



## President's Corner

There is still time to nominate yourself or someone else for *Library Journal's* Paraprofessional of the Year Award. I consider being honored with this award in 2005 as the highlight of my 32 year library career. Yes, exceptional performance appraisals, merit pay increases and promotions all say "you're doing a great job." But nothing says it better than to be nominated by your co-workers and recognized nationally. Our troubled economy has forced libraries to struggle with budget cuts and many library workers have been faced with layoffs, furloughs or salary/benefit cuts. Nominating someone for this award is a great opportunity to show how much you do value them and what they do.

*Library Journal* will honor one support staffer with its 12th annual Paraprofessional of the Year award in its March 1, 2011, issue. The award, sponsored by DEMCO,

comes with a \$1500 cash prize and a reception to honor the winner at the ALA conference in June. The award recognizes the essential role of paraprofessionals, now the largest constituency of library workers, in providing excellent library service. It places special emphasis on the efforts of the winner to further the role of paraprofessionals in the library profession.

### Nominating criteria

The criteria for LJ's Paraprofessional of the Year are excellence in performing their job, including contributions enabling the library to best serve its constituents and/or its community (whether town, college/university, school, or corporation), the encouragement of reading and the use of the library's resources, a commitment to free access to information for all, and the candidate's work to build networks, organizations, and/or groups to back excellence in library work and new career paths for support staff, and improved

communication and the breaking down of barriers between support staff and the MLS librarians with whom they work. Nominating letters should name the candidate and describe in 500 words or less why the nominee deserves the award. Supporting letters and accompanying material will be considered, but the nominating letter itself will be of prime importance.

Nominations may be e-mailed to:

[miller@reedbusiness.com](mailto:miller@reedbusiness.com)

Mailed nominations should be addressed to:

*Paraprofessional of the Year Award*  
c/o *Library Journal*  
360 Park Avenue South  
New York, NY  
10010

**Please note: the postmark deadline for nominations is January 10, 2011.**



**LSSIRT President  
Trish Palluck**

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LSSIRT Secretary Karen Turner with *Library Journal* Paraprofessional of the Year winners Dorothy Morgan (2001), Allison Sloan (2010) and Trish Palluck (2005) at the LJ reception in Washington, DC (June 2010).

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**Wanted: Individuals Who are Looking to Serve!**

**WANTED!**

**LOOKING FOR**

**LIBRARY SUPPORT STAFF TO SERVE  
ON THE LSSIRT STEERING  
COMMITTEE!**

**NOW IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO  
SERVE AS EITHER PRESIDENT-  
ELECT OF LSSIRT OR AS ONE OF OUR  
TWO MEMBER-AT-LARGE  
REPRESENTATIVES!**

**DON'T HESITATE,  
CONTACT US TODAY!  
LSSIRTB@ALA.ORG**

## Top 10: Recruiting New Members to ALA and LSSIRT

It might begin with a casual conversation in the library break room or during a networking event. Your co-worker asks why you decided to become a card-carrying member of your professional organization, ALA. Is your reason listed among these “Top Ten Reasons,” as given by over 9,000 members in the summer of 2009?

### 1. Legislative Advocacy:

ALA works to increase federal funding for libraries by promoting state and federal legislation of the benefit of libraries to communities and library users.

**2. Accreditation:** ALA offers accreditation programs which provide assurance that graduate and certificate programs in library and information studies meet approved standards of quality.

### 3. Continuing Education:

ALA provides continuing education in a variety of formats and venues, including conferences,

workshops, institutes, teleconferences and web courses.

### 4. Intellectual Freedom:

ALA promotes and defends intellectual freedom in libraries at the local, state and federal levels.

**5. Standards:** ALA develops standards and guidelines designed to improve library service.

**6. Website:** ALA’s website provides ready access to ALA news, information, tools and services.

**7. Networking:** ALA provides opportunities to interact with professional colleagues face-to-face or electronically so they can share knowledge and best practices and advance the profession.

**8. Divisions and Round Tables:** ALA’s eleven divisions and 17 round tables focus on specific types of libraries and specific types of library activities and provide members with information and services tailored to their needs.

