

**ALA Executive Board Talking Points**

**ALA Mid-Year Meeting at Lib Learn X**

**January 24, 2022**

**ALA Library Learning Experience/Mid-Year Meeting Updates and Highlights**

The new year and beginning of FY22’s second quarter, finds ALA two years into efforts to stabilize the association and steward the LIS sector in the midst of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the unprecedented pace of shift and change that the current public health crisis has caused, libraries have gained increasing visibility as conveners, connecters, and contested spaces. In the process, ALA member leaders and staff have been featured in an unprecedented number of media stories and profiles and have led on the most pressing issues facing our field and our communities across the nation. In addition to the LibLearnX attendance report, the following updates are among a larger body of activities highlighted in the Executive Board and Council Reports that ALA staff and members have filed in preparation for mid-year governance meetings.

**LibLearnX Attendance and Budget Report**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **LLX 2022 Virtual** | **Jan 21 Day 1** | **Jan 22 Day 2** | **Jan 23 Day 3** | **Jan 24 Day 4** | **Income to Date** |
| **TOTAL REGISTRATIONS:** | **2077** | **2152** | **2170** | **2183** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Projected Income** |  |  |  |  | **$ 387,022** |
| **TOTAL REG INCOME** |  |  |  |  | **$ 252,758** |
| **% of Reg Budget** |  |  |  |  | **65%** |
| **% of Anticipated Attendance** |  |  |  |  | **109%** |
| **% of Overall Total Budget** |  |  |  |  | **73%** |
| **Carbon Offsets** | **55** | **56** | **56** | **56** | **$ 720** |
| **21st Century Donations** | **65** | **66** | **66** | **66** | **$ 1,335** |

**Strategic and Financial Performance Updates:**

* **Pivot Strategy Status Report**

Now in the second quarter of its rollout, the ALA pivot strategy, “The Path to Transformation,” is on track establish the sixth revenue stream projected for its five-year span. With funding from the Mellon Foundation, ALA has partnered with the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy to bring on two Data Officers who both bring impressive quantitative and qualitative data backgrounds into their positions. Alongside Conference Services, Continuing Education, Contributed Revenue, Membership, and Publishing, the Data, Design and Research impact area brings needed capacity to support ALA’s evolution as an agile, data-driven, and responsive organization with the ability to anticipate and exceed member and sector need. Several units and divisions are evidencing early results from their alignment with the pivot plan’s goals and tactics. RUSA has seen a slight membership increase; the Chapter Relations and Public Programs Office have leveraged their abilities to attract contributed revenue to disseminate the largest grant awards in number and amount that ALA has ever provided to the field in the association’s history. The new Continuing Education unit launched a new learning management system last fall and is currently working on a new marketing plan. A key facet of the strategic plan is its emphasis on knowledge sharing and problem solving across ALA’s more than three dozen units and divisions.

Facilitating this goal of desiloization is the establishment of cross-functional teams made up of management and non-management staff representing every area of association work. Twenty staff teams are scheduled to have launched by the end of FY22, with eleven having launched in September 2021. Among them are Advocacy and Policy; Customer Service; Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; Grants, Partnerships & External Relationships; Mentorship; Program Assessment; Staffing Synergies & Productivity; IT; and Strategy & Performance Management. The staff will conduct a comprehensive strategic performance review during the third quarter of FY22 as part of the strategy & performance management cross-functional team’s scope of duties.

* **ALA Financials -- Realities and Possibilities**
* The FY21 budget results are being finalized indicating a preliminary $1.1M surplus. This surplus is possible due to forgivable federal PPP loans, endowment “transfer with terms,” staff furloughs, and an increase in contributed revenue.
* The FY22 budget is proceeding on plan, however, LLX revenues are likely to be lower than forecasted. ALA is adjusting expenditures accordingly.
* The ALA Endowment/Long Term Investment market value is $66 million with 55% ESG and 2% Diverse Owned Investment Managers.
* The FY23 Budget Planning process will begin in February following the completion of the audit.  During LLX meetings, the Executive Board and Council will consider Budget Objectives (previously Programmatic Priorities) to guide the development of a new budget.

* **Operating Agreement Work Group**

The OAWG will be meeting with PBA/BARC/Division Leadership for an update on their work.  For this meeting, the OAWG is exploring the feasibility of eliminating overhead for Divisions which is an internal transfer of funds from Divisions to ALA to support shared services and member value initiatives.  The OAWG will present their recommendations during the June governance meetings.

