

**TO:** ALA Executive Board

**RE:** ALA Membership Report

**ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:**

Information report

**ACTION REQUESTED BY:**

Melissa Walling, MBA, CAE, Director, Member Relations & Services

**CONTACT PERSON:**

Melissa Walling, mwalling@ala.org, ext. 2159

**DRAFT OF MOTION:**

N/A

**DATE:** Tuesday, January 12, 2021

**BACKGROUND:**

Report on membership activities and membership counts.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Report on membership activities and membership counts.

## December 2020 Informal Membership Snapshot

<b>Count of Personal (Individual) Members:</b>	48,685
<b>Count of Organizational Members:</b>	4,388
<b>Count of Corporate Members:</b>	130
<b>Total:</b>	53,203

---

ALA's membership is at a 7% decline from 2019 and an 8% decline when compared to the same time in 2018. In December, our ALA membership counts usually decrease by approximately 300-500 members. It was a bit of good news to see a less than normal decrease of only 127 members (-0.2%).

Division memberships currently totals 44,155 which is a slight decrease from last month. All divisions experienced a decline in membership ranging from 0.3% - 2.7% when comparing November to December. We cannot do year over year comparisons because of the Core merger.

Round table memberships currently total 18,018 which is a slight increase from last month as well as an increase when compared to December 2019. There were eight round tables that held steady or increased their membership with FMRT growing 3.5%, NMRT growing 3% and RMRT growing by 2.5%.

ALA's recent membership trend has been to see a decline in our Regular Members, and an increase in our Student Members. These trends have continued over the past year, and we expect them to continue. We are excited to see such growth and engagement in our Student Members, especially through our joint student membership program that we manage with ALA chapters; however, conversion of these Student Members to Regular Members will be essential to our long-term success as an organization. Retaining Regular Members, our largest and highest paying personal membership category, is imperative.

### FY21 Key Membership Activities and Focus Areas

**Membership Renewals:** Since April, we have collected \$2.6M in dues revenue which will be distributed across FY20, FY21, and FY22. As previously reported, membership renewals resumed in July via email and via print in October. Monthly membership renewals remain on track as best we are able with the accounting delays and we are still playing catch up with some of the members impacted by this interruption. In December, our counts did not decrease as much as they usually do, which we believe is a result of retention efforts. We also activated a new print renewal tactic in December which was well received. Continuing to highlight the semi-annual installment payments and the non-salaried membership price are important messages during this time when members need flexibility, and their employment outlook may be uncertain. Our lapsed member survey indicates that cost, unemployment, furloughs, and retirement are some of the reasons why people are discontinuing membership.

We estimated a 28% decline in membership revenue for FY21. While membership counts have remained steady at approximately a 7-9% decline from previous years, we are seeing a decline in our Regular, Organizational, and Corporate Members which pay the highest dues prices. We are seeing an increase in Student Members, especially through our joint student membership program, which pay only \$21 annually. Therefore, we will continue to monitor our dues revenue and counts closely for the next few months. Early signs for the FY21 budget indicate that we are on track.

**Joint Student Membership Program:** In January, we were excited to welcome the Iowa Library Association as the most recent chapter to join the joint student membership program (all but one state is participating in this program). This program now represents over 5,000 Student Members which is 58% of all Student Members of ALA. We also welcomed additional schools sponsoring memberships for their students this year including the University of Pittsburgh and University of Arizona. We have 17 states with 100 or more Student Members:

Row Labels	Count of iMIS Id
ST-CA	986
ST-TX	797
ST-NY	352
ST-NC	289
ST-FL	174
ST-NJ	174
ST-PA	172
ST-AZ	159
ST-WA	149
ST-MI	136
ST-MA	123
ST-WI	123
ST-TN	120
ST-GA	117
ST-IL	112
ST-OH	109
ST-OR	100

**ALA Connect Live:** ALA Connect Live has proven to be an engaging virtual event for our members. ALA President Jefferson has curated speakers that highlight the diverse work of the association including division, offices, and round tables initiatives. On average, 90% of attendees rank the program as very good or excellent and nearly 2/3 of attendees would recommend the program to a colleague. One recent attendee remarked, “Even if I do not attend a lot of these, I really appreciate that they are there.”

**Membership Onboarding:** The experience a new member has in their first 12 months of membership greatly impacts their long-term relationship with ALA. Currently, there is not a membership onboarding program for ALA membership, but one will be launched this fiscal year. A cross-organizational team is working to develop emails, videos, virtual meet ups, and web pages to ensure that our new members learn about everything ALA membership can offer. Demonstrating the value proposition of membership is always important, and even more so during this economic downturn. This effort is being supported through the sponsorship of OverDrive.

