ALAAmericanLibraryAssociation

ALA Executive Board Talking Points
ALA Annual Conference 2022
June 21, 2022

ALA Updates and Highlights

As the American Library Association prepare to convene members and stakeholders for its first in-person Annual Conference in three years, it does so in a time of unprecedented escalation in book censorship, primarily targeting school and public libraries, but most recently finding its way to bookstores. The fact that efforts to restrict or remove access to books and materials -- especially those that center the voices and lived experience of BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ people and authors -- and to increasingly target and remove library staff who defend the right to read has now eclipsed that of the McCarthy era, is one of the presiding concerns of ALA members, staff, the LIS sector in general, and increasingly, the general public.

Though understandably unable to discuss the details of its engagement in active cases, ALA, via its Office of Intellectual Freedom continues to provide consultative and technical assistance in the vast majority of censorship instances across the nation and in so doing remains one of the country's primary stewards of freedom of speech and the freedom to read. It is fitting then, that the American Library Association was the first organization to launch a nationwide anti-censorship campaign, **Unite Against Book Bans** (www.uniteagainstbookbans.org), which premiered during National Library Week in April. The campaign is informed by a mass poll commissioned by ALA which determined that Democrats and Republicans similarly disapprove (more than 70% of both people who identify as belonging to either party) of book censorship efforts seeks to rally the profession and most importantly – mobilize the public to push back against the encroachment of censorship.

As of this writing, nearly three-dozen national organizations have signed on to support the UABB campaign including the American Booksellers Association, American Federation of Teachers, Association for Library and Information Science Education, Authors Guild, Digital Public Library of America, Human Rights Campaign, National Book Foundation, National Coalition Against Censorship, and the Society of American Archivists. As Deborah Caldwell-Stone, director of the ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom adroitly summarizes, "This is a dangerous time for readers and the public servants who provide access to reading materials. Readers, particularly students, are losing access to critical information, and librarians and teachers are under attack for doing their jobs…ALA is taking the steps necessary to protect individuals' access to information, but we can't do this alone." This is a moment as critical as any ALA or its membership has faced, and the association is preparing to go the distance to protect reading access.

ALAAC 2022 Attendance and Budget Report

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact in-person meetings and convenings across industries. Per our benchmarking of other major association and ALA chapter and division in-person conferences over the last year, the ALA Annual Conference 22 attendance goal was to meet or exceed 7,000 standard paid registrants. ALA opens the conference having exceeded that number almost 400 registrations. Thus far, including exhibitors, guest speakers, and other attendees we have nearly 12,500 total registrants and have reached about 90% of anticipated revenue. We expect these numbers to grow still more throughout the conference.

Strategic and Financial Performance Updates

As ALA, like so many other organizations continues to have to carefully balance expenses and revenues during this period of economic contraction and looming inflation, the association's Pivot Strategy continues to provide a crucial operational roadmap for evolving and expanding the association's core businesses. As this report indicates, it has been adopted by every ALA unit and has in its first full fiscal year of launch, proved fruitful. While Conference Services, Membership, and Publishing -- ALA's traditional business areas, navigate downturns exacerbated by the pandemic, the new impact streams articulated by the Pivot Strategy: Continuing Education, Contributed Revenue, and Data, Design, and Research have demonstrated the potential to attract new members, customers, partners and income.

ALA has not held an in-person conference since 2019. The annual conference in June 2022 with its theme of "Together Again" sees ALA and **Conference Services** seeking to continue its successful track record of digital convening while also addressing the demands of the field who have made the Annual Conference, by far, the largest gathering of library and information science professionals in the world. Based on ongoing benchmarking efforts to track in-person conference attendance trends in the pandemic era, ALA projected and budgeted for 50% of 2019's paid annual conference registration (from 14,000 to 7,000 individuals) and those projections have borne out. In total it is expected that there will be between 13,000 to 14,000 total conference attendees (as opposed to more than 20,000 in 2019) when exhibitors and other stakeholders are added to the registration numbers. While these registration rates, in a moment when some are still cautious about travel, are hard won, this period has yielded many lessons about how ALA can reach new audiences and customers in future years.

