



**2014-2015 ALA CD#28.10_62015_inf.
2014 ALA Annual Conference**

**RUSA Division President's Annual Report to ALA Council
2014 – 2015 Highlights of the Division's Special Activities and Accomplishments
June 1, 2015**

ITEM #1: Our RUSA Strategic Plan, July 2015 – June 2018

Following the formation of our Strategic Plan Coordinating Task Force in summer 2014, RUSA made arrangements with Paul Meyer of Tecker International Consulting to facilitate our process. The Task Force members met with Paul in Chicago during the 2014 ALA Fall Leadership meeting to begin the work of reviewing RUSA's Core Ideology statements. A full-day facilitated strategic planning session was held with the RUSA Board on Friday, January 30th at ALA Midwinter 2015 in Chicago. Since that time the Strategic Plan Coordinating Task Force, chaired by Anne Houston, met regularly by telephone conference and exchanged roughly 200 emails to continue the work. One of our main tasks over February and March was to incorporate the priorities that had already been identified by our members in the RUSA Review Task Force Report, <http://connect.ala.org/node/229140>. By the end of March we were able to share a draft of the Strategic Plan with the Board for review and comment, which can be found at <http://connect.ala.org/node/237537>. Some of the questions that came up during this time related to how we could identify overlaps and move toward a more streamlined RUSA structure, how we should maximize the role of our publications as a key member value, and how to emphasize the importance of conference programming and the face-to-face experience. These questions and ideas were then able to be incorporated into the final draft, available at <http://connect.ala.org/node/238939>. At its regular online meeting on May 15th the RUSA Board approved the RUSA Strategic Plan: July 2015 – June 2018.

Our next steps are to finalize our action items and agree upon who within the organization is responsible for achieving the success of each. This work will take place during RUSA's Board meetings at ALA Annual in San Francisco. The document itself is brief and included here without Action items.

Core Purpose: (Note: Why we exist; Similar to a Mission)

RUSA is a member community engaged in advancing the practices of connecting people to resources, information services, and collections.

Core Organizational Values:

- Building relationships among members from all types of libraries
- Encouraging openness, innovation, and idea sharing
- Promoting excellence in library services and resources

Vision: *(Note: Also known as the Big Hairy Audacious Goal)*

RUSA is an influential and authoritative organization, essential to the work of anyone engaged in the practices of connecting people to resources, information services, and collections.

Vivid Description of a Desired Future: *(Note: Gives us direction on how we move toward the Vision)*

RUSA is known for signature products made available through a variety of innovative formats. The association's services are relevant, accessible, and clearly contribute to the success of its members at all stages of their careers. RUSA members benefit professionally through relevant programming featuring the newest trends, technology and services. Participation in the association's programming is considered essential to professional growth and to advancing libraries to meet new user needs. The strength of RUSA is reflected in its diversity of collaborative, innovative and engaged members who participate in collegial mentoring and networking. RUSA is renowned as a leading advocate group for library resources, information services and collections, and is recognized throughout ALA and beyond for its expertise.

Operating principles:

- Maximize time of RUSA staff and volunteers by operating as efficiently as possible
- Manage our financial resources responsibly
- Cooperate and collaborate with other divisions and groups in ALA
- Enable virtual participation whenever possible
- Emphasize the importance of marketing and communication to ensure that members are aware of all opportunities

Goals and Objectives:

GOAL #1: Create an organization with greater flexibility in structure, enabling members to pursue their areas of interest in a variety of ways with minimal barriers to involvement.

- a. Create a proposal to transition RUSA to a new organizational structure based on interest groups with a goal of reducing the complexity of the organization and better serving the members' needs.
- b. Create a process that allows members to become more easily involved in RUSA
- c. Offer more flexibility in programming so that opportunities are accessible to all librarians regardless of their ability to travel to conference

GOAL #2: Offer services, programs and products that maximize the value of membership, making RUSA a good return on investment for its members and encouraging member engagement, recruitment and retention.

