**TO:** PLA Board of Directors

**RE:** Other Transformation Initiatives

**DATE:** January 4, 2019

**ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:**

Information

**ACTION REQUESTED BY:**

N/A

**DRAFT OF MOTION:**

N/A

**2020 CENSUS**

*Submitted by Larra Clark, Deputy Director*

In October 2018, ALA released “[Libraries and the 2020 Census](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/ALACensusBrief.pdf),” a brief for elected officials and decisionmakers. On Oct. 25, PLA co-hosted a Census Solutions Workshop at the Chicago Public Library with nearly 80 participants, including librarians and regional leaders. PLA board member Tracy Strobel was a [speaker](https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/libraries-and-the-2020-census/) at the event. On October 23, the Center for Urban Research at the City University of New York released a [new study](https://www.gc.cuny.edu/Page-Elements/Academics-Research-Centers-Initiatives/Centers-and-Institutes/Center-for-Urban-Research/CUR-research-initiatives/Public-Libraries-and-the-2020-Census) showing that a public library is located within five miles of 99% of the census tracts at greatest risk of being undercounted, along with a [mapping tool](https://www.censushardtocountmaps2020.us/) to local public libraries near those communities. Upcoming Census-related programs include “[Library Advocacy and Community Engagement in the 2020 Census](https://2019.alamidwinter.org/news-you-can-use)” on Sunday, January 27, from 4-5 p.m. and a [Chapter Advocacy Exchange webinar](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/chapter-advocacy-exchange) on February 27 from 2-3 p.m. Central time. Information will continue to be updated on the PLA initiatives [web page](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/govinfo/census).

**EVERY CHILD READY TO READ**

*Submitted by Kathleen Hughes, Manager, Publications*

In 2018, our long-term agreement with ALSC to manage this project concluded and our new agreement with them offers PLA the freedom to develop new related products. The project now resides under the umbrella of the PLA Family Engagement Task Force, who are planning to create a sub-group to concentrate on producing Early Literacy and ECRR-focused products and publications. We recently released a product in the ECRR/Early Literacy arena, [The 2019 PLA Early Literacy Activities Calendar](https://www.alastore.ala.org/content/pla-2019-early-literacy-activities-calendar—pdf-download).

**FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

*Submitted by Scott Allen, Deputy Director*

The Task Force continues to look for a partner to help develop products such as assessment tools, training programs, and publications. We approached the Global Family Research Project (our partner in the Ideabook) without success. The National Center for Families Learning (NCFL) met with PLA staff in December 2018. This 30-year old organization has had significant success with its conferences, grant projects, and product development, including work with the YMCA which may be similar to what PLA is seeking. We are continuing discussions with NCFL around development a track at their 2019 conference, redeveloping their products such as Let’s Learn Together Outside for a library audience, collaborating to improve US Department of Education policies related to libraries, and joint grantwriting. In November 2018, a letter of intent was submitted with NCFL for a family math project grant. PLA also continued to present about libraries to educators and others, most recently presenting at the National Head Start Association conference. Finally, in early 2019 a new Project Manager position at PLA will be filled, and his/her priority will be to develop family engagement products.

**GROW WITH GOOGLE PARTNERSHIP**

*Submitted by Leighann Wood, Program Manager*“Digital Skills with Google” constitutes a sponsorship from Google to ALA, with PLA as a project collaborator and grant manager. [Grow with Google](https://grow.google/) aims to help people nationwide access the best of Google’s training and tools to grow skills, careers and businesses. The initiative also brings workshops, in-person training and one-on-one coaching to cities and towns across America in partnership with community groups and local leaders. In 2019, Google will bring workshops to libraries in all 50 states with input from ALA. Google and ALA will then make funding available to libraries to run their own community events for job seekers, small businesses and/or entrepreneurs. PLA will collaborate with the ALA Washington Office and Google to establish the process for applying for and managing grant processes for public libraries nationwide. There will be two tiers of funding opportunities—“micro” grants ($1,000) for a large number of libraries to hold community events and “spotlight” grants ($3,000) for a small number of libraries to conduct more in-depth projects and reporting to serve as case studies to inform future partnership and project opportunities. Google’s Digital Skills tour begins at the end of January with Philadelphia being the first stop on the tour. PLA is developing the grant application, review and communications processes. Plans will be finalized in the coming weeks.