**Membership Benefits:** We are continuing to identify opportunities to increase the benefits that are offered to our members. Here are a few recent benefits that have been activated for organizational members:

- Organizational members who purchase multiple registrations and/or a group license for one or more ALA Publishing eLearning Solutions events exceeding \$1,000, can receive discounts of up to 25% off the regular rate.
- ALA Essentials will be released as a member benefit to organizational members in early 2021. Organizational members will be able to use this course as a training tool for their employees and the course focuses on security, welcoming environment, intellectual freedom, diversity, and customer service.
- 15% discount on first time subscribers to RDA - Resource Description & Access – an international standard for the creation of library and cultural heritage metadata that can be used in our ever-expanding digital environment.
- The staff of organizational members were able to receive access to the ALA Annual Conference recordings and we had close to 400 library employees register for this access – many of whom were not ALA members.

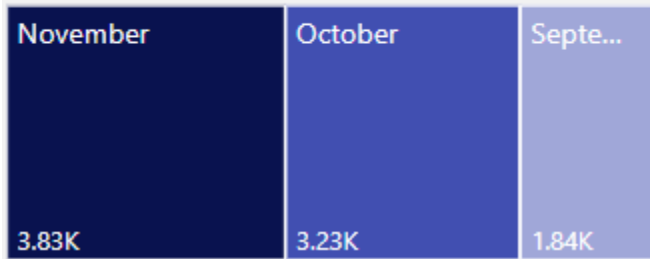
**Membership Model:** The Committee on Membership is continuing its work on the membership model with the goal of having a comprehensive proposal to this body in the Fall, 2021.

# ALA Connect Dashboard

ALA Connect is a key member benefit and as more communities transfer onto Connect, we are monitoring key metrics to ensure that this remains a relevant and useful tool for our members. Here is a snapshot of some of the data we are monitoring which all reflects an upward trend in usage and engagement.

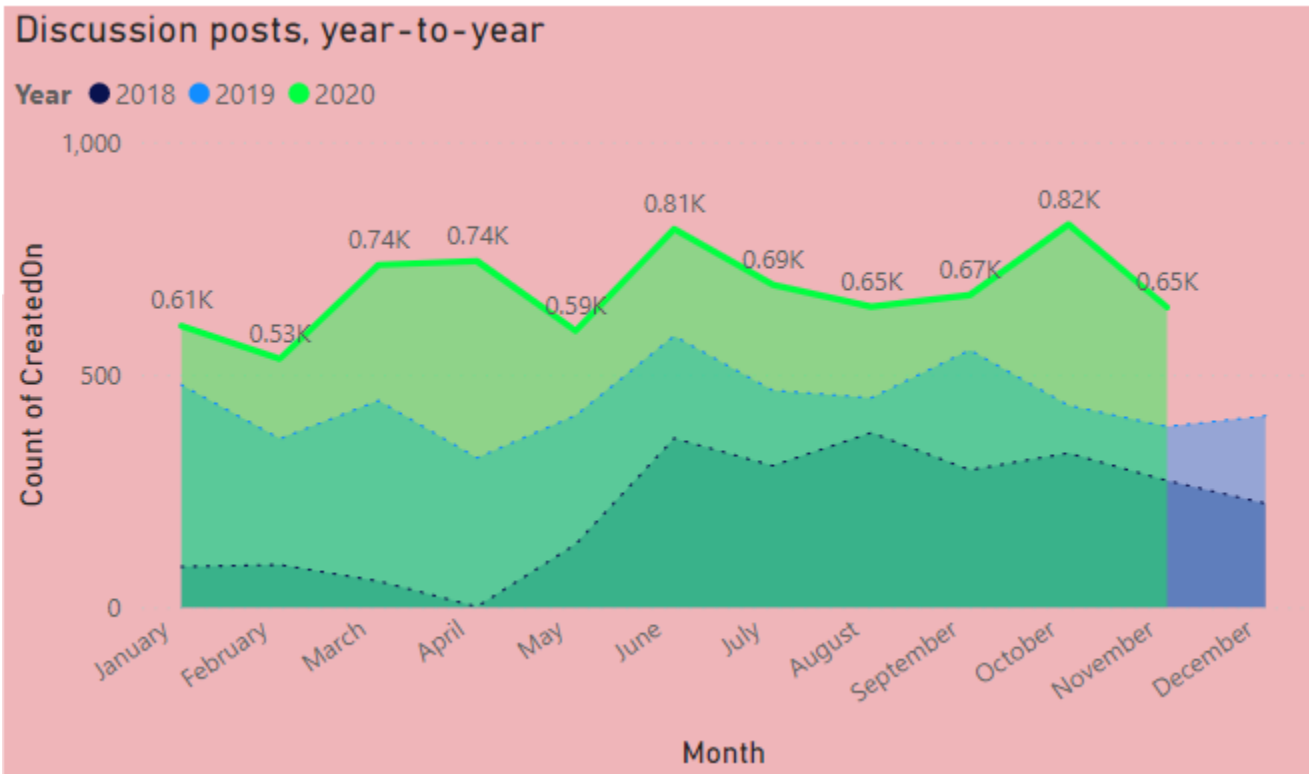
## Key Performance Indicator: Logins to the Web site

Unique web logins this quarter, by month of most recent (platform-wide)



## Key Performance Indicator: Engagement

Posting in the “all member” communities (this chart excludes divisions and round table communities which are being monitored at the community level)



We are also looking at trending topics on the community. Here are the 10 most active topics in the last quarter

