

American Library Association President-Elect Report
Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada
January 2022

Since my [Fall 2021 report in October](#) I have had the opportunity to really delve into my role as President-Elect. The majority of my activities centered around preparing ALA for a year focused on partnerships, membership growth, labor and workers' rights, and equity, diversity, and inclusion for the world we are now and the world we want to become.

Committee Appointments

[Nominating Committee](#)

I presented the appointment slate for the ALA Nominating Committee at the November Executive Board meeting. Approval was given and staff are working to confirm the appointments.

Presidential Advisory Committee

I am lucky to have strong advisors by my side throughout my President-Elect and President years. This group of seventeen stellar individuals from across the association have been instrumental in the development of ideas, strategies, and activities to accomplish the goals I set forth for myself and the association last year. Committee members and their institutions are listed at the end of this report.

[ALA Committees, Joint Committees, & Council Committees](#)

I am thankful to the Committee on Committees (CoC) and the Committee on Appointments (CoAppt) for helping me assess 596 applications from 304 volunteers within the Association. With only a little over 150 volunteer positions across 32 ALA and Council Committees to fill with these applications, appointment decisions were difficult and we tried to give as many volunteers as possible an opportunity to serve. To make these appointments, we assessed individuals on a number of criteria including: their responses to why they would like to serve on a committee, their previous experiences within ALA (or if they were a new voice within the association), their geographic locations, type of engagement with libraries (Library Worker, Trustee, Type of Library, etc.), and level of responsibility. For additional input, I also had one on one conversations with over twenty-five ALA staff members on the work of the committees they liaise to and the opportunities and challenges they saw in the coming years of leadership succession and work of the committees. I am pleased to bring my proposed Committee Appointments for approval to the Executive Board at our January governance meetings.

The work of committee appointments could not be completed without the stellar organizational and communication skills of ALA Governance Associate Holly Robison & ALA Governance Director Sheryl Reyes. A big thank you and shout out to these two.

Executive Board Nominations & Election Tellers

The CoC also had the additional task of selecting a slate of four nominees to fill two at-large seats on the Executive Board. Nominees for the ALA Executive Board are selected from currently seated Councilors and will serve a 3-year term.

To confirm the results of the Executive Board election, I appointed four individuals to serve as election tellers, one of them to be named chair.

Transforming ALA Governance

A continued privilege has been serving in an advisory role to the Transforming ALA Governance (TAG) Working Group led by Amy Lappin. The ideas and plans these individuals are bringing forth to ALA Councilors during our January Council meetings are the culmination of hundreds of hours of work from many many ALA members. Building upon the Avenue M and Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness reports, TAG listened thoughtfully and considered many paths to taking ALA forward. I am eager to hear the outcomes of our Council conversations in continuing to grow ALA into the association that we need it to be in our constantly changing world.

2022-2023 Presidential Planning Work: Our Brave Communities

My Presidential Advisory Committee has met several times since November, including a hybrid meeting with over half of the committee meeting in person in Long Beach, CA and virtually. The dedication my committee members have demonstrated to the association cannot be understated. The ideas and passion they have brought with them to this work has been exceptional and I am honored to have them as a partner in this work. I would also like to give a huge thanks to the ALA staff supporting us: our staff liaisons Cheryl Malden and Sheryl Reyes, and the staff that attended and helped guide our hybrid conversations: Executive Director Tracie Hall, ODLOS Director Kevin Strowder, Associate Executive Director Lorelle Swader, and Membership Development and Customer Service Director Melissa Walling. Our work as members is only possible thanks to our staff and I am grateful to have such strong staff supporting our members.