### 9. Public Awareness and

**Media Relations:** ALA works to increase the visibility of libraries, library workers and library issues. This includes an ongoing public awareness campaign that communicates the value of libraries and library staff and provides tools and materials needed to promote the library’s message on a national basis and in the local community.

**10. Policy Analysis:** ALA analyzes government policy in areas such as copyright and supports legislation promoting access to information.

Encourage your colleagues to find out more about the initiatives above and get to know some of our 60,000+ members. Then, ask them to make the best decision of their professional career – the decision to be a member of the American Library Association and LSSIRT. Visit the ALA Membership Website at: <http://tinyurl.com/29goemk>

“ENCOURAGE YOUR COLLEAGUES TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE INITIATIVES AND GET TO KNOW SOME OF OUR 60,000+ MEMBERS.”



## ALA Midwinter San Diego: LSSIRT Business Meeting

STEERING COMMITTEE/MEMBERSHIP MEETING

DATE: Saturday, January 8, 2011

TIME: 8 a.m. - 12 noon

WHERE: San Diego Convention Center -- Room 24 C

DESCRIPTION: Want to hear the latest news about LSSIRT? All ALA conference attendees are welcome to attend this OPEN meeting. We would love to see you there.



## Library Worklife: HR E-News for Today's Leaders Now Available To All

*Library Worklife* is a publication of the ALA-Allied Professional Association. It replaced Library Personnel News (LPN) in December 2003. Topics covered include pay equity, HR issues, career advancement, certification, and the work/life balance for all library workers. Prior to June 2010, this publication was available only by subscription. We are happy to report that the *Library Worklife* website is no longer password protected, though former subscribers will receive an alert each month letting them know when the new issue has been published. It is issued the second Tuesday of each month and available on the ALA-APA Web site at <http://www.ala-apa.org/>



Jenifer Grady, Executive Director of ALA-APA, welcomes articles. The call for submissions of articles is available here: [http://www.ala-apa.org/newsletter/?page\\_id=59](http://www.ala-apa.org/newsletter/?page_id=59)

All questions can be directed to Jenifer Grady (800-545-2433, ext. 2424) or [jgrady@ala.org](mailto:jgrady@ala.org)

Here is a sampling of this month's topics:

- Leadership Style and Organizational Impact
- Last Night I Caught My Husband Apologizing To a Librarian
- Library Support Staff Certification Program Recruits Portfolio Evaluators
- Making the Grade: The Elements of an Effective Performance Appraisal
- Employees of Special Libraries Utilize More Wellness Initiatives Than Other Library Workers
- Supreme Court Expands Statute of Limitations for Disparate Impact Lawsuits
- Moving Up: Making the Transition Support Staff to a Professional Position During a Budget Crisis



### San Diego

ALA Midwinter meeting will be held in San Diego, CA and there is so much to see and do! Of course there is Sea World, Lego Land and the San Diego Zoo. But, there are so many more treasures to explore., we can only list a few here:

[Balboa Park](#) has 15 major museums, renowned performing arts, gardens and the Zoo. [Seaport Village](#) has over 50 shops and restaurants and outdoor entertainment. Nearby is also the [San Diego Maritime Museum](#) and the [USS Midway](#). Two exciting ways

to explore the sea without ever leaving port! Last but not least is the [Hotel de Coronado](#), a legendary California resort on Coronado island. Google "San Diego attractions" and find more.

## FAQ on State/Regional Certifications for Non-MLS Library Workers

The following survey was compiled by Jenifer Grady (ALA-APA Director) and Gwyneth Mibeck (former ALA-APA Intern). The information is intended primarily for public library staff. More discussion (including a link to a detailed, state-by-state analysis) can be found at:

<http://ala-apa.org/certification-news/stateregional-certifications/>

Based on this survey, Georgia, Iowa, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Vermont, and Wisconsin had certification requirements for public library support staff.

