

# Chapter Relations Committee Midwinter Meeting 2016 Report

## Committee Charge:

To develop and recognize chapters as integral components of ALA. To encourage discussion, activities and programs that support the mutual interests of ALA and the chapters. To advise when requested on proposals and actions of other ALA units that may affect chapters. To provide a forum wherein chapters can share ideas and concerns of common interest and identify common needs and goals. To communicate these chapter needs and goals to ALA and ALA goals, programs and priorities to the chapters. To encourage and maintain a cooperative and supportive relationship among ALA, its units, and the chapters. To formulate and review periodically requirements for chapter status. To serve as an advisory committee to the Chapter Relations Office.

## Committee Members:

Ben Allen Hunter (Chair), Kristine L. Ferry, Carol Hanan, Carey D. Hartmann, Patti McCall, Louis Munoz, Jr, Kelly M. Robinson, Suzanne L. Sager, Susan J. Schmidt, Lisa R. Varga, Cathy Wolford, Melissa M. Brooks (Intern), Jillian K. Hayes (Intern), James Neal (Executive Board Liaison), Michael Dowling (Staff Liaison), Don Wood (Staff Liaison)

Division Representatives to CRC: Eleta Exline (ACRL Representative), Dana Lucile Jemison (ALCTS Representative), Carolyn Larson (RUSA Representative), Yoo Young Lee (LITA Representative).

CRC Member Liaisons to Other Groups: ALA Task Force on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion—Majed Khader; Freedom to Read Foundation— Susan Schmidt; Literacy Assembly—Patti McCall; Education Assembly— Suzanne Sager; Legislation Assembly— Carey Hartmann; Recruitment Assembly— Lisa Varga; Planning and Budget Assembly— Carol Hanan; Advocacy Group— Ben Hunter, CRC Chair

## Chapter Relations Committee at Midwinter Meeting

Documents and reports related to this report are located in the Chapter Relations Committee ALA Connect community at <http://connect.ala.org/node/247982>.

## Current

- The CRC held two meetings (Sat and Mon) in Boston. Attendees (apprx. 30 each mtg.) included Chapter Presidents, Executive Directors, Chapter Councilors
- The CRC organized, with the Chapter Relations Office (CRO), another successful full-day Chapter Leaders Forum. The Forums, which have been held at each Midwinter and Annual for over twenty years help prepare incoming Chapter Leaders (President-elects, treasurers, Chapter Councilors, Ex. Directors, etc.) for their roles guiding their associations. Thirty-five participants from 27 Chapters attended. Topics covered included Developing Engaged and Satisfied Members, Chapters and Federal Legislative Advocacy Group (FLAG), 12 Steps to Developing Your Organizations Creditability as an Advocacy Leader, and Library Associations: Transforming Ourselves.
- Marci Merola, director, ALA Office for Library Advocacy (OLA), spoke to the CRC. She introduced Jeff Julian, the new Public Awareness Office director, and Megan Murray Cusick, Grassroots Specialist, in OLA. She wants to encourage better internal coordination between agencies at the state and local levels, and sponsor more advocacy trainings for Chapters. She also updated the CRC on the Libraries Transform (LT) advocacy campaign, a 3-5 year campaign launched in October. She encouraged the committee to go to the LT toolkit now available online. OLA is creating a list of available advocates and their groups.
- Michael Dowling discussed the 2016 Money Smart Week, April 23-30. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is also working with Federal Bank of Chicago and is providing free MSW posters, bookmarks, and fliers. CRO will be publicizing this generous offer so CFPB they will continue to work with us in the future. Learn more about Money Smart Week at <http://www.ala.org/offices/money-smart-week> and @ALA\_CRO #MoneySmartWeek.

