

TO: LITA Board of Directors

TOPIC: Executive Director's Report

ACTION / INFORMATION / REPORT: REPORT

SUBMITTED BY: Jenny Levine, LITA Executive Director

DATE: June 4, 2018

This report covers LITA activity for January – May, 2018.

OVERVIEW

- We ended May with 2,409 members, up from 2,403 the previous month but down from 2,497 one year ago.
- Budget as of April 30: -\$25,623 (projected to be -\$40,242)
- Committee support: LITA staff member Mark Beatty attended 57 meetings to support the work of LITA committees.
- Mark published 86 jobs to the LITA Jobs Site, lita-l, and the LITA Blog. This is only 8 jobs less than were posted at this time last year, and we are currently on track to hit budget for this line
- LITA Blog posts: 77
- Between the two of us, we sent 26 email blasts (and did accompanying LITA Blog posts), including:
 - 11 promoting webinars and courses (not counting evaluations)
 - 7 related to ALA Annual, AvramCamp, and our preconferences
 - 3 about the 2018 LITA Forum call for proposals
 - 2 related to ITAL
 - 1 member newsletter
 - 1 asking members to fill out a survey about the proposed new division
- ITAL articles published: 6
- #LITAchats held on Twitter: 5

2018 LITA EMERGING LEADERS

Meets our strategic goals for Member Engagement, Professional Development

[Aisha Conner-Gaten](#) intersectional librarian, activist, and tech enthusiast working at the William H. Hannon Library at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. Her current research is focused on her

experiences as a new liaison to Women and Gender Studies, connecting and engaging students with tools to record oral history interviews. She is also working on collection strategies for new liaisons, specifically those that center non-white authors and creatives. Aisha is part of Team B, which will create an online educational resource map of tribal community libraries, archives, and cultural centers (museums) using AILA archives, membership, and oral histories to create a digital presentation/exhibit/video to share the history of the American Indian Library Association.”

[Samantha Quiñon](#) is the Assistant Director and Head of Research & Instruction at Lesley University Libraries in Cambridge (MA). Recently she was asked to sit on a curriculum committee to help decolonize course resources for a certificate program delivered to students in Nicaragua. Her university then sent her to Nicaragua to teach a “Critical Skills Intensive” delivered over five days, focused on engaging with and understanding information sources to produce better quality, personally meaningful research and amplifying marginalized voices. Samantha is part of Team H, a NMRT project to create “Professional Development Programming Kits for ALA Student Chapters.”

ALA CONNECT/LITA CONNECT

Meets our strategic goals for Member Engagement, Organizational Stability and Sustainability, Professional Development

ALA launched [the new ALA Connect](#) on May 10th. Attempting to get the LITA Connect site ready, I spent considerable time identifying bugs and helping fix structural and security issues in the three weeks leading up to the launch. While ALA ITTS continues to resolve some issues, I’m working on shaping the member experience for a tentative July launch that will move all our committees, LITA Chairs community, and New Member Interest Group into the site. Phase 2 will involve our interest groups, and in phase 3 I hope to migrate LITA to using the Volunteer Manager module in the system, rather than the ALA Appointments Database.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROGRAMS

Meets our strategic goals for Advocacy and Information Policy, Member Engagement, Professional Development

In a timely talk, [Kendra Albert](#) will detail how as data becomes the substrate for human and algorithmic decision-making and funding, it speaks louder and louder. But what can we infer when there is no or limited data, that is, when the data is effectively silent? Like all records, the data that libraries collect about their patrons and services contain presence and absence, resistance and compliance, exclusion and overrepresentation. In this provocative talk, lawyer and critical legal scholar Kendra Albert will reflect upon how the rise of data collection in libraries can be informed by the silences of data.

Drawing upon the literature on archival silence, as well as their work understanding and critiquing data collection across contexts, this [LITA President’s Program talk titled “The Silences of Big Data”](#)

will explore a number of potential reasons for data silences, from law to collection bias to subject disobedience.

Our low-cost [LITA AvramCamp preconference](#) will allow female-identifying individuals employed in various technological industries an opportunity to network with others in the field and to collectively examine common barriers faced. This year we've partnered with the Public Library Association (PLA) to bring more public librarians into the event. The day will follow the unconference model allowing attendees the power to choose topics most relevant to their work and their lives. Participants will have the opportunity to propose session proposals on a variety of topics such as salary negotiation, creating inclusive job postings, and getting involved in open source software development. The opening session, led by Erin Berman and Anastasia Diamond-Ortiz, will address imposter syndrome, the feeling that you aren't actually qualified for the work you are doing and will be discovered as a fraud. Thanks to our sponsors EBSCO and OCLC, as well as our partner PLA, we were able to offer 8 travel scholarships for participants.

We're also offering 2 additional, very practical preconferences on Friday:

[Managing Library Technology](#) presented by Carson Block

Do you want to get a better handle on taming the technological beast in your library? The pre-conference is based on Carson Block's ALA-APA CPLA Class "Management of Technology" and features ideas and practices from his new book [Managing Library Technology: A LITA Guide](#). This session and the accompanying book offers a solid approach to understanding and managing the things that remain constant in an ever-changing world. This preconference is designed in a workshop format and is highly interactive with many opportunities throughout the day to practice the concepts. All participants receive a copy of the book.