Membership is another established impact area that has been deeply affected by the pandemic. Whether self-funded or institutionally underwritten, a number of existing and prospective members experienced shifts in either income or employment. Though membership declined – though not to the degree of severity expected -- over the first two years of the pandemic, the pivot strategy's central focus on and investment in membership we are beginning to see some recovery as we begin to see an uptick (about 1,000 new or returning members) in our numbers. The Member Relations & Service unit has worked on a number of recruitment initiatives that have supported this trend including the following current initiatives:

- A joint membership recruitment campaign with the DC Library Association. While this is a localized campaign, we believe this is laying the ground for future chapter collaborations around ALA conference locations;
- Connected membership to discounted Continuing Education learning opportunities; and
- Reached out to unaffiliated student members to connect them to a division or roundtable.

As a new standalone impact stream, **Continuing Education**, has required considerable start up investment. Yet, at the end of the third quarter, sales are at approximately $465,000. ALA is currently at roughly 60% of our revenue target for this quarter. In partnership with the Music Library Association, ALA launched the Music Cataloging Course Bundle. And last month, launched the new *Human Resources Crash Course* workshop, which drew over 100 registrants for its debut session. Since its launch last fall, over 10,000 customers (6,733 of these individuals are not ALA members – indicating the expanded reach that CE is bringing) have created accounts on the new site.

To build towards ALA's goal of expanding its **Contributed Revenue** (that is grants and donations that underwrite mission-centered activity rather than programmatic grants of which ALA usually disseminates over $8M to libraries), the Development Office continues to identify, cultivate, and steward corporate, foundation and individual funders, process gifts, and support other ALA Units.

- Currently, Contributed Income generated or managed by Development stands at $2,669,600 of the Pivot Strategy goal of $3,085,000, or approximately 85%. This figure does not reflect planned gifts obtained during FY22, including approximately $450k reported through the FreeWill platform, which allows members of the public to name ALA as a beneficiary of their estate.

- In addition, the Library Champions program is currently at its highest level in 3 years, with the addition of three new members since the beginning of FY22 and a 10% increase in support by OverDrive, lead Library Champion.
- As part of its aspiration to expand its grantmaking capacity in support of libraries nationwide that do not have the staffing or funding to pursue professional grantmaking, ALA also gains mission-supporting contributions from major projects such as the $10 million grant PPO received earlier this year to support a new grantmaking initiative, [Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities](). Up to 600 grants, totaling $7.5 million, will be awarded to help libraries improve accessibility of their facilities, programming, and services. Participating libraries will host community conversations to better serve patrons who are disabled or neurodivergent.

These projects also contribute to the growth of ALA membership through underwriting individual ALA and one division memberships for 600 small and rural librarians. The overhead from that grant will support ALA's diversity. Equity, and accessibility efforts.

Publishing continues to find ways to respond to observed need in the LIS field though its magazines and through partnerships on publications such as "[A Trauma-Informed Framework for Supporting Patrons: The PLA Workbook of Best Practices](https://)," published by ALA Editions in collaboration with the Public Library Association (PLA) which was recently released. Presented by the PLA Social Worker Task Force, the book provides a collection of powerful tools for library workers. The book is described as being "filled with prompts, exercises, and best practices that shed light on how trauma can affect people, helping build confidence and ability to support library patrons."

In building its **Data, Design, and Research** team which will be part of the larger Center for the Future of Libraries unit, ALA has welcomed two new grant funded fellows:

- Dr. Ken Bigger most recently served as Executive Director of the Chicago Literacy Alliance (CLA), guiding the launches of the CLA's Equity Through Literacy Framework and Literacy Equity Initiative. He joins ALA as Senior Fellow in the Center for the Future of Libraries, to continue advancing programming and critical conversation about literacy, equity, opportunity, and the vital roles libraries play. Dr. Bigger's appointment is partially underwritten by the Barbara Bush Foundation for Adult Literacy.
- Dr. John Agada is a Professor Emeritus of Emporia State University in Kansas. He has an M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction (Ahmadu Bello University, 1981) and a Ph.D. in LIS (University of Pittsburgh, 1984). Dr. Agada has taught at universities in Nigeria, Emporia State University, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and Chicago State University. His studies of inner-city communities, "at-risk" students, and library users have been pioneering for the LIS field. He joins ALA as Senior Fellow in the Center for the Future of Libraries to forward his research on implications of the pandemic for the future of library and information services and as inaugural researcher in the newly formed Institute for the Study of Race in Libraries and Information technologies.

