

**American Library Association**

**ALA Midwinter Meeting**

**Report of President, Courtney Young**

Presidential Focus

My first *American Libraries* column, "Advancing our Mission", outlined my initial vision for the coming year. This includes moving forward existing initiatives with a focus on advocacy and outreach, viewing diversity through a different lens, and harnessing the potential of social media. This is also a strategic planning year. The year will go by quickly and there will no doubt emerge an unanticipated issue requiring attention.

I worked with Kevin Reynolds to select 22 state chapters to participate in the inaugural Career Development Facilitators (CDF) program. As noted in the press release, the program will provide "comprehensive training designed to address several facets of career planning and the job search. This specific CDF training for ALA Chapters will be tailored with special emphasis on the role of the librarian in helping patrons and job seekers. By offering this innovative training to those in state chapters, participants will be able to assist their peers as well as the numerous patrons at their local libraries." Each chapter has selected a representative to participate. Dr. Caitlin Williams will conduct the face-to-face training on January 29-30 at ALA Headquarters, and will continue in a virtual classroom format for fourteen weeks.

I am working with staff in the Office for Diversity on a plan to: create a top level link for Diversity on the ALA website that would be populated with diversity related resources from across the association and highlight affiliate initiatives; create a narrative around the value of ALA membership for career development especially for librarians of color and diverse librarians; and highlighting diversity success stories: successful examples of activities that have improved services, fostered organizational change, a potential tag line of "Diversity starts @ your library". Progress is being made in this area thanks to the hard work of Gwendolyn Prellwitz and a portal page will launch soon.

My presidential budget was designed to support opportunities that foster collaboration, cooperation, and partnerships across units. I have supported a joint proposal from Jenny Levine (ITTS) and Christina Coleman (Membership) to create a Media Resources Archive (MRA). "As ALA works to better coordinate its social media and electronic communication efforts to maximize advocacy, engagement, and impact, we need to shift our focus from text-heavy messages to more visually appealing media. To continue this transformation to a more story-based and visual approach, we must begin building capacity to capture and utilize various types of media." The anticipated outcomes for creating the MRC include equipment to capture content and stories; a concentrated and coordinated effort to humanize ALA, make staff efforts more visible, and make the inner

workings of the organization more transparent to promote member engagement and greater involvement; capacity to monitor external channels for content; a shared online repository of media and material to increase the visual impact of our efforts; consistently high quality materials that communicate messages visually; capacity to turn raw materials into visually engaging content; and a sustainable process that gives staff the resources needed to respond to stories, opportunities, and conversations in social media channels as they happen. The MRA will support improving the ALA member experience, and will have a positive impact on both new and continuing members. As President, I am very interested in demonstrating the value of ALA membership with regards to diversity, career development, and engagement and outreach. The MRA will allow the association to better communicate that value in these areas.

### Sustained ALA Leadership Focus

Barbara Stripling, Sari Feldman, and I have begun to have conversations about current initiatives and future possibilities so that we have a sustained leadership effort that carries through from one president to the next seamlessly. I continue to appreciate this collaborative approach to association leadership.

### Strategic Planning

I have worked closely with Keith Michael Fiels and Mary Ghikas on the now in-progress strategic planning process. An initial message regarding the proposed planning process was sent to ALA members, ALA Council, and posted to Connect on July 29, 2014.

Materials have been developed for planning forums at state chapter events. The first planning discussion took place with our division leadership colleagues during the Joint Boards meeting on October 24, 2014.

Keith Fiels and I led three online strategic planning discussions. Adobe Connect was used for the sessions. Each discussion was focused on a strategic direction: advocacy, information policy, and professional and career development.

### Social Media

I worked with Jenny Levine and Christina Coleman to hold the first ALA President Twitter Chat. The event took place on July 29, 2014 from 7-8pm. This first chat's topic was focused on my first month as ALA President and they asked me questions submitted by Twitter users related to this topic.

I also participated in a Google Hangout with ALA President-Elect Sari Feldman on October 20, 2014. We discussed getting involved in ALA. This Hangout was spotlighted in AL Direct and ALA's social media outlets.

I continue to provide additional social media support for the ALA Facebook page and Instagram account, and via my Twitter account and the #teamala hashtag. This includes posting photos using Instagram at conferences and events related to ALA. Examples include posting a photo of ALA Executive Director Keith Michael Fiels moderating the

IFLA U.S. Caucus meeting, and CA Chapter Councilor Patty Wong at the ALA Advocacy Table at the Hawaii Library Association conference.

### Media Interviews

I was interviewed during the ALA Annual Conference in Las Vegas, NV by Publisher's Weekly.

I was interviewed on July 8, 2014 by Reuters for an article on homeless and libraries. I also spoke with a reporter the same day from the Chronicle of Higher Education on the joint set of net neutrality principles supported by ALA and other college, university, and library organizations.

I was interviewed on July 9, 2014 by an affiliate of CBS News.

I was interviewed on July 9, 2014 by Comcast Newsmakers. The segment, titled "Modern Libraries", ran nationally on Headline News from 7/21-7/27. Comcast ran the piece again from 9/15-9/21. It also ran on the Xfinity-on-demand platform from 7/16-8/30. It is also available online: <http://comcastnewsmakers.com/2014/07/16/modern-libraries/>

I was interviewed by Ben Johnson of Marketplace Tech on July 31, 2014. The interview was broadcast on NPR affiliates nationwide. It is also available online: <http://www.marketplace.org/topics/tech/learningcurve/how-tech-changing-reading-libraries>

I spoke with a reporter on September 3, 2014 from Fast Company about libraries lending unusual items. The article is available online: <http://www.fastcompany.com/3035406/innovation-agents/taking-a-long-overdue-sledgehammer-to-the-public-library>

On September 4, 2014 I spoke with a reporter from a Monroeville (PA) newspaper regarding recent book thefts from that community's library.

