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The 10th annual service trip to Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, with Librarians Without Borders: Reflections from participants

By: *Allinston Saulsberry, Arizona State University*
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[Librarians Without Borders](#) (LWB) is “a non-profit organization that strives to improve access to information resources regardless of language, geography, or religion, by forming partnerships with community organizations in developing regions.” Jorge Chojolán, founder of Miguel Angel Asturias Academy, located in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, has a [continuing partnership](#) with LWB that allows librarians and library personnel to partake in service trips to the academy’s library.

In 2018, 12 participants traveled to Guatemala; three of these participants—Karen Garcia, Joi Jackson, and Allinston Saulsberry—describe the application process, their activities to support the trip’s goal objectives, and the benefits of experiencing librarianship abroad, as well as glimpses of the personal journeys they experienced through it all.



Participants from Librarians Without Borders give a puppet show at Asturias Academy.

The application process

Potential participants are encouraged to attend an informational meeting via a conference call. Attending the call does not increase chances of being selected, but allows interested candidates to become acquainted with the program and have general questions answered. Attendees are educated about LWB and the goal objectives of the current trip, get acquainted with program leaders, gain an understanding of the trip’s finances (trip fees, lodging, eating, and transportation), and view completed work done by the previous service team. The application process requires a statement video, a resume, a survey of questions, and documents that showcase your library skills (optional).

For the statement video, participants are asked to answer questions such as: Why are you interested in volunteering for LWB; why is the Guatemala service trip meaningful to you; and summarize any relevant qualifications and experiences that makes you an ideal candidate for the project. The video can be shot however the participant

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Message from the Editors

This June IL issue has a Hispanic flavor to it, focusing on libraries and librarians in Guatemala, Peru, Honduras, and Mexico.

Our lead article describes the 2018 Librarians Without Borders service trip to Guatemala. In addition we are treated to a rich library and information services journey in Peru and learn of a Reicken Community Library in Honduras. Our international librarian profile casts a spotlight on Dr. Jonathan Hernández, National Autonomous University of Mexico.

Did you know that [Sharjah](#) in the United Arab Emirates is the 2019 World Book Capital? The [World Book Capital programme](#), managed by UNESCO, has seen a series of world cities take the title in turns and commit to supporting books and reading.

“Known as the City of Knowledge, Sharjah has fast established itself as the source for the region’s growing publishing sector, and has become the hub for most book related events and organizations in the UAE” to learn more <https://www.sharjahwbc.com/en/about-us.aspx> . Happy reading!

Meet the Editors

Rebecca Miller

Rebecca is an independent library consultant, focusing on libraries in developing countries. She specializes in research, strategic planning, outreach, administration/management for libraries. She offers tailored professional development trainings and presentations on these and other topics. Rebecca has over 20 years of experience with libraries, as a practitioner and professor.



Florence Mugambi

Florence is the African Studies Librarian at the Herskovits Library of African Studies, Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, USA. She has over 10 years of experience as a librarian, and has a strong interest in literacy & establishment of libraries in rural communities of developing countries. She serves as the chair of the Africa Subcommittee, International Relations Committee.



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Message from the IRRT Chair



By Muzhgan Nazarova
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This is my last time writing this column as IRRT chair. Building upon my reflections in the [March](#) issue, I would like to say that it was a great opportunity to work with and serve librarians and information professionals committed to international librarianship. More international members have joined IRRT committees as chairs and members this year. The presenters at IRRT's different programs at the ALA Annual this June represent different continents and countries including Singapore, Vietnam, Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria, Spain, Austria, Russia and many more.

I have also enjoyed working with young professionals who are part of the 2019 Emerging Leaders program. These young professionals will be presenting the results of their project on *International Librarians Mentorship Program (ILMP)* at the poster at session at ALA annual as well as release a website they have created.

I would like to thank you all for your participation in ALA elections (2019 Election results <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/alaelection>). Special congratulations go to the newly elected IRRT Executive Board members: Alexandra Houzouri Humphreys as Chair Elect; Mark Mattson, Member-at-Large; and Julia M. Gelfand as Secretary/Treasurer. Please consider putting forward your candidacy for the Executive Board membership next year.

