

LSSIRT NEWSLETTER

<http://www.ala.org/lssirt/>

AUGUST 2005

ALA LSSIRT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINI-MINUTES FROM CHICAGO

LSSIRT President Jim Hill convened the meeting on June 27, 2005 in the McCormick Place Convention Center. Ten Steering Committee members were in attendance.

1. Treasurer Meralyn Meadows reported the Round Table has a net asset balance of over \$9,000, as of February 2005.
2. Membership Chairman Nina Manning reported a rise in membership from 449 in May 2004 to over 586 in May 2005. John Chrastka, ALA Membership Office, updated progress on the joint ALA/state chapter membership project. He confirmed 35 new members from this initiative with a total of 774 members.
3. The certification survey results were shared with the Steering Committee. Lorelle Swader (ALA Human Resource Development and Recruitment Office) reported 3,318 responders who overwhelmingly endorsed certification for support staff. The LSSIRT Certification Task force (chaired by Dorothy Morgan) will further analyze and annotate the survey results prior to sharing with a wider audience. Valuable information was gathered in this survey to assist LSSIRT in program planning and strategic planning.
4. The inaugural Conference Within A Conference (CWAC) was a success, with 154 registrants and over 753 full conference registrants who indicated they would be participating in some of the CWAC programming. Lorelle reported that ALA Conference Services is receptive to future support staff events at Midwinter and Annual conference meetings. Discussion centered on a one-day pre-conference prior to Jan. 2006 in San Antonio and another two-day CWAC in June 2006 in New Orleans. The Steering Committee voted to support both of these events.
5. LSSIRT Night Out dinner events continue to bring in some revenue and provide an excellent networking opportunity. The Steering Committee voted to continue the Night Out events.
6. Conference program planning for New Orleans was discussed. A minimum of two and possibly three programs will be sponsored, in addition to programming from the projected CWAC. Topics include 1) Communication skills at service desks (particularly Circulation), 2) Resume writing, and 3) Interviewing skills.
7. A discussion of term limits was introduced. A proposal to reduce the terms for Steering Committee Members-at-Large from 3 years to 2 years was tabled until the Midwinter meeting in San Antonio.
8. The following Steering Committee members were recognized for their service to LSSIRT: Diane Fay, Dorothy Morgan, Martha Parsons, Kent Slade and Carolyn Tate.

Jennifer S. Kutzik
LSSIRT Secretary and Webmaster
<http://www.ala.org/lssirt/>

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ALA to Continue Support Staff-Focused Programming

The ALA will hold a pre-conference for support staff at its midwinter meeting on Friday, January 20, 2006, and will also offer *Empowering Library Support Staff for the 21st Century* programming at its Annual Conference on Saturday and Sunday, June 24-25, 2006. This programming is offered as a result of the successful support staff-focused programming offered at the recent annual conference held in Chicago. Look for details regarding Midwinter and Annual in future *LSSIRT Newsletters*, as well as the association's *AMERICAN LIBRARIES* magazine.

The ***LSSIRT Newsletter*** is the official publication of the Library Support Staff Interests Round Table (LSSIRT) of the American Library Association.

It is distributed free to members of LSSIRT and is published quarterly in August, November, February and May.

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ALA COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTS POLICY ON INCLUSIVENESS AND MUTUAL RESPECT

Requested by Julie Brewer (Chair, ALA Human Resources Development and Recruitment Advisory Committee) and Diane Fay (Chair, LSSIRT Task Force to Create an Inclusive and Mutually Respectful Environment for All Library Workers), Resolution 2004-2005 ALA CD#49 passed UNANIMOUSLY at ALA Council Session II on June 28, 2005. Partial wording follows: "ALA Policy on Inclusiveness and Mutual Respect: The American Library Association values, respects, and welcomes the contributions and participation of all library workers. ALA actively promotes inclusiveness within the Association and communicates images and information about all types of library careers. ALA provides services and developmental opportunities for all library workers. The American Library Association affirms the importance of inclusiveness and mutual respect as essential for employee productivity, morale, and learning. Library employers that have developed respectful organizational cultures with inclusive language and developmental opportunities for all library workers should be recognized as models for others."