Operating Agreement Revision Update

Since its proposal during the 2020 ALA Midwinter meeting, the Operating Agreement Working Group (the OAWG) has met to focus on two activities: redrafting documents that define the operating relationship between the association and its wight divisions and roundtables and examining the financial practice of applying the overhead rate. Due to the complexity and of and amount of due diligence required, the culmination of this work has been extended through June 2022.

As ALA Treasurer Maggie Farrell has reported, the OAWG has distilled three options for overhead rate consideration: 1. Keep the operating agreement as is; 2. Alter the current overhead formula including the inclusion of new revenue streams identified in ALA's current strategy; 3. Eliminate the overhead rate as currently applied and consolidate financial reporting with budgets tied to specific ALA units, including Divisions and Round Tables. The OAWG has thus far

focused much of its investigation on the viability of option 3 to eliminate the overhead rate as currently conceived. The elimination of overhead would not change any revenue for ALA, but it does change how internal budgeting is conducted across the Association. However, the elimination of the overhead rate raises several questions: how will ALA Finance report Division net asset balances? How will revenue surpluses be managed? Would more financially stable Divisions subsidize other Divisions? Where is the incentive to develop revenue? How will budgeting ensure that all overhead expenses are covered?

It is anticipated that the OAWG will summarize recommendations for the EB, BARC, F&A, PBA, Division Leadership, and Council at the Annual Meeting. Operating Agreement Working Group members include.

	Name	Home Institution
Co-Chair	Maggie Farrell	UNLV
Co-Chair & SCOE Rep	Andrew Pace	OCLC
Division Member	Clara Bohrer	Retired Director, West Bloomfield Township Public Library
Division Member	Diane Chen	Stratford STEM Magnet School Library
Roundtable Member	Sophia Sotilleo	Lincoln University (PA)
Membership Member	Miranda Bennett	University of South Carolina
Publishing Committee Member	Christine Dulaney	Library of Congress
	Clara Harmon	Calumet City Public Library (IL)
Executive Board Member	Wanda Brown	ALA Past President
BARC Chair	Peter Hepburn	College of the Canyons
Division Staff	Tammy Dillard Steels	YALSA Executive Director
Division Staff	Kara Malenfant	ACRL Interim Executive Director
Division Staff	Kerry Ward	Core (previously LLAMA Executive Director)
Roundtable Staff	Lorelle Swader	Associate Executive Director, HR
Finance Staff	Denise Moritz	Director of Financial Reporting & Compliance
General Fund Staff	Melissa Walling	Associate Executive Director, AOMR
General Fund Staff	Kathi Kromer	Associate Executive Director, PPA

Governance Updates

Transforming ALA Governance (TAG)

The TAG committee and Council have continued to meet to discuss potential scenarios for restructuring the makeup and disposition of the Council body and Executive Board. The most substantive proposed changes seek to expand the representation of school librarians, divisions and roundtables in general, as well as National Associations of Librarians of Color (NALCo) affiliates. The TAG proposal will be presented during ALA Council Meeting ALA Council Meetings (see times below).

ALA Welcomes New Parliamentarian

Eli Mina, who has served as ALA's parliamentarian for 20 years, will be retiring at the adjournment of the 2022 Annual Conference in Washington DC, June 23-28, 2022. Adrian Stratton, president of the New York Association of Parliamentarians, has accepted the role of American Library Association (ALA) parliamentarian. Stratton, MBA, PRP, is a member of the National Association of Parliamentarians and the American Institute of Parliamentarians. His ideas on parliamentary law have been published in several journals including the National Parliamentarian and the Parliamentary Journal. ALA employs a parliamentarian who is not a member of the association for the Council and Membership meetings of the Association. Mina's distinguished service will be acknowledged during ALA Conference proceedings.