- Don Wood reported on the 2016 Student-to-Staff Program. Every year Chapter Relations Office with support from Conference Services coordinates the Student-to-Staff Program (S2S), which was established in 1973. S2S is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for 40 qualifying students engaged in ALA student chapters to attend an Annual Conference and enrich their studies. This year's students will be working with 25 ALA units. He encouraged state chapters to reach out to their student staff members and offer free student membership.
- Don Wood noted ALA partners with 39 state Chapters to offer the joint ALA Joint Student Membership program. This year this means that students may join ALA and one Chapter for the low price of \$38.
- Virginia Library Association Executive Director Lisa Varga discussed "Presentation Academy," VLA's response to a recent survey of members of the Virginia Library Association that revealed a number of library professionals would be interested in presenting but requested help with the necessary skills. Presentation Academy is a hybrid of in-person and online workshops intended to increase VLA members' presentation confidence and improve presentations. A webinar was led by Presentation Academy faculty members, who discussed the logistics of launching such an Academy, the content provided, feedback from participants, and plans for future Academies.
- Michael Dowling discussed the latest results of the State of the Chapter Annual reports. As explained at State of the Chapter Annual Report, on recommendation of ALA's Chapter Relations Committee, each year all Chapters are asked to complete an online survey to provide an overview of their past year's activities. These overviews help Chapters and ALA (1) assess the health and vitality of state and regional library associations, (2) highlight notable activities and achievements that can be modeled, and (3) identify challenges and needs that may be addressed collectively. Chapter reports are available from 2012 to 2015. See <http://www.ala.org/groups/all-state-chapter-reports> (up to date as of October 16, 2015.) Michael Dowling pointed out that Chapter memberships have stabilized, so that they are no longer losing members.
- ALA Washington Office Executive Director Emily Sheketoff presented to the Chapter Relations Committee. The following are highlights. For more information, visit [http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/governance/council/council\\_documents/2016\\_mw\\_council\\_documents/cd\\_30\\_wash\\_ofc\\_6\\_mos\\_rpt\\_1416\\_inf\\_0.pdf](http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/governance/council/council_documents/2016_mw_council_documents/cd_30_wash_ofc_6_mos_rpt_1416_inf_0.pdf):
  - **ConnectED Library Challenge.** Mayors, county executives, school superintendents, and library leaders from approximately 50 cities and counties met in Washington, DC, on January 19, 2016, as part of a national initiative to connect students to public library system resources. The "ConnectED Library Challenge: Answering the Call" convening was hosted by the White House, with the support of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. It was both a strategy session and a celebration of the community leaders who accepted the President's challenge last April. The Urban Libraries Council (ULC) (link is external) and American Library Association (ALA) (link is external) contributed to the initiative. In brief, the ConnectED Library Challenge is a way for communities throughout the country to create or strengthen partnerships so that every child enrolled in school can receive a library card. The initiative calls upon library directors to work with their mayors, school leaders, and school librarians, to provide wider access to the learning resources and books of America's libraries. The initiative calls upon library directors to work with their mayors, county executives, school leaders, and school librarians, to provide wider access to the learning resources and books of America's libraries.
  - **Open eBooks.** The Open eBooks initiative will make over \$250 million in popular e-books from major publishers available, for free, to children from low-income families via an app. The Open eBooks app is being developed by the New York Public Library, which is partnering with the Digital Public Library of America and First Book to curate and deliver the e-books to students from low-income families.
  - **ESSA Every Student Succeeds Act.** ALA has provided an analysis of the act here: <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/sites/ala.org.advocacy/files/content/advleg/federallegislation/ALA%20-%20ESEA%20Conference%20Overview%20%2811-30-15%29.pdf> Among the highlights: ESSA includes "School Librarians" in the definition of "specialized instructional support personnel"; ESSA includes new provisions that authorize local plans to include a description of how the LEA will assist schools in developing effective school library programs to provide students an opportunity to develop digital literacy skills and improve academic achievement; States are now authorized to use funds to support the instructional services provided by effective school library programs; ESSA requires local grants that focus on children in K – 5 to provide high-quality professional development opportunities for specialized instructional support personnel, school librarians, paraprofessionals, and other program staff. Emily Sheketoff was thanked for her 10 years' effort to see this act come to fruition.

