TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Libraries Transforming Communities

INFORMATION/REPORT:
Update on ALA’s Libraries Transforming Communities (LTC) initiative

ACTION REQUESTED BY:
Deb Robertson, Director, ALA Public Programs Office
Mary Davis Fournier, Deputy Director, ALA Public Programs Office

CONTACT PERSON: Deb Robertson, drobertson@ala.org; 312-280-5057

DRAFT OF MOTION: N/A

DATE: April 16, 2015

BACKGROUND:

Libraries Transforming Communities seeks to strengthen the role of librarians as core community leaders and change agents. With a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and in partnership with the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation, the initiative addresses a critical need within the library field by developing and distributing new tools, resources and support for librarians to engage with their communities in new ways.

This presentation will update the board on the progress of the initiative in its second year.

Attachments: EBD #12.21 ALA LTC Initiative Update.pdf
Libraries Transforming Communities

- LTC, an initiative of the American Library Association, seeks to strengthen librarians’ role as core community leaders and change agents.
- Addresses a critical need within the library field by developing and distributing new tools.
- Will help libraries become more reflective of and connected to their communities and achieve a domino effect of positive results.
- Four goal areas of initiative.

I. LTC Public Innovators Cohort

Goal: To intensively train a cohort of 50 library professionals and volunteers representing 10 libraries nationwide.

- Findings so far
- Attitudinal shifts
- Behavioral shifts
- Exploring and adapting this approach for specific library staff and institutional use

LTC Public Innovators Cohort

- Red Hook (NY) Public Library (pop: 1,900)
- Columbus (Wisc.) Public Library (pop: 5,000)
- Knox County (Ind.) Public Library (pop: 33,000)
- Suffolk (Va.) Public Library (pop: 85,000)
- Hartford (Conn.) Public Library (pop: 125,000)
- Springfield (Mass.) Public Library (pop: 151,000)
- Tuscaloosa (Ala.) Public Library (pop: 195,000)
- Spokane County (Wash.) Library District (pop: 265,000)
- San Jose (Calif.) Public Library (pop: 980,000)
- Los Angeles Public Library (pop: 3.8M)

Map of the United States with ten cohort communities starred.
Cohort team: Columbus, Wis.

- Small town (pop: 5,000) seeing influx of new residents
- Creating “Root for Columbus” campaign

Cohort Perspectives:

- “It’s striking how much people appreciate the chance to discuss and give feedback, and there’s a lot of power in just talking.”
- “The big shift I’ve seen...is how we gather information about the community. We were very much attached to census information and other researched data. This was the first time we looked completely to the community for information.”
- “I am seeing some members of my team (myself included) being perceived as Harwood experts as word spreads throughout the state.”

II. Distribution of Resources to the Field

Goal: To develop an array of accessible tools and virtual opportunities for facilitated and self-directed learning.

- “Getting Started” workbook and website
- Individual resource downloads
- Webinars
- Conference sessions

To the Field: “Getting Started” Guide

Taking feedback from the cohort, we organized the Harwood tools into an easy-to-follow “Getting Started” guide for libraries.

It is available in print and online at [www.ala.org/LTC/resources](http://www.ala.org/LTC/resources).

First page of workbook, “The First 30 Days: Getting Started”
Resource Downloads

9,000 total downloads since 1/1/14
ala.org/LTC/resources

Webinar Views

Conference Learning Sessions

Series of four sessions (Aspirations, Turn Quiz, Intentionality, Sustaining Yourself) offered at:
- PLA 2014 in Indianapolis
- ALA 2014 in Las Vegas
- Midwinter 2015 in Chicago
- Up next: ALA 2015 in San Francisco

PLA 2014 Sessions
III. Communications

Goal: Building support, visibility and buy-in for the work of libraries as agents of community innovation and change.

- Influence the national dialogue about libraries
- Achieve strong pockets of media coverage in cohort communities
- Amplify stories of library community engagement out in the field

Communications: Media Hits

- March 31, 2014: 4, 10
- June 30, 2014: 10
- December 31, 2014: 51
- December 31, 2015: 63
- March 31, 2015: 60
- December 31, 2015: 109
Sponsored by LTC, “Leading in Times of Crisis: A Conversation with Ferguson Library Director Scott Bonner” drew a standing-room-only crowd.

IV. Organizational Goal

Goal: Training ALA staff and member leaders in this approach to community engagement and the “turned outward” orientation.

- Training
- Practice
- Fluency

ALA Supports Library-led Community Engagement

Next Steps:

- Case studies and continuing resources and support.
- Community engagement support for other types of libraries.
- Support for ongoing community of practice for libraries and library professionals who are leading positive community change.
- Sharing stories of success and learning widely and publicly.