Annual Report, 2018-2019
Kristin E. Martin, ALCTS President, 2018-2019

This report represents a summary of the activities of the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), during the 2018-2019 year. Working in libraries of all sizes and types, ALCTS represents a specialized community of functional experts and leaders in acquisitions, cataloging and metadata, collection management, electronic and continuing resources, and preservation. While our engaged members lead the way in developing standards and best practices for creating, identifying, selecting, acquiring, organizing, managing, and preserving recorded knowledge in all formats, we also recognize that both the profession and the American Library Association as a larger entity are changing, and ALCTS needs to continue to grow and evolve. This annual report includes a summary of the association’s activities for the 2018-2019 year, and our plans for the future.

A New Division: Discussions with LLAMA and LITA

Stemming from explorations that started in January 2018, at the ALA Annual Conference in June 2018, the Boards of ALCTS, the Library Information Technology Association (LITA), and the Library Leadership and Management Association (LLAMA) voted to “devote the necessary staff time and resources through Fall 2018 to continued development of a potential new ALA division” and that “a final decision on sending the question of the proposed division to a member vote in Spring 2019 will be made at the 2019 Midwinter Meeting.” The decision made within ALCTS was carefully considered. The ALCTS Board supported this exploration, seeing it as an opportunity to reduce duplication of effort between the divisions, allowing for member dues to go farther, and offering new options for networking, programming and continuing education. Functional areas that may have fallen through the cracks of three divisions would be better supported by a single new division. Further, ALCTS leaders recognized that ALCTS’ current trajectory demanded change. While ALA membership has rebounded in recent years, ALCTS membership has continued to drop, and the division now has almost a third fewer members than it did ten years ago. ALCTS’ budget has remained stable due to strong revenue from continuing education, but the capacity to support new initiatives is limited. Leaders recognized the need to make the division more attractive to new and existing members. Combining with LITA and LLAMA to form a new division offered one path forward.

To support the Board directives, the presidents, presidents-elect, and executive directors of the three divisions formed a Steering Committee that continued to have nearly weekly meetings following ALA Annual 2018 to plan how a new division would proceed. Over the summer, the Steering Committee, with Tyler Dzuba as facilitator, held a virtual
retreat develop mission, vision, and values statements. Work during fall 2018 was divided up into different working groups, each addressing a different aspect of the new division plan:

- Activities Working Group, chaired by ALCTS President Kristin Martin, charged with exploring and aligning the activities of the three divisions to create a new slate of member offerings;
- Budget and Finance Working Group, chaired by Charles Wilt, previously charged with performing a preliminary financial analysis of the feasibility of a new division, continued work on developing a financial plan and proposed dues structure for the new division;
- Communications Working Group, begun in the spring of 2018 and chaired by LLAMA President Lynn Hoffman, charged with developing a communications plan and with providing mechanisms for members to provide feedback and share potential concern; and
- Operations Working Group, chaired by LITA President Bohyun Kim, charged with developing the early organization structure and documents that will be necessary for a new division to exist.

The Working Groups shared their reports and recommendations with the Steering Committee, who, especially due to the hard work of Jenny Levine and Kerry Ward, the Executive Directors of LITA and LLAMA respectively, developed a project plan shared with the Boards of the three divisions. However, just before the Midwinter Meeting, the Steering Committee members recognized some serious flaws in proceeding forward and ultimately none of the divisions asked their Boards to vote on whether to go forward. Instead a project pause was put in place. There were basically three reasons for the pause: first, divisions’ leadership still had key operational details to work through; second, because of time needed by the working groups to explore their respective areas, communications with the membership were not as robust as they needed and there was not sufficient time to involve the members in the discussion; and third, divisions’ leadership wanted to make sure the new division could provide far more robust service to members than what the three of divisions could provide separately.

