



**Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC),
a division of the American Library Association (ALA)
Annual Report 2019-2020
Cecilia P. McGowan, President**

2019-2020 has brought more changes than any of us had thought possible. Our successes include an updated committee structure, ensuring a more streamlined, functional, and well-aligned organization. The Board of Directors updated and approved a 2020-2023 Strategic Plan, which will guide the Board in its vital work over the next three years. The plan, a living document, will be assessed, curated, and updated as needed by the Board.

ALSC has remained committed to its focus on promoting [equity, diversity, and inclusion](#), part of its 2017-2020 Strategic Plan. Most recently, the Board voted to endorse the Black Caucus of the American Library Association's statement condemning violence and racism towards Black people and all People of Color; additionally the Board made a call to all its members to disrupt racism, anti-Blackness, and all forms of systemic oppression in their professional and personal communities.

Along with these successes, there have been huge challenges this past year as well. In early 2020, the COVID-19 virus developed into a global pandemic. In March, many states across the country issued stay-at-home mandates in line with recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to practice social distancing to stem the spread of the virus. Libraries around the country closed their doors, causing immediate and major changes in work conditions and practices of library staff. While many were furloughed due to shortfalls in funding, many other workers were authorized to work from home, where they shifted to providing services, such as reference and reader's advisory, and programming, such as storytimes, virtually. The sustained efforts, put forth during this challenging time by those who serve children and youth, are a testament to their flexibility, creativity, passion, and commitment to public service.

Through it all, ALSC has supported its members and those they serve with updated resources, forward-thinking programs, and a commitment to reach and serve all children, no matter where they are. While ALSC staff also faced challenges in pivoting from work in the office to working from home, they accomplished their work in an exemplary way, supporting our members in their important work.

None of this would have been possible without an engaged Board, painstakingly conscientious staff, and committed members. Without the synergy created by the work of these three groups, we could accomplish truly little of importance. Working together, we were able to create accessible, welcoming spaces and extend the walls of the library to serve children where they are. Every child deserves the absolute best service, and ALSC and its members strive to provide that every day.

COVID-19 and ALSC

The pandemic and nationwide stay-at-home orders also have affected ALSC and ALA's work in numerous ways. Most notably, the 2020 ALA Annual Conference & Exhibition, scheduled for June 25-30 in Chicago, was cancelled. 2020 marks the first time ALA has not held an Annual Conference since 1945 when World War II was nearing its end. Conference events along with many other 2020 happenings have been postponed, re-imagined, or cancelled, and priorities have shifted with the changing needs of membership and communities. Specific effects of the pandemic on ALSC's work are addressed in the reporting below.

ALSC Strategic Plan 2017-2020

In February 2017, ALSC adopted a three-year [strategic plan for 2017-2020](#). The three main areas of the strategic plan, the objectives that were designed to achieve strategic plan goals, and highlights of work achieved related to each goal area include:

Diversity and Inclusion. ALSC will become more diverse and inclusive, acting to promote these values in all aspects of library service to children. The ALSC Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion within ALSC Implementation task force (EDI TF) remained actively engaged as mentors creating a welcoming environment for the pilot group of six ALSC Equity Fellows selected in November 2018. Since that time all six fellows were appointed to ALSC committees and in June 2019 the board approved the EDI TF request to extend the fellowship for the pilot group to allow for a second year of conference attendance. Four of the six fellows opted to continue on for a second year and maintained their engagement in ALSC while producing a culminating project on a visual explanation of the ALSC committee appointments process. The EDI TF representatives and invited members presented at the New Chair Orientation for awards committees at the 2020 Midwinter Meeting with discussion on incorporating EDI work into their committee work, a continuation of the effort that began with the 2019 Midwinter Meeting.

The EDI TF's ongoing goal is to see EDI embedded in the work of all ALSC committees and members working in their library communities. In the Fall of 2019, ALSC joined several ALA divisions to provide free Bystander Intervention training presented by Hollaback! to nearly 80 ALSC member leaders including board members, Priority Group Consultants and committee chairs. An additional train-the-trainer opportunity was coordinated for six ALSC members who will be collaborating to create a training opportunity to be provided to hundreds of members over the next two years.

Advocacy. ALSC will champion the value of library service to children and the resources necessary to deliver on our vision. The Research and Agenda task force finalized the ALSC National Research Agenda for Library Service to Children (Ages 0-14). The research agenda was published in January 2020 and includes six priority research areas, research questions, and a bibliography of research done in each priority area.

The Public Awareness committee finalized and promoted the Championing Children's Services toolkit, which includes a variety of easy to use advocacy resources and a public service announcement video featuring Newbery Medalist Meg Medina. The toolkit has been promoted through ALSC social media and featured in the ALSC Giving Tuesday campaign. The Public Awareness and Advocacy & Legislation committees and two advocacy experts collaborated on a series of three webinars that introduced the Championing Children's Services toolkit and broadly discussed advocacy and how one might use the toolkit.

