

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Status of Advocacy Initiatives

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

Information Item – No Action Required

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

Cathleen Bourdon, Communications and Member Relations AED

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DRAFT OF MOTION:

N/A

DATE: March 15, 2007

ATTACHMENTS:

lovelibraries.org layout

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- Advocacy Institute Update
- Creating Advocacy Leaders Session
- 2007 Advocacy Institute Schedule
- I love Libraries
- Library Funding
- Speaking Engagements

Advocacy Institute Update

In May of 2005, the Ford Foundation awarded ALA \$80,000 to be used towards advocacy efforts. Specifically, this money is to help produce the Advocacy Institute on a Regional and Chapter level, working with Chapter Relations, ALTA and FOLUSA.

The Advocacy Institute at the ALA 2007 Midwinter Meeting, January 19, 2007, was a success, with over 100 attendees. A joint luncheon collaboration with YALSA offered a panel discussion on the topic “How to Grow your Own Advocates,” creating library advocates at the young adult age. Panelists included Patrick Jones, Young Adult author and Trainer; Rich Sweeney, University Librarian, New Jersey Institute of Technology;

and Ismail Abdullahi, Associate Professor of Library and Information Science, North Carolina Central University. Frances Roscello, Associate, School Library Media Services, New York State Education Department moderated the discussion.

For the first time, the Advocacy Institute featured advanced afternoon breakout sessions, allowing attendees to learn specific skills. Topics included:

- Crisis Communications, facilitated by Frances Roscello and Carol A. Brey-Casiano
- Passing Bond Issues or Referenda, facilitated by Larry Corbus, Corbus Library Consultants
- Fighting for your library's budget, facilitated by Judith Gibbons, Director, Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives; and Peter Pearson, President, The Friends of the Saint Paul (Mn.) Public Library
- Ask the Doctor/Resource Table, facilitated by Keith Michael Fiels, ALA Executive Director and Dale H. Ross, Trustee, Ames (Ia.) Public Library

The Advocacy Institute Task Force and Library Advocacy Now! (LAN!) Subcommittee of the Public Awareness Committee met after the event and agreed that the new was successful and should be repeated at upcoming trainings. The groups discussed ways to improve upcoming sessions.

Creating Advocacy Leaders Session

LAN! Subcommittee Chair Carol Brey-Casiano has been working towards the goal of identifying future library advocates for the profession. A session at Midwinter, entitled "Creating Advocacy Leaders: An Advocacy Institute Train the Trainer" January 20, 2007, was the first outcome of her initiative.

It was marketed as a follow-up training to the Advocacy Institute and allowed participants to further hone their skills and identify personal advocacy strengths. More importantly, it attempted to broaden the scope of *how* one can advocate. The session consisted of four breakout sessions on the following topics:

- Organizing communities, facilitated by Patricia H. Smith, Executive Director, Texas Library Association; Peter Pearson, President, The Friends of the Saint Paul (Mn.) Public Library; and Carol A. Brey-Casiano.
- Mining for Advocates/Increasing collaboration/network building, facilitated by Susan J. Schmidt, Past President, FOLUSA and Past President, Friends of the Library, Montgomery County (Md.); Larry Corbus, Corbus Library Consultants
- Communicating your Message, facilitated by Patricia Glass Schuman, 1991-1992 ALA Past-President and President, Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc.

- Train-the-Trainer/Tips on Becoming a Better Public Speaker, with Kathleen Imhoff, Executive Director, Lexington (Ky.) Public Library

Fifty-three people attended the session. The subcommittee agreed to continue this new format at upcoming sessions and discussed ways to improve the program.

2007 Advocacy Institute Schedule

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|---------------|--|
| March 30 | ACRL 2007 Annual Conference (Cosponsorship) Baltimore, MD |
| April 11-14 | Texas Library Assn. (Cosponsorship) Texas Women's (Cosponsorship) San Antonio, TX |
| April 25 | Kentucky Public Library Assn. (KPLA)/ Kentucky Library Trustees Round Table (KLTRT) Florence, KY |
| June 22 | ALA Annual Conference Washington, DC |
| June 23 | Creating Advocacy Leaders Program Washington, DC |
| October 25-28 | AASL 2007 Annual Conference (Tentative Cosponsorship) Reno, NV |
| November 8-10 | Colorado Association of Libraries Denver, CO |

I Love Libraries.org

Ilovelibraries.org, ALA's website for the public, and an initiative of ALA President Leslie Burger, is scheduled for a soft launch on May 1, 2007, in collaboration with National Library Legislative Day.

PIO is working with Chapter Relations, ALTA to create the Ilovelibraries.org Web site.

The group is proposing to the Web Editorial Board that it replace the Libraries & You tab of www.ala.org with www.ilovelibraries.org.