**HEALTH LITERACY AND PROGRAMMING**

*Submitted by Scott Allen, Deputy Director*

PLA’s work on health has expanded from our 2017-2018 project with the National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NNLM) Greater Midwest Region (GMR) office, focused on continuing education, to many different initiatives. PLA is a partner in the IMLS grant awarded to OCLC to develop 8 profiles of communities and libraries addressing the opioid crisis. PLA received a small grant from the NNLM Pacific Northwest Region (PNR) to mount a preconference on health equity at the 2019 Midwinter Meeting, and to extend the impact of the educational content through an articles, webinar and more. Three NNLM regional medical libraries have agreed to fund Project Outcome (PO) to develop questions for health programming as a new service area, which will then support all NNLM grantees to use PO to evaluate their programs. PLA also took on a new project to help libraries promote enrollment in the Affordable Care Act (see EDISJ initiatives report). Finally, PLA continues to distribute a monthly health e-newsletter to a small group of librarians who opted in (~200) and convene an informal health advisory group.

**INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM**

*Submitted by Angela Maycock, Manager of Continuing Education*

Starting at the 2018 ALA Annual Conference and continuing via email and conference calls, member volunteers from PLA's Intellectual Freedom Training Materials Working Group drafted survey questions, which were then significantly refined and reshaped by PLA staff, particularly Emily Plagman. The survey was open for two weeks (September 28 to October 12) to align with interest and attention around Banned Books Week. With promotion to PLA audiences and OIF's help in sharing it with their lists, we received almost 150 responses, about a 3x greater response than expected. Based on the demographics across respondents, we feel that we got a representative sample, though we can't claim the results to be representative of the field as a whole. The most important high level takeaway was that, of the respondents, nearly 70% would like training from PLA on how to communicate to their community about the library's intellectual freedom policies. This is a clear and somewhat unexpected area of need that PLA would not have been able to identify without this survey. We also received contact information for about a dozen public librarians who are interested in sharing information about their IF training, which will be an extremely valuable resource as we follow up with these individuals for more input on preferred modes, frequency of training, and perhaps even case studies -- they can serve as a focus group for further refinement of this initiative.

**MICROSOFT/RURAL LIBRARIES PROJECT**

*Submitted by Leighann Wood, Program Manager*

In August 2018, PLA and Microsoft Philanthropies began discussing an initiative to support libraries in rural communities to implement multi-faceted strategies that build the computer skills of community members, so they can benefit from access to high speed internet and updated technologies to meet their community’s needs. This work ties to the [Microsoft Airband initiative](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/airband), which brings broadband access to rural areas through technology and partnerships, as well as PLA’s work through Turning the Page, DigitalLearn.org and other strategies to provide libraries with the tools and training to facilitate access to and teach use of computers and the internet. The proposed partnership will use funds available from an employee giving program managed by Microsoft Philanthropies, which raised $400,000. These funds will be offered in the form of grants and used to address four areas: Infrastructure and Hardware (in partnership with TechSoup); Training and Support (in coordination with Designers for Learning and CrowdEd Learning with input from PLA’s Digital Literacy subject matter experts); Partnerships; and Communities. Project plan details remain to be in the works, with launch dates in the spring of 2019.

**OPIOIDS**

*Submitted by Larra Clark, Deputy Director*

The steering committee for “Public Libraries Respond to the Opioid Epidemic with Their Community” is fully formed and has met twice, including reviewing and giving feedback on the case study methodology, interview questions and possible case study locations. The metholody and interview questions were approved by the Independent Review Board, and Denver Public Library generously agreed to pre-test the instruments. Thanks to PLA board member Michelle Jeske and her team for helping us make needed improvements. Invitations are now going out to public libraries to be part of the research. Eight case studies are intended, and site visits are expected to begin later this month or early February. A project [website](https://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/opioid-crisis.html) also has been created and will include regular updates.