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO NEW LSSIRT MEMBERS

If you have recently joined LSSIRT and did not receive a timely welcome letter from the round table, here's why: A major alteration in the way membership information is distributed at ALA resulted in a major 10-month delay in distribution of new member information to ALA units, divisions, and roundtables, including LSSIRT. From July 2004 until May 2005, LSSIRT received no notification of new members or other alterations in members' status. As a result, new members who joined during that period did not receive welcome letters and other information from the round table until late-May and June 2005. Unfortunately, this delay coincided with a hugely successful new initiative to increase support staff presence in the association, the support staff membership rate, which increased LSSIRT's membership by over 200 during the period. The problem has now been fixed and LSSIRT will once again receive monthly reports. If you joined ALA in the last year and have not received a welcome letter from LSSIRT, please contact president Alice Poffinberger at ali.poff@duke.edu. We add our apologies to those of the association for any consternation or confusion this delay caused.

CONFERENCE WITHIN A CONFERENCE
Empowering Library Support Staff for the 21st Century
 SATURDAY, JUNE 25 – SUNDAY, JUNE 26, 2005



Dorothy Morgan welcoming the Conference Within A Conference attendees. L-R: Jackie Lakatos (COLT President), Carolyn Tate (LSSIRT), Carla Hayden (ALA Past-President), Dorothy Morgan (LSSIRT), Jim Hill (LSSIRT President), Allen Lanham (Illinois Library Association. President)

The first-ever ALA Conference Within a Conference was held June 25 and 26 in Chicago, IL, during the 2005 Annual Conference. The event offered opportunities for library support staff from across the country to learn, network and share model programming. Conference evaluations are being compiled and analyzed by ALA. Thank you to all who attended and supported this event.

Notes from Selected Conference Within A Conference Sessions

by Jennifer S. Kutzik

Opening Session: Carla Hayden, ALA Past President, warmly welcomed attendees to the first CWAC. She thanked support staff for all their many contributions to American libraries. Carla announced that one of the new goals for the ALA strategic plan (“ALA Ahead to 2010”) is to provide more professional opportunities for support staff. She reminded the audience that not everyone became a library careerist because they liked people. Most wanted to work in libraries because they liked the **materials** and wanted to touch and protect the **materials**. Not everyone exhibits what Carla called “common sense” when it comes to valuing every member of the library staff. That is the culture of the profession, but great strides are being made in modeling inclusive behavior and language. The term “professional” should NOT be tied to a job title, she stressed, but should be determined by how each employee performs their job duties. Carla called upon each library administrator to model that philosophy with their staff. In the Question and Answer session following her address, Carla responded to a question about how she chose staff to attend training or conferences. She said she looked for those who were already involved locally. She would seek out an outstanding employee who would share the information learned. When asked what skills are needed for library workers to be promoted, she quoted a futurist at a recent conference who listed 3 steps to achieve: 1) Prepare, 2) Perform and 3) Persevere. In summing up, Carla declared “An MLS is a degree, but not a pedigree.”

“Managing Across Generations: Traditionalists to Millennials.”

This session was sponsored by ALCTS and featured speakers from 4 generations. Hannah Kwon (Rutgers) spoke for the Millennials. She stressed 3 areas of importance for her generation: 1) technology, 2) diversity and 3) community. They assume technology will be there, they assume diversity will be there, but they are craving community. There is a lack of accountability with each other, as referenced in the book “Bowling Alone.” Her generation are natural multi-taskers, visual learners and non-linear thinkers. Dena Heilik (Philadelphia Free Library) represented Generation X. This group wants to balance self-fulfillment with job demands. Job titles are not as important as enjoying life, and there is less automatic respect for authority. They need to know the “why” and they work better in team situations. They are results oriented and frustrated by micro-managers. Mary Chute (Institute for Museum and Library Services) represented the Baby Boomers. As a group, they respect authority but want consensus on change. They have great work loyalty and they look askance at the 2-year work stints of GenX and Millennials. This group grew up during tumultuous times and their motto is still “Who do you trust?” Carol Kem (University of Florida) spoke for the Traditionalists, The Silent Generation. She portrayed herself as the classic “trailing spouse” following her husband through his career moves. She became an “accidental academic librarian” because it fit with her home-life situation. She characterized her generation as being tolerant and curious.