Throughout our discussions, brainstorming, and planning, the theme that emerged was “**Our brave communities**”. As our communities and our libraries continue to work, live, and operate under the stress of a pandemic, we have seen many acts of bravery both large and small to thrive and survive. Our messaging hopes to be one of demonstrating the importance of libraries within every community, school, and place of education. We also hope to highlight the bravery of our library workers to advocate for our core values, ourselves, and our colleagues in the face of injustice and uncertainty. We hope to pack a lot into this year and while our our plans are still in development, our high level outcomes include:

- Labor and Workers’ Rights: The last two years has increased our awareness of and need for library workers to be able to advocate for their rights and their dignity in the workplace. Focusing on the principle that “All Labor Has Dignity and Skill” we will focus on creating a toolkit of resources, standards for an equitable workplace, and developing partnerships with groups who can help us grow in this area.
- Partnerships: The cornerstone of getting the word about ALA out and highlighting the intersections libraries have with industries, issues, and causes of many types, we plan to host and highlight non-library based partners doing great work in areas such as employee labor relations, sustainability, EDI, voters’ rights, and more through a series of virtual and in person conversations.
- Membership growth: We seek to drive membership through a member-led campaign to highlight what makes ALA valuable to library workers and library lovers at all levels. This will be a multimedia campaign highlighting members of all types and at

all levels, including current and former ALA leaders who shaped their professional lives through the association. We plan to engage in particular library students, library workers who do not hold a library degree, and library lovers such as friends and trustees. Part of this member-led campaign will be supporting ALA memberships and conference registrations and attendance for recent graduates and library workers who have been laid off or experienced severely reduced hours during the pandemic.

- ALA-Allied Professional Association (ALA-APA): The need to grow our 501c6 association is needed now, more than ever to address library workplace issues of many types. In addition to the ideas highlighted above around Labor and Workers' Rights, we will also be looking for fundraising and financing opportunities for ALA-APA and working closely with Director Hall on a strategy to get the ALA-APA the resources it needs to support and respond to member requests.

Underlying these overarching areas are issues of and advocacy for equity, diversity, and inclusion. Throughout, we ask the question: "What does an equitable workplace look like?". We hope to bring more attention to the need for Universal Design in library services through an Annual Conference program. We also plan to focus on the importance of intersectionality in all of this work.

Supporting National Associations of Librarians of Color

Demonstrating my and ALA's commitment to our National Associations of Librarians of Color, as well as following the precedent set forth by previous ALA Presidents, I had the honor of donating \$2,500 of my President-Elect operating Budget to support scholarships to attend the sixth REFORMA National Conference (RNCVI) and committed \$10,000 to support scholarships to the Joint Conference of Librarians of Color to take place in St. Pete Beach, FL in October 2022.

Meetings

- ALA Executive Board Fall Meeting in Chicago, IL (October 29-31, 2021)
- ALA Executive Board & ALA Executive Committee Monthly Meetings
- President-Elect Advisory Committee Meetings (Monthly beginning in November)
- President-Elect Advisory Committee Hybrid Meeting in Long Beach, CA (December 3, 2021)
- Constitution & Bylaws Committee Meetings as a second year member and Executive Board Liaison
- Weekly Transforming ALA Governance (TAG) Working Group Meetings

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ALA Presidential Advisory Committee Roster

Trevor A. Dawes, University of Delaware
Miguel Figueroa, Amigos Library Services
Dr. Martin Garnar, Amherst College
Jody Gray, University of Minnesota
Janice Greenberg, Retired
Ariana Hussain, The Blake School, Highcroft Campus
Liana Juliano, Paul Hastings Law
Andrea Lemoins, Philadelphia free library, public
Erika Long, Metro Nashville Public Schools

Dr. Claudette McLinn, Center for the Study of Multicultural Children's Literature
Alanna Aiko Moore, University of California San Diego
Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada, Palos Verdes Library District
Veronda Pitchford, Califa
Dr. Ray Pun, Hoover Institute
Chisato Uyeki, Mt. San Antonio College
Sandy Wee, San Mateo County
Dr. Steven Yates, University of Alabama

ALA Staff Liaisons:

Cheryl Malden
Sheryl Reyes