By Wendy Newman

Internationally, how important is advocacy to the library community? Here’s an example. In one of the sessions I attended at the 2014 World Library and Information Congress (IFLA) in Lyon, France, panelists from across the globe reported on discussions of the IFLA Trend Report in their respective countries. This report was the result of “twelve months’ consultation with experts and stakeholders from a range of disciplines to explore and discuss emerging trends in our new information environment.”

In presentation after presentation, international colleagues spoke of the need to strengthen their advocacy so that the value and impact of libraries could be better understood and supported. They spoke of the need to tell the library’s story effectively, of the imperative to engage the support of decision-makers.

So it was not surprising that the Massively Open Online Course (MOOC) I offered earlier this year, called Library Advocacy Unshushed had such high international enrollment. I had expected the vast majority of the participants in this free, accessible course – a six-week adaptation of a twelve-week elective, Advocacy and Library Issues, taught in the Master of Information program at the University of Toronto’s iSchool — to be Canadian and American. However, fully 43% were from outside North America (15% from Europe; 9% Asia; 4% each from Africa, South America, and Australia; 5% other). They represented every type of library. Many of them were in small libraries, where their feelings of professional isolation could sometimes be discouraging. Nearly all expressed concern about a bleak funding environment. Participants from public libraries in the UK, for example, had seen devastating losses. Academic librarians in Spain and Greece had been working within stable institutions in which libraries had been at the heart of the institution’s history before their countries’ economies descended into freefall. Librarians in the former USSR republics looked toward a brighter future, and knew that the role of libraries in their universities could not be taken for granted. English is a second or third language for about one-third of them, so the transcripts of video lectures and interviews were especially useful. Altogether 5,200 participants registered for the course, which was offered through EdX, a not-for profit partnership.

Though most participants had completed degrees or course work in library and information science, it was clear that they had little

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Message from the Editors

This issue of International Leads features three articles that explore online and face-to-face educational opportunities for librarians around the globe. Our feature article, “International Library Advocacy and MOOCs,” educates librarians about library advocacy. Wendy Newman’s online course entitled “Library Advocacy Unshushed” was offered through the University of Toronto’s iSchool with enrollees from throughout the world.

In her article entitled “International and Comparative School Librarianship at CSULB,” Lesley Farmer discusses how her students learned about their subject through real-time discussions with library practitioners from around the world.

Elenita Tapawan and Heather Ward write about the U.S. State Department and the Broward County Public Library partnering to host a successful workshop for 26 American Spaces Coordinators. The Coordinators traveled from their libraries located in Latin America and the Caribbean to Florida to attend the workshop.

Loida Garcia-Febo summarizes ALA’s International Relations sponsored presentation, “Libraries as a Safe ‘Heaven’ in Times of Conflict.” The presentation was part of the Library 2.014 Worldwide Virtual Conference held in October 2014.

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~Kevin Murphy and Beth Cramer

Call for Submission

Do you have news about…

International library activities?
People in international librarianship?
Upcoming international conferences?

Then why not submit to International Leads? Send your news and stories to the co-editors:
Elizabeth Cramer, crameree@appstate.edu
Kevin Murphy, kevin.murphy@kctcs.edu

IRRT Web Site:
http://www.ala.org/irrt

International Leads (ISSN 0892-4546) is published quarterly by the International Relations Round Table of the American Library Association in March, June, September, and December. The first issue was published in 1957. IL contains news about international library activities, the international work of ALA and other organizations, people and publications in the field. IL is indexed by Library Literature and Library and Information Science Abstracts (LISA) and is available online: http://www.ala.org/irrt/intleads/internationalleads. The IRRT mailing address is: International Relations Office, American Library Association, 50 E. Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611. Materials for IL should be sent to Co-editor, Kevin Murphy, Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College, Middlesboro, KY. 40965 USA email: kevin.murphy@kctcs.edu
Message from the IRRT Chair, Robin Kear

We are almost halfway through the IRRT year and making progress on a number of initiatives. If you plan to attend ALA Midwinter, you are welcome to stop by the All-IRRT committee meeting on Saturday morning to listen, participate, or volunteer. You may also sit in on the Executive Board meeting on Sunday morning. Our committees will be hard at work planning their activities and sessions for Annual in San Francisco!