I am very happy that the findings of the newly released **State of America's Libraries Report 2019** (<http://www.ala.org/news/state-americas-libraries-report-2019>) coincide with my selected theme for the year of my IRRT chair-ship - *Serving communities: locally and globally*, which in turn fits very well with the initiative of our **2018–2019 ALA President Loida Garcia-Vebo Libraries = Strong Communities** which turned into a national advocacy effort aimed at highlighting the value of academic, public, and school libraries. Libraries = Strong Communities tour will end with a [rally and celebration](#) from 11 a.m. Saturday, June 22. (See page 7).

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Summarizing the library trends released during National Library Week, April 7 – 13, the Report provides statistical data and issues affecting all types of libraries, and provides the following conclusion “*Never have our nation's libraries played such a pivotal role in strengthening communities through education and lifelong learning. Libraries are a microcosm of the larger society. They play an important and unique role in the communities that they serve and provide an inclusive environment where all are treated with respect and dignity...*”

I want to thank the members and chairs of the following IRRT committees for their commitment and dedication in organizing outstanding programs within our theme “**Serving communities: locally and globally**” for the upcoming 2019 ALA Annual conference: Felicia Chan & Jamie Johnston, International Papers; Katherine Dow & Clement Chu, Poster Session; Yan Liu & Scott Harkless, International Connections; Gloria Creed-Dikeogu & Barbara Marson, IRRT Preconference; Jeremiah Paschke-Wood & Christina Riehman-Murphy, Chair's Program; Alexandra Houzouri Humphreys & Carol Brey, Sister Libraries.

Detailed information about IRRT programs and presenters can be found at <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/iro/iroactivities/meetingsprograms> including the pre-conference (registration required), on Friday June 2.

The co-chairs of other IRRT committees: Camille L. Callison & Margaret Spires, International Visitors Center; Laverne Page & Farzaneh Razzaghi, IRRT Reception and Citations; and Peter Bae & Gene Hayworth, International Librarian Orientation are working hand in hand to host our IRRT guests in Washington, DC.

The [IRRT Reception](#) will take place in at Library of Congress on Monday, June 24th, at 7 p.m. International librarians registered for the full conference will receive one complimentary ticket to the reception.

Library of Congress administration and representatives of different directorates, divisions and sections are working on special events to open its doors to ALA guests on Saturday, June 22 and Monday, June 24th.

More details are forthcoming.

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Message from the Chair, continued

To take a tour of the Library of Congress the following will be useful. (Please indicate that you are ALA participant).

Thomas Jefferson Building Public Tour Schedule <https://www.loc.gov/visit/tours/guided-tours/thomas-jefferson-building/>; Contact Visitors Services <https://www.loc.gov/visit/contact-visitor-services/> (202) 707-9779

To visit a specific LOC division or section, or meet a specialist in a specific area contact me in advance at mnaz@loc.gov or txt 217-721-06-08. I will do my best to accommodate your request.

To conclude, it has been a pleasure to serve as your IRRT chair this year, and as a local Washingtonian for the last 3 years and a representative of the Library of Congress I am looking forward to welcoming you in DC, and together with my ALA, IRRT and LOC colleagues make this experience unforgettable for you.

IRRT & IRC Programs at ALA Annual

<http://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/iro/iroactivities/meetingsprograms>

FRIDAY, JUNE 21

Transforming Community Relationships - IRRT Pre-conference

8:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 102B

Description: Libraries today continue to be attuned to meeting the needs of their communities. In the 21st century, libraries are encouraged to be the center of community life, to be community builders and places where people get involved. This pre-conference will focus on innovation in meeting these community needs. It will include representatives of different types of libraries around the world who will share their innovative practices and how they can be adapted in other libraries.