- a. Develop and expand educational resources and experiences that are of high value to many members, including education on cutting edge and advanced topics**
- b. Respond to changes in ALA conference structure to ensure excellence in conference programming and delivery**
- c. Maximize impact of RUSA publications and communications**
- d. Increase opportunities for members to network with colleagues with similar interests**
- e. Maximize the exposure and prestige of RUSA through awards**
- f. Increase recruitment activities**
- g. Boost retention strategies through member engagement**

As a RUSA member looks back at our current Strategic Plan for 2012 – 2015, available on our RUSA web site at <http://www.ala.org/rusa/sites/ala.org.rusa/files/content/about/rusa-strategic-plan.pdf>, the reader will notice that key language in our previous Vision statement has made its way into our new Core Purpose. Our primary reason for being is now our act of making *connections*. Our previous plan also focused a great deal of attention on *how* we deliver content and communicate and recognized our need to move activities online. We have made definite progress in this area (and some of these efforts continue), but the reader will notice that a significant focus of our new plan is on maximizing the value of the content itself. By providing high-value content and engaging experiences for our members we clearly support a good return on investment.

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who played a part in the completion of this project, including all of our RUSA members who participated in the RUSA Review survey last summer, the Board members who have been engaged in providing constructive input and feedback, and especially the members of the Task Force – Anne Houston, Chris LeBeau, Erin Rushton, Jennifer Boettcher, Kathleen Kern, and Liane Taylor – for their hours of dedication to ensure that we defined the right priorities for our association.

ITEM #2: RUSA Review Task Force Report

Over 2013-2014 the RUSA Review Task Force began its work to define the key issues facing RUSA and began developing recommendations for the division's future. A preliminary report was provided to RUSA Board at the ALA Annual Conference 2014. Their work continued through an online survey, *The*

RUSA Review: Summer 2014 Survey of our Members, from June through late July and saw 406 members complete the survey. On September 15, 2014 the RUSA Review Task Force completed its work through the release of a final report, which can be found on ALA Connect at <http://connect.ala.org/node/229140>. This was a vast project that took a great deal of coordination along the way. Credit for the success of the project goes to all of the members of the task force, but most significantly to co-chairs Chris LeBeau and Diane Zabel. The report served to highlight the key challenges and opportunities that RUSA faces as it strives to be a responsive and sustainable organization. It is become the primary research document that informed our Strategic Planning Process.

ITEM #3: RUSA 101

The RUSA Membership Committee, under the leadership of Ann Brown, developed a series of monthly RUSA 101 online sessions. These serve to orient new or potential RUSA members to the structure of the division and how to get involved. Guest presenters have included section chairs Jenny Presnell, Qiana Johnson, Stephanie Graves, Todd Hines, Tina Baich, and the RUSA President. Additional RUSA 101 sessions have also been provided to our new RUSA Student Sponsored members. Each session has consistently drawn between 13 and 17 participants.

ITEM #4: RUSA 201

Also organized by the RUSA Membership committee this year, was a new series of online sessions called RUSA 201. Unlike the RUSA 101s, which are geared to people who don't know anything about RUSA, the 201 sessions are targeted at current RUSA members interested in learning more about how to accomplish the work of the association. The series launched in January and again in February 2015 with RUSA Conference Program Coordinating Committee Chair, Don Boozer, providing advice on how to submit a RUSA conference program, preconference, or institute for Boston or Orlando in 2016. The series has continued with guest Elizabeth Kline, chair of RUSA Professional Development Committee, describing the process for proposing a strong webinar or online course proposal.

ITEM #5: Online Learning

More and more of our members are taking advantage of our online learning opportunities. Sessions offered this year included Business Reference 101, Genealogy 101, Readers Advisory 101, Xtreme Bibliographic Searching for Interlibrary Loan & Reference, Introduction to Spatial Literacy and Online Mapping, and – available for the first time - Introduction to Economic Data on the Web. These courses and our upcoming and archived webinars at <http://www.ala.org/rusa/development/onlinece>.