The Early and Family Literacy committee was established after the 2019 Annual Conference to identify, synthesize, and disseminate current research findings relevant to early and family literacy issues and other advocacy resources. The committee has been working to reach ALSC members and other individuals and agencies serving young children to determine information needs, open communication, initiate collaborations, and discuss future training options. The committee has contributed to the ALSC Blog with posts that have solidified understanding of the definition of family literacy as it relates to early literacy, inclusivity, and libraries.

Learning & Development. ALSC will actively develop new generations of leaders. ALSC committees continue to utilize the ALSC blog, webinars and courses to contribute to members' knowledge-base in areas such as early literacy, fiscal responsibility within their libraries, and intellectual freedom and information literacy in children's programs and services. The fall of 2019 the Education committee began a critical review of ALSC's core competences as part of 5-year review cycle. The committee reviewed results of a survey sent to ALSC membership to request feedback that will inform the updates and reported preliminary survey results analysis to the ALSC board at the 2020 Midwinter Meeting. Committee members are incorporating revisions for the updated competencies to be completed by the end of fiscal year 2020.

ALSC members, staff, and leadership have actively engaged in thoughtful consideration of how their work can impact specific goals set forth and inspired by the strategic plan. ALSC committees share their activities through quarterly reports that specifically gather information on progress toward each of the strategic plan areas. These reports and the work of staff and leadership continue to reveal steady progress in each strategic plan area.

August 31, 2020 will end the three-year 2017-2020 Strategic Plan. The Fall 2019 ALSC Executive Committee meeting initiated the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan work and was followed by the full ALSC Board's participation in developing a strategic plan by the start of the 2021 fiscal year beginning September 1, 2020. Preparations included an extensive review of resources that informed and supported the current strategic plan. Some examples of these resources include an environmental scan, quarterly Strategic Plan Implementation Progress Reports, ALSC surveys including the 2016 Diversity Within Children's Librarianship and 2019 Needs Assessment survey results, background information on current ALSC projects and resources from ALA such as the ALA's Strategic Directions and updates, and the State of America's libraries report. The Board continues the work of developing the strategic plan to ensure its relativity to a post-pandemic environment.

Membership

Statistics & Involvement

Since June 2019, ALSC has experienced an approximate 8% decline in overall membership. Many factors have impacted ALSC membership, most prominent being the current economic climate and the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the ALSC 2019 Membership Needs Assessment Report, we know approximately 70% of ALSC members pay their own dues; considering this, it will continue to be difficult for members to financially commit to ALSC.

Emerging Leaders

In November 2019, ALSC named Jessica Agudelo as its representative in the 2020 Emerging Leaders

program. Jessica Agudelo is the Supervising Librarian for the Bronx Library Center's children's department where she facilitates community partnerships and coordinates the development of early literacy, bilingual, and technology-based programming. Working for the New York Public Library since 2012, Agudelo, has vast experience in outreach services, partnerships, and children's and bilingual program development. Agudelo has served on the New York Public Library's Best Books for Kids committee and assisted with creating its Spanish counterpart, "Mejores libros para pequeños". Additionally, in 2014, she was awarded a Spectrum Scholarship from the ALA and will serve as chair of the 2021 Pura Belpré Award selection committee. She is currently working on a celebratory and awareness 40th anniversary project proposed by the Asian Pacific American Librarians Association. Due to the cancellation of the 2020 ALA Annual Conference, this project will now be presented at the 2021 ALA Annual Conference.

Mentoring Program

Applications for the Fall 2019 Mentoring Program closed in September. The Mentoring Working Group was able to facilitate 28 matches. Monthly communication is sent to the matches participating.

Engagement and Advocacy

Throughout the year, ALSC leaders and members take advantage of opportunities to spread the word about the work of ALSC and its membership and to learn from and make connections with other organizations, libraries, and professionals who work on behalf of children.

ALSC hosts regular online discussion sessions called [Community Forums](#), during which participants can chat live with the ALSC President, members of the Board of Directors, fellow ALSC members, and presenters. Members who cannot participate live may submit questions in advance via email or Twitter. Transcripts of the chats are shared afterwards. This year's forums have included:

- February 2020 – ALSC Committee Alignment and Transition to more Virtual Work
- May 2020 – Impact of COVID-19 and the Library: Present and Future

In addition to Community Forums, ALSC recognized the need for youth serving library workers to stay connected and network during this time of uncertainty. In April 2020, ALSC launched its first **We Are ALSC Chat**. Led by ALSC committees, these informal chats (held on Zoom or Twitter) are open to members and non-members and are designed to be online networking chats for resource sharing and discussion around timely topics in children's services.

