the ALA President-elect is to lead the work involved in making appointments to Council Committees and Committees of ALA. I benefited greatly from the observations and insights of current ALA leaders as well as the improvements to the process made to the database by ALA staff. Still, the work involved in making these appointments is enormous and was particularly challenging this year because of the early dates of Midwinter.

The first task for the CoA was to advise on recommendations for the Nominating Committee. Nearly every division president-elect submitted names for consideration. The Committee was presented to and approved by the Executive Board at its Fall Meeting at the end of October. With Nominating Committee Chair Vivian Wynn leading the effort, the following divisions, units, and affiliates are represented: AASL, ALSC, ACRL, ALCTS, ASCLA, PLA, LLAMA, YALSA, ERT, IFRT, IRRT, LSSIRT, FTRF, JCLC, BCALA, REFORMA, and CALA. The Nominating Committee members have deep and wide networks; all are committed to reaching out broadly to present a slate of candidates for ALA President and Council who represent the diversity of our Association.

The Volunteer Form for ALA and Council committees was available on the website for three months, beginning in early August. The early November cutoff date was adopted by the Executive Board this year as a recommendation of recent ALA Presidents. Even so, much of the work I did was over the holidays in December because of time needed to gather CoC and CoA input and of the travel schedule I had in the first part of December. Trying to communicate with individuals to invite them to chair committees was complicated by the fact that many were on vacation and out of the office.

Even though ALA publicized the call for committee volunteers several times, many people were unaware of the early cutoff date. Particularly people who are relatively new to the committee volunteer process often seemed not to think about the requirement to volunteer eight months prior to when their service

would begin. Also, many current committee members, who might be interested in reappointment to a committee, may have missed the call for volunteers. Since it seemed wise to reappoint some committee members who were eligible as well as add new voices, we had to look beyond the volunteer forms to make sure that there was a balance of experience as well as new perspectives.

Both the CoC and the CoA were very active in making recommendations. We used ALAConnect quite successfully, which allowed members of each committee to see the recommendations of their colleagues. In nearly every case, those recommendations drove my recommendations. I invited CoC and CoA members also to share with me any thoughts they had for individuals to chair committees, even though those decisions are left to the President-elect.

Like my predecessors, I tried very hard to balance the many factors that result in having committee members with diverse perspectives. In fact, this is not as easy as one might expect. I encouraged CoC and CoA members to consider which members of committees would be continuing for another year so that we would be looking to fill gaps when we could identify them. The reality is that each President-elect must gather information/recommendations from the CoC and CoA, review the continuing members on the committee, review the volunteer forms, review the members eligible for reappointment, etc., etc. In addition, I asked my assistant, Jon Grass, to review the names of those who would be continuing on committees and to identify areas where we had an opportunity to fill gaps. Some of the factors that he identified, e.g. committees that were all female, were helpful, but then the volunteers were all women, making trying to “balance” for gender particularly challenging. The bottom line that it is important for ALA leadership and governance members to understand is that committee appointments are more of an art than a science, which is probably not a bad thing.

One noteworthy observation is there were a large number of relatively “new” volunteers so that we were able to fill not only intern but also regular committee appointment slots. We also valued the contributions of the “veterans” and looked to have nominees from both groups.

In selecting committee chairs, I recommended some reappointments, some new chairs who have served on the respective committee, and a few new chairs who are new to the committees but who have a track record of being engaged in the focus of the committee. In a few cases, committee chairs are “seasoned” as members of the respective committee but relatively new to ALA leadership positions.

Data on the committee appointments will be provided in a supplement to this report since the early date of Midwinter makes it nearly impossible to provide that analysis at this point.

## **Presidential Initiatives**

My Presidential Initiatives focus on two Key Action Areas (also 2015 Strategic Plan priorities): advocacy and diversity. (<http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/missionhistory/mission/index.cfm>).