In Spring 2019 conversations with the current Steering Committee started up again, and all agreed to have the incoming presidents-elect, Christopher Cronin, ALCTS; Evviva Weinraub, LITA; and Tyler Dzuba, LLAMA, form a new Steering Committee to address the remaining issues with the project plan and move forward with considering a membership vote in Spring 2020. The divisions’ leadership believes this can also serve as a model for the work of the Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE) and demonstrate the value of a functional division across library types. Due to the strong working relationship between the three divisions, new collaborations are planned for this upcoming year. There will be a joint meeting held at the ALA Annual Conference 2019 detailing the next steps, a joint spring 2020 online conference, delivering education from each of the divisions; a joint President’s Program at the 2020 Annual Conference; and a joint fall 2020 in-person conference to formally launch our new division.
**Finances**

The financial situation for ALCTS has been a bright spot for the past two years, reversing losses from FY12-FY16. Although not as robust as FY17, ALCTS ended FY18 ahead of budget projections, with net revenue of $76,365. So far, FY19 is on track to have a net positive revenue as well, with net revenue in April at $64,930. The success of this positive years has allowed us to build back up our reserves and to devote resources to new division conversations and to bystander training in support of equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives. Sources of revenue mainly have been due to strong registration numbers for ALCTS continuing education events, particularly webinars and web courses, which continue to sell out. There was a dues increase in FY2018 that continues to generate more revenue, although decreased membership numbers, which are down by approximately five percent, are concerning. Revenue from publications continues to underperform, with both monograph revenue and Library Resources and Technical Services subscription revenue coming in under budget. ALCTS Interim Executive Director Kerry Ward and the division’s Budget and Finance Committee continue to review and analyze revenues and expenditures.

Member donation and corporate sponsorships also support the ALCTS budget. Members continue to support ALCTS through donations, with over $45,000 in donations received so far in FY19. Corporate sponsorships are critical in a number of areas, including member recognition through awards, sponsorship of professional development opportunities, and support for Preservation Week, which allows preservation-related issues to reach a wide public audience. A special thanks goes to the ALCTS Fundraising Committee who coordinates all of this work.

**Education and Professional Development**

As mentioned above, continuing educational offering remain extremely popular for ALCTS members and beyond. So far, through fiscal year 2018-2019, there have been 28 webinars offered, repeated sessions of the nearly sold-out seven Fundamentals courses, and monthly e-forums on topics around collections and technical services. Most web course sessions continue to sell out, particularly the popular Fundamentals of Cataloging. Special webinar series offered this year included a five-part series on licensing electronic resources, a two-part introduction to data visualization, and a two-part series on serials standards. ALCTS remains dedicated to offering a wide array of online professional development and education, and the consistent popularity of these offerings demonstrates how we are able to meet the needs of a wide constituency, from webinars in specialized areas for seasoned professionals to the foundational basics in the Fundamentals web courses, three of which are approved by the Library Support Staff Certification program. These offerings would not be available without the dedicated work of the ALCTS Continuing Education Committee.

The Continuing Education Committee, along with the Program Committee, developed two virtual preconferences, “Advocating for Your Department and Library” and “Library Project Management 101.” These two pre-conferences will occur before the ALA Annual Conference. ALCTS is also offering two in-person pre-conference workshops. “Change Management in Libraries and Technical Services,” highlighting an area of intersection between ALCTS and LLAMA, will offer participants skills on leading their institution
through changes. “Better Networking for Disasters: Improving Participation and Coordination for Disaster Response and Recovery of Cultural Heritage” offers an opportunity for attendees to learn about disaster preparations and responses, using the disaster response to Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico as a case study. Organized by the Preservation Administration and Reformatting Section (PARS), with support from the ALA International Relations Office and the Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Work (FAIC)/National Heritage Responders (NHR), we are delighted to be able to bring in Hilda Teresa Ayala Gonzalez, Cecilio Ortiz, and Johnny Lugo Vega from Puerto Rico to speak on this topic.

