

TO: LITA Board of Directors

TOPIC: Executive Director's Report

ACTION / INFORMATION / REPORT: Report

SUBMITTED BY: Jenny Levine, Executive Director

DATE: January 18, 2019

This report covers LITA activity for July – December 2018.

OVERVIEW

- We ended December with 2,352 members, down from 2,393 the previous month and down from 2,426 one year ago.
 - Budget as of November 30: -\$19,543 (projected to be \$65,536)
 - Committee support: LITA staff member Mark Beatty attended 46 meetings to support the work of LITA committees. I attended an additional 3 committee meetings during this time.
 - Mark published 103 jobs to the LITA Jobs Site, lita-l, and the LITA Blog. This is one more ad than was posted at this time last year, and we are currently on track to hit budget for this line.
 - Mark worked with the Program Planning Committee to submit [32 sessions](#) for the 2019 Midwinter Meeting
 - LITA Blog posts: 69
 - Between the two of us, we sent 29 email blasts (and did accompanying LITA Blog posts), including:
 - 7 related to online education offerings (not counting evaluations)
 - 5 about the 2018 LITA Forum (including the evaluation)
 - 4 promoting our call for proposals for the 2019 ALA Annual Conference
 - 2 related to Top Tech Trends at Midwinter
 - 2 marketing new LITA Guides
 - 2 new ITAL issues published
 - 1 announcement about a #LITachat
 - #LITachats held on Twitter: 2
-

2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROGRAMS

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

This year Mark led an initiative to use short evaluations printed on heavy business card-size paper

to try to improve the number of responses. This worked well and we received quite a few cards back. Mark entered the information from the cards in [a Google Sheet](#) along with other information so that we can analyze everything from the effect of room location to time of day.

Sessions

- [20 programs](#)
 - Including [Gender and Sexuality in Science Fiction and Fantasy](#) presented by our Imagineering Interest Group and [Executive Perspectives: A Conversation on the Future of the Library Technology Industry](#)
- [President's Program with Kendra Albert](#)
- [LITA Top Tech Trends panel](#)

Preconferences

- AvramCamp = 34 registrants; this year we collaborated with the Public Library Association to reach more public library participants; together with our sponsors EBSCO and OCLC, we were able to offer 8 scholarships to attend
- Managing Library Technology = 27 registrants; we included a copy of Carson Block's [Managing Library Technology](#) book with each registration
- Python for Beginners = 36 registrants

Mark worked with the Program Planning Committee to schedule [20 programs](#) and [3 preconferences](#) for the 2019 Annual Conference (with committee and IG meetings still to be scheduled).

2018 LITA ALA LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE SCHOLARSHIP

Meets our strategic goals for Member Engagement, Professional Development

Jennifer Chan was selected to receive LITA's first ever scholarship to attend the ALA Leadership Institute in August. Chan is the Scholarly Communication Librarian at the UCLA Library. Her work focuses on altmetrics and bibliometrics, open access, the Affordable Course Materials Initiative, and research impact. She liaises with campus partners on the development of targeted outreach and programming that promote scholarly communication and develops open education strategies to further the campus mission of research, teaching, and public service.

This scholarship was funded by LITA members who responded generously to our December fundraising campaign.

2018 LITA FORUM

Meets our strategic goals for Member Engagement, Professional Development

Mark worked closely with the 2018 Forum Committee and handled the advance planning and onsite logistics for catering, AV, speaker agreements, signage, the print pocket guide, our complimentary hotel rooms, making sure the rooms were configured correctly, and sending out the

evaluation survey. I want to again commend him for all his work to make Forum the best event possible.

I want to give a special shout out to Chair Melody Condron and Vice Chair Jason Battles, along with Subcommittee Chairs Galen Charlton (sponsorships), Jason Griffey (programming), Cody, W. Hanson (video streaming and recording), Ranti Junus (accessibility), and Becky Yoose (user experience). Additional recognition goes to Katherine Boden (for helping manage the website) and Joanna Kimmitt (for helping with engagement and filling in gaps). At the direction of Past President Andromeda Yelton, the entire Forum Planning Committee did an amazing job of using the recommendations from the 2017 Forum Assessment Task Force Report to completely revamp the event. And thank you to Minitex for inviting us to co-host a joint reception with the Upper Midwest Digital Collections Conference [UMDCC].

This year's theme explored Building & Leading, with more than 60 programs care so that every program time slot offered different types of sessions: two traditional lectures, focused discussion, problem-solving, and two hands-on activities.

Given that the location wasn't finalized until February, it's an achievement that we even held a Forum this year, let alone came away with survey results showing that 91% of respondents rated their overall experience Good or Excellent, and 93% said they would Probably or Definitely recommend Forum to a colleague.

[Collaborative notes](#), [slides/handouts](#), and some [recordings](#) are available on the Forum website. We were also excited to offer captioning for the first time for the 9 livestreamed sessions.