**Membership Updates**

* **Growing and Retaining a Powerful and Engaged Membership at a Critical Time for Libraries**

The Member Relations & Services unit is working towards three goals that support the pivot strategy:

* Increase membership to 56,000
* Increase student membership to 9,000
* Increase ALA membership in coordination with ALA Chapters and Affiliates

The protracted pandemic and its impact on libraries and LIS staff have expectedly caused membership to remain at a decline when compared to previous years and ALA membership counts ended the fiscal year at 49,727. This decline was predicted in ALA’s budgeting process, and though not as steep as originally projected, due to the challenges of the pandemic ALA ended the year with an 8% decline from FY20 and an 11% decline from FY19. MRS anticipates membership to rebound somewhat with resumed in-person events since conference registration remains a membership driver. However, this period provides an opportunity to focus on new recruitment and retention approaches. One of MRS’s key activities this quarter was to activate the membership reinstatement campaign. This was a key strategy to attempt to reengage members lost during the pandemic. This initiative has resulted in the return of 4% of the identified lapsed member audience to date. MRS also began work on pilot programs including collaborating on membership growth campaigns in partnership with ALA Chapters and ALA Affiliates.

Division Membership counts ended the year at 40,400 and Round Table Membership counts at 17,723. With the dissolution of Four divisions at the start of FY21, it is difficult to benchmark Division membership year over year; however, Round Table Membership held steady when compared to FY20. At the end of FY21, overall participation in Divisions and Round Tables reflects:

* 39% of members are only members of ALA
* 40% are part of a division only
* 5% are part of a round table only
* 16% are part of both a division and round table

Since FY19 when ALA last reviewed these numbers, there has been an increase of 3% in members who are not connected with a division or round table. As membership in either of these bodies has proven critical to individual member engagement efforts will be made to grow division and round table affiliation, especially among ALA’s large number of student members, the majority of whom hold only a general membership.

ALA’s Membership Committee presented a simplified membership model to ALA Executive Board which was approved on October 29, 2021. In 2018, ALA contracted with a market research firm, Avenue M which presented five potential models to ALA. These five models were informed by the goals of creating a membership structure that will increase membership growth for the organization. After review and deliberation, the Membership Committee is recommending a two-phase approach to ALA’s membership model work which will be discussed further during January governance meetings:

* **Phase One:** Consolidate the eleven (11) membership categories into four (4) membership categories. The new model would roll out in FY24 (Executive Board, Council and Member Vote in early 2022) and would not change division or round table structures. FY23 will be needed to work on implementation and communication plans.
* **Phase Two:** Building upon Phase One, launch an “enhanced” membership approach which will bundle additional benefits. Examples of the bundled benefits may include division or round table membership and/or professional development offerings.

**Governance Updates**

• **Transforming ALA Governance (TAG)**

Various proposals for governance reconfiguration will be examined during the January meetings of Council. In support of TAG planning, the Executive Office took on the task of researching and contacting peer associations to determine overall budget, membership, and governance size, structure, and ratios to staffing. This comparative analysis, conducted late fall 2021, represents the most up to date information available and also illuminates a range of approaches to member and staff deployment.

**Timeline

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**Selected Programmatic Activities:**

* **Public Policy and Advocacy Office Raising the Visibility of Libraries on the Hill**

The Public Policy and Advocacy office continues to produce and promote resources that will enable ALA members to access additional funding through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021, including the $10 billion Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund. Last quarter, PPA welcomed substantial increases in federal funding for libraries approved by the House Appropriations Committee for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, which included a $9 million increase for the IMLS-administered Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), and a $3 million increase for the Department of Education-administered Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) program. The Senate draft of the appropriation bills also includes $3 million for an important Information Literacy Taskforce. As it currently stands, the federal government is operating on a continuing resolution (CR) and is not expected to revisit the FY 2022 appropriations bills before mid-February. This means that funding levels from FY 2021 will continue until Congress can come to an agreement, and these proposed increases to federal library programs will be on hold. Since many libraries rely on the need for robust federal funding, PPA staff are concerned that these proposed increases will be delayed. PPA staff have also been actively involved with our state affiliates in providing support for legislation that expands both libraries’ and library users’ access to digital content via eBooks, including New York and Maryland. The Maryland bill, which took effect on January 1, 2022, is the first law of its kind in the nation, requiring publishers to sell or license to libraries any content available to the public in Maryland. On December 9th, 2021, the American Association of Publishers (AAP) filed a lawsuit against the state of Maryland, challenging this upcoming law. PPA staff, along with the Maryland Library Association and ALA’s Legal Counsel, Jonathan Band, Esq., are busy at work to ensure that this lawsuit does not further impede on the rights of Marylander’s equitable access to information**.**

* **ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom Confronts Exponential Rise in Censorship Challenges**