### **Advocacy**

Building on the advocacy initiatives of previous ALA Presidents, this Presidential Initiative will focus on engaging our communities to advocate for libraries and their value, based on factors that matter to communities and their leaders. Patty Wong, County Librarian/Chief Archivist for Yolo County Library (CA), and Barbara Stripling, Director of Library Services, New York City School Library System, accepted my invitation to co-chair this effort. Also involved in the planning have been key ALA staff leaders: Marci Merola, Director of ALA’s Office for Library Advocacy as well as Emily Sheketoff, Associate Executive Director for the ALA Washington Office, and Sally Gardner Reed, Executive

Director of the Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends, and Foundations (ALTAFF). JoAnne Kempf, Director of the ALA Governance Office, is a key participant and advisor as well.

Advocacy by our library communities of all types is the heart of this initiative. When we who work in libraries tell our story—what is really the library story—there is almost always a perceived element of self-interest. When members of our communities tell the story of the transformational power of libraries, that self-interest issue disappears. This initiative will provide approaches and tools for ALA members from all types of libraries to motivate their library communities (parents, educators, business and nonprofit leaders, youth, New Americans, community activists, anyone who uses libraries) to tell our story—the transformational power of libraries.

Attachment 1 details the approach of this initiative. In addition to the core group working on this initiative, leaders from all types of libraries will be invited to become part of a Lead Group of practitioners to advise and react to our plans as they are developed.

### **Diversity**

ALA, through the Spectrum Scholarship Program, has made a major commitment to build and support a more diverse workforce of librarians. The effort to increase the amount of funding available by \$1 million through the Spectrum Presidential Initiative, led by Past President Betty Turock, is an effort that has called upon the enthusiastic involvement of many ALA leaders, including me as well as current and past ALA officers and leaders.

My Diversity Presidential Initiative will seek to connect leadership development opportunities with this more diverse workforce so that the library leaders of tomorrow are as diverse as the populations we serve. We intend to engage members across a broad concept of diversity, including ethnic/racial diversity as well as other elements such as age/cohort, sexual orientation, type of library/position, persons with disabilities, etc. We are working closely with Miguel Figueroa in the ALA Office for Diversity to develop plans. At Midwinter, I will be hosting a meeting of about 20 member leaders to discuss ideas for the most effective way to move leadership development forward for the more diverse workforce we are supporting. The meeting group includes many ALA division presidents-elect (those who accepted my invitation to be involved) as well as a diverse group of ALA member leaders. While we have not yet sought official representatives from ethnic caucuses and other ALA units, we have included many leaders who are actively engaged with these caucuses and units as well as members who have developed effective diversity programs in their libraries and institutions. The Midwinter gathering will determine our path forward; we expect to focus on ways that ALA directly offers leadership development opportunities.

More will be reported on this initiative in the coming months.

### **With Appreciation**

While it is a great honor to serve as ALA President-elect, I could not have done nearly what I have without the support and assistance of many people. Although I could name many, I will name just a few. Special thanks goes to JoAnne Kempf, Director of the ALA Governance Office, and all the great staff there: Alicia Bastl, Lois Ann Gregory-Wood, Cheryl Malden, and Delores Yates. I am also extremely grateful for the strong support provided by ALA's Executive Director, Keith Michael Fiels, who has provided helpful guidance at many places along the way. My orientation in October reacquainted me

with many I knew in ALA HQ and introduced me to many more who have provided information and support in a variety of areas. I also want to acknowledge the support of ALA officers, current and past, who have been most generous in sharing their insights and wisdom. Finally, I want to express my appreciation to Jon Grass, new graduate of the University of Texas/Austin's iSchool and my assistant, who assisted me greatly with managing information during the committee appointments process.

