**TO:** PLA Board of Directors

**RE:** PLA Operations Combined Report

**DATE:** June 17, 2022

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

**ACTION REQUESTED BY:**N/A

**DRAFT OF MOTION:**N/A

**MEMBERSHIP**

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

ALA membership counts ended January 50,459 and have been growing slightly since the beginning of the year. This is a 3% decline from FY21 and a 12% decline from FY20. This was a projected decline due to the challenges of the pandemic. The table below shows PLA membership stats comparing September 2021 to January 2022. Even fiscal years represent PLA Conference years, where we typically see a rise in membership. PLA 2022 Conference registration opened in October 2021.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Month** | **FY22** | **FY21** | **FY20** | **FY19** |
| January | 8,431 | 8,489 | 9,843 | 9,341 |
| September | 7,319 | 9,162 | 8,261 | 8,977 |
| **Change** | **+1,112** | **(-673)** | **+1,582** | **+364** |

Out of 1,143 respondents, the PLA 2022 post-conference survey showed that:

* **60%** of attendees joined PLA for the conference discount
* **54%** of attendees would pay for a 2-year membership in a conference year if it were available; **41%** were unsure
* **33%** of attendees were unsure if they will renew their membership in 2023; **8%** will not renew
* Of those who are not planning to renew (220), **45%** cannot afford to and **32%** do not see the value of being a member in non-conference years

**TECHNOLOGY**

*Submitted by Steven Hofmann, Manager, Web Communications*

ALA currently uses the Drupal version 7 web content management system to maintain the ALA unit and division microsites for the main ala.org web presence. Microsites, like PLA’s website, have their own look and structure and there are 30 of them in ALA's Drupal version 7 implementation. The Drupal 7 web content management system will become unsupported in November 2023. In order to address this, ALA's web content management system will be upgraded to Drupal 9 along with a website redesign of the microsites properties. The goal of this project is to have a more agile, revenue generating, modern, and accessible website. It will be asset rich, authoritative, and iterative (constantly improving). Marketability will also be improved, and ALA plans to use the website to increase membership. The project team will be soliciting member input throughout the redesign phase of the project..

The large ALA divisions were asked to identify a representative for the internal work team, and PLA will be represented by Steven Hofmann, our Manager of Web Communications.

**PUBLICATIONS**

*Submitted by Kathleen Hughes, Manager, Publications*

*Public Libraries* Magazineis published bimonthly and sent to 9,000 PLA members plus almost 500 subscribers.

In 2020-2021, to be more sustainable and in response to supply-line issues caused by the pandemic, *Public Libraries* introduced digital issues. Two issues in the 2020 volume year were available only in the digital format. In the 2021 volume year, three issues were (Sept/Oct, May/June, and July/August). In 2020 we had a cost savings of $28,000 and in FY 2021 we will see cost savings of approximately $54,000 because of moving to digital for those issues. In FY 2022 the cost savings will be approximately $28,000.

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Issue | Theme |
| May/June 2021 | Partnerships |
| July/August 2021 | Antiracism/Social Justice |
| September/October 2021 | Library Safety |
| November/December 2021 | Staff Training |
| January/February 2022 | Legal Issues in Public Libraries |
| March/April 2022 | Two Years of Covid-19 |
| May/June 2022 | Library Services to the Justice-Involved |

Two feature articles were chosen to receive the *Public Libraries* Advisory Committee’s Feature Article Award for the 2021 Volume Year. First prize of $500 was awarded to Katie Horner, Head of Circulation & Reference, Lake Bluff (Ill.) Public Library, for her article “[We Can Do Better – Best (and Worst) Practices for Manager Responding to Sexual Harassment Claims](http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2022/01/we-can-do-better-best-and-worst-practices-for-managers-responding-to-sexual-harassment-claims/),” which was published in the September/October 2021 issue of Public Libraries. Honorable mention prize of $300 was awarded to Tamar Kirschner, Library Technology Program Lead and Instructor, Job Skills for Library Careers: Access & Technical Services in Libraries, Diablo Valley College, Pleasant Hill, Calif., for her feature article, “[We All Win—Training and Advancement for Non-MLIS Library Workers](http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2022/01/we-all-win-training-and-advancement-for-non-mls-library-workers/)” which appeared in the November/December 2021 issue. All feature articles written by public library workers and published in 2021 were evaluated. Both winners were chosen by members of the [Public Libraries Advisory Subcommittee](https://www.ala.org/pla/about/people/committees/pla-publibs)

Like the print iteration, [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. A look at PL Online stats shows:

May 2021-May 2022 Individual users: 414,344/ approximately 35,000 per month.

Top three most-viewed articles published over the past year:

[Are We Reaching the End of Library DVD Collections?](http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2021/06/are-we-reaching-the-end-of-library-dvd-collections/)

[Gaining Patron Cooperation on Mask Wearing](http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2021/04/gaining-patron-cooperation-on-mask-wearing/)

[Why Do We Think Library Services Are Free?](http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2021/06/why-do-we-think-library-services-are-free/)

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‐depth. To date, we have recorded 58 podcasts.