2019 EMERGING LEADERS

Meets our strategic goals for Member Engagement, Professional Development

We're excited to introduce you to our 2019 Emerging Leaders, [Kathryn Greer](#) and [Rachel Murdock](#). Kathryn is the systems and Digital Content Librarian at Kaufman Library, where she recently led her library's transition to a new ILS. Next she'll be managing their implementation of OpenAthens. Rachel is the Innovative Librarian at the Hedberg Public Library, where she handles emerging technologies & maker activities. She is particularly interested in how tech intersects with diversity, equity, and inclusion. Both are already leaders in the libtech field, and we're looking forward to working with them more closely.

We also proposed a team project that was accepted that called *LITA Close to Home: Developing Local Support Networks* to develop a plan for creating local LITA chapters. The four Emerging Leaders who will be working on this include Kathryn, Rachel, Liz Gibbons-Camp, and Abigail Sparling.

2019 LITA/OCLC SPECTRUM SCHOLAR

Meets our strategic goals for Member Engagement, Professional Development

We're also thrilled to announce the selection of our second LITA/OCLC Spectrum Scholarship, [Riko Fluchel](#). He is a second year at the University of Washington Information School MLIS program,

where he is focusing on Information Architecture and Design. He is deeply interested in the ways information architecture facilitate or hinder information literacy, as well the applications of linked data and cultural heritage. Through the Spectrum program, Fluchel hopes to find mentorship and grow professionally as a digital humanist and information architect.

ALA CONNECT/LITA CONNECT

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

I spent July doing a lot of customization of our LITA site within ALA Connect to make it easier to use. This included creating readable URLs for our committees, implementing a standard format for committee email addresses, adding help information to each committee's group home page, designing the [LITA Connect home page](#), and changing the navigation to be more usable. I then shared the changes I made with ALA and the other divisions.

All our committees are now using Connect, which will be a huge savings in staff time since we won't have to maintain two versions of every roster anymore. In December, the Board voted to move all LITA interest groups into Connect, but the project was put on hold when security bugs were discovered in the software.

FREE ARCHIVED WEBINARS, A NEW MEMBER PERK

Meets our strategic goals for Member Engagement, Professional Development

In September, the Board agreed to archive recordings of LITA webinars older than one year that we don't plan to run again in the LITA Members community in ALA Connect. In November and December, I contacted the presenters of webinars that were held between 2015-17 and obtained their permission to post the recordings. These can now be found in a special [Archived Recordings folder](#) that only LITA members can access on Connect. Each year we'll add the previous year's recordings.

FUNDRAISING

Meets our strategic goal for Organizational Stability and Sustainability,

We projected raising \$2,000 for all of FY19, but we beat this goal and raised \$2,000 by the end of December alone thanks to a last-minute fundraising campaign, some of which will be matched from the ALA level. This money will go towards future AvramCamp scholarships and Emerging Leader sponsorships.

GOVERNANCE/ADMINISTRATION

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

I met regularly (often twice a month) with President Bohyun Kim and President-Elect Emily Morton-Owens to keep them informed of issues and plan LITA activities and discussions. This was especially important during the past year of discussions about creating a new division with ALCTS and LLAMA.

I analyzed our year-end FY18 budget and posted the [budget spreadsheets and a narrative](#) in the new [LITA Public Documents folders in LITA Connect](#).

The Board held virtual meetings in [July](#) and [October](#). The agenda, discussion documents, and recordings are available in LITA Connect.

IMPROVING EFFICIENCY

Meets our strategic goal for Organizational Stability and Sustainability

One of the reasons it's sometimes difficult to collect sponsor payments is that ALA doesn't provide an online form sponsors can use to pay using a credit card. After discussions with ALA's Finance and Accounting Department did not produce a solution, I created [a secure form in WordPress](#) to handle these payments. The information goes into a native WordPress database and I get an email notification whenever a new payment is submitted. I then log in, transfer the payment information to ALA's paper form, and delete the record from WordPress. While this still involves manual work for me, it makes it easier for sponsors to pay at their own convenience rather than trying to connect with me via telephone.

I was also finally able to implement phase two of our Reporting Forms in WordPress thanks to the use of a new plugin, Gravity Forms. Now when a committee chair, interest group chair, or LITA representative fills out a quarterly report, it is published publicly as a WordPress post. These posts are automatically categorized by group, reporting period, and strategic goals met for easy tracking.

- [Committee reports](#)
- [Interest group reports](#)
- [Representative reports](#)

The Web Coordinating Committee is working on revamping the interface for [our docs.lita.org site](#) to make these reports more easily findable and improve navigation overall. For phase three, we will be setting up email notifications anyone can subscribe to when new reports are posted.

We have now moved all of our forms out of Drupal and in to WordPress to improve readability and usability.

