

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Report on Progress in the Advocacy Strategic Direction

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT: Discussion

ACTION REQUESTED BY: Cathleen Bourdon, AED, Advocacy and Member Relations Department; Marci Merola, Director, Office for Library Advocacy; Emily Sheketoff, Executive Director, Washington Office

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Background

This report will briefly highlight the progress made in the Advocacy Implementation Plan from July 2015 to date. The Advocacy Continuum, which organizes activities into four categories – laying the groundwork, turning support into action, advocating for specific goals, and responding to opportunities and threats – will be used to structure the report.

Laying the Groundwork

- Develop and launch a new advocacy campaign, Libraries Transform, to increase public awareness of the value, impact and services provided by librarians and libraries of all types
Activities: The [Libraries Transform website](#) offers information and resources for the public and the profession. Under the leadership of ALA president Sari Feldman, the Campaign will be launched to the public on October 29, 2015.
- Incorporate Libraries Transform core messages into all ALA initiative talking points, statements and press materials
Activities: The Public Awareness Office (PAO) secured more the 220 placements regarding the transformative role libraries play within their communities. Media outreach efforts have resulted in a circulation rate of more than 633 million and a publicity value of more than \$5 million.
- Promote the value of libraries through national initiatives such as Library Card Sign-up Month
Activities: Library Card Sign-up Month served as a national platform for Libraries Transform messaging and ALA President Sari Feldman and other library experts discussed the changing role of libraries. Coverage highlights included a segment by NBC News entitled [Modern Libraries Go Way Past Books, With 3-D Printers and Laser Cutters](#). Feldman was featured in the segment which was posted to the NBC News website. The NBC News website receives more than 24 million visitors per month. Also the segment aired on the NBC News Channel which serves more than 200 NBC affiliates throughout the United States. Library Card Sign-up Month /Libraries Transform successes also include [audio Public Service Announcements](#) (PSAs) that aired on WESB News Radio 1490 AM, Bradford, Pennsylvania; KFNN Money Radio 1510 AM & 99.3 FM, Scottsdale, Arizona; WLNA Real Country 1260 & 1420 AM, Hudson Valley, N.Y.; and WCPT 820 AM & 92.5 FM, serving Chicago. Audio PSAs reached an audience of more than 200,000 listeners.

Many articles were fueled by Sari's message "libraries are not what we have for people, but what we do for and with them," such as [Got a library card? Here's what to do with it](#), Chicago Tribune; [Nationwide Grants Give Groups Chance to Learn Latino Culture, History](#), CNN.com; [9 surprising things you can find at the library](#), Market Watch; [New telescope lending programs taking off at some suburban libraries](#), Daily Herald; [Money Smart Week: Get free financial advice](#), USA Today; and [At Brookline library, you take the cake...pans](#), Brookline Tab.

Because [Snoopy](#) served as honorary chair of Library Card Sign-up Month, more than 1,000 libraries received permission to use free Peanuts artwork on their library cards.

- Promote futuring and innovation techniques to help librarians and library professionals shape their future
Activities: The Center for the Future of Libraries continues to promote trends thinking through its growing [trends collection](#), including new write-ups of Haptic Technology, Badging, and more. Recent outreach has included presentations at conferences, webinars, and partner conversations.
- Implement the Libraries Transforming Communities community engagement initiative in partnership with the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation and funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Activities: A [cohort](#) of ten public libraries will finish an intensive, team-based community engagement training program this fall. [Resources](#) for all librarians including worksheets, conversation guides and webinars are available on the Transforming Libraries website. The website has received more than 48,000 page views and 7,000 downloads since the project began in January 2014.
- Encourage research and evaluation that documents the value and impact of all libraries
Activities: The Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) Investor Education Foundation has given ALA more than \$1.6 million to support financial literacy education in U.S. public libraries. The funding will support a research study of financial literacy resources and services available in U.S. public libraries, and the development of a traveling exhibition on personal finance topics.
Results from the Book Industry Study Group's study, "Digital Content in Public Libraries: What Do Patrons Think?" will be available this fall. ALA staff members Kathy Rosa (ORS) and Carrie Russell (OITP) assisted with the study.
- Promote the value of libraries through social media
Activities: The ALA [Twitter](#) feed has more than 72,000 followers, [Google+](#) has more than 252,000 followers, and the ALA [Facebook](#) page has more than 118,000 likes. An ALA staff Social Media Team promotes content on all of the top-level ALA branded social media channels, including Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and Tumblr. The I Love Libraries Facebook page has 87,000 followers, 26,000 Twitter followers and more than 5,000 e-newsletter subscribers. The I Love Libraries website had a 39% increase in page views in 2015.

Turning Support into Action

- Provide advocacy training to turn passive support into educated action by stakeholders
Activities: PLA's advocacy training curriculum, [Turning the Page: Supporting Libraries, Strengthening Communities](#) is available for free download. The package includes an Advocacy Training Implementation Guide and a set of 15 training sessions that each includes a trainer script, PowerPoint presentation, and handouts. An Advocacy Action Plan Workbook accompanies the training so participants can develop an advocacy plan for their libraries in real-time.