Mitch Freedman

“Debate: Do Unions and Professional Associations Belong in Libraries?”

This session was sponsored by the ALA-APA and featured 3 panelists moderated by LSSIRT Past-President Diane Fay. Mitch Freedman, former ALA President and Director of the Westchester (NY) Public Library, presented several arguments for unions. Anecdotally, police officers and teachers are making higher salaries due to unionization. Library salaries have been lagging behind more and more. Mitch reiterated the theme of his ALA Presidency that library workers deserve to be paid a living wage and

cannot continue to practice voluntary poverty for the sake of our profession. He urged all library workers to empower themselves to demand higher pay. Even if the library worker does not feel **they** are worth it, the **work** is worth it! Pamela Wilson (Dept. for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO) reported that women are forming and joining unions at a higher rate than men. She cited an average of \$12 per hour for most library technicians. She urged joining a union to have a voice in negotiating better health care, pensions and salary increases. Her final point was “Contracts make the difference.” Saul Schniderman (President of AFSCME 2910 and Library of Congress staff member) dispelled many myths about unions at the Library of Congress. Over 3,500 of the 4,200 employees are union members. For many years, they have used collective bargaining to change their working conditions for the better. He reported that only 12% of United States workers are unionized while over 88% of Swedish workers are unionized.

Luncheon Speaker: “Why Can’t You Be More Like .. Like Me!” Juan Ortiz,

successful businessman and motivational speaker, spoke to the value of communicating with people in a way they truly understand based on their personality type. He defined 4 major character types: 1) Domineering Cholerics, 2) Life of the Party, 3) Organized Melancholy. and 4) Peaceful Phlegmatics. He stressed three points: 1) people are different from you because everyone is unique, 2) we should never stop learning, and 3) we must keep a dream in front of us as well as keeping other’s dreams in front of them. He called this the concept of “Balcony People”: being in other people’s balconies to be a supporter of their dreams. He urged everyone to find your potential by finding your power.



Closing Session: **Debra Wilcox Johnson** wrapped up the CWAC by reflecting on the events of this ground-breaking conference. She exhorted everyone to make a difference by developing their own success destination. She stressed that “action without vision is just spending time.” For each person to reach their career potential, she urged attendees to make a total commitment to their profession.

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### ALA Annual, Conference Within A Conference, and LSSIRT Evening Out Photos



Lorelle Swader, LSSIRT Liaison,  
welcomes conference attendees



Jennifer Kutzik



Meralyn Meadows,  
Ali Poffinberger, and  
Gene Kinnaly



Jim Hill, Paulette Feld, & Sara Stichert



Dorothy Morgan, Sue Knoche, and Sandy Olson



LSSIRT Steering Committee Meeting



Sandy Olson  
Jack Fitzpatrick



LSSIRT Evening Out at Leona's





Jenifer Grady



Jim Hill, Mitch Friedman (co-award winner), Jack Blount (Dynix President and CEO), Dorothy Morgan (co-award winner), Michele Leber



Jim Hill presenting Dorothy Morgan with the Dynix ALA-APA Award

**Dynix ALA-APA Award Breakfast**



Jennifer Kutzik at the LSSIRT Booth



Debra Wilcox Johnson

**Sign-up for the LSSIRT Members Only E-list.**

For between newsletter updates and to network with LSSIRT colleagues, be sure and sign-up for the very low volume LSSIRT e-list. To sign-up send a message to Martha Parsons at [parsons@halcyon.com](mailto:parsons@halcyon.com) with your ALA membership number and ask to subscribe.

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