The [ALSC Roadshow](#), which provides funding and/or materials, offers ALSC members the opportunity to represent the association at conferences and other relevant events around the country. In 2019-20, thus far, ALSC has supported member representatives at events:

- National Summer Learning Association Conference (NSLA) in Atlanta, Georgia – October 2019
- American Association of School Librarians (AASL) Conference in Louisville, Kentucky – November 2019
- Public Library Association Conference in Nashville, Tennessee – February 2020

Professional Awards and Scholarships

(May Hill) Arbuthnot Honor Lecture

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 lecture to be given by Neil Gaiman, award-winning author and library advocate, has been postponed indefinitely. As further information becomes available, it will be posted at <http://www.ala.org/alsc/2020-may-hill-arbuthnot-honor-lecture>.

The Arbuthnot Honor Lecture was renamed as the Children's Literature Lecture by the ALSC Board of Directors in January 2020. The purpose of the award remains the same: a lecture series that celebrates scholarship and critical thinking about literature for children, which are ever evolving. The new award name expands upon May Hill Arbuthnot's professional legacy and celebrates the many voices and perspectives that all lecturers bring to the award.

The 2021 ALSC Children's Literature Lecture will be delivered by Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop, Professor Emerita at The Ohio State University, whose research, writing, and teaching have informed and expanded conversations about representation of African Americans in children's literature and provided a critical framework for research and pedagogy. The host site application process, normally initiated in early spring, has been put on hold for the 2021 lecture, as libraries currently are focused on their own communities and on addressing managerial and financial challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

ALSC Distinguished Service Award

This award honors an individual member who has made significant contributions to, and had an impact on, library services to children and ALSC. The 2020 winner is:

- Dr. Claudette S. McLinn, Center for the Study of Multicultural Children's Literature, Inglewood, California

Bookapalooza Award

Each year the ALSC office receives almost 3,000 newly published books, videos, audiobooks, and recordings from children's trade publishers for award and notables consideration. At the end of the year, after the award winners have been chosen and announced, ALSC selects three libraries to receive a collection of these materials to use in an innovative way in their communities. The recipients for 2020 are:

- Civic Center Secondary School, San Francisco, California
- Big Rapids Community Library, Big Rapids, Michigan
- Wood Dale Public Library District, Wood Dale, Illinois

Baker and Taylor Summer Reading Program Grant (Donor: Baker and Taylor)

This \$3,000 grant provides financial assistance to a public library for developing an outstanding summer reading program for children. The 2020 recipient is:

- Homewood Public Library, Homewood, Alabama

Bechtel Fellowship (Donor: University of Florida's Endowment in memory of Louise Seaman Bechtel and Ruth M. Baldwin)

This fellowship provides a \$4,000 stipend to allow a qualified children's librarian to spend a month or more reading at the University of Florida's Baldwin Library of Historical Children's Literature, which contains a special collection of 85,000 volumes of children's literature published mostly before 1950. No fellows were named for the 2020 award year.

Maureen Hayes Author/Illustrator Visit Award (Donor: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing)

This \$4,000 award was established with funding from Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, in honor of Maureen Hayes, to bring together children and nationally recognized authors/illustrators by funding an author/illustrator visit to a school or public library that has never had the opportunity to host one. The 2020 recipient is:

- Algonquin Area Public Library, Algonquin, Illinois

Light the Way: Library Outreach to the Underserved Grant (Donor: Candlewick Press)

This \$3,000 grant is sponsored by Candlewick Press in honor of author Kate DiCamillo and the themes represented in her books. The grant is awarded to a library with exceptional outreach to underserved populations. The 2020 recipient is:

- Monterey Park Bruggemeyer Library, Monterey Park, California

Penguin Random House Young Readers Group Award (Donor: Penguin Random House Young Readers Group)

This award provides a \$600 stipend, provided by Penguin Young Readers Group, for up to four winners to attend their first ALA Annual Conference. Applicants must have fewer than 10 years of experience as a children's librarian and work directly with children. The 2020 recipients are:

- Amalia Butler, Maplewood Memorial Library, Maplewood, New Jersey
- Carla Davis, Multnomah County Library, Portland, Oregon
- Jennifer Minehardt, New York Public Library, New York, New York

Due to the cancellation of the 2020 ALA Annual Conference in Chicago, 2020 award recipients may choose to attend the ALA Virtual Event scheduled for late June 2020, or the 2021 ALA Annual Conference.

Bound to Stay Bound Books Scholarship (Donor: Bound to Stay Bound Books, Inc.)

The Bound to Stay Bound Books (BTSB) Scholarship provides financial assistance in the form of four \$8,000 annual awards for the education of men and women who intend to pursue an MLS or advanced degree and who plan to work in the area of library service to children. This work may be serving children up to and including the age of 14 in any type library. The scholarship is made possible through the generous contributions of Bound to Stay Bound Books, Inc. The BTSB winners will be announced later in June.

Frederic G. Melcher Scholarship

The Frederic G. Melcher Scholarship provides financial assistance for the professional education of men and women who intend to pursue an MLS degree and who plan to work in children's librarianship. This work may be serving children up to and including the age of 14 in any type of library. Two \$8,000 scholarships, increased this year from \$7,500, are awarded annually. The Melcher winners will be announced later in June.

