

## **Annual Report of the Association for Library Collections & Technical Services**

**Jennifer Bowen, President, 2019-20**

### **Core Development**

Throughout Fall 2019, a revised Steering Committee (<https://core.ala.org/steering-committee/>) and new project teams agreed on the new name and worked through all operational aspects of the new division. A Communications Working Group developed and implemented an intense member communication campaign, including in-person and virtual town halls, focus groups, surveys, and countless updates through email, social media, and a new website: <https://core.ala.org/>. In December the final project plan was shared with members, including the proposed bylaws ([https://docs.google.com/document/d/1inbWssE5\\_evD3RkG\\_ODsb-L2BTyDhNv0FuIJX8K\\_poY/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1inbWssE5_evD3RkG_ODsb-L2BTyDhNv0FuIJX8K_poY/edit?usp=sharing))

Throughout the spring, communication continued, and each division held a final set of virtual town halls. In the spring election, 91% of ALCTS members who voted supported the creation of Core, and the other division members overwhelmingly voted to support Core as well (LITA 96% yes, LLAMA 96% yes).

In May, new Working Groups were launched to lead the transition:  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ofjZ8zxN9cVT9LzOlcg9xSfBt1H\\_KauC7hUw9pyC-Vs/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ofjZ8zxN9cVT9LzOlcg9xSfBt1H_KauC7hUw9pyC-Vs/edit?usp=sharing)

The rest of the summer will be devoted to winding down ALCTS and planning for Core. A virtual celebration of our three divisions is being planned for July.

### **ALA and COVID-19**

Like all of our institutions, ALA was impacted by the pandemic, and ALA staff have been working at home since March. The ALA Annual Conference was also canceled. Staff has continued to provide webinars (information below) and is working on ways to repurpose Annual Conference programming for virtual presentation this Fall. They also continue to plan for the Core launch on September 1.

ALA's move to a new office was also delayed by COVID, from April to June. In May, ALCTS staff packed the old office area and most of the move was completed by early June. Starting the week of June 15, one quarter of the staff at a time will go to the new office at 205-225 N. Michigan Avenue to unpack and organize. Through August, staff will continue to work in teams at 50% occupancy, adhering to social distancing guidelines set by the City of Chicago. The official return to work date is anticipated to be September 8.

The ALA budget situation worsened in FY20. At the Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia, ALA announced that much of its cash and short term reserves, including those reserves built up by the divisions, had been used to cover operating deficits, and that cash flow to pay bills remains a concern. ALA has applied

for and received some relief under the Payroll Protection Program, but with even lower revenue due to COVID, the deficit has widened, and staff will be required to take one week of furlough in August, and five weeks of furlough in FY21.

### **ALCTS Activities 2019-2020**

During 2019-2020, while much of the attention of ALCTS members has focused on envisioning and discussing a possible future for the division's work as a part of Core, some ALCTS committees were less active than in previous years. Nevertheless, many essential ALCTS and ALCTS section activities continued during 2019-2020 and provided continuing value to ALCTS members in areas including continuing education, professional development, leadership development, standards development, and advocacy. During the transition period between the vote to approve Core and the actual formation of the new division, much of this work will continue without interruption.

The activities of ALCTS over the past 6 months have continued to reflect its strategic plan. Programming continues to be a strength for the division. For years ALCTS has been providing programming in multiple formats, which was extremely helpful this year with the reduction of a physical presence at ALA Midwinter and much of the world working from home due to Covid-19. With the cancellation of many in-person events, ALCTS groups and members moved their activities to a virtual environment more quickly and successfully than could have otherwise been imagined.

There has been a significant increase in regard to assessing current divisional programs and services within ALCTS due to the upcoming merger with LITA and LLAMA. Many committees and interest groups also addressed strengthening diversity and inclusiveness, in particular in the area of assessment of program proposals.

### **ALCTS Awards, etc.**

ALCTS award juries selected deserving [award recipients](#) for twelve division and section-level awards; in addition, three ALCTS members were selected by the ALCTS President to receive Presidential Citations for their contributions to planning for Core. A virtual ALCTS Awards Ceremony is scheduled for July 14th, 2020. Zoë McLaughlin, South and Southeast Asian Studies Librarian at the Michigan State University Libraries, was selected as the ALCTS-sponsored Emerging Leader for 2019-2020.