Since the first quarter of FY22 OIF staff have provided confidential counsel in 275 cases, consulting on policy and procedure, providing legal information related to case law and legislation, and sharing information about challenged titles. By comparison there were 330 unique cases reported to OIF in the three-month period between September 1 and November 30. In 2020, with pandemic closures, 156 unique cases were reported to OIF for the entire year. In 2019, 377 unique cases were reported to OIF for the entire year. The groups targeting books in school library collections also began to challenge the same titles in public libraries, focusing on materials, displays, and programming reflecting LGBTQIA+ concerns and experiences as well as books and resources addressing the history of racism and slavery in the United States and the lived experiences of Black, Indigenous, and persons of color. Elected officials in a number of states issued statements supporting the censorship of diverse books and promised to initiate legislation or agency actions designed to suppress or censor books based on the false claim that such works were subversive or harmful to minors. That same false claim fueled efforts by a number of individuals and groups to file charges with local law enforcement, asserting that librarians and libraries violated law by providing access to such works. The campaign to censor library collections provided several opportunities for OIF staff to share messaging about ALA's support for intellectual freedom, its opposition to censorship, and the importance of, and need for, diverse books that amplify the voices of historically marginalized groups. Based on data maintained by ALA's Communications and Marketing Office, OIF Director Deborah Caldwell-Stone provided information to 42 national and local newsgroups, including [*The Guardian*](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2021/nov/25/us-libraries-report-spike-in-organised-attempts-to-ban-books-in-schools), [Chicago Tonight](https://news.wttw.com/2021/11/22/book-censorship-debate-controversy-over-gender-queer-memoir),  [NBC.com](https://www.nbcnews.com/nbc-out/out-politics-and-policy/south-carolina-governor-calls-lgbtq-book-banned-schools-rcna5409), [*Washington Post*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2021/11/12/school-book-challenges-conservative/), [Yahoo News](https://news.yahoo.com/push-ban-lgbtq-books-waukee-114404637.html), [CNN.com](https://www.cnn.com/2021/11/04/us/texas-lgbtq-books-schools/index.html), [NPR](https://www.wmfe.org/gender-queer-banning-divides-orange-brevard-county-communities/192826), [*TIME*](https://time.com/6117685/book-bans-school-libraries/), [*New York Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/12/opinion/book-bans.html)*,*[*Dallas Morning News*](https://www.dallasnews.com/news/education/2021/10/21/backlash-over-books-about-race-gender-hits-texas-schools/)*,*and others.

OIF’s work and messaging also commanded attention on social media:

* + Twitter: From September 1 to December 1, tweets from the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom Twitter profiles, including Banned Books Week, garnered 664,002 impressions, 15,331 engagements and 2,868 post links, with a gain of 539 net followers. The top tweet for the period promoted and linked to the OIF blog post, [A Note from Jerry Craft](https://www.oif.ala.org/oif/?p=26995).
  + Facebook: From September 1 to December 1, OIF's Facebook pages attracted 1,173,848 impressions 7,059 engagements and 16,040 post links, with significant growth in engagement over the past quarter, reflecting the increased engagement associated with Banned Books Week.

The work described above is undergirded by the ALA Executive Board’s approval of the [Statement on Book Censorship](https://www.ala.org/advocacy/statement-regarding-censorship) on November 29, 2021, supporting those libraries and library workers working to defend students' and library users' freedom to read across the United States.

* **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice Inventory and Planning**

Underpinning the association’s new pivot plan is the central goal of creating greater equity, diversity, inclusion and social justice in library and information (LIS) services and the LIS workforce. Toward that end, Executive Director Hall requested that all ALA units report out on all active EDISJ projects and programs. ODLOS Director Kevin Strowder collected and synthesized this information which has been submitted as an attachment to this document. The volume and variety of EDISJ efforts being led by almost every unit present the opportunity to replicate, scale, and systematize many of these initiatives. The number and reach of these activities also suggest that the association is ready to support a more comprehensive board or member-led EDISJ initiative that might establish certain protocols and baselines for EDISJ competencies and practices across ALA.

In the near term, ALA staff EDISJ initiatives will coalesce around three main priorities: 1) Identifying and implementing strategies that will strengthen equitable and inclusive hiring practices; 2) creation of an ALA fellowship or residency program that might serve as a career accelerator for early to mid-career LIS professionals interested in LIS and/or association management; 3) growing ALA’s capacity to produce original research and analysis of the state of EDISJ in the LIS profession; and 4) the adoption of the [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Scorecard for Library and Information Organizations](https://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/2021%20EQUITY%20SCORECARD%20FOR%20LIBRARY%20AND%20INFORMATION%20ORGANIZATIONS.pdf) created by the Committee on Diversity and Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services, namely its five suggested scorecard measures:

* Embeddedness of DEI into the Culture and Climate of the Organization: Integration of diversity, equity, and inclusion into the organization which ensures that DEI is a priority;
* 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;
* 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;
* 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
* Data Practices: Plans and procedures for acquiring or collecting, analyzing, disseminating, and applying data to monitor and achieve organizational DEI goals and objectives

The Executive Office will be working over the next eleven months to bring each of these priorities to fruition by the end of the calendar year and will report on progress to the ALA Executive Board through December 2022.