ALSC Spectrum Scholarships

Two ALSC Spectrum Scholarships are awarded to Spectrum applicants who express an interest in library service to children. Since the program began in 1997, ALA has awarded more than 1,000 Spectrum Scholarships to qualified applicants enrolled in an ALA-accredited graduate program in library and

information studies or an ALA-recognized NCATE School Library Media program. The 2020 ALSC Spectrum Scholars will be announced in June.

Ellen Fader, ALSC past-president (2005-2006), has provided a generous donation to the Spectrum Scholarship for a seventh year. Her contribution will support a student through the 2020-21 school term. The scholarship recipient will be announced later in June.

Literary & Related Awards

Although ALSC is best known for its landmark awards, the **Newbery and Caldecott Medals**, the association administers a wide range of book and media awards, including the **Batchelder Award** for distinguished translated books; the **Belpré Awards** for books that best represent Latinx culture, co-sponsored with the National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish-Speaking (REFORMA); the **Excellence in Early Learning Digital Media Award** for distinguished digital media for an early learning audience; the **Geisel Award** for the most distinguished book for beginning readers; the **Odyssey Award** for excellence in audiobook production, jointly administered with the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) and sponsored by *Booklist* magazine; and the **Sibert Medal** for the most distinguished informational book. ALSC's **Children's Literature Legacy Award** honors an author or illustrator whose books, published in the United States, have made a substantial and lasting contribution to literature for children.

ALSC member evaluation committees also produce lists of recommended children's media: Notable Children's Books, Notable Children's Recordings, and Notable Children's Digital Media (NCDM).

ALSC's award winners and notable lists are available at www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants.

- **The ALA Youth Media Awards (YMA) Press Conference at Midwinter in Philadelphia** was webcast live and the archive presentation is at <http://ala.unikron.com/about2020.php>. In the weeks and months following the press conference, numerous award winners and honorees shared their feelings and expressed their gratitude in reaction videos. Their heartfelt and creative messages are posted on the [ALSC Youtube channel](#). Among the featured award recipients are Newbery Medalist Jerry Craft, Caldecott Medalist Kadir Nelson, Children's Literature Legacy Award recipient Kevin Henkes, Belpré Medalists Carlos Hernandez and Rafael López, Geisel Medalist James Yang, and Sibert Medalists Kevin Noble Maillard and Juana Martinez-Neal.

For the second year, the 2020 YMA announcements highlighted award titles selected by the American Indian Library Association (AILA), Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA), and the Association of Jewish Libraries (AJL), in an effort to bring about awareness and encourage the creation of more books that depict diverse cultures, or by authors of color.

COVID-19 Impact on ALSC Awards

The COVID-19 pandemic and the cancellation of the ALA Annual Conference precipitated two major adjustments to the ALSC awards program. A temporary change was made to the submission guidelines for 2021 award committee work, allowing committees to create suggestion and nomination lists using digital book copies. This change was made since many committee members were experiencing difficulties obtaining physical copies of books and publishers were experiencing difficulties distributing physical copies.

ALSC is collaborating with REFORMA, ODLIS, Booklist, and YALSA on virtual award events, hosted on YouTube, that will take place throughout the day on Sunday, June 28. Branded as “The ALA Book Award Celebration,” these presentations will feature the award ceremonies that normally occur during the Annual Conference and will be free and accessible to all.

Initiatives

ALSC has been home to two major national initiatives, each with a unique focus. The Public Awareness, Advocacy and Legislation, and Quicklists Consulting committees, help develop and implement the initiatives, with oversight from the ALSC Board of Directors.

Día

As the National Home of [Día](#) (El día de los niños/El día de los libros - Children’s Day/Book Day), ALSC has continued to work to encourage the widespread incorporation of this multicultural initiative into libraries’ daily programming and collection development. This year, ALSC created and shared vibrant graphics for librarians to promote their Día programs. The tagline: Each Story Matters. Every Child Counts was also developed to coordinate messaging with completion of the 2020 Census. The Quicklists Consulting Committee compiled a new set of reading lists. Unfortunately, the timing of the April 30 observation of Día fell shortly after many states began instituting stay-at-home orders due to the COVID-19 pandemic. ALSC responded by encouraging libraries to share details on how they reformatted their Día programming to offer virtual or socially-distanced events.

Everyday Advocacy

The [Everyday Advocacy \(EA\) website](#) is a member-driven resource providing straightforward, effective ways librarians and others can advocate for children and libraries. Everyday Advocacy features resources and tips for engaging community supporters, legislators, and stakeholders and for effectively communicating the value of libraries and librarians, with emphasis on librarians serving youth. *Everyday Advocacy Matters*, a quarterly electronic newsletter, highlights advocacy stories, tips, and ideas. The latest issue released came out in January 2019.