ALA Council and Executive Board Meetings

All Annual Conference attendees are welcome to attend and observe the following **ALA Council Meetings** in DC as found in the ALA schedule:

- Session I — Saturday, June 25, 2:30 PM -5:00 PM ET
- Session II — Sunday, June 26, 9:00 AM -11:30 AM ET
- Session III — Monday, June 27, 9:00 AM -11:30 AM ET

Executive Board Meetings, other than closed sessions, are also open to all Annual Conference attendees. The following Board meetings can be found in the ALA schedule.

- Session I — Friday, June 24, 9:00 AM -12:00 PM ET
- Session II — Monday, June 27, 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM ET
- Session III — Tuesday, June 28, 8:00 AM -10:30 AM ET

Public Policy and Advocacy

After a truly generative tenure at ALA, Kathi Kromer, AED for Public Policy and Advocacy left AL on June 10. Alan Inouye, Senior Director of Public Policy and Government Relations will step into the Associative Executive Director role on an interim basis. Kathi came to the American Library Association five years ago to be the Associate Executive Director of the Washington Office. She envisioned and led the transformation of the Public Policy and Advocacy office through the merger of the former Office for Information Technology Policy with the former Office of Government Relations and former Office of Library Advocacy, bringing greater cohesion to our policy and advocacy work at every level. She created a strategic plan for the office and strengthened and grew our grassroots network. Last year, I added the Chapter Relations and International Relations offices to her portfolio. Under Kathi's leadership, the PPA team has worked closely with members to advance ALA's mission and to drive the increase of IMLS funding by over $37 million; to secure, via the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), $200 million for IMLS for digital inclusion and COVID-19 recovery, with a $2 million minimum distributed to each state—the largest single investment in the agency's 25- year history; launch the #eBooksForAll campaign; develop the Appropriations Fly-In and streamlined National Library Legislative Day, ALA's signature grassroots policy event and securing support for libraries in the CARES Act which yielded $50 million for national grants and funding to state libraries, distributed through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), for COVID-19 response and digital inclusion

While the search for a new AED gets underway, Dr. Alan Inouye, PPA's Deputy Director, will step into the interim role on June 10. Alan is the Senior Director of Public Policy and Government Relations and has been engaged in the public policy work of the American Library Association for the past 15 years. Alan leads ALA's efforts on eBooks and the digital divide. He also developed the partnership with Google which resulted in the Libraries Ready to Code and Libraries Build Business programs. Previously, he was the coordinator of the President's Council of Advisors of Science and Technology in the Executive Office of the President and a study director at the National Academy of Sciences. Alan completed his Ph.D. in library and information studies at the University of California at Berkeley. Early in his career, he was an engineer and manager in Silicon Valley.

During this transition, Public Policy and Advocacy (PPA) continues its efforts to gain support for key legislation related to libraries. Among the items on which PPA is providing updates include:
   o ALA endorsed the Housing for All Act (S.3788/H.R.6989) introduced by Sen. Alex Padilla (D-CA) and Rep. Ted Lieu (D-CA). The bill would authorize $10 million per year for 10 years for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to fund libraries to carry out pilot programs to address the needs of individuals

experiencing homelessness or individuals at risk of homelessness. Sen. Padilla included a quote from ALA President Patty Wong in his press release announcing the legislation.

o On March 29, in response to the White House's fiscal year 2023 budget request, ALA welcomed the administration's proposal to create a new Office of School Infrastructure and Sustainability within the Education Department, to facilitate funding and resources for improving school facilities, which include school libraries. On May 18, the [Re]Build America's School Infrastructure Coalition, of which ALA is a member, applauded the House Education and Labor Committee's approval of the Rebuild America's School's Act (H.R. 604), which would authorize new funding to modernize school campuses, including school libraries.

Policy issues and activity of note include:

- Library Funding: The $1.5 trillion Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 funding package signed by President Biden brought the annual appropriations cycle (on pause since October 1) to a disappointing close. A final budget agreement between the administration and House and Senate leadership resulted in funding for many library programs (and most domestic programs) significantly below levels originally proposed by Congress (see ALA's FY 2022 federal funding for libraries chart).

