

TO: LITA Board of Directors

TOPIC: President's Report

ACTION / INFORMATION / REPORT: REPORT

SUBMITTED BY: Evviva Weinraub Lajoie, President

DATE: August 24, 2020

Below are the primary activities I have been active in since I last reported at our meeting in January. This report will include the remainder of my term as VP and my term as President.

Appointments Committee

On February 24th, the LITA Board sent out communication to the membership titled, "News regarding the future of LITA after the Core vote" which effectively made Appointments Committee work moot. I made a few appointments to committees that needed assistance with current work.

Core Merger Project

After the work the Core Steering Committee did, with PHENOMENAL leadership by the Core Communications Team, we started the post-Midwinter season quietly. Each division agreed to hold one additional Town Hall session before voting in the ALA election began on March 9th. On February 24th, the LITA Board released the aforementioned "News regarding the future of LITA after the Core vote" a few hours before the LITA Town Hall session. This was done intentionally and with the full knowledge of the Core Steering Committee in order to be as transparent and open with the membership of LITA as possible, to allow everyone to make the most informed decision they could with the information available to them in that moment, and to allow everyone an opportunity to have their questions answered by the LITA Board and the staff directly. Effectively, we were looking to model the behaviors we are trying to build into Core. On April 8th, we found out that 96% of the LITA membership voted in favor of the merger into Core.

Beginning the week of April 20th, the Core Transition Committee began meeting weekly to begin work on merging these three organizations. We were able to identify 11 areas where our divisions needed to focus on how we would merge work and operations. Those working groups came together to create reports that would highlight the concerns of the new, merged committee, a series of preliminary recommendations of activities for the new Core committee, and any future considerations for that committee to think about or work on. An attempt was made for each working group to be made up of a balanced number of volunteers from all divisions. That was not always feasible, but we were mostly successful. The working groups submitted their reports to the

Transition Committee beginning in early August. We have been reviewing them and making further recommendations.

In September, we will vote again. We will choose our new president and complete our merger, but more importantly, we will be voting for a new president-elect for our new division. The idea of this fills me with a feeling of hope and moving forward – we will be voting for a leader to do the work of stepping from the years of planning and negotiation into the work of leading something new. I am excited to be able to work with them.

Our work to merge LITA, ALCTS, and LLAMA has been a tremendous undertaking and has taken significant time and a tremendous amount of staff resources. Jenny Levine, Chrishelle Thomas, Kerry Ward, and Julie Reese have been invaluable in organizing us, keeping us on task, and navigating the complexities of ALA. Tie into all of this a brand-new ALA Executive Director (Tracie D. Hall) starting in February, ALA moving to new offices, a global pandemic, budget uncertainties, and furloughs...it has been inspiring and exhausting to watch everyone at ALA step up and be proactive, productive, and generally just great.

I expected I was going to spend a lot of time over the next few months preparing for two different possible futures. It was, therefore, a wonderful gift in the middle of the absurdity that is our current world to be able to focus on something that felt like it would be real as something in the now and not a plan for a hope in a future that is filled with more questions than answers. LITA is a legacy I am proud to have had a moment to uphold and have helped pass it into a partnership that will take all that we have loved about LITA and make something even greater.

Respectfully submitted,
Evviva Weinraub Lajoie