EA is also a conduit for sharing advocacy updates and actions from the Washington Office, as well as a gathering place for members to share the impact that specific programs and funding have had on their libraries.

With the EA member content editor role currently vacant, ALSC is exploring options for ongoing resource development and communication about library advocacy.

Projects, Partnerships & Letters of Support

Every Child Ready to Read

During Midwinter 2018, the ALSC and PLA Boards examined next steps in early literacy and decided to maintain and promote the ECRR toolkit and content in their current form, while concluding ECRR as an active initiative. ALSC and PLA have agreed upon a new MOU to focus on the maintenance of the existing product and communication regarding different, but related, programs and services. The MOU allows for flexibility within each organization to continue to develop new programs and services that build on and go beyond the ECRR framework. As evidenced by the final ECRR IMLS research report, we know that ECRR and

its practices are now foundational to libraries' work in early literacy and are regarded today as established methodology in the field.

The final evaluation report from Drs. Neuman, Moland, and Celano was the result of a three-year study of the ECRR initiative. The research report points to relevant uses for the existing ECRR materials and resources and makes recommendations for additional areas to address in the field of early literacy. The complete evaluation report can be found on the [ECRR website](#).

At the 2019 Midwinter meeting, the ALSC Board established the Early and Family Literacy committee to ensure continuity of and building on the ECRR practices. The committee is focused on the identification, synthesis, and dissemination of research findings relevant to early and family literacy issues, culled from library schools, education scholars, and other advocacy sources to libraries, childcare providers, and community agencies serving children from birth through age 8.

ALA Public Policy and Advocacy – Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission

ALA has partnered with the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission. WSCC was created by an act of Congress and consists of Presidential and Congressional appointees, as well as representatives of federal agencies, including the Library of Congress. One of WSCC's projects is the donation of 6,000 sets of books about women's suffrage that are written for elementary, middle, and high school audiences. ALA will co-brand the distribution of the books and related materials (reading list, program/display ideas) to public and school libraries across the country. ALSC was invited as an ALA stakeholder to appoint a representative to a short-term working group. A co-chair of the Quicklists Consulting Committee is serving in this role.

Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood - Grand Communications/Fred Rogers Productions

ALSC collaborated with Grand Communications in November 2019 to co-develop a series of materials to support the theme of "family" for the Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood television show and to promote library opt-in to access materials and proprietary PBS graphic assets. ALSC's Early Childhood Programs and Services Committee contributed the replicable activities for librarians and the Quicklists Consulting Committee also developed a booklist.

Kent State University - Project SHIELD: Supporting Healthy Infant Early Learning and Development

Kent State University's (KSU) School of Information, in partnership with KSU's College of Nursing and Akron-Summit County Public Library (Ohio), has applied for a one-year IMLS planning grant in the Community Catalysts category to conduct a pilot study that will take place in Akron, Ohio, to explore the feasibility and impact of partnering public library staff with nurses to provide parents and caregivers with information and mentoring on how to effectively bond with their baby. In addition to providing findings on the impact of this initiative, it will also inform a plan for a larger project grant to create a replicable model of how libraries, by working with nursing staff, can be catalysts for supporting learning and health for the youngest members of their communities. ALSC provided a letter of support for this project in March 2020.

MI TALKS

The Ypsilanti (Michigan) District Library has received a three-year National Leadership Grant from IMLS to expand the MI TALKS project geographically—from its current reach of Washtenaw County, Michigan, to the entire state of Michigan. The eventual product is envisioned as a nationally available subscription service created by and for librarians. The project is described by the coordinator as, "an early literacy

texting service specifically designed to tie families into the library, with an emphasis on meeting non-user parents where they are. We believe that, because TALK is based on the ECRR five practices, it has tremendous potential to bolster early literacy and market libraries at the same time.” ALSC provided a letter of support for this project in September 2019.

National Association of the Deaf

ALSC, along with ALA’s other youth-serving divisions, was approached by ALA’s Association of Specialized Government and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASGCLA) to join that division in signing on to a letter of support. The National Association of the Deaf (NAD) is applying for a grant to establish a Deaf Youth Self-Advocacy Center to create a junior NAD curriculum and regional onsite training for deaf youth in middle school. ALSC provided a letter of support for this project in March 2020.

ALSC Partners to Support National Summer Learning Week 2019

In 2019, ALSC and the National Summer Learning Association (NSLA) promoted the weeklong summer learning event—National Summer Learning Week—held July 8 through 13 and organized around theme days. ALSC President Cecilia McGowan and Liz McChesney, Chair of the Summer/Out-of-School-Time Learning Task Force, attended NSLA’s National Conference to share updates from the committee and explore opportunities for further efforts. The ALSC Board voted to maintain this collaboration from 2019-2021.