AGENDA

- 8:00am - 8:30am Registration
- 8:30am - 12:00pm Welcome, panel introductions, presentations, interactive group discussions, Q & A
- 12:00pm 1:00pm Lunch

To register: <https://2019.alaannual.org/>

Cost: \$90 Event Code: IRRT2 Fee includes materials, refreshments, and lunch

International Relations Committee I

1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Location: Marriott Marquis, Magnolia

International Librarians Orientation

2:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Location: Washington Convention Center, 146C

SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 2019

IRC/IRRT All Subcommittee Meeting

8:30 AM - 11:00 AM+*

Location: Renaissance, Grand Ballroom South

+8:30 - 9:00 am IRRT Chairs Meeting

+9:00 - 10:00 am IRRT Subcommittee Meetings

+10:00 - 10:30 am IRRT Chairs report back to IRRT Executive Board

*8:30 – 11:00am IRC Committee Meetings

Grassroots Library Initiatives in South America (IRC)

10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 143C

Serving communities: locally and globally - IRRT Chair's Program

(IRRT)

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 144A

Japan Libraries: Transforming Libraries with Innovative Ideas - How Japanese Public Librarians Engage in Building Better Communities

(IRC)

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Message from the IRRT Chair Elect

By Richard Sapon-White
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This issue will be reaching you as many of you prepare to attend the ALA Annual Conference in Washington, DC.

I hope I have an opportunity to meet some of you at one of the many IRRT programs and meetings. Much of the work of IRRT is evident during the An-

nual Conference, including the IRRT pre-conference, Chair's Program, International Visitors Center, and so much more. If you are attending, I hope you will take advantage of these programs and services to connect with international issues and attendees.

IRRT has connections with many other units within ALA. Various IRRT officers and committee chairs serve on ALA's Education Assembly, International Relations Committee, Membership Promotion Task Force, and the like. In the past two years, IRRT has also had a representative on ALA's new Supporting Refugees, Immigrants, and Displaced Persons Committee (SRIDP), a unit of the Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services (ODLOS). The committee works to encourage

libraries of all types to engage proactively with people who are new to the United States and struggling with the adjustments and challenges that come from living here. Loida Garcia-Febo, then IRRT Chair and now ALA President, served on the SRIDP last year, and I have been serving this year.

SRIDP is currently preparing an action plan for 2019-2020 that includes:

- promoting observance of World Refugee Day (June 20) by libraries
- building a web presence off of the ODLOS website
- preparing a webinar on the current state of refugees and immigrants in the United States and what librarians can do to serve their communities
- promoting Welcoming Week (<https://www.welcomingamerica.org/programs/welcoming-week>) in libraries this September

Project Welcome: Libraries Serving Refugees and Asylum Seekers preceded the establishment of the SRIDP. I encourage anyone interested in immigrant and refugee issues to explore that project's website at <https://publish.illinois.edu/projectwelcome> for resources, ideas, and best practices.



INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS
ROUND TABLE

Please Support the ALA International Relations Roundtable International Librarians' Orientation Program

Request for Sponsors

At each ALA annual conference, we organize a raffle drawing for our international visiting librarians with gift items contributed by our sponsors. We hope you will consider contributing a prize this year, which will be held during the Orientation Program on Friday, June 21st, 2018 from 2:00 till 4:00 at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center.

The international visitor whose name is drawn for your gift will be given a certificate listing the gift and asked to take the certificate to your booth to retrieve the gift. We believe that this encourages our international visitors to visit the exhibits, and allows them to introduce themselves to you and your products. We would appreciate it if you could support us with any item that you would like to contribute to the raffle. For further information, or to make a contribution, please contact:

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Gene Hayworth, Co-Chair, ALA IRRT International Librarians'
Orientation/Mentoring Committee
gene.hayworth@colorado.edu

IRRT & IRC Programs at ALA Annual, continued

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 143C

Will They Stay or Will They Go? 'Sense of Belonging' as a Foundation for Creating Inclusive Library Services for International Students

(ACRL/IRC)

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 150B

When You Can't Go Home Again: Refugee and Exile Authors in the U.S.