### **Travel and Speaking Engagements**

#### ***July – December 2010***

August 9-15	International Federation of Library Associations (Gothenburg, Sweden)
September	Visit Stanley (ID) Community Library (inspiring to see a rural library in action)
October 2	Keynote for launch of NEA “Big Read” Grant Program: collaboration of Oberlin College, Oberlin Public Library, and Oberlin Public Schools (Oberlin, OH)
October 4	Visit to Kent State University, SLIS, meeting with students, faculty, and KSU library staff; and Keynote Address for KSU/SLIS Annual Alumni Dinner (Kent, OH)
October 5	Freedom to Read Foundation Retreat (Chicago, IL)
October 19-21	President-elect Orientation at ALA HQ (Chicago, IL)
October 22-24	Fall Executive Board Meeting (Chicago, IL)
November 6	Trejo Institute (Boston, MA)
November 7	Visit to Simmons, GSLIS, speaking to class and meeting with ALA Student Chapter (Boston, MA)
November 8	Visit to Boston Public Library (Boston, MA)
November 17	Media Training at ALA HQ (Chicago, IL)
November 18-19	Advocacy Initiative Retreat, Steering Committee (Chicago, IL)
December 4	Commencement Address, Emporia State University SLIM, Colorado Program, Cohort X (Denver, CO)
December 8-9	“I Love My Librarian” Awards Ceremony sponsored by the New York Times and the Carnegie Corporation (New York, NY) (stand-in for President Stevens)
December 9	Visit to New York Public Schools Libraries (New York, NY)

## **MOLLY RAPHAEL: ALA ADVOCACY PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVE**

Building on the advocacy initiatives of previous ALA Presidents, Molly Raphael's Presidential Initiative will focus on engaging our communities to advocate for libraries and their value, based on factors that matter to communities and their leaders.

Advocacy by ALA Leaders and Library Directors



Frontline Advocacy by All Library Employees



Advocacy by Engaged Constituencies

Possible title(s) for initiative:

**Why Libraries Matter: Empowering Community Voices**

or

**Empowering Voices: Communities Speak Out for Libraries**

Questions to be answered by initiative: How do we translate what we are doing into what matters/what is valued by others? How do we engage our constituencies/communities to reflect on and talk about the value they find in libraries in ways that resonate with community leaders?

Questions to be answered by libraries/library personnel as a part of this initiative:

1. How do we assess the needs of our communities?
  - What is the community (or communities) our library serves?
  - What are the needs and priorities of our communities?
2. How do we engage community members in connecting their needs to libraries?
  - How does our library connect to and answer those needs?
  - What can our library do to meet needs that are not currently being met, or bring in members of our community who are not currently taking advantage of the opportunities in our library?
3. How can we help define key messages for our constituents based on what is valued as priorities in our communities and on the message that libraries are a core service in each community?

4. How can we motivate and empower our community members (both library users and nonusers) to advocate for the value they derive from the library?
  
5. How can ALA connect the messages from the communities of different types of libraries to foster a complex but consistent national message about the value of libraries (told from the viewpoint of the communities they serve)?

Possible outcomes or products of the initiative:

<b>OUTPUTS (PRODUCTS)</b>	<b>OUTCOMES (CHANGES IN BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDES)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Strategies for engaging communities to tell libraries their needs (recognize that this is a 180-degree shift for some libraries from traditional communication channels when libraries tell communities what programs they offer)</li> <li>➤ Strategies for identifying and defining the strongest messages for each community or constituency within a community</li> <li>➤ Menu of messages for each constituency based on research when it is available</li> <li>➤ Tools/techniques for fostering advocacy within communities including step-by-step processes as guides (e.g. sample Letters to the Editor)</li> <li>➤ Collection of research and other information about effective, community-based libraries</li> <li>➤ Strategies for building coalitions among advocates including building partnerships with organizations that share a common purpose</li> <li>➤ National clearinghouse of effective, community-based advocacy efforts and library stories</li> <li>➤ Website with tabs for different topics, constituencies</li> <li>➤ Formation of collaborative partnerships</li> <li>➤ Data to use in speaking effectively (includes power statements like, “Did you know. . . .?”)</li> <li>➤ Communications tools: speakers’ bureau; social networking; Library Snapshot Day; replicable; viral word of mouth campaign</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Positive changes effected in libraries</li> <li>➤ Public is mobilized to speak out and take action</li> <li>➤ Strong advocacy by library community members on an ongoing basis, not simply one-time messages and not only when libraries are facing cutbacks</li> <li>➤ Every constituency within community becomes library advocate</li> <li>➤ Changes in behavior on behalf of libraries are measured and monitored</li> </ul>