

**American Library Association  
Report from President Julius C. Jefferson Jr.  
January 2021**

Since our June Annual meeting, much of my time has been focused on Advocacy. Work on the other two items on my Presidential agenda - EDI and ALA Branding- will unfold during the virtual midwinter and in the coming months.

**HOLDING SPACE**

This two-week virtual advocacy tour was my first engagement as President. Thanks to the leadership of ALA State Advocacy Assistant Director, Megan Cusick, Holding Space successfully pivoted from a physical cross-country tour to a virtual one.

This highlighting of the essential and invaluable work being done by tribal, rural, HBCU, school and under-served libraries, was well-received. The itinerary, themes and list of hosts can also be found [here](#).

We had 87 panelists including library patrons/students, local, state and federal officials; Involvement from 12 state associations, 2 ALA Affiliates and 3 State Libraries; 4,367 total registrations and 1,988 total event attendees. As of December 31<sup>st</sup>, the website which contains my '[Letters from the Road](#)', [media coverage](#) and [event recordings](#) has since received 25,123 views.

**OTHER ADVOCACY EFFORTS**

Additionally, I have tirelessly advocated and sought support for the [Library Stabilization Fund Act](#) – a bill introduced by Sen. Jack Reed (D-RI) & Rep. Andy Levin (D-MI) which will bolster library services and address the financial losses due to COVID-19.

The ALA Connect Live events have addressed important issues and engaged members on topics such as EDI, Advocacy, reopening libraries during COVID-19, intellectual freedom and the REALM project and a focus on LIS students. We have had a variety of speakers from ALA Division leadership, committees and affiliates, as well as outside speakers like IMLS Director Crosby Kemper III and OCLC WebJunction Director Sharon Streams.

Submitted a [joint letter](#) with United for Libraries President David Paige to the Loudon County, VA, Board of Supervisors, in support of the governing board of the Loudoun County Public Library.

Recorded congratulatory video from to Congressman Andy Levin (D-MI-09), MLA's legislative awardee, during their annual awards program.

[Submitted a letter](#) to the Biden-Harris education transition team with AASL President Kathy Carroll, and leaders from forty-eight state chapters.

In the area of International librarianship, the [ALA Task Force on the United Nations Sustainable Goals](#) has been making progress in reaching out to more libraries and library workers. To illustrate how libraries are helping communities meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals- the Task Force created visual displays, including a chart featuring services during COVID-19, and a chart that

highlighted the services of the Los Angeles Public Library. The Task Force also participated in webinars including a webinar presented at the Philippine Library Association.

## SCHEDULE

A number of my activities as ALA President have either been canceled or postponed, due to the needed restrictions caused by the global pandemic COVID-19. I anticipate further cancelations of domestic and international trips. Many speaking engagements have also been adapted and transformed into virtual programs. Below you will find travel, speaking engagements and meetings conducted since the ALA Annual meeting.

### Press

- **Gray Washington News Bureau:** Congress aims to protect future of American libraries (July 20<sup>th</sup>)  
[Congress Protecting American Libraries](#)
- **Washington Post:** Opinion Piece on MLK Jr. Memorial Library Renovation (July 23<sup>rd</sup>)  
[American Libraries Need Pandemic Relief](#)
- **Forbes:** Google Partnership with ALA (July 23<sup>rd</sup>)  
[13 Libraries: Entrepreneurship Hubs in Underserved Communities](#)
- **Library Journal:** Library Stabilization Fund Act Seeks \$2 Billion for Pandemic Losses, Reopening Costs, and More (July 28<sup>th</sup>)  
[Library Stabilization Fund Act Seeks 2 Billion](#)
- **Living Facts:** American Democracy Can Be Found at the Library (October 7<sup>th</sup>)  
[American Democracy Can Be Found at the Library](#)

### Virtual Engagements

- [ALA Connect Live](#) (July 23<sup>rd</sup>, August 27<sup>th</sup>, September 24<sup>th</sup>, October 22<sup>nd</sup> & November 19<sup>th</sup>)
- [ALA Holding Space](#) (July 27<sup>th</sup> –August 7<sup>th</sup>)
- [Libraries Shaping Peace Global Dialog of Association Leaders](#), Speaker (September 21<sup>st</sup>)
- [Computers in Libraries/ Internet Librarian Biggest Challenges and Solutions for the Future](#), Keynote Speaker (September 25<sup>th</sup>)
- [FCC's Digital Opportunity Equity Recognition \(DOER\) Award Program](#), Represented [America's Libraries](#) to receive this award (October 1<sup>st</sup>)
- Addressed North Carolina Central Library School International Librarianship students (October 8<sup>th</sup>)
- Addressed UIUC ischool International Librarianship students (October 12<sup>th</sup>)
- [Citizens for Maryland Citizens: 2020 Annual Conference for Friends, Trustees, and Library Supporters](#), Closing Speaker (October 17<sup>th</sup>)
- Addressed the ALA student chapter at the University of Hawaii (October 20<sup>th</sup>)

- [Advancing Your Library Agenda Post-Elections](#): Webinar to offer strategies for early engagement with elected leaders (October 21<sup>st</sup>)
- Meeting the Challenge in Times of Crisis Sharjah Virtual international Library forum Keynote (November 5)
- Anti-Racism & Libraries: A Conversation with ALA President Julius C. Jefferson, Jr., Council of Chief Librarians California Community Colleges Virtual Conference (December 10<sup>th</sup>)
- Library of Congress Archives Forum (December 10<sup>th</sup>)

### **Canceled Engagements**

- Sharjah International Book Fair (November 4<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>)
- Guadalajara International Book Fair (November 28<sup>th</sup> - December 6<sup>th</sup>)

### **Meetings**

- Joined ALA ED for the ED Roundtable (August 4<sup>th</sup>)
- Meeting with Forward Together Chairs (August 7<sup>th</sup>)
- Meeting with Forward Together Chairs, (September 11<sup>th</sup>)
- Virtual Fall Council meeting (September 18<sup>th</sup>)
- Virtual US Russia Library Dialog Meeting (September 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>)
- Meeting with COSLA (September 23<sup>rd</sup>)
- Presidential Advisory Meeting (September 29<sup>th</sup>)
- Division Presidents Meeting (September 30<sup>th</sup>)
- ALA Executive Board Meetings (October 24-26)
- ALA Executive Board Retreat (November 14<sup>th</sup>)
- ALA National Network (November 16<sup>th</sup>)
- ALA Virtual Council Meeting (December 3<sup>rd</sup>)

Lastly, I have dedicated considerable time working with the Forward Together Working Group chairs in preparation for the rescheduled December 3<sup>rd</sup> Council meeting and the final report for the January 2021 Virtual Midwinter meeting.

The invaluable work of ALA staff has made the challenging circumstance of leading in a virtual environment manageable. Thanks to the ALA Governance, PPA, CMO, Membership staff and all who have supported my efforts as President and the work of the association during this unprecedented time.