* **Coretta Scott King Book Awards Round Table Status**

In 2021, the Coretta Scott King Book Awards Committee started the process to obtain Round Table status. Working with EMIERT, they created a task force to research and provide recommendations on how to move forward with this charge. With the support of EMIERT, CSK submitted their request to COO by collecting over 100 signatures, a summary of the “past, present, and future” of the committee, and letters of support from ALA members. As of January 10th, 2022, COO approved CSK’s proposal and will move forward with presenting the proposal to Council at the Mid-Year LLX Meeting.

* **Revision of the 1992 Standards for Library Services for the Incarcerated and Detained**

Supported by Mellon Foundation funding, ALA’s ODLOS and Executive Offices and Publishing unit are working with a team of ALA members and stakeholders to complete the first update to *the Standards for Library Services for the Incarcerated and Detained* since 1992 (see [here](https://www.ala.org/asgcla/resources/librarystandards) and [here for full pdf of former standards](https://www.prisonlegalnews.org/media/publications/Library%20Standards%20for%20Adult%20Correctional%20Institutions%20Am.%20Library%20Ass'n%201992.pdf)) nearly 2,000 volumes of the standards will be disseminated to correctional and detention center staff in January 2023. A comprehensive status update on the project will be provided as part of the April and June 2022 Executive Director reports. ALA is proud to be partnering with the San Francisco Public Library, specifically SFPL staff member Jeanie Austin author of [*Library Services and Incarceration: Recognizing Barriers, Strengthening Access*](https://www.alastore.ala.org/lsai) on key aspects of this work. Additional details can be found in this January 17 [announcement](https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/mellon-foundation-grants-2m-to-san-francisco-public-library-to-expand-services-for-incarcerated/ar-AASRR3k).

* **Chapter Relations Office, Development Office, and Public Programs Office Contributed Revenue Update**

As we work, per the pivot strategy, deliberately to position ALA to earn enough contributed revenue to significantly expand its internal capacity and to disseminate grants to libraries experiencing funding and service reductions, ALA is excited to report that the Public Programs Office has received major grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and other sources to accelerate new program models for engaging library users in civic discourse during this pandemic period. As well, PPO is preparing to announce a groundbreaking new grant to support its Libraries Transforming Communities (LTC): Accessible Small and Rural Communities initiative. This opportunity will enable PPO to provide new grant funding to hundreds of libraries to improve accessibility of their facilities, programming, and services. These new grants will add to the 724 library grants that PPO is currently managing nationwide in addition to engaging with an average of 26,000 unique users through the office’s ProgrammingLibrarian.org website.

As well, funds received from two funders: the Acton Family and the Mellon Foundation in FY21 allowed ALA to distribute grants through the Chapter Relations Office that made a significant difference in their communities. Below are just two self-reported examples from recipient libraries that indicate how important it will be to seek ongoing funding to expand sector capacity.

* **New Brunswick Free Public Library, New Brunswick, NJ**

**Grant Amount: $30,000**

Nearly 75% of the 57,000 residents that the New Brunswick Free Public Library serves are Latinx, Asian, or Black, with 56% of all residents speaking a language other than English at home. The library is visited by many immigrant newcomers from an array of nations who see English as a critical skill in advancing their career goals. Forced to cut 25% of their staff, the grant will allow the re-hiring of two part-time staff to continue providing English as a Second Language instruction and career efforts to assist displaced workers and jobless out-of-school youths. The ALA COVID Library Relief Fund is supporting 48 hours of ESL classes with 56 students and 19 hours of career services per week at the New Brunswick Free Public Library. Three ESL facilitators were hired to provide beginner, intermediate and advanced levels of Conversation Groups and Conversation Cafes, with an integrated literacy curriculum to support further education and workforce training. Four Career Navigators were also hired to provide one-on-one career assistance on job applications, resume and cover letter writing and interview skill training. The library started the ESL and Career Help service after the grant money was successfully allocated and has helped about 50 people, with 22 successfully getting interviews or employment. ESL programs started in August with 12 classes.