Consider submitting a proposal or poster! There are four calls out for participation in IRRT Annual programs. The Chair’s Program (Library Leadership Initiatives) and the International Papers and Projects (Mentoring Across and Within Borders) deadlines are December 19, the Pre-Conference deadline is January 31 (Leading from Any Position), and the International Posters deadline is February 6. Please contact Delin Guerra dguerra@ala.org or myself rlk25@pitt.edu for a copy of any of these calls.

The Ad Hoc committees are continuing their efforts. Bylaws should have changes ready for you to vote on in the spring and the IRRT Endowment group continues to solicit donations. Please consider giving to help us reach our next goal.

Thanks to the hard work of the IRRT publications committee we are ramping up our social media efforts, including updating our blog and Facebook page. Please stay tuned for further developments in this area.

The joint IRC/IRRT call for our pilot international mentoring was a success! We are taking a look at the mentee and mentor applications this month; you should hear from us before Midwinter.

Thank you again to all of our IRRT volunteers, including those willing to run for our elected positions. If you would like to volunteer for a committee appointment for the 2015-2017 cycle, please contact chair-elect John Hickok or fill in the form on the IRRT Committees page.

I wish you and yours health and happiness in this season of peace.

Robin Kear
IRRT Chair, 2014-15

Message from the IRRT Chair-Elect, John Hickok

Greetings fellow IRRT members! I echo Robin’s many invitations. Come join us at Midwinter. Volunteer on one of our excellent committees. Submit a proposal for one of our Annual programs (paper/poster/preconference).

ALA Midwinter is a great time for IRRT: we meet, discuss, make plans, and connect with each other.

However, travel is not always possible for everyone. So I am encouraging committees and committee chairs to make use of Skype (or other communication tools) for Saturday’s committee meetings. The live interaction of committee discussion—whether in-person or on a speakerphone—is one of the dynamic aspects of our collegial collaboration.

I recently returned from visiting libraries throughout Southeast Asia. This included the Philippines, where I spoke at the Philippine Library Association’s annual conference. There is tremendous interest and enthusiasm about ALA Annual being in San Francisco. For our many IRRT members abroad, especially along the Pacific Rim, San Francisco poses a terrific opportunity to attend!

Our amazing committee projects are one of the strong appeals of IRRT. Whether it is the Sister Libraries committee matching libraries or the Reception Committee rolling out the red carpet every Annual, our efforts get noticed. If you are an IRRT member and think you can’t participate because of distance, think again—your talents are welcome across time zones. (My last conference call was from Jakarta, Indonesia!). To volunteer for an IRRT committee, simply fill in the form on the IRRT Committees page.

Hope to see you at Midwinter!

John Hickok
Chair-Elect, 2014-1015
Broward County Library Embraces State Department’s American Spaces

By Elenita M. Tapawan & Heather E. Ward

The U.S. Department of State has a long history of building ties between the people of the United States and citizens of the rest of the world through the medium of libraries. Just as American libraries are evolving from traditional repositories of knowledge to centers of their community with vibrant outreach programs, so too are the U.S. public diplomacy platforms known today as American Spaces.

In March 2014, the State Department’s Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) partnered with the Broward County (FL) Public Library (BCL) to host a workshop for 26 American Spaces Coordinators from Latin America and the Caribbean. The purpose of the workshop was to inspire participants by showing them award-winning outreach in action and to provide them with the skills and resources needed to implement similar programs at home.

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IIP provides guidance, funding, and training to support American Spaces, which are managed by U.S. Embassies and Consulates around the world. The bureau has a corps of Information Resource Officers (IROs) who provide this guidance and support on the ground through expertise in areas such as project management, content curation, and innovative outreach. Twenty-five IROs are posted overseas across the globe and most are responsible for a regional portfolio covering several countries.