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 145B

Knowledge is Global: Expanding the Awareness and Impact of Research from the Global South

(ACRL)

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 146C

SUNDAY, JUNE 23, 2019

Bringing Global to Local: The Horner Fellowship Arizona-Japan Librarian Exchange

(IRRT, Sister Libraries)

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 143C

International Poster Session

9:30 am - 11:00 am

Location: Washington Convention Center, Exhibit Area

Dialog and Exchange Transforms Russia and U.S. Libraries

(IRC)

10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 144A

IRRT Executive Committee Meeting

11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 153

Preparing for a Changing World: How Libraries Facilitate the Acquisition of New Skill Sets in Communities - IRRT Paper and Projects Session

(IRRT)

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 143C

International Relations Committee II

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Location: Marriott Marquis, Supreme Court

MONDAY, JUNE 24, 2019

Leaning International: Stories from the Field

(IRRT International Connections)

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 144A

Librarians and U.S. State Department Study Abroad Scholarships

(IRC)

10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 143C

Libraries Advancing Peace with Local Initiatives: Learn Globally, Act Locally -

(IRRT ISLD)

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 146C

An Excursion into Africana Collections Around the World

(IRC)

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 143B

From Alexandria to Aarhus: What Three Americans Learned Exploring International Libraries

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 145B

An International Leaders Forum: Leading a Vision for a Global Community of Libraries

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 143C

An International Leaders Forum

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Location: Washington Convention Center, 143C

International Librarians Reception

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Great Hall, Library of Congress

Libraries = Strong Communities tour to end with rally celebration at ALA Annual Conference and Exhibition in Washington, D.C.

ALA President Loida Garcia-Febo and other library advocates from across the country will celebrate the triumphant finish of Libraries = Strong Communities, a national advocacy presidential effort aimed at highlighting the value of academic, public, and school libraries. The tour will culminate with a rally and celebration from 11 a.m. – noon on Saturday, June 22, at the ALA Park on the exhibits floor of the 2019 ALA Annual Conference & Exhibition in Washington, D.C.

Libraries= Strong Communities launched in New Orleans during the 2018 ALA Annual Conference & Exhibition in support of ALA's Strategic Directions, which include Advocacy, Information Policy, Professional & Leadership Development, and Equity, Diversity & Inclusion.

Garcia-Febo traveled more than 200,000 miles and visited a variety of libraries in eight countries. She met with local advocates, library leaders and city government officials to discuss how libraries strengthen communities through education and lifelong learning. More than 200 media organizations provided coverage of Libraries =Strong Communities and reached more than 56 million potential advocates in communities across the country.

“The tour was a tremendous effort that was made possible by library professionals and advocates from across the globe,” said Garcia –Febo. “I am humbled that I had the opportunity to join our country’s advocates on the front lines as they fight for resources and promote successes. I am extremely grateful for the hard work and support of local advocates and ALA staff members as we worked together to shine a spotlight on the invaluable contributions of libraries and library professionals. Because of all of you – Libraries =Strong Communities.”

The rally will honor participating tour sites such as Pikes Peak (Colorado) Public Library District; Cambridge (Massachusetts) Public Library; Seattle Public Library; North Miami Public Library; Los Angeles Public Library; MIT and Harvard Libraries; Cranston High School East Media Center; and several international libraries.

For additional event information please visit the ALA Annual Conference website at <https://2019.alaannual.org/special-activities-and-events>.

To learn more about the Libraries = Strong Communities national tour please visit <http://www.ilovelibraries.org/librariestransform/libraries-strong-communities>.

Volunteers Needed for the International Visitors Center

The IRRT International Visitors Center (IVC) Committee needs volunteers to staff the IVC at the ALA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., any-time from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., from Friday, June 21 through Sunday, June 23, 2019 and 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., on Monday, June 24.