New “issues” will be published every two weeks, for a total of 26 issues per year. Some areas, employing RSS feeds, will change more frequently, including Booklist Online’s Review of the Day (daily) and Libraries in the News from AL Direct (weekly).

Many units around the building have enthusiastically offered their assistance to this project, including the ALA Library, Public Programs Office, American Libraries, Booklist and ALA Graphics.

A draft layout is attached.

Library Funding Reports in Media

Since June 2003, ALA has been tracking the status of library funding across the United States in public, academic, school, and state libraries through news media accounts. This report provides information on the status of library funding from mid-December 2006 to mid-March 2007.

Although there were substantial positive trends, many articles still report cuts to library budgets affecting hours of operation, staffing levels, materials and acquisitions, technology, programming and services, construction and library enhancement, and other long-term projects.

The funding data is accumulated from published sources, including: LexisNexis (news from a broad range of media); Google news searches; and library-related journals and periodicals (e.g. *American Libraries* and *Library Hotline*). ALA recognizes that information presented in the media represents only a portion of the funding crisis.

Highlighted below is a current aggregate approximation of the funding data from mid-Dec. 2006 to mid-March 2007:

Public libraries (and state and government libraries)

Actual and recommended library funding/budget cuts reported: \$9,278,099

At least 102 library jobs have been eliminated, laid off or not replaced, according to news reports.

At least 24 libraries closed or are facing closure: Minneapolis, Minn. has temporarily closed three libraries. Fifteen libraries in Jackson County, Oregon face closure on April 6, 2007. Two branch libraries face closure in Evanston, Illinois. The Reid Branch Library in Passaic County, N.J. faces closure. A branch library outside of New Orleans closed. Independent Hill and Lake Ridge (Va.) branch libraries face closures.

Positive trends: (includes fundraising drives and bond issues raising money for libraries): 46

Negative trends: 66

Stories with Mixed or Neutral trends: 34

School libraries

Positive: 5

Negative: 11

Mixed: 1

School library funding/budget cuts reported: \$572,260

At least 17-school library workers have been eliminated, laid off, or are facing job loss.

Academic libraries

Overall academic library funding/budgets cuts are at least \$650,000

Negative: 5

Positive: 3

Stories with Negative Trends:

A state cutting its library budget in half: The 2007 library funding cut in Michigan is \$6.1 million, half of all state funding. What this means is the state would give 60 cents to libraries for every Michigan resident. Across the country, libraries say that number is \$3.50, almost six times as high. The Capital Area District would lose about \$150,000 a year. Gretchen Couraud, Michigan Library Association Director, anticipates service cuts and even some library closings.

Counties with inadequate funding to keep libraries open as a consequence of the failure to renew the Secure Rural Schools Act: Thirty-two counties in Oregon will see cutbacks in the next fiscal year after Congress failed to renew the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act, which provided \$273 million annually to Oregon counties and schools. The act was a safety net for counties that relied heavily on timber receipts from logging on federal lands, which began to crash in the 1990s, according to *The Oregonian*. Fifteen libraries in Jackson County are scheduled to close indefinitely, April 6, 2007 because of a \$23 million shortfall in the county budget. The shortfall has forced county commissioners to make dire choices, such as the closing of the main library in Medford and branches in Applegate, Ashland, Butte Falls, Central Point, Eagle Point, Gold Hill, Jacksonville, Phoenix, Prospect, Rogue River, Ruch, Shady Cove, Talent and White City.

Major library systems with inadequate funding to keep open branch libraries: A one-year \$1.2 million increase in the budget for the Minneapolis Public Library (MPL) won't be

enough for the library board to keep three of 15 branches open. The board wants to budget on a three-year basis, and without assurances of continued funds, will close the branches, according to *Library Journal*.

School library media teacher positions being eliminated: Sixteen library media teacher positions in the Merced City (Calif.) School District will be cut next fall, the Board of Education decided by a 2-1 vote. Superintendent Terry Brace said the librarians wouldn't lose their jobs but may have different positions next fall. Robert Frausto, associate superintendent for personnel, said the district's goal would be to hire back as many library media teachers as it can. Susan Walsh, a Merced College librarian who said she was speaking as a voter and community activist, said the board's decision was a philosophical one rather than budget-based. She urged the board not to cut the library teachers. Walsh said the board would have to answer to parents, students and the community for cutting library media teacher positions.

States risking losing library services, as they don't provide state funding for libraries: Vermont is one of only six states that does not provide funding for public libraries. Library advocates are urging the state to start providing support or risk losing libraries services. The librarians are asking the state to pay 10 percent of their operating costs – an average, they say, of what other states contribute, according to *Barre Montpelier Times Argus*.

Nonunion parents placed in school library positions: At Forrest and McCall school libraries in Philadelphia, Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT) officials want to know why non-certified, non-union parents were placed in library jobs. Parents who are officials of their respective schools' home-and-school associations staffed both libraries. By contract, PFT said school libraries must be staffed by either librarians or LIMAs (Library Instructional Material Assistants).