University of North Carolina - Future of Youth Public Librarian Education

The University of North Carolina (UNC) is applying for a one-year IMLS National Forum Grant that would fund a yearlong exploration into the future of public youth services librarianship, culminating in a two-day national symposium. The Forum will include 40 innovators, scholars, and practitioners from LIS and related fields and will be hosted at Chapel Hill, North Carolina. This project will be an intensive exploration of the developing trends in youth services in public libraries to determine how higher education LIS curricula should change to meet the needs of 21st and 22nd century youth library professionals. UNC is also engaging with YALSA on this project. ALSC provided a letter of support for this project in March 2020.

University of Washington – Autism-Ready Libraries

This project focuses on early literacy library services to children with autism and their families. The research team is working to create an Autism-Ready Libraries toolkit, which will contain evidence-based professional development training modules and early literacy program resources specifically for children with autism and their families. This project will provide important tools for librarians serving autistic children and promote early literacy among families. ALSC provided a letter of support for this project in March 2020.

University of Washington – Project VOICE

The University of Washington’s iSchool and Kent State University School of Information received a three-year Laura Bush 21st Century Research in Service to Practice grant to create an outcomes-based, social justice planning and assessment tool. The tool will be developed as a result of the team’s research and will support library staff in their work in underserved communities with children birth to age eight and their families. The research team is focusing their efforts in Ohio, Washington, Colorado, and South Carolina to answer the following questions: How, if at all, are libraries offering outreach programs and services to reach and serve young children and their families in underserved communities? What are the experiences and perceptions of various stakeholders (families, community partners) who participate in and/or facilitate

these outreach programs and services? How, if at all, are librarians planning and assessing their outreach programs and services to promote equity, engagement, and empowerment for families in underserved communities?

Welcoming Spaces National Forum Grant - IMLS \$150,000

ALSC received a National Leadership Grant from IMLS in the area of Community Catalysts. ALSC, in collaboration with the Association of Children’s Museums (ACM), planned to convene a one-day National Forum for representatives from 12 children’s museums, 12 libraries, and up to 24 of their partnering organizations to distill a set of best practices from their exemplary work serving immigrants and refugees. In response to COVID-19 sheltering and distancing mandates, ALSC and ACM have postponed the forum and will consider the benefits and drawbacks of rescheduling the forum as either an in-person or virtual experience. In addition to the forum, ALSC and ACM will compile the best practices resulting from the forum into a white paper and broadly disseminate that document to elevate these practices and encourage their adoption by libraries and children’s museums. Forum participants will be selected based on criteria developed by the project team with input from ALSC’s Outreach to Underserved Children and Their Caregivers committee and ALA’s Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services Advisory Committee’s subcommittee on Services to Refugees, Immigrants, and Displaced Persons. When selecting participants, care will be taken to maintain a balance of representation from children’s museums and libraries, as well from geographic location and service area type. The project team will give preference to applicants who propose to attend as part of a collaborative team that includes a community partner organization or a patron. The initial application window was from January to March 2020. With the need to reschedule the forum, the application will also be reopened.

Publications & Professional Resources

Along with serial publications—*Children and Libraries: The Journal of the Association for Library Service to Children* and the *ALSC Matters* electronic newsletter, and the *ALSC Update* and *ALSC Advantage* e-mailings, the Association also produces special publications and resources, such as booklists, toolkits, books, white papers. Resources not addressed elsewhere in this report are included below.

During the challenges of 2020, ALSC provided free access to numerous recorded webinars and the *Children and Libraries* journal to support library workers with professional development and keeping their work moving forward.

Guides & White Paper

Newbery and Caldecott Awards: A Guide to the Medal and Honor Books, 2020

Written by ALSC and published by ALA Editions, this publication was released in April. The [annual guidebook](#) is a resource for quick reference, collection development, and readers’ advisory. This year’s edition features an interview with two-time Newbery medal winner Lois Lowry.

Engage, Cultivate, Provide, Assess: An Outreach Model for Serving Children and Families White Paper

In January 2020, [ALSC released this white paper](#), which identifies a research-based framework for outreach development and supports ALSC’s position on the value that libraries serve in establishing and assessing outreach opportunities in their communities to reach unserved and underserved children and their families.

The white paper, written for ALSC by J. Elizabeth Mills, Dr. Kathleen Campana, and Dr. Michelle H. Martin, was adopted by the ALSC Board of Directors on June 22, 2019.

[Virtual Storytime Services Guide](#)

In response to COVID-19 and the need for library staff to transition their in-person programming to virtual opportunities for their communities, ALSC is working with member volunteers and the Colorado Early Literacy Library to develop a comprehensive guide that features best practices, resources, and tips on how to plan, promote, and conduct virtual storytime programming. They are working to finalize the guide by early June 2020.

Booklists

2020 Summer Reading Lists

The Quicklists Consulting committee updated the [Summer Reading lists](#) this spring with new titles to keep children engaged and reading throughout the summer. Four customizable booklists, covering birth through eighth grade students, are available.