Although more than half of the 50 states offer or require certificates or certification for public library workers, the standards for certification are not universal and the requirements vary from state to state. The greatest difference among states was required education. For states certifying individuals without a MLS, related work experience and continuing education are taken into account. Some staff need to get the cer-

tification in order for the library to receive state funding, or because they participate in the state retirement plan. The purpose for the certifications may exist as a legal requirement, skills enhancement, or as a requirement to practice. They may require an application, copies of diplomas, or an exam. They may be free or cost up to \$80.00. Re-certification or renewals may be scheduled anytime from biennially to never; and usually are granted with documented completion of continuing education activities.

The objective of certification varies by state:

1. States with different levels of certification aim to provide non-MLS individuals with courses to improve competencies and work performance. States may provide different certification levels to accommodate different educational backgrounds.
2. The required certification programs in nearly all cases can only be renewed with proof of continuing education hours.
3. Some states provide certification, but do not have a certification program.

Many states and regions either have certification programs for library workers or are developing them. They differ in these ways:

- all states do not have certification programs or requirements
- certification may be mandatory or voluntary
- certification may be for all library workers or particular categories
- certification may be granted based on exam(s), portfolio(s), and/or course evaluation
- certification may be related to individual career growth possibilities
- certification has a range of costs

The Library Support Staff Certification (LSSC) Program is a national certification program supported by the American Library Association and the Institute of Museum and Library Services. LSSC began accepting applications for LSSC candidacy in January 2010. For more information, visit: <http://ala-apa.org/lssc/>



“MANY STATES AND REGIONS EITHER HAVE CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS FOR LIBRARY WORKERS OR ARE DEVELOPING THEM.”



## Change & Reorganization Can Be Challenging to Keep Staff Morale Up

In an atmosphere of change and reorganization it can be challenging to stay positive about your work environment. It can feel like you have no control over your work situation and that it is no longer possible to chart a career direction. You may be assigned to work in an area where the materials used are new to you. You may be removed from long developed working relationships. I am going to describe some strategies that I have used to seek the positive in an atmosphere of change.

It is important to identify something that you can have some control or direction over, even if it is only your immediate work area or desk space. Rearranging an area - bringing in flowers or a nice print can improve any space. I once brought in a really silly pencil sharpener in primary colors shaped like a fan. Not only did it really sharpen pencils, but it made me smile. Currently I have some old postcards blown up and mounted near my desk.

Reading whatever library newsletters your library distributes can also be important. Perhaps you will learn about an opportunity to serve on a committee, to participate in an event, or to learn a new skill. When our library had a staff development week it was not only an

opportunity for staff to learn new things from other staff, but it was also an opportunity for staff whose usual position descriptions did not call for doing presentations to develop experience with presenting to a friendly group. Added to a resume, this shows that one is interested in the big picture of the organization. If you are lucky enough to have a staff development department you might also have opportunities for staff development classes where you can develop practical skills.

Take advantage of the assistance that is available to you. Human resources staff, your family doctor or your union representative can be helpful and perhaps help you see additional resources or possibilities. Discussing fears or anger outside of your regular office can help you to keep a professional demeanor when you are on duty. It can be stressful to go through a big workplace change even when it is positive and it can cause physical symptoms.

Almost two years ago I made a change from a fairly large library where I had worked for 23 years to a small library in the College of Built Environments. I would like to share some specific observations and thoughts on my personal experience dealing with changes in

the workplace.

New duties and work expectations may be different than what you are used to. Read your position description and ask questions if anything is unclear. Does your manager prefer formal meetings or informal questions? Are there duties where you need additional training? What are the priorities of your position? These are all questions that can prevent misunderstandings later. Do talk about your feelings with human resources staff if needed. Use their skills. I have found that even after a few years I sometimes have feelings of uncertainty that I want to talk to someone about.

Quick information and basic reference questions come first to the circulation desk. It was important for me to learn some of the basic tools that students and faculty in the college of Built Environments work with. Learning the library collection in the Built Environments Library is something that I approached in a number of ways. Because one of my duties is processing course reserves I had a good opportunity to see what some of the basic textbooks in the college are.