### **ALCTS Continuing Education**

Seven Fundamentals courses were offered this year, covering Acquisitions, Electronic Resources, Collection Development and Management, Collection Assessment, Preservation, Cataloging, and Metadata. More than 550 individuals registered for the courses.

ALCTS has also offered over 20 webinars in FY21, including two that were presented for free during Preservation Week. Overall, nearly 700 individuals and groups registered for webinars.

### **Conference Programming**

Prior to the move from an in-person to a virtual ALA Annual, the ALCTS Program Committee developed a full slate of programming with an increasing focus on topics advocating equitable access to resources. This included a preconference on cataloging ethics and preservation in times of crisis, among others. ALA selected two ALCTS programs for Virtual Annual: “Happy Together?: Communication and Collaboration Between Technical Services and IT” and “The technical services learning organization: transformation through training and development.” Planners of other programs have been offered the option to convert them to webinars, which should provide many possible programming topics for the inaugural year of Core. The committee has incorporated diversity and inclusiveness as criteria in the evaluation of program proposals submitted. Prior to the cancellation of ALA Annual, program planners also explored with ALCTS staff promoting inclusiveness during presentations through increasing the availability of microphones for audience questions and for speakers on panels so that all audience members are able to hear all aspects of the session.

In lieu of face-to-face meetings at the Annual Conference, ALCTS is also holding a Virtual Interest Group Week from June 8-12, 2020, with all events free of charge.

### **ALCTS/LITA/LLAMA Exchange**

In May 2020, the three divisions worked together to deliver the Exchange: An ALCTS/LITA/LLAMA Collaboration. Using the successful 2017 ALCTS Exchange as a model, members from the three divisions worked together for the better part of a year to develop an online conference with content and themes relevant across the three divisions. The ALCTS Office took the lead in managing the budget, contracting with external vendors, and providing staff support. ALCTS Past-President Kristin Martin chaired the Exchange Working Group. There were a total of 249 registrants, both groups and individuals. Hosting the Exchange across the three divisions provided an opportunity for the three divisions to work together and a launching point for the professional development activities of Core. We believe the success of the event will allow it to become a staple of professional development for Core. Assuming a post-pandemic world supports in-person professional events, the Working Group recommends offering the Exchange in alternating years with the in-person Core Forum.

### **Preservation Week**

This year marked the 10th anniversary of [Preservation Week](#)<sup>®</sup>, a public awareness initiative that aims to promote preservation and conservation in communities with the help of libraries, institutions and museums, which was held virtually April 26—May 2. This year’s theme was “[Preserving Oral History](#)” and author, activist and cultural critic Roxane Gay was the honorary chair. This theme offered the public the opportunity to explore oral histories both as acts of preservation and as artifacts that require preservation. Preservation Week is a collaborative effort supported by ALCTS, the Library of Congress, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

### **ALCTS Publications**

From September 1-June 8, 2020, *ALCTS News* published nine feature articles, six columns, and ten announcements. (Please note that some articles are categorized as more than one item.) Chelcie Rowell continues to post conference reports to ALAIR.

The monthly electronic newsletter *ALCTS Connect* is no longer being sent out every month and is now being sent every other month. The January/February *ALCTS Connect* was sent in early February and the March/April *ALCTS Connect* was sent in early April. The average open rate is 30 percent.

From January-May 31, 2020, thirteen papers were submitted for publication in *Library Resources and Technical Services* (LRTS), an increase from the eight papers submitted for the period January 1-June 1, 2019. Two papers were published, three rejected, and the others are in various stages of review. A total of 32 papers were submitted during 2019. Because of the pandemic, the search committee for the LRTS Editor position decided to suspend the search and extend terms for the journal's current editors for an additional year. Current LRTS Editor Mary Beth Weber and current LRTS Book Review Editor Elyssa Gould will continue in those roles through December 2021. As of April 2020, *LRTS* has 137 subscribers.