ALA-CBC Building a Home Library

The Quicklists Consulting committee contributed to the compilation of four booklists created by the ALA-Children's Book Council (CBC) Joint committee. These lists are intended to provide guidance to parents, grandparents, and others interested in assembling a high-quality library for their children at home.

Día Reading Lists

Each year, the Quicklists Consulting committee compiles lists of books for children from birth through age 14 that celebrate many cultures and backgrounds. These [lists are shared to promote Día](#) and the sharing of wonderfully diverse books with children.

Early Literacy Reading Lists

This set of lists is the first in a series of literacy-focused reading lists. The first lists focus on the age ranges of birth to age three and ages three to five and are grouped into themes like high color contrast and daily routines.

Charlemae Rollins President's Program Reading List

The Quicklists Consulting committee compiled a list to support this year's Charlemae Rollins President's program, "Telling Our Authentic Story: Connecting, Sharing and Bridging Divides Through Children's Literature." The booklist will include recent works from panelists and moderators as well as picture books, graphic novels, and chapter books for ages birth to 14 that feature authentic, own voices stories.

Social Media

Facebook

The [ALSC Facebook account](#) is used to broadcast important messages, to promote awareness of the association and library service to youth, and to provide inspiration, resources, and news to our members and all interested colleagues. With more than 13,300 followers, the account continues to be an engaging space. In the most recent 28-day reporting period, the page reached 13,959 readers and accumulated 1,246 post engagements (post clicks, reactions, comments, and shares).

Twitter

[ALSC's Twitter presence](#) continues to grow each month. In the last year, the number of followers has increased by more than 900 and @WeAreALSC currently has more than 16,600 followers. ALSC has been using this platform to engage with members during webinars and community forums using respective hashtags.

ALSC Blog

The [ALSC Blog](#) strives to position the association as a thought-leader and to be the destination for individuals seeking ideas and inspiration around library services to young people. Daily posts address subjects such as programming, collection development, and partnerships. In 2019-20, the blog has averaged approximately 22,000 sessions per month.

In 2019, ALSC staff discovered security and plug-in integration issues on the ALSC Blog, which is hosted on WordPress. Although now fixed, these issues uncovered the need for a redesign to ensure, going forward, that the blog effectively represents ALSC as a modern, inclusive, innovative, and accessible organization. Last summer, ALSC contracted with a freelance web developer, who is currently working on a redesign of the ALSC Blog.

The blog is still in Feedspot's Top 50 Library Blogs and Websites for Librarians at number six.

ALSC Events and Continuing Education

ALSC National Institute

The [2020 ALSC National Institute](#) is slated for October 1-3 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. ALSC continues to monitor the phased reopening of states across the nation and our ability to host group events. The status of the in-person event is being considered in consultation with ALSC leadership, the National Institute Task Force, and with current Institute registrants via a survey. More information on the status of the Institute will be provided as it becomes available.

The Institute Task Force has created a dynamic slate of speakers, including Opening Keynotes Carole Lindstrom and Michele Goade (*We are Water Protectors*) and a Closing General Session, "Diving Into Identity: Amplifying Own Voices" with a panel featuring Kacen Callendar, Kyle Lukoff, and Christian Robinson. There will be sixteen educational programs that will deliver learning opportunities in four tracks: Collaborate, Include, Innovate, and Respond. The schedule is currently structured that attendees will be able to attend eight programs: two in each track.

Other major panels include our annual Breakfast for Bill panel; this year, the Task Force built a panel discussion "Family Matters: Sharing Generational Love in Children's Literature," featuring Bao Phi, Minh Lê, Cheryl Minnema, and Kao Kalia Yang. Our two Big Ideas panels are a Touchpoints Training with Carolyn Brooks, and a panel discussion on "Muslim Representations and Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) Publishing Statistics" featuring Ariana Sani Hussain, Miriam Hussain, and Madeline Tyner.

ALA Virtual Event

ALA Virtual: Community Through Connection, an online event with educational programming, special author events, and social networking, has been scheduled for June 24-26, 2020. ALA Virtual's educational

sessions will include two (see below) of the seven ALSC programs previously chosen by the Program Coordinating Committee (PCC) for the Annual Conference line-up. ALSC is considering alternative outlets for presenting the remaining programs, such as webinars, online courses, and journal articles.

In addition, other ALSC meetings and events, such as membership and board meetings, will be held virtually and outside of the dates on which ALA Virtual will be held.

Educational Programs – 2020 ALA Virtual: Community Through Connection

ALSC is presenting the following programs during ALA Virtual:

- Juntos: Latino Family Engagement at Your Library
- Universal Design for Learning and Storytime: An Inclusive Approach to Early Literacy at the Library

2020 ALSC Charlemae Rollins President's Program

ALSC looks forward to hosting the 2020 Charlemae Rollins President's Program, "Telling Our Authentic Story: Connecting, Sharing and Bridging Divides Through Children's Literature." With the cancellation of the 2020 Annual Conference and Exhibition, we are currently pursuing other options for presentation of this panel presentation, which will include children's writers and illustrators Cece Bell, Erin Entrada Kelly, and Oge Mora, and will be moderated by author and poet Janet Wong.