When IROs covering the Western Hemisphere—Elenita Tapawan, Heather Ward, and Holly Murten—contacted the BCL to gauge its interest in partnering for a day of programming for a three-day American Spaces workshop, administrative manager Elsie Lewin responded with an enthusiastic, “yes!” She then proceeded to offer a program that exceeded all expectations. With just several weeks notice, Elsie and the IROs developed a full-day program that included presentations from the Library Foundation, Outreach Services, and Young Adult Services. The workshop was held at the main branch in April, 2014. The agenda also included visits to four different branch libraries, each serving a different population—from small to large communities, with diverse backgrounds and different needs.

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education in advocacy and welcomed an opportunity to improve their game. Perhaps we have depended too often on our associations to get libraries on our community’s agenda. They simply can’t do it without a strong, “on the ground” advocacy force that engages communities in the value and values of libraries. Learning to be effective, evidence-based advocates means parting company with some habits of mind and expression – habits like entitlement-based arguments, undue reliance on statistics, appeals to nostalgia, and “getting the message out” without regard to the priorities of our audiences.

So what do we need, and what can we get from an advocacy course that we can’t get from a conference presentation? The MOOC format offers time and sequence for learning and reflection, a research-based foundation, and the opportunity to discuss ideas with colleagues from all over the world. There are graded exercises and rubrics for self-evaluation.

The course combines the foundational research underlying successful advocacy with practical skill development that prepares participants for action. We begin with the classic values of librarianship and explore the distinctions between marketing, promotion, public relations, and advocacy. We look at how effective advocacy leads to transformation. We look at the research on perceptions of libraries – all kinds of libraries—and the significant differences between the perceptions of librarians (“insiders”) and others (“outsiders”). A major component examines the lessons of research on influence and relationship development. On the basis of this insight and evidence, the course offers practical lessons in strategy development and advocacy planning, walking participants through the five classic planning steps, from the development of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timed) objectives to evaluation. Special topics include the potential and use of social media, effective organization of delegations in advocacy meetings, and media relations.

For each of the six weeks of “live” delivery, the MOOC provided a package of short illustrated video lectures with complete transcripts, a list of required and suggested readings, exercises to apply and test new insights, discussion postings, and guest interviews with experts. These sixteen guests – which included Joe Janes, Ken Haycock, Sarah Thomas, John Szabo, Huw Williams, Nancy Kranich, and Mary Ann Mavrinac – contributed their stories and personal insights that enlivened the advocacy research and principles. The archive of lectures and speaker interviews remained online until December 1, 2014, so that participants who had not been able to complete the course during the “live” period could refer to them. This is one of the benefits of enrollment in a MOOC: time pressures are a daily feature of our lives, and we can all take longer than we expect to complete our plans.

I find it frustrating that many articles about MOOCs focus on dropout rates. Yes, withdrawals happen, but the real story is what participants do, what they learn, and what they take away. OCLC’s At a Tipping Point report in mid-2014 makes it clear that consumer behaviour, technology developments, and economic incentives imply a strong role for MOOCs and similar offerings. The final assignment in Library Advocacy Unshushed invited participants to write a structured reflection on the lessons and surprises of the course and the ways in which they could move ahead in their advocacy. The results were stunning. Participants wrote of their new perspective on advocacy. They understood more about influence. They were now attuned to the decision-making structures and processes in their environments. They had learned the importance of proactive relationships of credibility and trust. They had a better sense of the potential – and the potential drawbacks - of social media.

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Libraries as Safe “Heavens” in Times of Conflict

By Loida Garcia-Febo

Last October ALA’s International Relations Round Table sponsored Libraries as a Safe “Heaven” in Times of Conflict*, an online event and part of the Library 2.014 Worldwide Virtual Conference. The program featured librarians from regions experiencing different types of crisis who shared insightful strategies that might help colleagues help others in their region, equip themselves to take action if needed, and learn ways to help libraries in cities currently in conflict.