- Help libraries understand and share the true impact of essential library services and programs
Activities: PLA launched Project Outcome, which provides simple-survey instruments and an easy-to-use process for measuring and analyzing outcomes. It also provides public libraries with resources, training and a supportive online community to apply their activities and advocate for their library’s future. Participation in Project Outcome is funded by a grant from the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#) and builds upon a 2013 initiative led by then-PLA president Carolyn Anthony (Director, Skokie Public Library), who established a Performance Measurement Task Force.
- Help school library advocates
Activities: Thanks to support from Bound to Stay Bound Books, [school library advocacy packs](#) containing tools to spread the word about the many ways school librarians are transforming teaching and learning are now freely available through the ALA online store. AASL has also released a new [member-created resource](#) to help school librarians promote the ways their programs transform teaching and learning.
- Support author advocates
Activities: United for Libraries welcomed the Horror Writers of America as new Gold Corporate Sponsors. Their writers will be featured on the Authors for Libraries website. This website allows librarians and writers to connect for programs and to request advocacy materials (letters to the editor, phone calls, emails, etc.) from local writers when the library’s budget is in trouble.

Advocating for Specific Goals

- Advocate for school libraries
Activities: Called on ALA members to urge their Senators to [support the bipartisan Reed-Cochran “library amendment”](#) to the [Every Child Achieves Act of 2015 \(S. 1177\)](#), a bill to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). (2,120 advocates sent 5,591 emails of support and 810 tweets.) The amendment, passed by the Senate by a rare vote of 98-0, expressly recognizes school libraries as authorized uses of ESEA funds and the importance of “effective school library programs.” The House’s related legislation lacks this language, so the [second phase](#) of ESEA-related grassroots advocacy urges ALA members to contact their Members of Congress to urge their support for including the Reed–Cochran amendment in the final bill.
- Advocate for privacy
Activities: Mobilized ALA members to ask their Senators to [VOTE NO](#) on the Burr Amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act which, if passed would have authorized the NSA, CIA and FBI and other government agencies to share vast amounts of citizens’ personal information with law enforcement agencies at every level of government. ALA grassroots advocacy has fended off action on this to date.
Urged members to sign on to a “We The People” petition to the President to *Bolt the Back Door* against excessive federal surveillance as part of the national [SaveCrypto.org](#) campaign launched by ALA and other leading civil liberties organizations. (18,041 opened our ask to sign onto the petition, 2,631 people clicked on petition and 118,065 people signed the petition overall.) The Petition urges the President to publicly speak out against legislative efforts to mandate that encryption designers build vulnerabilities into their software to provide law enforcement ready access to individuals’ phone calls, email, texts, and other electronic communications. Any “We the People” petition that is signed by at least 100,000 persons within 30 days of its release is assured a substantive response from the White House. At this writing, the Petition has been signed by approximately 20,000 people.

- Advocate for access to information

Activities: Urged ALA members to phone, email and tweet their Senators advocating that they [VOTE YES](#) on the [Fair Access to Science and Technology Research Act \(S. 779\)](#), or *FASTR*, a bill to make the results of federally funded research more freely accessible online. (222 advocates sent 254 emails and 13 tweets supporting us.) Helped secure Committee approval of the bill and will re-issue a call to action when *FASTR* reaches the Senate floor. Timing of such a vote is uncertain and may remain so for some time.

ACRL joined a broad coalition of more than 90 education, library, technology, public interest, and legal organizations in a letter calling on the White House to take administrative action to ensure federally funded educational materials are made available as [Open Educational Resources](#) (OER) that are free to use, share, and improve.

Participated at a [convening](#) of ConnectHome, which the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the White House [launched](#) in July, with ALA as a named partner. The initiative seeks to extend broadband access to public housing through 28 pilot cities; libraries provide digital literacy training and access to the varied user services on the internet, with the goal of boosting educational and economic opportunity.

Respond to opportunities and threats

- Promote the freedom to read

Activities: Banned Books Week, September 27-October 3, focused on the themes of "Diverse Books Need Us" and Young Adult literature, both frequent targets of contemporary challenges. PAO tracked more than 1,200 articles/mentions which resulted in a circulation rate of more than 3.1 billion and a publicity value of more than \$25 million. An op-ed from Sari Feldman appeared on HuffingtonPost.com, entitled "[Celebrate The Freedom To Read.](#)" A quote from Feldman regarding patron's right to choose materials for themselves and their families also appeared within a CNN.com article entitled "[Banned Books Week champions challenged literature.](#)" PAO also worked closely with ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom to secure coverage and vetted more than 25 interview and information requests from a variety of media. Coverage highlights include [American Libraries](#); [MTV News](#); [National Geographic Education Blog](#); [The Guardian](#); [Parade.com](#); [Entertainment Weekly](#); [Smithsonian.com](#); [Washington Post](#); [Kojo Nnamdi Show](#); [New York Times](#); [Quartz](#); and [MSN.com](#).

- Assist members to advocate at the state and federal levels

Activities: ALA provides [advocacy software](#) (Engage) that increases the capabilities for members and the public to advocate through ALA and chapters at the state and federal levels.

Attachment

- The Advocacy Continuum

The Advocacy Continuum

Overview



Laying the Groundwork

Community Engagement
Public Awareness
Center for the Future of Libraries
Research and Data on the Value of Libraries
Impact Measures

Turning Support into Action

Training
Resources
Peer-to-Peer Support Networks

Advocating for Specific Goals

Federal Legislation
State Funding
Local Initiatives
International Issues

Responding to Opportunities and Threats

Online Action Networks
Fighting Budget, Censorship and Legislative Challenges
Individual Consulting