* **Indian Pueblo Cultural Center Library and Archives, Albuquerque, NM**

**Grant Amount: $40,000**

Dedicated to the history and culture of the Pueblo people, the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center Library and Archives suffered a 30% budget cut, reducing staff from three to just one. The Library and Archives serves the 66,0000 members 19 Pueblos of New Mexico and Ysleta del Sur Pueblo in Texas, as well as researchers, and the public. The grant allows the library to hire back staff, upgrade computers that are ten years old, and purchase new books and other resources for the community. ALA grant money has paid for two staff members to return full-time to the IPCC library. We are open to the public four days a week from 9am to 4pm, and on Saturdays by appointment. We have assisted students, adults, educators, and Cultural Center staff with research and access to archival collections. Research assistance also occurs online through email. Since July, we have had three book donations ranging from small to large. Library staff is processing these books into our library system, as well as labeling and shelving items…Work also continues on scanning transcripts of past educational lectures to put online for patron access, as well as creating brief synopses of transcripts and dissertations by Pueblo people and/or about Pueblo topics for improved accessibility.

**• Accreditation Survey and Planning Update**

Last June, at the commission of ALA Executive Board, the Office for Accreditation, and the assigned Accreditation Working Group (AWG) discussed their progress on a working report intended to outline steps to making the accreditation process more efficient and impactful at the Annual Conference board meeting. Among the recommendations yielded by that midterm report was, *“the establishment of a new commission within ALA with independent governance and membership procedures, supported by a coalition of relevant professional associations.”* The effort has now evolved to a more comprehensive process inclusive of the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) and with greater intentionality around efforts to revise ALA accreditation review processes to include a rubric for evaluating equity, diversity, and inclusion at the student, faculty, and administrative level. Current ALA President Patty Wong has made collaboration with ALISE on this effort a priority and has secured the association’s commitment to support a survey that will look at the goals of equity and inclusion evaluation measures alongside prevailing issues of accreditation review committee recruitment and terms, accreditation process costs, and Office for Accreditation structure and budget size. Preparation for this collaborative work and survey is planned for report, if not completion, by or before the June 2022 Executive Board meeting and is informed by past accreditation studies, including this 2016 summary: <https://alair.ala.org/bitstream/handle/11213/7194/ebd5_2_1_accred_tf_recommendations.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>. Dr. Nicole Cooke of the University of South Carolina School of Information Science, Karen O’Brien, director of the Office for Accreditation, and Tracie Hall, ALA Executive Director are joining President Wong in bringing the plan of work described above to fruition.

* **ALA joins with SAA and ARL to Bring Libraries and Archives Together to Observe Day of Racial Healing**

For the first time in the sixth year history of its commemoration, the [American Library Association](https://www.facebook.com/AmericanLibraryAssociation/?__cft__%5b0%5d=AZVWDn-F6rOZa2Uc3RrIv05x7m3yK2_c00rbFlPTrJNEILX0u3kSoKSSevbpgnnUnVQ4WyDOf_1BRthKkTf_bGRORyFh9IPbIU3M09U_zNeM75ySAvzyUIL-Eld2730vG6Hw5YrMeQSXLk1tibItRaeb&__tn__=kK-R), the [Society of American Archivists](https://www.facebook.com/archivists/?__cft__%5b0%5d=AZVWDn-F6rOZa2Uc3RrIv05x7m3yK2_c00rbFlPTrJNEILX0u3kSoKSSevbpgnnUnVQ4WyDOf_1BRthKkTf_bGRORyFh9IPbIU3M09U_zNeM75ySAvzyUIL-Eld2730vG6Hw5YrMeQSXLk1tibItRaeb&__tn__=kK-R), and the [Association of Research Libraries](https://www.facebook.com/association.of.research.libraries/?__cft__%5b0%5d=AZVWDn-F6rOZa2Uc3RrIv05x7m3yK2_c00rbFlPTrJNEILX0u3kSoKSSevbpgnnUnVQ4WyDOf_1BRthKkTf_bGRORyFh9IPbIU3M09U_zNeM75ySAvzyUIL-Eld2730vG6Hw5YrMeQSXLk1tibItRaeb&__tn__=kK-R) came together on January 18 to observe the [#NationalDayOfRacialHealing](https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/nationaldayofracialhealing?__eep__=6&__cft__%5b0%5d=AZVWDn-F6rOZa2Uc3RrIv05x7m3yK2_c00rbFlPTrJNEILX0u3kSoKSSevbpgnnUnVQ4WyDOf_1BRthKkTf_bGRORyFh9IPbIU3M09U_zNeM75ySAvzyUIL-Eld2730vG6Hw5YrMeQSXLk1tibItRaeb&__tn__=*NK-R) (NDORH) and in the commitment to document the diverse histories of the United States. ‬The National Day of Racial Healing is part of a larger movement for Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation embraced by more than 300 organizations calling for the establishment of a US Commission on Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation. Through programming, education, advocacy, and most importantly -- action, ALA and our partner organizations are working to examine our own practices and to support our memberships in helping the communities they serve tell and access their own enduring stories. ‬As part of this day, ODLOS Director Kevin called on LIS practitioners dedicate time for a [Healing Hour](https://www2.archivists.org/national-day-of-racial-healing/healing-hour) to reflect on the unfinished work of racial equity in libraries and archives. More on the NDORH here: [https://bit.ly/3rpNlcy](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fbit.ly%2F3rpNlcy%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR2r8_ACMg3gANHCIfL0DG9JTw9wxhXq4pKTQfnYEH-JJ9txv-UWEKkkJX8&h=AT2KD-I-MqSb8SZmxxL-GxfgxzqpRRWLyf-NJ8NWYe6iDq8jzrre7-N7T9-LMjeFtwDtxOVZ4o9ihBSJCVv3GuoydxLRY9gRwO4KZDdn09UltPXFqn855gPKntb-RFPZmg&__tn__=-UK*F).