The event started a conversation about how libraries are helping people in cities experiencing conflict around the globe by providing shelter, basic needs and books. Libraries are liaising with organizations to bring services into their communities. In times of armed conflicts, crises and natural disasters, libraries are playing a key role in the recovery process helping to keep families together and rebuild communities. Libraries are saving lives and providing hope in uncertain times.

The speakers agreed on the importance of establishing strong relationships with community-based organizations and agencies that might be instrumental in providing resources needed by the community in times of crisis. Librarians are using social media such as Twitter to communicate accessibility of resources and availability of library staff to help in various ways.

It is important for librarians to stay updated about community resources related to cultural literacy and education. At the same time, it is a good idea to provide media training to library employees. Staff support should be provided to library workers going to work, and to those that might decide not to go to work while the community experiences crisis. Finally, documenting the entire process is valuable for librarians in other regions to understand how they could respond if there is a crisis in their part of the world.

A recording of the live event is available for viewing.

The conversation about this topic is expanding. The International Librarians Network dedicated a discussion forum to the role of libraries in disasters and invited guest posts to share related news. One of the posts was about libraries in disasters and the role of IFLA.

We are pleased to share a bibliography created by Dr. Roberto Delgadillo, Libraries as a Safe “Heaven” in Times of Conflict: A Selected Bibliography of Print and Electronic Resources. You can also read online about ALA’s efforts to help libraries experiencing crisis at our International Relations Office.

*Note that we used the word heaven because libraries are a heaven/haven.
Angela J.A. Kent to Represent IRRT in Emerging Leaders Program

The International Relations Round Table (IRRT) announced Angela J.A. Kent of Austin, TX as its representative in the 2015 Emerging Leader program. Kent is currently a reference librarian in information services with the Texas State Library & Archives Commission.

Kent is an experienced library paraprofessional and professional in academic, federal, and special libraries. Kent’s academic and professional background is in international relations (defense and intelligence studies) and her research interests include open government and open data, research methods and analysis, intelligence analysis, grey literature and sources, open source intelligence, and copyright and information policy issues.

“We are excited to have Angela as the 2015 IRRT Emerging Leader,” said IRRT Chair Robin Kear. “Her work background and multicultural experience mesh well with the goals of the IRRT to advance international library issues. She has great leadership potential and we look forward to watching her career. We are happy to sponsor new leaders in our profession through the Emerging Leaders program.”

As IRRT’s representative for the 2015 Emerging Leader program, Kent will attend the 2015 Midwinter Meeting in Chicago, as well as the 2015 ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco. The Emerging Leaders program enables newer librarians from across the country to participate in workgroups, network with peers, gain an inside look into ALA’s structure and have an opportunity to serve the profession in a leadership capacity. Emerging Leaders receive up to $1,000 each to participate in the Midwinter Meeting and Annual Conference, and each participant is expected to provide years of service to ALA or one of its units.

IRRT, the largest round table of the American Library Association (ALA), is committed to promoting interest in library issues and librarianship worldwide. To learn more about IRRT, visit IRRT’s website: www.ala.org/irrt.

2015 ALA Midwinter IRC and IRRT Meetings and Programs

The IRRT/IRC all-committees meeting will be held on Saturday, January 31st from 8:30 to 11:30 in McCormick Place - W190A. IRRT Committee Chairs will meet with the executive board and each other for a brief meeting from 8:30 - 9:00. The meetings with your committees will be held from 9:00 - 10:30. Please have someone from the IRRT committee rejoin the chairs board group with a brief report on your progress between 10:30 and 11:30.