[Python for Beginners: A Gentle and Fun Introduction](#) presented by Robin Davis and Mark Eaton
This hands-on workshop will introduce registrants to the Python programming language through a fun project they can show off. No coding experience required. With a provided starter kit of library data and sample code, participants will learn to use regular expressions and some basic Python. By the end of the workshop, they'll build their own customized Twitter bot that will send tweets out into the world!

This year's Imagineering Interest Group author panel will focus on [Gender and Sexuality in Science Fiction and Fantasy](#). Our amazing list of panelists includes:

- Jacqueline Carey
- Sherrilyn Kenyon
- Seanan McGuire
- Nnedi Okorafor

Panelists for [our popular Top Tech Trends session](#) include:

- Jason Bengtson, Assistant Director, Kansas State University Libraries

- Laura Cole, Director, BiblioTech
- Justin de la Cruz, Unit Head, E-Learning Technology, Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library
- Marydee Ojala, Editor-in-Chief, Online Searcher: Information Discovery, Technology, Strategies, Information Today, Inc.
- Reina Williams, Reference Librarian and Education Coordinator, Library of Rush University Medical Center
- Panel to be moderated by Marshall Breeding, Independent Consultant, Library Technology Guides

View our [21 programs](#) and [10 interest group sessions](#) in the [2018 ALA Annual Scheduler](#), and don't forget to join us for a very [Happy Hour](#) to network with great people who share your interests. This year's venue, Fulton Alley, offers bowling lanes, bocce courts, darts, a selection of board games, and a lineup of curated beers and cocktails, as well as a full menu.

This is our second year offering a [Conference Buddy Program](#) to foster inclusion and build connections between LITA members.

AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

Meets our strategic goals for Professional Development

This year's recipients are:

- [Larry P. Alford](#) – **Hugh C. Atkinson Memorial Award (ACRL/ALCTS/LITA/LLAMA)**
Alford was recognized for his distinguished career as an academic librarian, including his outstanding experience in library automation and library management, as well as his demonstrated risk taking in redesigning library spaces and securing funding for renovations.
- [Colby Lewis](#) – **LITA/Ex Libris Student Writing Award**
Lewis' was recognized for her educational, well-written, and comprehensive review titled "The Open Access Citation Advantage: Does It Exist and What Does It Mean for Libraries?," which will be published in a 2018 issue of *Information Technology and Libraries*. (ITAL).
- [Heather Moulaison Sandy](#) – **LITA/Library Hi Tech Award for Outstanding Communication for Continuing Education in Library and Information Science**
Moulaison Sandy was recognized for her work as a technology expert, editor, contributor, and compiler of books to make technology and makerspaces accessible for many different types of institutions.
- [Richard P. Smiraglia](#) – **Frederick G. Kilgour Award for Research in Library and Information Technology (OCLC)**
Smiraglia was recognized for his many significant contributions, including distinguished works on the theory of instantiation and the growth of science in knowledge organization. His influential book, *The Nature of a Work: Implications for the Organization of Knowledge*

(Scarecrow Press, 2001), has been invaluable in the era of data management, as instantiation (or "versioning") and is considered to be pressing importance to open data, data publication, and data reuse.

- **[Simone Wagner](#) – LITA/Christian (Chris) Larew Memorial Scholarship in Library and Information Technology**

Wagner was recognized for her leadership of a project to integrate the New York Public Library Digital Collections into student graphic design projects expanding the use of online archives. She also volunteered with Dream Africa Volunteer Service (DAVS) in Ghana teaching computer basics to young adults ages 18-35, was a web designer for UNESCO creating a site to be shared using 5 different languages, and she worked in Mumbai, India for the Ascend International School leading the professional development of staff around technology.

- At the 2018 Midwinter Meeting in February, the LITA Committee Recognizing Excellence in Children's and Young Adult Science Fiction issued its first ever [Notables List](#). It is designed to encourage good science fiction literature for children. SF books use (future) science and technology rather than fantasy or magic. The Lists will be announced every year at the ALA Midwinter Meeting.

GOVERNANCE/ADMINISTRATION

Meets our strategic goals for Member Engagement, Organizational Stability and Sustainability, Professional Development

I met regularly (usually twice a month) with President Andromeda Yelton to keep her informed of issues and plan LITA activities and discussions. In February we brought President-Elect Bohyun Kim in to discussions.

I analyzed our year-end FY2017 budget and posted the budget spreadsheets with narratives to the Board's ALA Connect group and the Financial Advisory Committee's Connect group. I also drafted the FY2019 budget and provided narratives of LITA activities for the ALA Executive Director's quarterly reports.

This year we continued to expand our branding initiative by working with ALA Production Services to create logos for ITAL and Top Technology Trends. We also created new icons and a new layout for the Forum Sponsor Prospectus and ordered branded tablecloths to use at conferences.