- E-books: Eight states have active legislation or definitive efforts to improve digital book access for libraries. Most prominent is Maryland, having enacted legislation and a law that is preliminarily enjoined by the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland. Federal Judge Deborah L. Boardman approved the motion for a preliminary injunction on Maryland's law on February 16. Hence, the Maryland law is now suspended, pending further action by the court. The other currently engaged states are Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, Missouri, New York, Rhode Island, and Tennessee. In terms of awareness, education, and the visibility and reputation, the various state actions have been quite favorable for libraries. PPA is developing recommendations and guidance to aid state efforts, especially looking ahead to the 2023 legislative sessions.

- Digital equity: PPA has worked with coalition partners to ensure libraries are at the decision-making table when it comes to policymakers' continued efforts to bridge the digital divide, PPA issued a white paper, "Keeping Communities Connected: Library Broadband Service During the COVID-19 Pandemic," focusing on how libraries provided internet and technology access to those who would otherwise lacked it. The report useful as a resource for the community practitioner to provide ideas for improving library services and for advocates to showcase how libraries leveraged federal funds to bolster internet access during a pandemic—whether to advocate for further funding or to explain the effective use of federal funds by libraries.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice Inventory and Planning

Earlier this year, Council approved ALA's **adoption** of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Scorecard for Library and Information Organizations created by the Committee on Diversity and Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services, namely its five suggested scorecard measures:

a. Embeddedness of EDI into the Culture and Climate of the Organization: Integration of equity, diversity, and inclusion into the organization which ensures that EDI is a priority;

b. Training and Education: The organization provides training that keeps staff current on topics related to racism and on ways to assess the organization's current racial climate to create a more equitable workplace;

c. Recruitment, Hiring, Retention, and Promotion: Effectiveness in reaching out to candidates of color for recruitment and in hiring them. Examining the consistency of retention and promotion of persons of color;

d. Budget Priorities for DEI: Funding that demonstrates investment in diversity, equity, and inclusion in the organization and community, including staff, collections, programs, and services; and

e. Data Practices: Plans and procedures for acquiring or collecting, analyzing, disseminating, and applying data to monitor and achieve organizational DEI goals and objectives.

The implementation of this framework across ALA administrative and operational systems by the third quarter of this year will yield the following intended outputs and outcomes. Progress will be assessed at the end of both FY22 and FY23.

Among the tactics that will evidence the embeddedness of "equity, diversity, and inclusion into the organization" will be working with the Office of Accreditation, the Committee on Accreditation, and Executive Board leadership to introduce EDI as one of the metrics in the accreditation review process by the end of FY23. ALA will also adopt a maximum three-year cycle for comprehensive EDI training and education for all staff. These training and professional development opportunities will reflect on the range of diversity including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, age, religious belief, class, as well as issues and contexts that explore the intersectionality of personal and group identity. This three-year comprehensive staff training and education cycle will begin in FY 2022 with the Disability Inclusion Institute trainings which aim to increase knowledge on disability rights and etiquette, as well as best practices for enhancing the accessibility of our digital and event offerings. All ALA staff will be required to take this training.

In alignment with its commitment to "identifying and implementing strategies that will strengthen equitable and inclusive hiring practices" ALA will i) work to increase the inclusion of BIPOC and/or individuals with disabilities in the candidate pool for posted ALA positions; and ii) by the end of FY2023, launch a one-year residency program to serve as a career accelerator and ALA workforce pipeline for early to mid-career LIS and association professionals interested in LIS and/or association management. As part of ALA's quest to expand its internal data practices and to serve as a data clearinghouse for the field, ALA will launch the Institute for the Study of Race in Libraries and Information Technologies as part of the Center for the Future of Libraries in FY22. The work of the R-LIT will be carried out by a designated Center scholar. With funding from the Mellon Foundation, Dr. John Agada, widely respected and cited for his hallmark work on information gatekeeping in communities of color inaugurates this position with a one-year appointment beginning in late Spring.