- **IRS Tax Form Outlet Program.** The IRS will send instructions and all forms out to libraries at the end of January. Libraries are able to reorder forms and instruction booklets.
- **Engage.** The Chapter Relations Office and the Washington Office are reviewing the current software—Engage (used to communicate with elected officials and encourage members to take action on legislation)—to determine whether to find another software or to ask for more functions for Engage.
- Doug Evan, Ohio Library Council Executive Director, presented a report on proceedings of the International Council of Library Association Executives (ICLAE) committee meeting at Midwinter. Below are highlights:
  - **Capwiz & Engage.** Consensus among the states is that Engage works well and are or will soon utilize it. States that are still using Capwiz are using it because they are still in their fiscal cycle.
  - **Communications Survey.** A survey to determine how Chapters communicated ALA information and how ALA could best communicate to the Chapters was sent to Chapters prior to Midwinter. Most concerning from the results was the discrepancies within the same organizations. If more than one person responded from a state, they had conflicting answers.
  - **Libraries Transform Initiative.** Chapters would like an expanded toolkit. There is a desire in the second year of the initiative to put more of a personal touch on the campaign. It is likely when Julie Todaro becomes ALA president that the campaign will feature individual staff members from libraries. There is an effort to personalize the Libraries Transform campaign.
  - **State Chapter Leadership Institutes.** To assist the Maryland Library Association, CRO will send out a survey after Midwinter to determine the structure, cost, and efficacy of leadership institutes. MLA will share results with other Chapters.
  - **Codes of Conduct.** Codes of Conduct were discussed. Some people will not speak at an event unless there is a Code of Conduct set up. States will start to utilize the ALA Code of Conduct for their events.
  - **International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA).** IFLA World Library and Information Congress will hold its 82nd IFLA General Conference and Assembly, 13–19 August 2016, in Columbus, Ohio.
- Liaison and Representative Reports. CRC liaisons made brief reports from the following groups: ALA Task Force on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion—Majed Khader; Freedom to Read Foundation—Susan Schmidt; Literacy Assembly—Patti McCall; Education Assembly—Suzanne Sager; Legislation Assembly—Carey Hartmann; Recruitment Assembly—Lisa Varga; Planning and Budget Assembly—Carol Hanan; Advocacy Coordinating Group—Ben Hunter, CRC Chair; and Division Representatives—Yoo Young Lee (LITA), Dana Lucile Jemison (ALCTS), Eleta Exline (ACRL), Carolyn Larson (RUSA).

## Discussions and Action Item

The CRC discussed the following Items at length.

### 2016 ALA Midwinter Conference’s President’s Program featuring Cory Booker

The New Jersey Library Association expressed its “dismay” (see <http://www.njla.org/content/new-jersey-library-association-statement-ala-presidents-program-midwinter-2016>) over ALA choosing U.S. Senator Cory Booker (NJ) as speaker for the President’s Program. As mayor of Newark, NJ, Booker severely cut public library funding and closed 3 of 10 branches. “Hours were reduced at all remaining branches and at the main library. Staff was forced to endure a 40% pay cut for more than 15 weeks in 2010.” NJLA also expressed concern that ALA had not reached out to it first before choosing Booker and then did not reach out to NJLA with its response to the NJLA resolution before distributing it. Discussion focused on how to encourage better communication among ALA and the Chapters.

### Advocacy Implementation Plan

Some concerns were expressed that ALA had not consulted Chapters sufficiently before releasing plan. Discussion focused on how to encourage better communication among ALA and the Chapters.

## **Libraries Transform Advocacy Campaign**

Part of the Advocacy Effort is the Libraries Transform advocacy campaign. Concerns were expressed about how Chapters could be involved in and support this campaign, particularly in conjunction with their own campaigns and local concerns.

### **Information Sharing Within Chapters Survey (Action Item)**

- Prior to the Midwinter Meeting, the Chapter Relations Committee conducted a survey to investigate how/whether ALA chapters is sharing information shared on the alacro-I and chapeditor lists with members of their chapters. This survey was designed to ascertain whether or not this information is being distributed, who is responsible for distributing the information, how helpful the information is, and whether there are more effective ways this information could be shared. CRC and the Chapter Relations Office will use the findings to evaluate current methods of communication. Ben Hunter, CRC Chair, shared the findings, and much of the subsequent discussion centered on conflicting responses submitted by Chapters; subscribers finding the information useful and those sharing the information act as gatekeepers, sharing information they think will be useful to their Chapters; and confusion among Chapters about what each e-list is used for. In addition to possible follow up to reach out to Chapters that didn't respond to find out why they didn't respond, after more discussion about the effectiveness of the chapeditor e-list, the Chapter Relations Committee voted to sunset chapeditor and to send all news and information directly to the alacro-I e-list.

## **2016 Annual Conference in Orlando**

The CRC will discuss the progress of the Advocacy Implementation Plan; the Libraries Transform Advocacy Campaign; whether to propose to the ALA Committee on Organization to limit the membership of the Chapter Relations Committee to current and former Chapter leaders; leadership institutes; Engage and other advocacy platforms; and how the ALA and Chapters can foster better communication.