LITA/ALCTS/LLAMA New Division Discussions

Meets our strategic goals for Member Engagement, Organizational Stability and Sustainability, Professional Development

At the 2018 Midwinter Meeting, the LITA Board discussed the idea of creating a new, cross-function division with the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS) and the Library Leadership and Management Association.

The Board approved the creation of joint working groups to assess the feasibility of a new division. The three executive directors worked with the president and president-elect of each of the divisions as a steering committee to create a Financial Working Group and a Communications Working Group. The FWG completed and submitted its financial feasibility study, which all three boards will discuss at their 2018 ALA Annual meetings.

The ALCTS/LITA/LLAMA Steering Committee also created a member survey to gauge member interest in a combined division. The survey results will be shared publicly and discussed at ALA Annual.

Our goal is to be as open and transparent as possible, so we've created an [ALCTS/LLAMA/LITA Alignment Discussion community](#) in ALA Connect where we'll be posting all documents, soliciting input throughout the process, and answering questions/concerns. In addition, LITA President Andromeda Yelton created [an anonymous form](#) anyone can use to submit a question, [all of which she's been answering on the LITA Blog](#).

The Board II meeting at Annual will be a joint meeting of all three boards to formally vote on continuing the discussion and moving forward with a new phase to create the mission, bylaws, structure, and staffing for a potential new division. The goal is put the idea to a member vote in the 2019 ALA election.

LITA FORUM

Meets our strategic goals for Member Engagement, Professional Development

[The 2018 Forum](#) will be held November 8-10, in Minneapolis (MN) at the Hyatt Regency. Registration will open in July, and the Planning Committee is almost done building a more interactive, dynamic program. This will be the first Forum to implement the recommendations from the [2017 Forum Assessment Task Force](#), and it's shaping up to be a unique experience.

We're waiting until after the 2018 ALA Annual Conference board meetings to determine what the 2019 Forum might look like and if it will be a collaborative venture with ALCTS and LLAMA. Going forward, we'll be moving to a 3-city rotation for Forums, cycling between Denver, Minneapolis, and probably Pittsburgh (2019 would be our first Forum there).

ONLINE LEARNING

Meets our strategic goals for Professional Development

Since Midwinter, we've run one webinar series and three individual webinars, with two courses starting in June:

- [Privacy in Libraries, a LITA webinar series](#) (5 webinars, 31 individuals for the series, 15 groups for the series, 7 individuals for one session, 1 group for one session, \$12,391 gross

revenue); of special note is that we offered the first webinar in the series to anyone for free, which resulted in

- [Introduction to Schema.org and JSON-LD](#) (repeat webinar, 17 individuals, 9 groups, \$2,513 gross revenue)
- [IT Security and Privacy in Libraries](#) (webinar, 5 individuals, \$647 gross revenue)
- [Nuts and Bolts of Data Visualization](#) (webinar, 22 individuals, 5 groups \$2,630 gross revenue)
- Still to run: [Project Management for Success](#) (repeat course, June 12 – July 3)
- Still to run: [Contextual Inquiry: Using Ethnographic Research to Impact your Library UX](#) (repeat course, June 20 – July 26)

Webinar revenue had already exceeded the entire year's projected budget by the end of April, with 6 webinars and 2 courses still to be added to the total.

PUBLICATIONS

Meets our strategic goals for Professional Development

This summer we'll receive our second royalty payment from our publisher, Rowman and Littlefield. To date, we've published 15 books with them and have 3 more in production with 12 additional titles under contract.

We also updated one Neal-Schuman title with ALA Editions for Spring 2018 but don't have any sales data for it yet.

WEB PRESENCE

Meets our strategic goals for Advocacy and Information Policy, Member Engagement

We switched our site on ala.org to the new responsive redesign in April thanks to the tireless efforts of the Web Coordinating Committee (WCC) and Mark Beatty. Collectively we spent quite a bit of time shaping the site's new information architecture based on usage data and the [2017 Personas Task Force Report](#). In the future, we still hope to move the bulk of our information and engagement for members to the new ALA Connect.

The WCC continues to work on automating our [Jobs Site service](#) in WordPress for a summer re-launch with new features that will make it much easier to use. We're very grateful to the group for working on this because the changes will also save quite a bit of staff time while ensuring jobs are posted daily instead of weekly.

WORKING GROUP SUPPORT

Meets our strategic goals for Member Engagement, Organizational Stability and Sustainability, Professional Development

I had planned to implement phase two of our Committee/IG/Representatives Reporting project this year, which will turn submitted reports into public blog posts that will be categorized by group name, reporting period, and strategic areas of focus addressed. Unfortunately, the WordPress plugin we were using was unable to handle all the features we wanted to implement, so we switched to a different plugin instead.

The Web Coordinating Committee has helped transition most of our other forms to the new plugin, but I haven't had a chance to complete work on the reporting forms. I hope to finish this project over the summer.

This year I created and implemented Google Spreadsheet-based checklists for our awards and scholarship committee so that both the chair and I will always know where we are in the process and what needs to happen next.

We're also working on an Editorial Calendar to help us coordinate the promotion of regular events and integrate content across committees.

As we begin to use the new ALA Connect, I've set up public file folders for Board documents, budget documents, committee reports, interest group reports, representative reports, and task force reports.