ITEM #6: Student Sponsored Memberships

In an effort to recruit new members, veteran RUSA members have made monetary contributions to support free student memberships. It took some time to get a process in place to make this work in 2014, but now that the program is established we are moving into a second round of fundraising to support the enthusiastic demand that the program has generated among students.

ITEM #7: Speed Mentoring

Organized by the RUSA Leadership Development Task Force, RUSA held its first Speed Mentoring session at ALA Midwinter 2015. Many thanks go to Gary White for serving as the event's lead organizer, and to Diane Zabel for opening the session with words of experience regarding the importance of mentoring. About fifteen mentees attended, with more than that number of mentors available to pair-up. Immediately following this session we walked down the hall to the RUSA Membership Social, which received an excellent turnout of both new and familiar faces. The Social again served as a great informal opportunity to talk to others about our work in RUSA and our own libraries.

ITEM #8: The RUSA President's Program

danah boyd will present "It's Complicated: Navigating the dynamic landscapes of digital literacy,

collapsing contexts, and big data” on Saturday, June 27, 2015 from 4:00-5:30 pm at ALA Annual in San Francisco. danah is a principal researcher at Microsoft Research and is a 2008 PhD graduate of the School of Information (iSchool) at UC Berkeley. Her research focuses on the intersection between technology and society. She blogs at <http://www.zephoria.org/thoughts>. danah is a prolific blogger and speaker with big ideas about how librarians can make a difference in the data deluge! Make sure to join us at the Moscone Convention Center, 3014-3016 (W). See <http://alaac15.ala.org/node/28619>

ITEM #9: A New Timeline for the Andrew Carnegie Medals

Over the winter of 2015 the RUSA leadership communicated with Booklist, CODES leadership, RUSA Board, and members of the current Andrew Carnegie Medals committee regarding the change of the Carnegie timeline to allow for the announcement of the award winners to take place at Midwinter 2016 and a celebratory event to take place at Annual 2016. The change has allowed for the financial sustainability of the award, as well as an opportunity to develop a larger awards event that combines RUSA’s existing RUSA Book & Media Awards with the announcement of the Carnegie winners beginning at Midwinter 2016 in Boston. Nancy Pearl has agree to return as chair of the Andrew Carnegie Medal Award Committee.

The fourth annual 2015 Andrew Carnegie Medals for Excellence in Fiction and Nonfiction Announcement and Reception will be announced this year at ALA Annual in San Francisco on Saturday, 8:00pm to 10:00pm. Make sure to join us at the Hotel Nikko, Nikko Ballroom for ALA’s only single-book award for adult fiction and nonfiction, followed by a chance to mingle at the dessert and drinks reception. This year we are proud to have Kareem Abdul-Jabbar serve as our keynote speaker. Tickets are \$25 for RUSA Members, \$35 for others. See <http://alaac15.ala.org/node/28669>.

ITEM #10: RUSA’s Visit to the ALA Washington Office

Following up on the work of the previous year’s RUSA Task Force on Legislative Issues, Alesia McManus, RUSA’s representative to the ALA Legislative Assembly, continued to inform RUSA members about relevant legislative and advocacy issues. Alesia also arranged for an opportunity for RUSA members to meet the staff of the ALA Washington Office on February 12, 2015. This visit was open to all RUSA members. We will be continuing to focus on these legislative priorities for RUSA:

Primary priorities:

- Federal funding for libraries
- Access to information including government information and government funded research

Secondary priorities:

- First sale doctrine
- Copyright and fair use
- Access to e-books
- Privacy and surveillance

ITEM #11: Meeting Online

The RUSA Executive Committee has become very adept at using Adobe Connect as we use it to meet and conduct the division's business on a monthly basis. This is in addition to our regular email communication. Following online orientation sessions in the summer of 2014, the full RUSA Board has met via Adobe Connect five times over the year. All committees across RUSA may easily reserve use of our Adobe Connect rooms through a link on the RUSA home page.