Libraries threatened with a loss in funding if they don't filter the Internet: Monroe County (N.Y.) officials threatened to pull funding for the Central Library of Rochester over a policy that lets patrons view blocked Web sites that could be inappropriate or pornographic.

University libraries that cannot afford to adequately update their library collections: A budget gap at the University of Hawaii-Manoa has led the campus library to slash spending on new books by a third. Anticipating cuts in its own budget, the library has, among other moves, trimmed \$650,000 from its \$1.9-million budget for buying books, which could represent the loss of about 10,000 books the library would otherwise have purchased. Some faculty members called the move a threat to Manoa's stature as a leading research institution, and one librarian described the effect as "a huge scar" on the collection. Library officials said they had drastically reduced planned book purchases from major academic and trade publishers through at least June because of a projected shortfall in the library's budget this year. The university faces an overall budget shortfall of \$7-million for the 2006-7 academic year.

School libraries with dated books: School librarians in South Carolina say they need more money for new books. The state Association of School Librarians says the average book on the shelves in school libraries is 17 years old. Some of those books describe a world in which the Berlin Wall still stands and Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia are still on maps of Europe. The association is asking state lawmakers to allocate 25 dollars per public school student for new school library books in next year's budget. That would mean 20 million dollars for new books and materials, according to The Associated Press.

Stories on Positive Trends:

Citizen rallies against library closings: Some 300 supporters of the Jackson County (Ore.) Library demonstrated in downtown Medford January 31 as county commissioners held a public hearing at the courthouse on the fate of the headquarters library and its 14 branches. The entire library system is scheduled to close its doors April 6 because of a fiscal crisis triggered by federal legislators' failure in November to renew a subsidy to communities whose revenue relies on the logging industry.

Academic librarians organizing for pay equity: Librarians in the State University of New York (SUNY) system have begun a campaign to win pay equity with classroom faculty on campuses throughout the state, unanimously passing a resolution and issuing a six-page report written by an ad hoc committee of the SUNY Librarians Association (SUNYLA). Librarians have enjoyed faculty status on SUNY campuses for decades, but the differences between librarians and "classroom faculty" are stark. Faculty members, for example, have 10-month contracts while library faculty members have 12-month "calendar year" obligations. In terms of salary, the average SUNY librarian in 2006 earned \$55,595, while professors and instructors averaged \$61,413.

Presidential support for library funding: President Bush's fiscal year (FY) 2008 budget requests \$226,182,000 for the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), an increase of \$15,585,000 over FY 2006 and an even bigger increase than LSTA would have received for FY 2007. The LSTA number includes an increase in the Grants to States program, bringing funding for that program to \$171,500,000. The budget also includes \$4 million for policy research and statistics. The budget request includes \$26,500,000 for The First Lady's Twenty-First Century Librarian Program, a \$2,740,000 million increase over 2006. The Improving Literacy Through School Libraries program was level-funded.

City councils approving plans for new libraries: The Walnut Creek (Calif.) City Council recently voted 4-1 to approve a funding plan for its \$43.5 million library, expected to break ground in 2008.

Major library systems deciding to expand Sunday hours: Last year the San Francisco Board of Supervisors allotted the San Francisco Public Library (SFPL) an additional \$480,000 to expand Sunday hours, given that library service is available on Sundays at only seven of 27 branches and the main library. Recently, with the implementation plan still in formulation, the board voted unanimously to urge the Library Commission to establish "permanent Sunday hours," according to *Library Journal*.

Referendums supporting library funding: Voters in Albany, N.Y., approved a referendum Feb. 6 that commits \$29.1 million to overhaul five neighborhood library branches

Cities opening expanded renovated libraries: In Fort Wayne, Ind., the Allen County Public Library (ACPL) recently opened its expanded 367,000 square foot downtown library. Five years ago, taxpayers approved more than \$84 million to renovate and expand the more than 30-year-old main library and renovate and/or build 11 branches. The building includes not only a café and art gallery but also retail stores and a food court. A performing arts theater, part of the complex, will open April 1.

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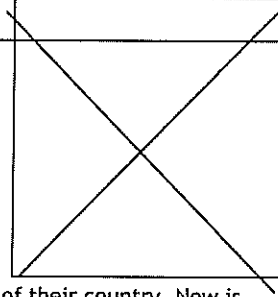
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Libraries in the News

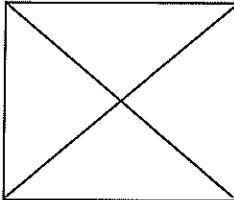
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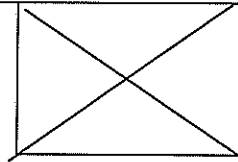
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