FYI Podcast Stats – May 2021 – May 2022

10,969 plays over the course of the year.

Top 3 Episodes

FYI 49-[Digital Author Events with Stesha Brandon](http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2021/06/new-fyi-podcast-hosting-digital-author-events/) (posted June 1, 2021)

FYI 50 [PLA Benchmarks and Library Staff Diversity Survey](http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2021/12/new-fyi-podcast-episode-pla-benchmark-library-staff-diversity-survey/) (posted December 16, 2021)

FYI 53 [A Trauma-Informed Framework for Supporting Patrons](http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2022/03/new-podcast-a-trauma-informed-framework-for-supporting-library-patrons/) (posted in March 2022).

Current subscribers (via RSS Feed, Apple, and other Podcast Services): 11,274

Podcasts were accessed 2,421 times directly from PL Online.

**Products + Publications**

This year PLA released two publications:

**2022 Early Literacy Tips Calendar**

Publication Date: October 2021.

Based on Every Child Ready to Read practices of reading, writing, singing, talking, playing (and now counting), each download contains twelve 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 to the library’s logo and contact information. Thanks to REFORMA, this year the calendar is also available in Spanish.

# **A Trauma-Informed Framework for Supporting Patrons: The PLA Workbook of Best Practices written by the PLA Social Worker Task Force**

Publication date: March 2022.

#### Offering practical guidance and support, this workbook will spark curiosity and reflection on how everyday library interactions intersect with trauma and adversity. Whether it is navigating a crisis or witnessing a community member struggling with tough times, coming face to face with trauma and adversity can be uncomfortable. But in striving to learn more about challenging behaviors, and how we can better interact with library patrons and our coworkers, we can come to see that people are complex and not simply “problems.” This workbook from the PLA Social Worker Task Force (SWTF) provides a collection of powerful tools to add to your customer service toolbox. It is filled with prompts, exercises, and best practices that shed light on how trauma can affect people, helping you build confidence in your ability to support your library’s patrons. Readers will:

* delve into what trauma is and how it impacts library work;
* be introduced to a framework for utilizing a trauma-informed lens in your interactions;
* practice exercises to spur personal reflection on common concerns bound up with library work and the policies relating to these issues; and
* gain hand-on tools and techniques, including strategies for de-escalation and guidance on the impacts of involving law-enforcement and banning patrons.

Readers will also explore various scenarios which provide the opportunity to integrate what they have learned and practice responding through a trauma-informed lens, including

* Mental Health Challenges
* Sleeping at the Library
* Strong Personal Odor
* Personal Belongings
* Suspected Intoxication/Under the Influence
* Substance Use
* Threatening Verbal and Nonverbal Behavior
* Unsheltered Teens
* Adult Self-Neglect
* Child Abuse or Assault
* Solicitation or Panhandling
* Stealing
* Child Unattended After Closing

**PLA ADDS STAFF CAPACITY**

*Submitted by Mary Davis Fournier, PLA Executive Director*

Over the first half of 2022, PLA was pleased to welcome five new staff members.

Mahogany Meeks transitioned from a temporary to permanent position as a Project Coordinator for data and research and has provided critical support for the Benchmark launch, as well as the PLA 2022 conference, in her time in this role. Mahogany brings great customer service and office experience from previous work at BPA (Bullying Prevention and Awareness) 365, interning with AT&T, and seasonal retail work. She earned her B.A. in psychology from Eastern Illinois University in August 2020 and plans to continue her psych studies in the future.

Katina Jones recently joined PLA as Program Manager for Evaluation and Assessment. She will support Project Outcome, Benchmark, and our other data and evaluation work. Katina comes to us from Mid-Continent Public Library in Missouri where she was the Statistical Research Analyst. She served as a member of PLA's Measurement, Evaluation, and Assessment Committee for the last four years. She also previously worked as a State Data Coordinator, administering the IMLS Public Libraries Survey among libraries in Missouri. Katina's extensive experience working with public library data and evaluation practices make her a very valuable addition to our team.

Mary-Clare Bietila joined as Program Manager for Programming Initiatives. Mary-Clare has deep experience developing programs for the University of Chicago, Columbia College and healthcare companies and non-profits. Originally from Virginia, she has an M.ED in teaching. She goes by Mary-Clare to cut down on some of the Multiple Mary Madness.

Alison Armstead, our new Continuing Education Coordinator is an experienced event and project manager. She has undertaken complex projects and managed events of all sizes for Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, University of Chicago, and most recently National Louis University. She is also currently in the home stretch of finishing her Master of Arts degree in Grant Writing Management & Evaluation from Concordia University Chicago.

And finally, Eliana Tang Kleiman joined the team as a Communications Associate. Ellie first became interested in libraries while working on their senior research project at Brandeis University. Ellie’s research was in the library’s Archives & Special Collections Department where she created a digital timeline and published archival research and writing content on the Brandeis Black Space Portal, recovering 50 years’ worth of Asian American & Pacific Islander history at Brandeis. Ellie has strong non-profit and digital content experience, coming to us from the HANA Center, a non-profit service and advocacy organization that serves Chicago’s Korean, Asian American, and multi-ethnic immigrant communities.