I added Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) to my vocabulary. I also learned what was meant



**Noreen B. Jacky**  
University of Washington  
Libraries

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## Change & Reorganization Can Be Challenging to Keep Staff Morale Up (cont.)

when someone asked me for the 'Means' books. I learned that these are a series of books in the reference section that construction management students use to figure out costs. I learned what textbook is used for studying concrete, as well as the names of basic texts for the history of architecture courses. It makes me very happy when a student comes in asking for the textbook for Architecture 241 and I know exactly what she wants. One very useful tool has been the subject guide that the reference librarian for the Built Environments Library has put together. This is where I learned about the 'Avery Index for Architectural Periodicals' which is the principal index for articles in Architecture and related fields. I also have become familiar with the Built Environment's library northwest reference collection. I became familiar with several online sources that have been helpful in architectural research. My supervisor Alan Michelson has developed an online database of Pacific Northwest Coast Architecture that is very useful and interesting, and the Special Collections section of the Suzzallo Library has a collection of Architectural Drawings that I have sometimes referred to. I have also learned to use

the 'parcel viewer' on the King County government web site.

Identifying training needs is important in a new position. When I was working in a larger library I had become a specialist in certain procedures. When I came to a small library I learned that there were some tasks that I needed to perform that I was unfamiliar with. I have enjoyed the challenge of learning new things but I will admit that I still have some moments of insecurity and doubt.

As I started getting to know our patrons, I needed to learn what degree programs were supported by the college. The college of Built Environments has degree programs in Landscape Architecture, Architecture, Construction Management, Urban Design and Planning, as well as a program in Community Environment and Planning. There are also certificate programs in Historic preservation and urban design. I had new students taking pre-architecture and landscape courses as well as graduate students and faculty doing in-depth research. I learned how busy the students are in the college with their long studios. Projects that I have heard about while working in the library range from designing new performing arts spaces to

a park in Little Saigon. I enjoy the people who come in from off campus to try to find information on the history of their homes or other personal architecture research quests. One man I enjoyed talking to was planning a trip to Iraq and was eager to find books on that country's architecture. A student wanted to find out about Vietnamese building traditions for a paper she was writing. I learned that this college has a global focus and that many of the students participate in study abroad programs around the world. I also found that I very much enjoy the international students that are part of the college. I found that in a small library I have quickly gotten to know more of the student patrons than I did in a large library. I know the early students who come in to print their papers before their 8:30 classes, and the ones who come in the late afternoon to research their particular projects. I learned who is interested in researching Seattle's auto row and who is interested in Scandinavian design. The drama scene shop is located across the street, so we also see students who are interested in looking at photos of historic interiors to inspire their stage set designs.

It is important for me to

stay in touch with colleagues in other parts of the library system. I stay in touch informally by having lunch or coffee with people working elsewhere in the library system and formally by trying to work on committees where I can try to contribute to the library system as a whole. I am also trying to identify areas where staff training courses might be helpful to my professional development. The changes over the past few years have been a challenge, but they have been very rewarding. I would advise anyone looking at this kind of change to focus on the positive aspects of reorganization and seek out the learning opportunities involved on the micro and macro levels.

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[www.ala.org/lssirt/](http://www.ala.org/lssirt/)

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 three-four times a year.

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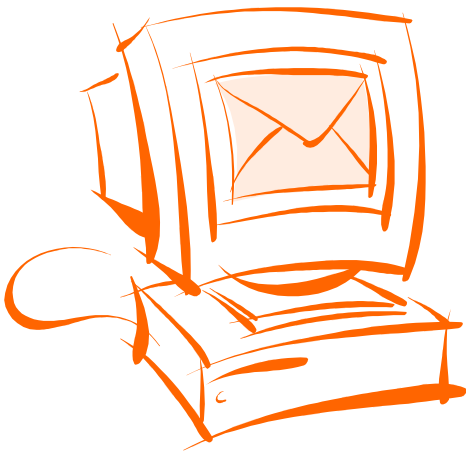
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**Our mission is to provide an arena within ALA for programming,  
communication and networking for library support staff.**

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



For timely updates and for networking with LSSIRT colleagues, be sure and sign-up for the very low volume LSSIRT e-list.

To sign-up, send an e-mail to Martha Parsons at...

[parsons@halcyon.com](mailto:parsons@halcyon.com) with your ALA membership number and ask to be subscribed.