**PROJECT OUTCOME**

*Submitted by Emily Plagman, Manager and Samantha Lopez, Project Manager*

In November 2018, Project Outcome passed a major milestone of having over 200,000 patron responses collected in its system, continuing to grow while many of the outreach activities have wound down. Staff have pursued new funding and partnership opportunities: the development of a Health Topic survey in partnership with the National Libraries of Medicine and the creation of Project Outcome for Academics, scheduled to launch in April 2019, in partnership with the Association of College and Research Libraries.

**SHORT STORY PROJECT**

*Submitted by Leighann Wood, Program Manager*

This fall, PLA, in collaboration with French publisher [Short Édition](https://short-edition.com/en/) and the [John S. and James L. Knight Foundation](https://knightfoundation.org/), held a national short story fiction writing contest as a part of the[Fostering Creative Community Connections](http://www.ala.org/pla/initiatives/shortstorydispensers) (FCCC) project, an ongoing effort to promote literary expression, community engagement, library programs and services, and creative expression. Through FCCC, PLA and Short Édition supported four libraries in [Knight Foundation communities](https://knightfoundation.org/programs/communities) (Akron, OH, Wichita, KS, Philadelphia, PA, Richland, SC) to bring short stories to unexpected places via the [Short Story Dispenser](http://dispenser.short-edition.com/). Over 600 writers across the U.S. entered the contest by submitting short stories on the theme of *courage*. Submissions from the four pilot libraries totaled 116, with the most from Richland, SC. The contest jury, comprised of writers, librarians and literary experts, awarded the $1,000 first prize to Mim Eichmann, a professional folk musician, composer and choreographer from Wheaton, Illinois, for her story “[Slomp](https://short-edition.com/en/story/5-min/slomp-2" \t "_blank).” Other juried winners as well as the Readers’ Choice winners are detailed in [PLA’s December 2018 press release](http://www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2018/12/winners-national-short-fiction-contest-announced). All three juried winners will be given the opportunity to have their stories published in Short Édition’s Short Story Dispensers. PLA is developing a webinar highlighting how this project has transformed (and will transform) community engagement as well as promoted creativity, literacy and library services within the pilot libraries’ communities and the profession at large.

**SOCIAL WORK IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES***Submitted by Kathleen Hughes, Manager of Publications*

PLA recognizes the hiring of social work professionals in public libraries as an emerging trend as well as the growing need to share related resources to better inform and support the public library field, who often provide social services without the benefit of a social worker on staff. In fall of 2018, we have created a Social Workers in Public Libraries Task Force and plan to use their valuable knowledge to develop and recommend a strategic and coordinated approach to help public libraries address the social service needs of their communities. Recognizing that most public libraries will be unable to afford or secure support for hiring a dedicated social worker, PLA aims to use this group to provide resources to better equip libraries to serve patrons experiencing life-challenges. To begin this work, we held an Ideas Exchange event in September, 2018, with 13 library social workers. This in-person, daylong event helped us to identify the most important topics, philosophies, and methods, and also to plan and shape the content, provision, and delivery of professional development materials in this arena. A report of the event is [available here](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1br67WelSvnqLFShGVYQGXAKO-kBiPx8R/view?usp=sharing). The Social Worker Task Force is currently authoring a regular column “[Social Work in Public Libraries](http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2019/01/providing-social-service-resources-in-a-library-setting/),” recording podcasts, considering publication ideas, and planning other educational content.

**PLA STRATEGIC GOAL LINK (check all that apply)**

TRANSFORMATION  LEADERSHIP  ADV. & AWARENESS  E.D.I.S.J.  ORG. EXCELLENCE