**TO:** PLA Board of Directors

**RE:**  PLA Operations Combined Report

**DATE:** April 20, 2023

**ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:**Information

**ACTION REQUESTED BY:**N/A

**DRAFT OF MOTION:**N/A

**MEMBERSHIP**

**ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:**Information

*Submitted by Samantha Lopez, Manager, Marketing & Membership*

**Membership Stats**

The total ALA membership count at the end of February 2023 was 49,695. This remains flat compared to the end of FY22 and last year’s February counts. PLA membership counts as of January 2023 were 8,028.

PLA has seen an average membership loss (pre-pandemic) of 941 in non-conference years. The membership loss since the beginning of the FY23 year is 302, which is comparable to FY19’s loss of 364 members. The table below compares January membership counts since FY20. Even fiscal years represent PLA Conference years, where we typically see a rise in membership.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Month** | **FY23** | **FY22** | **FY21** | **FY20** |
| January | 8,028 | 8,431 | 8,489 | 9,843 |
| Change |  | -403  (-4.9%) | -461  (-5.6%) | -1,815  (-20.3%) |

Despite experiencing a typical loss in membership, dues are at a 15%+ variance as of the January financial reports. This is most likely due to the conservative projections for FY23 planning, and the success of PLA 2022 Conference (1,548 new/renewed/reinstated members).

Update in ALA dues: Starting in FY23, the salary cap for non-salaried members was raised from $30,000 to $45,000.

In February 2023, ALA released the ALA Membership Survey Research conducted by Avenue M. The [complete executive summary can be found here](https://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/governance/ExecutiveBoard/20222023Docs/ebd%2012.7%20Exec.%20Summary%20Presentation%202.23%20Combined.pdf). Some of the high-level findings were:

* During the next few years, respondents indicated dealing with increasingly **high stress** situations in their library, **keeping up with new trends and developments** in the field, and dealing with **budget constraints** will likely be their biggest professional challenges. **Accessibility**, **race**, **disability**, **ethnicity**, **socioeconomic class and/or economic situation** are the top areas respondents feel or believe the library community needs to put greater emphasis on or improve.
* **Satisfaction.** 62% of members are satisfied or extremely satisfied with membership. This is +5% from the 2018 survey.
* **Connectivity.** 34% of members feel connected or extremely connected to ALA. This is the same percentage as the 2018 survey.
* **Value for the Cost of Dues.** About half of survey respondents in 2018 and 2022 think the value of membership is equal to the cost. About one in three view the value as less than the cost of membership, which is slightly higher than what Avenue M sees with other organizations (i.e., about one in four).
* **Willingness to Recommend (NPS)**. About one-third (32%) of current members are considered Promoters of ALA, meaning they are very likely to recommend membership in the organization to their colleagues and peers.
* The majority of members and former members are driven to join ALA to support the profession, support intellectual freedom, learn new skills relevant to their job, access up to date publications, and **participate in ALA’s Divisions (61%)**.
* **Who pays?** About 6 in 10 respondents (60%) pay 100% of their own ALA membership dues and 65% pay for Division and/or Round Table Dues. CE, conference/events travel, and registration are more likely to be paid by employers or split between the respondent and their employer.
  + Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, **about one-third of respondents have decreased budgets** for both membership and professional resources.
* The top 4 ways the membership experience would be improved is if ALA **lowers the cost of membership dues** (48%), **removes the requirement of joining ALA to join a Division or Round Table** (33%), **decreases the cost of education** (33%), and **lowers conference prices** (27%).

**PUBLICATIONS**

*Submitted by Kathleen Hughes, Manager, Publications*

***Public Libraries***

*Public Libraries* magazineis published bimonthly and sent to 8.5k PLA members plus approximately 400 subscribers. PLA produces two digital issues a year (May/June and July/August) and five print issues.

During the past 12 months, *Public Libraries* magazine has addressed trending and challenging topics for public librarians through themed issues, listed below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Issue | Theme |
| May/June 2022 | Library Services to the Justice-Involved |
| July/August 2022 | Books & Reading |
| September/October 2022 | Basic Literacy |
| November/December 2022 | Services to Children |
| Jan/Feb 2023 | Understanding Your Library’s Users/Community |
| March/April 2023 | Libraries in a Politically Charged Age |
| May/June 2023 | Trauma-Informed Libraries |

Two feature articles were chosen, in 2023, to receive the Public Libraries Advisory Committee’s Feature Article Award for the 202 Volume Year:

First prize of $500 was awarded to Jennifer Brown, Executive Director, and Nora Mulligan, Head of Adult Services, The Field Library, Peekskill, New York, for their feature article “[When First Amendment Auditors Visit Your Library](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_uouG_L8Ogvt7GcTkznA7wMpxk3_HWSi/view),” which was published in the January/February 2022 issue of Public Libraries.

Honorable mention prize of $300 was awarded to Jenn McKague, Outreach Services Librarian, Salt Lake County (UT) Library, for her feature article, “[Strengthening Communities—Outreach Services to Persons Who Are Incarcerated and Those Re-entering Society](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jikYTiIZjcpPuWHJCcZKsnFzZQT6kxD5/view),” which was published in the May/June 2022 issue of Public Libraries.

All feature articles written by public library workers and published in 2022 by the magazine were evaluated. All winners were chosen by members of the [Public Libraries Advisory Subcommittee](https://www.ala.org/pla/about/people/committees/pla-publibs).

Like the magazine, [PLOnline](http://publiclibrariesonline.org/) focuses on issues and topics that matter to public libraries and public librarianship. Updated several times per week, the site features selections from the print magazine and unique content and averages 8,000-10,000 views per week. Recently PL Online has undergone several updates to modernize the look with a more contemporary design, to improve organization, and to enhance security.

**FYI Podcast**

In 2016, PLA started [FYI: The *Public Libraries* Podcast](http://publiclibrariesonline.org/category/media/podcast/) as another way to explore a variety of library-world topics in greater depth. To date, we have recorded 60 podcasts. From April 11, 2022, to April 11, 202, FYI podcasts had 12,500 individual plays. This compares to 10,496 individual plays in the previous twelve-month period (2021-2022). Since its inception, there have been over 77,000 individual plays. There are over 75,000 subscriptions via RSS and other apps.

**Advertising**

As of July 2022, PLA has engaged ACRL/Choice’s advertising sales representative, Pamela Marino, who has more than a decade of experience and success selling advertising for Choice/ACRL. She is off to an excellent start, and we expect to meet or exceed the budgeted figure for advertising revenue in FY23. As of this writing, she has already exceeded the targeted revenue amount for this year.

**Products + Publications**

In fiscal year 2023 PLA released the following:

[*2023 Early Literacy Tips Calendar*](https://www.alastore.ala.org/content/early-literacy-calendar-2023%E2%80%94pdf-download)

Publication Date: October 2022

Based on the “Every Child Ready to Read” practices of reading, writing, singing, talking, playing (and now counting), each download contains 12 months of learning activities, book lists, nursery rhymes, and more. On one side is a calendar with a fun skills-building activity for each day, and the other contains supplementary content like nursery rhymes, early literacy tips, song lyrics, or suggested reading material. The calendar pages are also customizable with each containing a designated spot to add the library’s logo and contact information. This year the calendar was also available in Spanish, with translation provided by REFORMA.