An op-ed was published in the Huffington Post for Banned Books week. Sincere thanks to Barbara Jones for the piece. It is available online: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/courtneyyoung/trigger-warnings-censorship\\_b\\_5863506.html?utm\\_hp\\_ref=books](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/courtneyyoung/trigger-warnings-censorship_b_5863506.html?utm_hp_ref=books)

ALA past president Carla Hayden and ALA Washington Office staff member Emily Sheketoff were quoted in the Washington Post's "Librarians won't stay quiet about government surveillance." ALA My President's Column "Advocate. Today." was included as a part of the article, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-switch/wp/2014/10/03/librarians-wont-stay-quiet-about-government-surveillance/>.

I spoke Garry Boulard from Construction Reporter News on October 16, 2014 for the piece "New library construction reflects larger trends." It is available online, <http://constructionreporternews.com/?p=7072>.

On November 3, 2014 I spoke with a reporter from EdWeek about net neutrality. The piece was posted online, [http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/marketplacek12/2014/11/'net\\_neutrality'\\_stirs\\_passions\\_of\\_some\\_ed.\\_groups\\_gets\\_silence\\_from\\_others.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/marketplacek12/2014/11/'net_neutrality'_stirs_passions_of_some_ed._groups_gets_silence_from_others.html).

In partnership with Media Planet and the ALA Public Information Office, "How public libraries transform lives and communities" ran in the December 26, 2014 USA Today magazine supplement and was published online at <http://www.americanliteracynews.com/reading-fundamentals/how-public-libraries-transform-lives-and-communities>.

### Travel and Speaking Engagements

July 9, 2014 I spent the day at the ALA Washington Office. I received updates from staff in OITP in the morning and OGR in the afternoon. I also did the two video interviews mentioned above.

July 22-27, 2014 I traveled to the Dominican Republic to keynote the library conference sponsored by the Global Foundation for Democracy and Development hosted at the Juan Bosch Library in Santo Domingo.

I attended the IFLA Conference in Lyon, France on August 16-23. At the request of Michael Dowling, I spent time at the ALA Booth in the exhibits hall. This gave me an opportunity to meet librarians, library school students, and IFLA leaders. I also signed an agreement on behalf of ALA with Bibliothek & Information Deutschland (BID) to begin in 2016 a three-year partnership program with the German library community. IFLA was also an excellent opportunity to build a strong working relationship with Sari Feldman, Barbara Stripling, and Keith Michael Fiels.

I keyed the Kentucky Library Association/Kentucky Association of School Libraries annual conference in Louisville, KY on September 18, 2014.

I gave brief remarks at the Pennsylvania Library Association's President's Luncheon on September 28, 2014.

I keyed the Nebraska Library Association annual conference in South Sioux City, NE on October 9, 2014.

On October 14, 2014 I attended the Aspen Institute "Dialogue on Public Libraries" event at the New York Public Library.

On October 27-30, 2014 I attended the South Korea Library Association.

On October 31-November 2, 2014 I attended the Japan Library Association conference. JLA celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

November 5-6, 2014 I attended the opening of the "Magna Carta: Muse and Mentor" exhibit at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC.

November 9-13, 2014 I attend and keynoted the inaugural Sharjah International Book Fair American Library Association Library Conference in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates.

November 14, 2014 I keynoted the Academic Library Association of Ohio conference in Sandusky, OH.

On December 2, 2014 I presented the I Love My Librarian Award! at the New York Times in New York, NY.

December 1-3, 2014, along with other ALA leaders I met with various publishers in New York, NY.

December 4-7, 2014 I attended and keynoted the Hawaii Library Association conference in Honolulu, HI.

From December 7-9, 2014 I represented ALA at the Coalition of Networked Information fall meeting in Washington, DC.

#### Upcoming Travel and Speaking Engagements

From February 26-March 2, 2015 I will attend and present the closing session at the Alaska Library Association conference.

On March 17, 2015 I will make a presentation at Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI.

March 19-20, 2015, at the invitation of the dean of university libraries, I will visit and make a presentation at the University of North Carolina Greensboro University Libraries. I will also attend a reception for Gerald Holmes, recipient of the ALA 2014 Achievement in Library Diversity Honoree.

March 25-28, 2015 I will attend the ACRL 2015 Conference in Portland, OR.

April 8-10, 2015 I will visit and make a presentation at the North Carolina Central University School of Library and Information Science in Durham, NC.

April 14-15, 2015 I will attend the Texas Library Association Annual Conference in Austin, TX.

April 17-19, 2015 I will chair the ALA Executive Board spring meeting at ALA Headquarters in Chicago, IL.

On April 20, 2015 I will make a presentation at Northwestern University in Evanston, IL.

On April 27, 2015 I will speak at the Annual MLIS Summit at St. Catherine University in St. Paul, MN.

From April 29-May 1, 2015 I will attend the Oklahoma Library Association Annual Conference in Midwest City, OK.

From May 3-5, 2015 I will represent ALA at National Library Legislative Day in Washington, DC.

May 16-19, 2015 I will present at the Acquisitions Institute in Timeberline Lodge, OR.

June 10, 2015 I will attend the Diversity Conference for NJ Libraries in Eatontown, NJ.