Online Courses

In 2019-20, ALSC offered 14 [online courses](#). The schedule included:

Summer 2019

- Contemporary Issues In Action: Ethics for Librarians
- Full STREAM Ahead: How to Take Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) to the next level with maker kits
- Postmodern Picturebooks: Changing Minds for Life
- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Programs Made Easy
- Storytelling with Puppets

Fall 2019

- Contemporary Issues In Action: Ethics for Librarians
- Full STREAM Ahead: How to Take Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) to the next level with maker kits
- Postmodern Picturebooks: Changing Minds for Life
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Programs Made Easy

Winter 2020

- Contemporary Issues In Action: Ethics for Librarians

- Full STREAM Ahead: How to Take Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) to the next level with maker kits
- Postmodern Picturebooks: Changing Minds for Life

Spring 2020

- Full STREAM Ahead: How to Take Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) to the Next Level with Maker Kits
- Storytelling with Puppets

Webinars

ALSC offers hour-long [live webinars](#) with a youth-service focus that are free for all members and non-members. Topics this year have included:

- Advocacy from A to Z
- Basic Storytime Development
- Championing Children’s Services: Discover the Instruments Your Advocacy Toolbelt Needs
- Childcare is Everywhere: How Libraries Can Develop, Strengthen, and Support Child Care Part 1: Introduction to Child Care & Bringing Literacy to Child Care
- Childcare is Everywhere: How Libraries Can Develop, Strengthen, and Support Child Care Part 2: Programs for Nannies and Informal Providers
- Childcare is Everywhere: How Libraries Can Develop, Strengthen, and Support Child Care Part 3: Developing and Supporting Childcare Programs
- Dispatches from the Field: Advocacy Best Practices with Jeremy Johannesen and Megan Cusick
- Early Childhood Expertise Beyond Libraryland: Reading Life Between the Lines: Using Children’s Literature for Tough Conversations about Diversity
- Honoring Infancy Part 1: Growing the Garden – Nurturing a Play and Early Learning Space
- Honoring Infancy Part 2: Libraries Welcoming Babies
- Honoring Infancy Pt 3: Beyond Baby Storytime

Recorded Webcasts

ALSC offers [archived webinars](#), which have already taken place, as on-demand video that can be watched at any time. In efforts to support ALSC's continuing education goals, live webinars and archived webinars were offered free to ALSC members again in 2019-20. Archived webinars were available to non-members for a small fee.

Board Work

The [ALSC Board of Directors works year-round](#)—in person at ALA conferences and virtually—reviewing strategic plan implementation and priorities, discussing mega issues, deliberating on organizational matters, and making decisions that move the association forward. Directors are elected by the ALSC

membership and serve a three-year term. Board schedules, along with official documents and minutes, are available on the [ALSC website](#).

As part of their work to develop a strategic plan for 2020 to 2023, the ALSC Board undertook a review of ALSC's structural organization. As a result of this review, during their February 2020, meeting, the Board voted to approve a realigned ALSC committee structure that becomes effective on July 1, 2020, with the start of a new service year. At the same time, each of ALSC's process committees will begin operating in a hybrid manner with a co-chair structure. Details of this new structure and background information regarding these changes can be found on the [Committee page](#) of the website.

Looking Ahead

ALSC has accomplished so much in the past year, thanks to the hard work of the staff, the ALSC Board, and our committees. There is no question that challenges lie ahead—further fallout from COVID-19, the ALA headquarters building move, ALA staff furloughs, and possibly others that cannot even be identified at this time. But through concerted, collaborative effort, ALSC will remain a strong, fiscally responsible division and continue to excellently serve our members and work together to serve all children and their caregivers in a respectful and equitable way.

2019-2020 ALSC Board of Directors and Staff

Executive Committee:

Cecilia P. McGowan, President
Kirby McCurtis, Vice-President/President-Elect
Jamie Campbell Naidoo, Immediate Past President
Julie Dietzel-Glair, Division Councilor
Amber Creger, Fiscal Officer

Directors:

Linda Ernst
Elisa Gall
Africa Hands
Maggie Jacobs
Sujei Lugo
April Mazza
Sue McCleaf Nespeca
Amy Sears

ALSC Staff:

Aimee Strittmatter, Executive Director
Alena Rivers, Deputy Director
Jordan Dubin, Awards Coordinator (*effective October 2019*)
Kristen Figliulo, Program Officer, Continuing Education (*until October 2019*)
Angela Hubbard, Program Officer, Projects and Partnerships
Anne Michaud, Program Coordinator

Sarah Polen, Program Officer, Continuing Education (*effective February 2020*)
Laura Schulte-Cooper, Program Officer, Communications and Website
Elizabeth Serrano, Membership Marketing Specialist