

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

Update on equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) initiatives of the Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services (ODLOS) and other key stakeholders

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

Kristin Lahurd, Interim Director, Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services

CONTACT PERSON:

Kristin Lahurd
(312) 280-3275
klahurd@ala.org

DRAFT OF MOTION:

No motion proposed – informational only

DATE: March 24, 2021

BACKGROUND:

The report details key initiatives and efforts related to equity, diversity, and inclusion within and beyond the Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Updates

April 2021 Executive Board Meeting

Key Initiatives

EDI Assembly

Established at the direction of the ALA Executive Board at the 2020 Midwinter Meeting, ALA's EDI Assembly has held quarterly meetings on August 4, 2020, November 17, 2020, and March 25, 2021. The charge of the Assembly is to provide a forum for all groups within ALA and ALA-affiliated organizations working on initiatives related to equity, diversity, and inclusion to discuss their activities, identify opportunities for collaboration and coordination, and explore new initiatives related to the association's strategic direction on equity, diversity, and inclusion.

As it worked well in November, the March meeting used the same structure of breakout conversations on specific topics within an overarching theme. Around the theme of "prioritizing EDI amidst the pandemic," attendees participated in breakouts on the following topics: anti-Asian violence; services to underrepresented populations; and critical practices – around staffing, collections, services, programming, etc. Members of the ODLOS Advisory Committee facilitated the conversations, and participants added themes and takeaways from the conversations to the ongoing [shared meeting notes](#).

Cultural Competencies for Racial Equity Task Force

The [Building Cultural Proficiencies for Racial Equity Framework Task Force](#), a joint initiative of ALA (specifically the Association of College and Research Libraries, the Public Library Association, and ODLOS) and the Association of Research Libraries, continues the work of its charge: to create a framework for cultural proficiencies in racial equity that can be used in public and academic libraries through: scanning the environment, including review of relevant documents to identify literature and similar statements and frameworks related to racial equity; drafting the framework; seeking comment from stakeholders and the library community on the draft, and revising as needed.

As of February 2021, the Task Force completed a series of working sessions facilitated by Katherine Skinner, Executive Director of Educopia Institute, which culminated in a logic model to inform the creation of the racial equity framework. More specifically, the logic model defines the Task Force's intended vision, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact. In addition to the ongoing working groups within the Task Force – Survey, Data and Competencies, and Glossary – a Framework Development Working Group will lead the drafting of the framework itself. We are in the process of identifying an external facilitator to guide that group's work. The goal is to prepare a draft framework for public feedback by late summer or early fall 2021.

Spectrum Scholarship Program

In November 2020, ODLOS received a \$170,000 grant from an anonymous funder to provide an additional 20 scholarships as part of the 2020-2021 Spectrum Cohort. In January 2021, we awarded the scholarships and [announced the recipients](#).

As part of the Community Catalysts project category of the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program, ODLOS submitted a successful preliminary proposal to IMLS to fund another round of Spectrum Doctoral Fellowships. Gwendolyn Prellwitz, Assistant Director, Recruitment and Retention, is preparing the full proposal, which is to fund 10 Doctoral Fellowships and begin support of a cohort of future LIS faculty committed to fostering racial equity through teaching and research. The grant would also involve building partnership models among degree programs to support new course development and cross-listing of courses in a social justice curriculum.

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Finally, the application for the 2021-2022 Spectrum Scholarships closed on March 1, 2021, and a jury of 20 individuals will begin review.

Continuing Education

EDIcon and Other Trainings

In partnership with the Chapter Relations Office, ODLOS continues to provide virtual equity, diversity and inclusion trainings for library systems, state chapters, and organizations. We have several trainings scheduled in the coming months, including two series of *EDIcon: Foundations of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion*, first for the school librarians within the Boards of Cooperative Educational Services in New York and then as part of the Utah Library Association / Mountain Plains Library Association virtual conference in May. We will also be facilitating an *EDI Elements* training series for Dorchester County Public Library and the session *Uncovering Privilege and Addressing Microaggressions* for the Whatcom County Library System.

Member Group Initiatives

The ALA committees and interest groups under ODLOS are engaged in several initiatives to further the priorities of equity, diversity, inclusion, literacy, outreach and access. Under the leadership and pledge of financial support from ALA President-Elect Patty Wong, the Committee on Literacy has begun a strategic planning process to highlight and advance the work on and role of literacy in the Association. A working group of members of the Committee on Literacy and Literacy Assembly are meeting bi-weekly to lay the groundwork, including setting a timeline and doing preliminary assessment through a SWOT analysis and survey. Our next steps will be to draft a scope of work and RFP for a strategic planning consultant.

The Committee on Diversity identified three key projects led by working groups and recruited volunteers for each. They are: Adding EDI Accountability to ALA Grants Criteria; Best Practices for Library Diversity Committees; and an Equity Scorecard for Library Administrators.

The Committee on Education (COE) is currently updating the Core Competencies including the addition of a new competency on equity, diversity, inclusion and social justice. A draft for public feedback will be available for input prior to a period of revision, after which the Core Competencies will be presented to ALA Council. Once the Competencies are finalized, COE also plans to convene a series of forums and discussion of how they can be used by LIS degree programs, continuing education providers, and as part of onboarding and training practices.

The Rural, Native and Tribal Libraries of All Kinds Committee will host a summit on May 25-26, 2021, to explore the challenges and opportunities that rural libraries are facing. The summit will include discussions related to funding, responses to COVID-19, and opportunities to network.

The Library Services to the Justice-Involved (LSJI) interest group, formerly Library Services to the Incarcerated and Detained, hosted a discussion group during Midwinter 2021 and are initiating the process toward creating new Correctional Library Standards. The Standards were last updated in 1992.

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The Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services is also part of several groups across the Association engaging around the intersection of intellectual freedom and social justice. The Committee on Professional Ethics Working Group on Social and Racial Justice is developing a ninth principle for the Code of Ethics on advancing racial and social justice. The Freedom to Read Foundation Task Force on Intellectual Freedom and Social Justice is exploring the complexities at the intersection of intellectual freedom and social justice and creating an action plan. Finally, the Intellectual Freedom Social Justice Working Group, convened by Martin Garnar under the leadership of ALA President Julius C. Jefferson, Jr., includes representation from various ALA member groups and National Associations of Librarians of Color. The group is developing guidance on how to talk about the intersections of social justice and intellectual freedom and exploring webinars to discuss the issues.

Upcoming Events

In partnership with the Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL) and the Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services (ABOS), ODLOS launched the rebranded [National Library Outreach Day](#), formerly National Bookmobile Day. In light of the invaluable role library professionals have played in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, ODLOS and our affiliate partners were compelled to recognize and celebrate all outreach efforts, including and beyond outreach vehicles. National Library Outreach Day will be celebrated on Wednesday, April 7, and presents an advocacy opportunity, showing support by thanking library staff, writing a letter or e-mail to their libraries, or voicing support to community leaders.

For information on upcoming equity, diversity and inclusion events geared toward the LIS profession, please visit the ODLOS page [EDI & Social Justice Opportunities](#). Library workers contribute to the page through a [submission form](#), and the list includes symposia, summits, and conferences, including our affiliate partners' upcoming conferences, [National Conference of African American Librarians](#) and [REFORMA National Conference](#).