**Division Updates**

* **AASL --** As a division that holds a national conference only every other year, October 2021 was even more significant as AASL held its biennial [AASL National Conference](https://national.aasl.org/general/) as an in-person event from October 20 – 23 in Salt Lake City, Utah. That conference marked the first ALA in-person conference since the pandemic. Advocacy for school libraries and the work of school librarians was evident throughout the conference. TheOpening General Session featured a keynote by Dr. Omékongo Dibinga, author of “The UPstander’s Guide to an Outstanding Life,” who talked about misinformation and recognized the important work of librarians. During her keynote, author Kekla Magoon said, “I challenge you to be brave, to stand up for the needs of your young patrons and not shy away from shelving the books that feel important to you and to them”. Another General Session featured a conversation with administrators from the AASL School Leader Collaborative, a two-year project sponsored by OverDrive Education, who spoke about how administrators can impower a school librarian’s leadership role that impacts all learners in the community.
* **ACRL** -- Per ACRL’s strategic [Plan for Excellence](https://www.ala.org/acrl/aboutacrl/strategicplan/stratplan), it is essential to “promote the impact and value of academic and research libraries to the higher education community,” especially in the current environment. ACRL’s [2021 Environmental Scan](https://acrl.ala.org/acrlinsider/2021-acrl-environmental-scan/) also notes the need for libraries and higher education institutions need to prepare for potential budget shortfalls in upcoming budget cycles, leading to a potential increase in the need for data-driven decision making. As these trends continue, it is essential for academic and research libraries to show their continued impact on the campus community while planning and evaluating their services and resources. To help address this need, ACRL and the Public Library Association (PLA) now offer [Benchmark: Library Metrics and Trends](https://www.ala.org/acrl/proftools/benchmark) to power library data analysis and visualization. This new digital resource can help libraries plan, make informed decisions, and tell the story of their impact. Through Benchmark, library professionals have access to a centralized collection of their library data and the ability to compare with peer libraries using a robust set of visualization and reporting tools.
* **ALSC --** ALSC’s Intellectual Freedom committee has been using the ALSC blog to share resources to support libraries as they navigate Critical Race Theory book challenges – a new and growing concern that is largely impacting children’s access to diverse books. The IF committee is looking to amplify the work of ALA’s Intellectual Freedom committee and expand on it to address the specific needs and concerns of youth library workers. In addition, the ALSC board of directors worked quickly to sign on to [ALA’s joint statement](https://www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2021/11/american-library-association-opposes-widespread-efforts-censor-books-us), “regarding attempts to remove materials that focus on LGBTQIA+ issues and books by Black authors or that document the Black experience or the experiences of other BIPOC individuals”. ALSC is also tracking COVID-19’s impact on youth and library staff. As libraries assess their budgets going forward, the value of children’s library professionals may be overlooked. Library staff who serve youth are in need of tools and resources to help advocate for their positions, both within their libraries and through local and national advocacy efforts. #LookToLibraries provides resources and highlights the value of children’s library professionals as youth media mentors.
* **Core -**- Core is beginning its second year as a division. In its sophomore year its focus is on providing member value by fulfilling the commitments we made to members when we asked them to vote for innovation, career development, and community in a new division. In FY22, the key question will be how to re-engage members/former members/non-members as we transition from pandemic to endemic. In the past few months CORE has launched a webinar recording archive: <https://connect.ala.org/core/find/free-recordings>; published new section pages <https://connect.ala.org/core/communities/all-core-groups/core-sections/metadata-collections>; launched the Core Reading Club. As well, a new member group, Academic Interviews Project Team, delivered their report in December: [Best Practices for Academic Interviews](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdocs.google.com%2Fdocument%2Fd%2F1i2zIP-qgwivZFV5kVRZZEXPlAVfo70BBzj5gFi5EsQY%2Fedit%3Fusp%3Dsharing&data=04%7C01%7Carch%40up.edu%7C41ae7cab551b4291380008d9b90a7186%7Cea8f3949231c40b6a33f56873af96f87%7C0%7C0%7C637744277525078179%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=81sVP6Mi1%2BTe1TBL%2B7pR5U4F3WoQ2453n2zuZ6ltADE%3D&reserved=0).