Programmatic Innovation

During this period of disruption, ALA continues to innovate programmatically. The following are examples of new and expanded programs created to respond to current LIS sector need:

- PLA recently announced the availability of new and updated digital literacy courses and training materials developed as part of PLA's collaboration with AT&T to bring digital literacy training to families. In addition, PLA launched the Digital Literacy Workshop Incentive Program, supported by AT&T, which will provide resources and funding opportunities (of up to $7,000 per library) for public libraries to use the new materials to lead local digital literacy workshops. The curated collection of courses—available in English and Spanish—help newly connected families to build skills and confidence using technology and are now freely available on PLA's digital literacy training site, DigitalLearn.org.

- ODLOS is engaged in several key literacy initiatives in coordination with the ALA Committee on Literacy and Literacy Assembly. The newest of these is a webinar series on digital equity through literacy. With digital equity a central focus of Patty Wong's presidency and of the ALA, and on the heels of the recent American Libraries Special Report: *Toward an Equitable Digital Future*, ODLOS saw the opportunity to elucidate the interconnectedness of digital equity and literacy. The first webinar, Digital Equity through Literacy: Framing the Conversation, was held on May 31st and included panelists John Agada (Senior Fellow, ALA Center for the Future

of Libraries); Cassandra Barnett (Program Advisor for School Libraries, Arkansas Department of Education's Division of Elementary and Secondary Education); Ken Bigger (Senior Fellow, ALA Center for the Future of Libraries); and Mimi Lee (Director of Literacy and Learning, New Jersey State Library). The speakers offered perspectives on digital equity through literacy in public and school libraries.

- ACRL's is offering the second installment of its Fostering Change Cohort, a 12-week program designed for teams from institutions planning any type of organizational change, this June through August. The cohort program hopes to build a community of change agents in academic libraries, armed with the tools to spark, lead, and sustain change with a network of peers to lean on as they embark on a variety of streams of change.
- Through its Development Office, ALA is pleased to announce a partnership with Estée Lauder to support WRITING CHANGE, an innovative pilot grant project to build literacy and digital skills. ALA will receive funding to support its "Imagination Station" initiative grants that will be disseminated to 12 libraries in the United States. Those libraries will receive funding to partner with local artists and writers to implement arts programming that builds literacy and digital skills for distinct populations – including youth, as well as adults who have had low educational or employment attainment. ALA will be hosting a virtual information session discussing the program and application process on Wednesday, June 29th from 12:30-1:30PM CDT. Interested libraries can register here.

Staffing Updates

Like other organizations, ALA continues to contend shifts in its workforce prompted by the major trends being documented in the American workforce: the "great resignation," retirement-age employees choosing to exercise that option, and the widescale migration out of urban centers as remote work options multiply. All three have begun to occur at ALA. ALA's staff ranks are currently at around 200 employees, with a planned capacity of at or around 220. While we must ensure that our human resources are in alignment with our revenue and service goals, ALA is also working to ensure that it remains a competitive workplace which necessitates a look at compensation; promotional opportunities; racial diversity, equity and inclusion; accessibility; and building a culture based on collaboration and innovation. To that end, ALA has bridged some current vacancies with talented interim staff leaders to allow them opportunities to broaden their awareness of ALA operations and build their leadership acumen. Current external searches, most notably for the Chief Information Technology Officer have drawn talented applicants and we look forward to having that continue as we seek to fill the following positions in the first and second quarter of the Fiscal Year 2023:

- ALSC ED
- Center for the Future of Libraries Director
- Communications, Marketing, and Media Office Director
- Institutional Advancement and Partnerships Office Director
- IT Application/Database Specialist
- ODLOS Accessibility Services Program Manager
- OIF Deputy Director
- PPA AED
- YALSA ED

Conclusion

The activities and updates above offer just a brief summation of the dynamic work being carried out by the hundreds of staff and thousands of members who dedicate themselves to the preservation of our nation's libraries and the agency of the communities they serve to use them actively and freely. To continue this work, we must prioritize the growth of our membership and customer base and the financial and operational efficiency of this association, which at times of this time of greatest threat must continue to prove itself one of this country's most effective stewards of information access.