Programmatic activities at the ALA Midwinter Meeting and the Annual Conference offer another venue for learning, conversation, and networking. With over forty ALCTS Interest Groups, conversations and presentations around topics of interest to ALCTS members occur regularly at these conferences. More recently, some interest groups have been expanding their reach through online meetings. Both the Chief Collection Development Officers of Large Research Libraries Interest Group and Technical Services Directors of Large Research Libraries Interest Group held an online discussion meeting during January 2019, with a wide range of topics, including changes in physical spaces in libraries and their effects on the collection, open access, building the next generation of technical services leaders, and building digital collections. Over 50 and 80 individuals attended the meetings, respectively. At the Annual Conference, ALCTS will be presenting sixteen programs, with an emphasis on issues around digital collections, from preservation issues for podcasts, to resource sharing for streaming video, and to using analytics to better assess and encourage use.

ALCTS is also excited to bring in Marcia Chatelain, Associate Professor of History and African American Studies at Georgetown University, as the featured speaker at the 2019 ALCTS President’s Program. Professor Chatelain’s talk will be sharing her research for her upcoming book, Franchise: The Golden Arches in Black America, which “tells the story of black capitalists, civil rights leaders, and even radical nationalists who believed that their destiny rested with a set of golden arches. And it tells of an industry that blossomed at the very moment a freedom movement began to wither.”

With support from ALCTS and the Preservation and Reformatting Section (PARS), the 2019 Preservation week was held from April 21-27, with the theme of “Preserving Your Family History.” Professional genealogist, entrepreneur, and attorney Kenyatta D. Berry served as honorary chair, and hosted one of two free webinars on the topic. The two webinars garnered between 400 and 500 registrations each, and close to 300 viewers tuned in live for each webinar. Another important annual PARS event, held at the ALA Annual Conference is Preservation in Action (PiA). In this year’s sold-out PiA event, participants will take part in day-long preservation project with District of Columbia Public Library, providing preservation care and rehousing for the library’s special collections.

Publications

Publications remain a key mechanism for ALCTS to support the professional development needs of its members and share scholarship coming from the profession. ALCTS publishes the highly regarded peer-reviewed journal Library Resources and
Technical Services, publications in the popular series Sudden Selectors, as well as individual monographs on areas of interest to collections and technical services professionals. News and events continue to be shared through ALCTS News. A new series, the Sudden Positions guides, began this year, with the areas of acquisitions, technical services, collection assessment, cataloging and metadata, and collection management expected to come out later this year. Three new publications were released this year, with several more in preparation to be published in 2018–2019.


**ALCTS Standards Activities**

ALCTS members continued to provide guidance, recommendations, and standards work across the profession. The Acquisitions Section updated the “Statement of Principles and Standards of Acquisitions Practice,” in support of the “Core Competencies for Acquisitions Professionals,” endorsed last year. Beth Shoemaker, CaMMS Member-at-Large is chairing the new Cataloging Ethics Steering Committee, to provide an environmental scan of specific topics around cataloging ethics and develop a cataloging code of ethics. The ALCTS Advocacy and Policy Committee reviewed and provided comments for 18 Library Bill of Rights provisions during the course of the year.

Nationally and internationally, ALCTS continues to be a leader in standards development and review, particularly in the area of cataloging and metadata. In coordination with the ALCTS Standards Committee, the NISO representative, Jill Emery, Portland State University, received feedback from 52 individuals from ALA and ALCTS on various standard reviews and new proposals. At her recommendation, the ALCTS Board appointed an alternate representative, to ensure that we always have coverage for this important position. Examples of standards reviewed include updates to KBART (Knowledge Bases and Related Tools), which is a critical standards for libraries to maintain and understand their electronic resources holdings, and the proposed authentication standard, RA21, still under review. The Standards Committee maintains a LibGuide ([https://alcts.libguides.com/alcts_standards](https://alcts.libguides.com/alcts_standards)) of standards-related information, and the CRS Standards Committee has led an education effort to disseminate information about serials-related standards through forums and webinars. The ALCTS/LITA Metadata Standards Committee has spent the year working on a framework for metadata assessment.

