Advocacy Training Subcommittee Meeting  
2009 ALA Midwinter Meeting, Denver  
Sunday, January 25, 2009  
10:30 – 12:00  
Sheraton Denver, Tower Court C

Agenda

In attendance: Judith Gibbons, Chair, Advocacy Training Subcommittee; Kathy Bloomberg-Rissman, Upland (CA) Public Library; Shirley Bruursema, Kent District Library; Larry Corbus, Corbus Library Consultants; Fannie Cox, University of Louisville, Ekstrom Library; Kathleen Imhoff, Lexington Public Library; Peter D. Pearson, Friends of the St. Paul Public Library; Susan J. Schmidt, ALTAFF; Jeffrey Smith, Baltimore Country Public Library; Denise Zielinski, DuPage (IL) Library System

ALA Staff Liaisons: Jaclyn Finneke; Communications Specialist, OLA; Marci Merola, Director, OLA

Welcome & Introductions

Judith Gibbons, Chair of the Advocacy Training Subcommittee, welcomed the group.

Recent & Upcoming Trainings, Programs and Tools

Marci Merola, Director, ALA Office for Library Advocacy discussed current initiatives and projects:

- Approximately 100 people attended the “Building Statewide Coalitions for All Libraries” panel discussion, which took place on Saturday, January 24, 2009, 4:00-5:30, in the Colorado Convention Center. Panelists included Martin Garnar, Past President, Colorado Association of Libraries; Director, Nebraska Library Commission Rod Wagner; and Ann Dutton Ewbank, Education Liaison Librarian at Arizona State University's Fletcher Library. Carol Brey-Casiano moderated the discussion. Marci felt that response to the program was positive.

- A new web resource of research and statistics to help advocates make the case for libraries at every stage of youth development, “Add It Up: Libraries Make the Difference in Youth Development and Education” was released just prior to Midwinter. OLA worked with ORS to launch The Advocacy Statistics for Youth initiative. Other partners include AASL, YALSA and ALSC. The resource can be seen at www.ala.org/additup.

- The Advocating in a Tough Economy Toolkit was launched in the fall. This online resource includes talking points, statistics, and data to help make the case for your library; strategies to help focus public attention and generate support; tips on how to connect with decision-makers. OLA pulled together the work of several units: PIO, Chapter Relations, Washington Office to produce this product. It’s available at www.ala.org/tougheconomytoolkit.
• Resources have been requested from ALA Chapters on coalition best practices for the Building Coalitions website, to be part of Advocacy University.

• Marci reviewed President-Elect Camila Alire’s Presidential Initiative, which would focus on advocacy and literacy.

Ideas for New Directions for Trainings: Topics, Vehicles and Venues

Marci discussed that the Advocacy Institute at Midwinter was canceled due to low attendance, and suggested that attendees may be staying for shorter periods of time due to budget constraints. How could the committee continue to create interest in the Advocacy Institute? Did it need to start looking at other training modules, such as online training or courses during regular conference hours instead?

Several things were determined at the meeting:

• It was decided that the committee would try a half-day Institute.

• It would focus on the tough economy, with a catchy title and description.

• Because hotel costs are really the biggest issue, Marci would look into having the event off-site, at the Harold Washington Public Library in Chicago, Chicago Cultural Center or similar venue. It would be moderately priced at $25.

• The shortened Institute would omit introductions, advocacy basics and move right into specific breakout sessions, with the possibility of having an opening guest speaker. Other options included having speakers come in and talk about their efforts (case studies).

• The Institute would be tied into ALTAFF’s Saturday Nuts & Bolts program – advocacy basics would be available on Saturday; the Friday session would contain breakout sessions.

• The Illinois Library Assn. and ALTAFF would be asked to co-sponsor.

Several things are yet to be decided, including:

• Speakers. Several were suggested, including Oprah Winfrey, Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley, Chicago Public Library Commissioner Mary Dempsey, or Karen Danczak-Lyons, First Deputy Commissioner, Chicago Public Library.

• Breakout session and/or case study topics. Various ideas were introduced including coalition building, working with politicians; “Storyville,” Atlanta’s $300 Million bond issue

• The idea of having a virtual preconference came up.
Next Steps

Marci would begin planning the event once back home. The group would follow up with a conference call.