The IVC is an essential help station for international conference attendees, conveniently located at the Walter E. Convention Center, near the registration area, to help answer questions and provide directions and conference information. If interested, please fill out this [short questionnaire](#). A committee member will follow up with your scheduled time slot. For additional information or questions, please contact Katie Spires at mkspires@gmail.com and Camille Callison at Camille.Callison@umanitoba.ca.



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sees fit, but must not exceed three minutes. “The setup for my video consisted of a mosaic tapestry for my background and an accent chair I had around my apartment,” said Allinston Saulsberry, 2018 Service Team Representative. “I recorded myself using my iPhone and a tripod and went so far as to write a script to read from a teleprompter. It eased my nerves and allowed me to be clear and concise when answering questions.” While there are no language requirements for the statement video, Allinston Saulsberry and Joi Jackson spoke Spanish in their videos while Karen Garcia only spoke English, but highlighted that she was a native to Guatemala.

Potential participants are encouraged to upload an updated resume as the goal objectives vary from year to year for the LWB Guatemala Service Trip. For 2018, we focused on improving the purchasing, cataloging, and inventory of the academy’s collection and aimed to develop programming for students, parents, and teachers. “Given that I have experience working in a public library providing customer service to all ages, conducting Bilingual Preschool Storytimes, and coordinating all Spanish language programs, I aimed to highlight this in my application and knew that I would be able to bring valued experiences to the programming element,” said Karen Garcia, 2018 Service Team Representative. Applicants are also encouraged to upload any documents that demonstrate library skills, this may include but is not limited to: program flyers, program videos, published articles, research, project proposals, etc.

The survey portion of the application process consists of questions ranging from the ability to work in a team setting, Spanish language skills, abroad travel experience, health, references, and commitment to volunteer expectations.

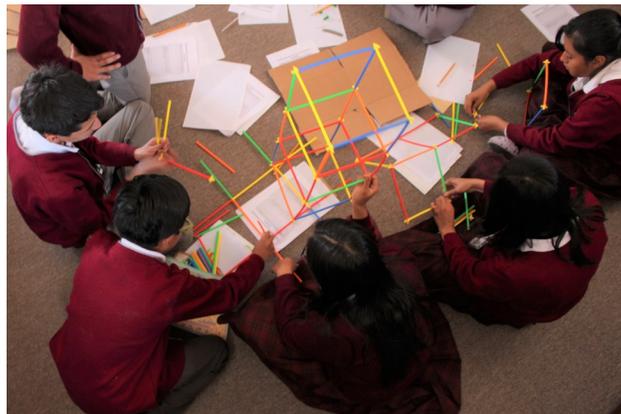
Service team roles

During the planning phase, each member was appointed to serve on either the collection management or programming team. To properly catalog new books, the collection management team received training for the academy’s unique cataloging system prior to arriving in Quetzaltenango. The team collectively cataloged over 500 books – a record for the program! In addition, the collection management team participated in a special project that consisted of scanning over 5,000 items and completing the first ever inventory of the entire collection.



Allinston Saulsberry works with the collection.

The programming team was tasked with providing library programs for each grade (K-12). Preparation included planning programs and purchasing supplies for crafts, demonstrations, props, and much more. The team made a Color Themed Program for grades K-5, including songs, a puppet show, and an activity to build a house for the puppets. Grades 6-12 participated in two programs to learn about earthquakes, which are quite frequent in Guatemala. Activities included dances and constructing straw structures to withstand simulated earthquakes.



Furthermore, there were training programs for teachers and parents. The teacher’s session consisted of providing them with two different techniques that could be applied in their classrooms: how to use puppets and geometrical plastic puzzle pieces (to teach mathematics). Teachers were excited to learn about these techniques and had a chance to work in groups to demonstrate and practice what they have been taught.

For the parents, the service team demonstrated storytime reading techniques that could be done in the comfort of their own homes. This entailed educating parents on the importance of making voices when reading a book; how to describe the illustrations of the book; why using various words matters; and asking open ended questions. As a takeaway, parents received free books to practice all of the techniques at home.

Ultimately, over four days, the service team worked hard to provide programming in the library to every student, every teacher, and any parent that was able to attend. Although the schedule was intense, we were grateful that we had the opportunity to contribute to this wonderful school and its amazing students.