* **PLA** -- PLA continues to focus on how the field is responding to two main trends: Getting back to 100% service levels and recovering as the pandemic situation evolves; and the challenges of a charged political environment. PLA is paying close attention to activity on the ground. Libraries are in various states of openness, with some fully re-opened and others still struggling to return to full service. PLA also launched a free webinar series: Public Libraries: Partners in Workforce Development, which showcases the work public libraries are doing to meet the needs of job seekers. In September, PLA released a new book “Strategic Planning for Public Libraries”. This instructional publication provides a framework that libraries of all sizes can use as a basis for their strategic planning. The content is supported by research conducted across more than 200 public library professionals and in-depth interviews with more than 20 library directors and leaders throughout the country and includes downloadable templates and worksheets. PLA22 conference registration opened in early FY22. As of December 13, 2021, there were 1,343 full conference attendees registered and 156 exhibitors (these numbers have grown significantly since that tally). Early bird registration will close in January, and advance registration closes in late February.
* **RUSA** -- With the most recent membership numbers provided through August, RUSA had 2,574 members. This represented a slight increase from the 2,548 membership total reported in July. In August RUSA also recorded an increase in membership in all but one of its Sections. A RUSA [membership and retention task force](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1e-EbnipR2aK0XaD6Txaagp2gU8EMXlq4/view?usp=sharing) is currently investigating the motivations and reasoning behind members joining or not joining RUSA. Strategies for member growth will be implemented through the findings of the task force. Planning for RUSA’s first ever Virtual Forum continues to move forward. FY22 has started with the establishment of two important task forces for RUSA, the RUSA Membership and Retention Task Force and the RUSA Publications Task Force. Each of these task forces will be developing needed strategies for major RUSA areas with budget implications, membership, and publications. Additionally, dates have been selected for the two-day Virtual Forum, March 8 & 10. Promotion should begin in early January. The annual [RUSA Book & Media Awards](https://rusaupdate.org/category/awards/book-and-media/) will be held during LibLearnX on Sunday, January 23rd at 4:30 p.m. CT. Now in the national spotlight with other prestigious literary awards, the Andrew Carnegie Medals for Excellence in Fiction and Nonfiction are announced at the RUSA’s Book and Media Awards ceremony.
* **United For Libraries --** Boards of Trustees around the country are facing increasing challenges to library materials, resources, and programs. Additionally, board dynamics have been influenced and disrupted by the appointment of Trustees with personal views and agendas in direct opposition to library values. United for Libraries is seeing an increased need for board training and support in several areas: Roles & Responsibilities of Trustees; Understanding of Governing vs. Advisory Boards; Conflict of Interest and Ethics Policies/Statements; Regular Policy Review/Update; Effective Board Meetings; and Board/Director Relationship. United for Libraries responded through a November 1 American Libraries article ([A Conflict of Values](https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2021/11/01/library-trustees-conflict-of-values/)) and a December program focused on Library Boards, Intellectual Freedom, and Challenges. Two United for Libraries staff members and two board members are serving on Office for Intellectual Freedom’s Rapid Response Team.
* **YALSA --** YALSA held its 2021 Young Adult Services Hybrid Symposium on November 5-7, 2021, in Reno, NV, and virtually. The Symposium's theme was "Biggest Little Safe Spaces: Serving Teens During Times of Adversity." Two hundred and thirteen attendees registered for the in-person Symposium session. One hundred sixty-three individuals registered for the Virtual Symposium and 10 group registrations for the Virtual Symposium, which yielded 70 additional attendees; overall, YALSA had 233 attendees for the virtual Symposium. On Monday, January 24 during LibLearnX, YALSA will announce the winners of the Alex, Edwards, Odyssey, Morris, Excellence in Nonfiction and Printz Awards.