INFORMZ MARKETING EMAILS

Meets our strategic goals for Member Engagement, Organizational Stability and Sustainability,
ALA (and therefore LITA) uses Informz to send marketing emails. As part of an upgrade to the software, we had to implement new subscribe and unsubscribe options for all our emails sent through the system. I worked with ALA ITTS to create new iMIS SQL queries to better target our messages and then created the pages at http://ala.informz.net/ala/pages/LITA_opt_in and http://ala.informz.net/ala/pages/LITA_opt_out to offer more granular subscription options.

This is a big change for us because we've always used one unsubscribe for everything we send, which meant if someone unsubscribed from a Forum marketing email, they also unsubscribed from all LITA emails. This new version should help users get those emails they truly want to receive

while also reducing the number of people who are unsubscribing from all our emails. In addition, we'll continue to send announcements to various mailing lists, including lita-l.

LITA JOBS SITE SERVICE

Meets our strategic goals for Professional Development

For July – December 2018, Mark published 103 ads to the LITA Job Site, lita-l, and the LITA Blog. This is one more ad than was posted at this time last year. We are still waiting for PayPal information from ALA in order to implement the newly-automated site our Web Coordinating Committee built in WordPress.

NEW DIVISION DISCUSSIONS

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

As part of our exploration of creating a new division with ALCTS and LLAMA, I have participated in weekly Steering Committee meetings and been the staff liaison to the Activities Working Group and Communications Working Group. As part of my role, I created [an ALA Connect community for ALCTS/LLAMA/LITA Alignment Discussion](#), implemented the Communication Working Group's [Current Information page](#) in that Connect community, and sent 5 Informz email blasts to members about progress and opportunities to participate in the conversation.

In December (and into January), I worked with ALCTS/LLAMA Director Kerry Ward to synthesize the recommendations from the various working groups into a project plan that was shared with the three boards. Board members are now tweaking the plan so that it can be shared with members of all three divisions.

ONLINE LEARNING

Meets our strategic goals for Professional Development

Since July 2018, we've held two webinars and two courses:

- [Positioning UX as a Library Service](#) presented by Lisa Gayhart (webinar, 17 individuals, 5 groups, \$2,225 gross revenue)
- [Metadata Management Tools](#) presented by Kelsey George (course, 41 individuals, \$8,630 gross revenue)
- [Contextual Inquiry: Using Ethnographic Research to Impact your Library UX](#) presented by Rachel Vacek and Donna Lanclos (repeat course, 11 individuals, \$1,910 gross revenue)
- [Accessibility for All: Screen Readers](#) presented by Kelsey Flynn (webinar, 16 individuals, 8 groups, \$2,468 gross revenue)

In addition, Carli Spina again volunteered to do a free webinar for Forum presenters showing how to make their presentations ADA-compliant, and this time we archived the recording in the LITA Members community for all our members to view.

We're also excited that Debra Shapiro has started her term as our first ever Education Acquisitions Editor. She will be supplementing the sessions our Education Committee plans, filling in gaps and making sure we're offering a robust offering of courses and webinars.

During the fall, I worked with ALA Publishing's eLearning Solutions unit on a proposal to outsource logistics for our webinars and courses to them. After coming to agreement on terms for a one-year pilot, I worked with the LITA Financial Advisory Committee to evaluate the proposal, which resulted in a recommendation to the LITA Board to approve it. The Board voted yes, and the new agreement will be implemented beginning with the spring 2019 semester.

PUBLICATIONS

Meets our strategic goals for Professional Development

To date, we've published 17 books with Rowman and Littlefield and have 11 more titles under contract.

Our two latest titles are:

- [Tech for All: Moving Beyond the Digital Divide](#) by Lauren Comito
- [Managing the Digital You \(paperback version\)](#) by Melody Condrón

WORKING WITH ALA

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

I've been very involved with Division Directors meetings and ALA Unit Managers meetings. I also participated in several interviews for the new Community Engagement Specialist in ALA Membership Development and helped rewrite the job description. I participated in several calls/meetings with Higher Logic, the provider of the new ALA Connect platform, and I attended two sessions with the external consultants ALA hired to do an IT audit.

I continued working with ALA ITTS toward an implementation of automated campaign emails for new, renewing, and dropped members. I hope this will finally begin in spring 2019.

This fall I took the lead to plan the virtual Division Presidents-Elect Orientation with United Director Beth Nawalinski. We held three sessions, one each on media, legal, and ALA financial training.

In preparation for the 2018 LITA Forum, I pushed ALA to improve its code of conduct process and procedures. Discussions continue.

ZOOM MIGRATION

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

Most ALA units have decided to switch from using Adobe Connect to Zoom for meetings and webinars, including us. We'll begin using Zoom for all online LITA sessions next month, which should improve the user experience and make recording the sessions less time-intensive for staff. This will also allow us to share the admin login with all chairs so that they can schedule and run meetings on their own without making Mark a bottleneck for this. The only remaining issue is that we'll need to decide where we'll centralize a calendar so that they can easily manage scheduling on their own.

As part of this migration, Mark coordinated the manual downloading of all our Adobe Connect recordings by August 31. We thank the members of our Web Coordinating Committee for helping with this project.