The ALCTS Acquisitions Section Publications Committee has two book projects in process. 1. Zines in Libraries: Selecting, purchasing, and processing zines (title may change) -- is in the editing stage. 2. Still in Print: Collection Development and Management for our Connected Future (title may change) -- is in the writing stage. A new version of the [Foreign Book Dealers directory project](#) is expected to be released in July 2020.

Three ALCTS monographs were published in 2020 (*Linked Data for the Perplexed Librarian*; *The Library's Guide to Graphic Novels*, and the *Sudden Position Guide to Collection Management*), four more are in the editorial phase, and four more are in process. Comprising members from both academic and public libraries and one member from the Library of Congress, the ALCTS Monographs Editorial Board provides ALCTS members an opportunity to serve as board members, and provides an opportunity for ALCTS members to publish. The Board is currently developing a proposal for a monograph covering diversity and inclusiveness.

ALCTS Publications Committee members will be reaching out to Exchange virtual conference presenters about writing for ALCTS. Members of the Committee have followed the development of Core with great interest and will be offering their expertise in working with ALCTS publications forward to contribute to designing a plan for publications within the new division and its new sections.

### **ALCTS Leadership Development/Mentoring Program**

The ALCTS Mentoring Subcommittee has been supporting the program's third cohort of 28 mentor/mentee pairs, which ended on April 30, 2020. The Subcommittee has reviewed applications for the fourth cohort and matched mentors with mentees for a total of 31 pairs, whose relationships begin in June 2020. In collaboration with LLAMA Mentoring Committee, participation in this year's mentoring program was opened to current members of ALCTS, LLAMA, and LITA, and received applications from members across all three divisions. The ALCTS Leadership Development Committee continued

development of a LibGuide as a resource for ALCTS leaders and delivered a webinar on virtual meeting best practices for ALCTS Leaders to support the ALCTS strategic goal to increase virtual participation in events.

### **ALCTS Standards Development Activities**

With the approval of Core, the ALCTS Standards Committee One proactively began brainstorming a new charge that could incorporate the mission of the new division as well as other standards committees, and identified the CRS Standards Committee as one such committee to merge with. Prior to the 2019 Annual Conference and 2020 Midwinter Meeting, the committee distributed a list of standards-related ALCTS programming to a variety of listserves and will post it on its LibGuide.

The Metadata Standards Committee held monthly online meetings where they continued working on the Assessing Metadata Framework. The Framework is a rubric used to determine the quality of a metadata standard for a given project. The committee wrote an executive summary to accompany the Framework, and sought feedback from the community during ALA Midwinter.

Joelen Pastva began her new role as the new ALA representative to NISO (National Information Standards Organization). Other ALCTS Committees within the Cataloging and Metadata Management Section (CaMMS) continued their work to discuss and provide input into metadata-related standards, including the Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access, which contributed to the development of *RDA: Resource Description and Access* and the Subject Analysis Committee (SAC), which studied and made recommendations related to a variety of subject and genre/form vocabularies used to organize information, including discussing possible alternatives to the use of the Library of Congress Subject Heading “illegal aliens”.

### **Advocacy**

The ALCTS Advocacy and Policy Committee received reports from liaisons to COLA and ALA Legislative. The chair took ALA Bystander training in September and shared notes from that class. The committee discussed updates on Core and possible future work, such as developing statements of value for generic technical services positions. Committee members also recommended that CORE have a seat on the ALA Advocacy Committee, and identified the need for a group that advocates specifically for technical services staff within ALA and libraries.

### **Moving Forward**

A more detailed report, including additional information about the final year of ALCTS’ activities, will be published in *ALCTS News* as the transition from ALCTS to Core moves ahead. As ALCTS President, I would like to express my appreciation to my colleagues on the ALCTS Executive Committee (Kristin Martin, Past President; Chris Cronin, President Elect; Erin Stalberg, ALCTS Councilor; Kerry Ward, Executive Director, and Julie Reese, Assistant Executive Director) as well as to the entire ALCTS Board, for their support this past year, their service to ALCTS, and their visionary leadership in supporting the transition from ALCTS to Core.