**ALA Media Relations**

The Communications and Marketing Office led the association to a period of peak visibility over the last few months. Per the News Media Alliance, there are more than 1,300 daily newspapers and 5,700 weekly newspapers in the United States, so the following placements should be viewed as a snapshot of coverage.

Overall Media Snapshot for Sept. 1 – Nov. 30, 2021

* 9,029 articles/mentions
* 11.9 billion in circulation
* $15.7 million in publicity value

ALA was mentioned in every state in the nation during this reporting period.

**Staffing Updates**

* Much is being documented about three major pandemic-era shifts in the American workforce: the “Great

Resignation,” the “Great Job-hop,” and the mass employee migration out of urban centers as remote work options multiply. Though ALA’s staff ranks are currently at around 207 employees, with capacity for a staff size of 222-227, each of these phenomena are impacting our work as the association experiences accelerated retirements and resignations from staff seeking to move to other regions, or to work remotely on a permanent basis. ALA will use these trends to review its human resource and talent management strategy with a focus on recruitment, retention, racial equity, and inclusion.

That said, key searches for management-level staff continue to meet with successful conclusions. ALA ended the first quarter of FY22 having successfully completed its search for a Chief Financial Officer and welcomed Dina Tsourdinas in that capacity in late December. A licensed Certified Public Accountant, Dina also holds a master’s and bachelor’s degree in Accounting from the University of Illinois at Chicago and is an active member of the Illinois CPA Society and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Dina has worked in leadership roles in finance at several non-profit and educational institutions including UIC, SOAS Children’s Villages Illinois where she was Chief Financial Officer, Childserv, where she was CFO and Vice President of Finance, and Adler University where she served as Associate Vice President of Finance. In addition to her own career achievement, Dina has helped prepare early career accounting professionals through her two decades of instruction at Saint Xavier University’s Graham School of Business in Chicago where she teaches advanced accounting courses. Dina’s arrival provides the opportunity to thank Denise Moritz for her formidable work in the interim CFO role. Denise’s nearly two-year tenure in that capacity was deeply impacted by the pandemic. During this period, she led ALA’s successful application for Payroll Protection funds which shortened the staff furlough period by a week and bridged critical lost revenue. We are grateful to Denise for her teamwork orientation and her committed service to ALA during unprecedented times.

We are also pleased to report that Lorelle R. Swader has accepted the Associate Executive Director, Human Resources role after having served as interim in that capacity since March 2020. During Lorelle’s tenure she has supported the move of ALA’s headquarters, the creation of new staff safety reporting protocols during the pandemic and overseen the hiring of the ACRL and PLA executive directors, the ODLOS director, and new CFO. In her new capacity, Lorelle continues to provide oversight for the ALA-Allied Professional Association. Lorelle has been with ALA since October 1992, when she was hired as Program Officer/Deputy Executive Director for the American Library Trustee Association (ALTA) – now United for Libraries. Lorelle has a B.A. in Speech Communication and an M.L.S. from Indiana University and an M.A. in Communications and Training from Governors State University (IL). She earned her Certified Association Executive (CAE) recognition in 2004. We are grateful to Lorelle for the staunch dedication she has shown to the association for three decades. As Lorelle moves into the permanent HR position and maintains her ALA-APA leadership role, we are pleased to welcome Melissa Walling as the new AED for ALA Offices and Member Relations (AOMR). Melissa joined ALA in June 2019 as Director, Member Relations & Services. Since joining the team, Melissa has worked with the Membership Committee on a new membership model, helped to launch a new member onboarding campaign and implemented the ALA Connect Live series with Immediate Past President Julius C. Jefferson, Jr. Melissa came to ALA with 15 years of association management experience working in membership, customer service, chapter relations and education. She was most recently the Vice President of Membership & Education at Association Forum and held previous roles at the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Institute of Real Estate Management. Melissa earned her MBA from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana in 2020 and is a Certified Association Executive and a graduate of the Institute for Organization Management. Melissa currently serves on ASAE’s Membership Professional Advisory Council. She will continue to manage the key activities of the MRS Director position until her successor is named.

This current quarter will prioritize the management-level searches for a Chief Information Technology Officer, ALA’s first ever Accessibility Officer (a position to be added to the ODLOS staff team), and a Senior Program Officer and inaugural fellow for the Center for the Future of Libraries. The recruitment of a Director for Institutional Advancement is also planned by end of FY22.

**Conclusion**

The activities and achievements summarized above are only representative of the dozens of new programs and initiatives currently underway across the association. Despite the uncertainty of the times, the unrelenting pace of change, and hardships endured, ALA leaders, members, and staff continue to display a steadfast commitment to strengthening the nation’s libraries and the communities they serve through and beyond this pandemic period.