ITEM #12: ALA Midwinter 2015 Wrap-Up

I consider one great accomplishment this year to be that we actually pulled off holding the RUSA Book and Media Awards Ceremony at the height of a snowstorm and while many across the country watched the Superbowl. About one hundred dedicated individuals came together at the Hilton Chicago to recognize the best in adult fiction, non-fiction, reference, book reviewing, and web sites. This year we also tried something new. We were very happy to have highly acclaimed Chicago author Margaret Hawkins kick-off the event by sharing some of her thoughts about the craft of writing, including insight into why she has set some of her scenes in libraries. The event then went on without a hitch. For a comprehensive list of the selections, including the Notable Books, Reading List, Listen List, and the Best Free Reference Web Sites, see <http://www.ala.org/rusa/awards/literarytastes>.

2015 RUSA President's Program Planning Committee and the RUSA Just Ask Task Force joined forces in Chicago to host a discussion about some of the themes in danah boyd's book, [It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens](#) (available for free download at <http://www.danah.org/itscomplicated>). One of our key discussions involved the collapsing of contexts, specifically relating to the modern reality that an online post made by an individual in one place might take on a very different meaning when interpreted in another. It was a dynamic discussion and we truly could have used more time than the hour that had been allocated! I want to thank Peter Bromberg for organizing the discussion and Cathay Keough for taking notes and posting these on our Facebook event page. You can find these at <https://www.facebook.com/events/562596213874497/permalink/580179555449496>.

ITEM #13: [RUSA Events Coming Up at the ALA Annual Conference 2015 in San Francisco](#)

In addition to the aforementioned RUSA President's Program with danah boyd, Andrew Carnegie Medals for Excellence in Fiction and Nonfiction Announcement and Reception, and other programs and discussions organized by the RUSA sections, we will be offering these noteworthy experiences to conference attendees.

On Friday, June 26, 2015 RUSA and its sections will provide three pre-conferences:

- BRASS Preconference: Intellectual Property for Entrepreneurs
<http://alaac15.ala.org/node/28625>
- History Section's Genealogical Librarianship Symposium (Registration is free!)
<http://alaac15.ala.org/node/29537>
- STARS Preconference: ILL Data Storm - Practical Assessment
<http://alaac15.ala.org/node/28622>

Also on Friday we'll be holding our annual RUSA 101 from 3:00 - 4:00 in the afternoon at the Westin St. Francis, Tower Salon A & B. This is a fantastic opportunity for all conference attendees to learn about RUSA, connect with established members, and enjoy some free refreshments. See <http://alaac15.ala.org/node/29504>.

On Sunday, June 28, 2015 from 8:00am to 10:00am we will offer the annual Literary Tastes program at the Moscone Convention Center, West Exhibit Hall, 1st Floor. At this event attendees get to hear from some of the year's best authors and enjoy light refreshments. #literarytastes. See <http://alaac15.ala.org/node/28616>. Also on Sunday, from 5:00pm - 6:30pm, we will hold the RUSA Achievement Awards Ceremony at the Westin St. Francis, California West BR. Attendees will be able to share in the celebration and join RUSA colleagues as we recognize this year's outstanding

achievement award winners. Light refreshments will be served. See <http://alaac15.ala.org/node/29509>.

I am extremely grateful to all of our fantastic RUSA member volunteers across the association, as well as our dedicated RUSA staff: Susan Hornung, Leighann Wood, Marianne Braverman, and Andrea Hill. All of the webinars, courses, programs, discussions, articles, events, and awards could only happen because of their great efforts. It has been a great privilege to serve RUSA and the American Library Association as a division president over this past year.

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