ALCTS continues to support ALA involvement in the development and maintenance cataloging code, Resource Description and Access (RDA). After a year of operations, the North American RDA Committee (NARDAC) updated their Terms of Reference, which
were adopted by the ALCTS Board. The Board appointed Stephen Hearn, University of Washington, to a three-year term as the ALA representative as the ALA Representative to NARDAC, starting January 2019. He joins colleague Dominique Bourassa, Yale University, and replaces Kathy Glennan, University of Maryland, who began a four-year term as chair of the RDA Steering Committee. NARDAC participated in reviewing governance and structure for maintaining RDA, updates to the RDA Toolkit and the 3R project, and education to the professional about RDA and the IFLA Library Reference Model.

Former ALCTS Executive Director Keri Cascio, now at the Chicago Public Library, represents ALA as a copyright Holder on the RDA Board.

**Recruitment and Retention**

Membership within ALCTS continues to fall at a steady pace. Membership in April 2019 was 3,136 total members, down from 3,264 in April 2018. The ALCTS leadership recognizes that declining membership continues to be a challenge, despite our events at providing relevant programming and activities to attract members. As noted above, changes in the profession are likely contributing to the decline in membership, which is a large reason why ALCTS is looking to create a new division with LITA and LLAMA. Given that the timeline for that change is taking longer than expected, ALCTS continues to look at what the division can do right now to make itself as attractive and relevant as possible.

During the 2018-2019 year, ALCTS continued to operate under the 2015-2018 strategic plan. Looking ahead to 2019-2020, the ALCTS Planning Committee developed a new one-year strategic plan to help keep ALCTS vibrant and active, while also anticipating major structural changes. The new strategic plan, still awaiting approval by the ALCTS Board, will provide emphasis on equity, diversity, and inclusion work as well as an internal and external review of organizational structures and activities. ALCTS already has many programs in place in support of EDI, including support of an ALA Spectrum Scholar, the Lois Mai Chan Professional Development Grant, which encourages professional development for librarians and paraprofessionals from traditionally underrepresented groups, and online course grants for library professionals from developing countries (http://www.ala.org/alcts/awards/grants/onlinegrant). Additionally this spring, ALCTS updated its Online Code of Conduct (http://www.ala.org/alcts/alcts-statement-conduct) to provide better support for individuals from all backgrounds, and has been working with other divisions to develop options for bystander training.

Building on the success of the first year of the ALCTS mentoring program, the second year supported 33 mentor/mentee pairs, and anticipates a similar size for year three. While the program has been successful and is entering its third year now, the members the ALCTS Leadership Development Mentoring Subcommittee also recognize great promise with the potential to expand the program under a newer and enlarged division.

**Organizational Changes**

Keri Cascio, ALCTS Executive Director, accepted a new position as Assistant Chief, Technology, Content and Innovation at the Chicago Public Library in September 2018.
While a wonderful opportunity for Keri to return as a professional to the field, we were sad to see her leave. Fortunately Kerry Ward, LLAMA Executive Director, agreed to be the Interim Executive Director. In October 2018, we were very lucky have Julie Reese rejoin the ALCTS Staff as the ALCTS Deputy Director. Julie took responsibility for managing the staff and daily operations of ALCTS, while Kerry managed Board responsibilities and the finances.

I am grateful for the support provided by everyone in the ALCTS Office and their marvelous skill in finding the answers to my questions. I am especially appreciative of the thoughtful guidance, comments, and opinions of my Executive Committee colleagues, ALCTS Interim Executive Director Kerry Ward, ALCTS Deputy Executive Director Julie Reese, President-Elect Jennifer Bowen, Past-President Mary Beth Thomson, and Division Councilor Erin Stalberg. I am also grateful for the opportunity to work with the amazing leadership of LLAMA and LITA, particularly LITA President Bohyun Kim, LITA President-Elect Emily Morton-Owens, LITA Past-President Andromeda Yelton, LITA Executive Director Jenny Levine, LLAMA President Lynn Hoffman, LLAMA President-Elect Anne. Members from all three divisions put in much time and effort into considering how a new joint division could be successful. Most importantly, I would like to thank all ALCTS members. I continue to be impressed as how much ALCTS is able to accomplish because of the time, expertise, and inventiveness of our dedicated members. I have been honored to lead ALCTS during the 2018-2019 year.