Friday, January 30,
International Relations Committee I
#53025, 2:00 - 4:00 pm
Hyatt Regency, McCormick, CC 10C
IRRT Welcome Session
3:00 - 4:00 pm
Hyatt Regency Chicago, Room TBA

Saturday, January 31
IRC/IRRT All Subcommittee Meeting
#53070
8:00 - 11:30
IRRT Subcommittee Reports 10:30 - 11:30 am
IRC Subcommittees 9:00-11:30
IFLA Update
#53071, 10:30 - 11:30
McCormick Place - W176B

Sunday, February 1
IRRT Executive Committee Meeting,
#53026, 8:00 - 11:30 am
McCormick Place - W175B

Monday, February 2
International Relations Committee II,
#53027, 1:00 - 2:30 pm
By Lesley S. J. Farmer

In working to internationalize its curriculum, the teacher librarian program at California State University Long Beach (CSULB) in summer, 2014, offered an online graduate course on international and comparative school librarianship. Though advertised on several national and international listservs, such as the American Association of School Librarians, the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL), and the School Libraries Section of IFLA, all of the enrolled students were Californians and most were current students. The remaining students were CSULB program graduates. Students represented a spectrum of ages and ethnicities.

In the course, students explored how school libraries differ around the world in terms of education, roles, staffing, resources, and services. They examined the role of school libraries as a universal construct and in the context of their countries and cultures. Students analyzed information technologies and media issues of politics, equity, bias, and impact. They also examined national and international school library professional associations, practiced cultural competence, and addressed information needs of international students through the school library program.

To make the course more engaging and authentic, students communicated in real time with school librarians in Canada, Jamaica, Costa Rica, South Africa, India, Australia, and Malaysia. These speakers were all professional colleagues of the instructor, mainly through IASL. The online discussions focused on the topic of the week (e.g., teacher librarianship preparation, technologies, services, etc.), noting challenges and successes. Students were inspired, for example, by the Indian school librarian Madhu Bhargava’s professional activities at local, national and international levels. Students were surprised at the lack of nationally required training for Canadian school librarians. They were impressed with the efforts of Jamaican librarians to provide each other professional development opportunities. Students were surprised that school libraries exist in almost every school in Malaysia. They lauded South African librarians’ campaign of “Every school a school library and school librarian,” and their ingenuity of providing such services as “Library in the box.”

Australian library educator Barbara Combes provided an interactive session about library space and information landscapes. Students were also impressed with Costa Rica’s partnerships to provide digital libraries and foster student information creations.

For their major assignment, paired students wrote papers comparing and contrasting school library systems in California with systems in two countries. In weekly assignments, students shared their insights with each other via discussion forums.

Here are a few representative student comments:

“This class allowed me to step out of my comfort zone and see what it is like to be a librarian in other parts of the world.”

“One of the biggest take-aways of the class is that despite the cultural differences, we have similar struggles (facilities, budget, staffing) and strive for the same goals (love of reading, literacy information, digital access to information and resources, and critical thinking).”

“The thing that will stick with me the most from this course is the shared ideas and perspectives about equitable and efficient use of (always deficient) resources and how to maximize influence and effect with minimal money, space, and technology.”

This course was a pilot project but may be offered again if interest warrants. For more details contact Lesley.Farmer@csulb.edu.
(Broward, cont. from page 4)

This aligned neatly with American Spaces that adapt programming to serve the specific needs of their local community.

Broward County Library (BCL) is the ninth largest library system in the U.S., with about 30% of its users under the age of 18. English is the primary language, followed by Spanish, French Creole, and Portuguese. This was a familiar demographic to workshop participants coming, as they did, from American Spaces in 16 different countries. They reach out to young, often underserved populations in all of these languages, but focus particularly on access to English resources.

After participants were welcomed by Director, Skye Patrick, Broward County Mayor Barbara Sharief discussed the economic development of the county and its international ties. Then librarians from BCL’s different branches shared information on creative programs such as a summit for young men to develop leadership skills; a young adult volunteer project that taps into existing talents, develops new skills, and results in concrete professional development; and innovative, hands-on programming for teens. These presentations gave participants an excellent example of how American public libraries connect with their communities.

Participants were inspired by visits to the state-of-the-art African-American Research Library and Cultural Center and the combined library and Young at Art Museum. The group also visited the Creation Station, a makerspace that encourages learning by doing through the use of the latest technology. There, they marveled at robotics, circuitry, and 3D printing demonstrations. One participant from El Salvador was so impressed that he has since hosted a makerspace workshop for Salvadoran librarians and professors, promoting creative play and the development of work skills and competencies among youth.

Bringing local colleagues and Spaces partners to Broward County not only introduced them to the latest methods for reaching young people, but also to America itself. Several participants had never been to the U.S. before and even this brief glimpse will better equip them to introduce America to their communities.

American Spaces present both digital and in-person outreach to their users. They provide the vital “last three feet,” the personal contact that Edward R. Murrow described as “the real crucial link in the international exchange.” Broward County Library helped inspire new and creative approaches to this contact. BCL proved an excellent partner for our American Spaces workshop.

(MOOCs, cont. from page 5)

The experience was so encouraging that we are going to offer the MOOC again, beginning in February 2015, with some updates and added guests. Based on many conversations and programs at the 2014 IFLA Conference, I expect that IFLA’s constituent associations will also encourage more national and international advocacy education and networking. The course will be open for registration in December 2014 at: https://www.edx.org/course/library-advocacy-unshushed-university-torontox-la101x
Call for Presentation Proposals

The IRRT Preconference Committee invites proposals for presentations at Annual Conference in San Francisco on June 26, 2015. The IRRT Preconference provides a forum for librarians interested in international librarianship to discuss the current and future state of librarianship.

This year the IRRT Preconference is inviting proposals from around the world addressing how to lead and how to nurture leadership of both individuals and libraries. This year there will be time set aside for breakout sessions, during which each presenter will facilitate discussion related to his or her topic at a table.

The following topics are suggested for presenters to consider, but other topics pertaining to the theme are also welcome:

- Sustainable community based library projects in developing areas of the world
- Public libraries that have raised their profiles by taking the lead in education, career preparedness and other fields
- University libraries that have taken the lead in innovation at their institution or more widely
- Librarians leading positive change outside management structures—projects to nurture leadership at all levels in any library

In the proposal, please provide:
- Title of the presentation
- Abstract of the presentation (no more than one page or 300 words)
- Name, title of position, and affiliation of the presenter(s)
- Contact information (email address and phone number)
- Brief biographical statement of the presenter(s)' credentials.

Submission

Please submit your proposal to: enyren@placer.ca.gov no later than January 31, 2015. All applicants will be notified by March 1, 1015.

Call for Poster Session Proposals

The IRRT International Poster Sessions Committee invites you to submit poster session proposals on international themes for the 2015 ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco.

The poster session committee encourages submissions from all types of libraries and on any topic relevant to international librarianship. Submissions may include a description of an innovative library program; an analysis of a solution to a problem; a report of a research study; or any other presentation that would benefit the larger library community.

Poster session participants place materials such as pictures, data, graphs, diagrams and narrative text on boards that are usually 4 x 8 feet. During their assigned 1 ½ hour time periods, participants informally discuss their presentations with conference attendees. Titles/abstracts from previous years are available on ALA Connect: http://connect.ala.org/node/210160 (note that this site is only serving as an archive for previous Annual Conference poster sessions – for information on this year's posters, go to: https://ala2015.wingateweb.com/portal/ssoCfp.ww).

The deadline for submitting an application is February 6, 2015. Applicants will be notified by the end of March, after a double blind peer review process, whether their submission has been accepted for presentation at the conference. The 2015 ALA Annual Poster Sessions will be held June 27 and 28, 2015 (the Saturday and Sunday of the conference) in the exhibits hall.

Start your application process now at https://ala2015.wingateweb.com/portal/ssoCfp.ww. You must create a username and password for the site before you submit your application, you must choose to submit a poster session proposal after you log-in, and you will receive a confirmation e-mail after you have completed your submission. Additional questions regarding international poster sessions can be directed to:

Deana Groves, co-chair of the IRRT International Poster Session Committee, deana.groves@wku.edu

Or

Valeria Molteni, co-chair of the IRRT International Poster Session Committee, valeria.molteni@sjsu.edu