Benefits

Collectively, we feel that the following benefits were gained from our journey:

- ◆ Becoming an advocate for libraries!
- ◆ Networking with library professionals and making friends with the service team

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- ◆ Being immersed in a cultural experience
- ◆ Gaining personal and professional leadership skills
- ◆ Learning new techniques/skills within or outside of one's career field
- ◆ Sharing information and learning of what other libraries are doing around the world
- ◆ Developing a newfound appreciation for ALL opportunities and resources available (scholarships, grants, professional development, technology, access to information, etc.)
- ◆ Receiving innovation to set new goals for oneself
- ◆ Self-gratification of participating in this journey and getting out of one's comfort zone
- ◆ Using one's professional experience to provide a community with information and resources
- ◆ Applying learned skills, techniques, and culture appreciation from abroad experiences
- ◆ Ultimately, you have fun!!!



From left: Allinston Saulsberry, Debbie Chavez (LWB Program Lead), Karen Garcia, and Joi Jackson

Reflections

Karen Garcia:

My first thought upon receiving the email from Reforma regarding the service trip to Guatemala was that I needed to go and do something better for my country. This was a huge opportunity for me to bring something useful that could aid in building a better society, provide tools, and promote the love for libraries. Although sharing my experience as a paraprofessional was important, most importantly was to gain learning experiences as an MLIS candidate and to be immersed into librarianship from the perspective of foreign libraries.

This experience expanded my boundaries and allowed me to step outside of my comfort zone. To support myself finan-

cially, I had to create a GoFundMe campaign to ask for monetary donations. Getting rid of my initial fear to ask for money, I was confident that anyone who encountered my campaign would support my efforts and acknowledge the need for this service trip. In addition, I overcame working and co-existing with complete strangers from other states and countries. Uniting as one to help a third world country and embracing diversity and inclusion for one good cause allowed me to immediately bond with the women. We even connected over my ability to translate and highlight my country's culture throughout the trip.

Given that this was my first service trip, I was a little uneasy of what to expect going back to my birth country. Even though Quetzaltenango is one of the most advanced towns in Guatemala, I tend to forget the needs that we have where I come from. Here in Florida, I have A/C, hot water throughout the day, and other luxuries that we lack in Guatemala.

This is an experience that I will never forget. You're provided with beautiful scenery, are able to build incredible relationships, assist in helping more than 200 people collectively between parents, teachers, and students, as well as be able to use everything you experience towards your professional and personal growth.

One thing that stood out the most from this trip is my interview with one of the teachers. I asked "What is the importance of having LWB come to your school?" She replied, "When all of you come here to help, you bring happiness to our children and you change the view on how we should feel about books. Usually, here in Guatemala, if a child is misbehaving, the teacher's first reaction is to demand the child to grab a book and sit down as a form of punishment. Reading is treated as a punishment." My eyes opened wide because I have been working with the Latino Community for the past three years in West Palm Beach and it has been hard for me to gain their trust. I now realized that none of the information I had to share mattered if in their heads they are conditioned to think that I am punishing them with books or that I work for the government.

When I came back to the U.S., I explained this to my boss. A campaign of how the library works and its resources came to life. Teaching people that their information cannot be handed to the police or other immigration departments has been included in our speech. We became conscientious of our approach to present the information since we do not know clearly what has been their previous relationship to either a library or a book. That was a well learned lesson.

Allinston Saulsberry:

While in Guatemala, I was completing the last semester of my graduate program as an MLIS Candidate at the University of Arizona. Although I have worked in libraries since I was legally able to do so, becoming a librarian was never my end

Continued on page 10

goal until I recently realized the immediate gratification from bridging the gap between information and individuals of all ages, genders, and backgrounds. On this trip, I found myself very emotional as it unknowingly validated my reasonings to becoming a librarian. To me, librarians and information professionals are the gatekeepers to information and resources, thus this industry will always remain, yet evolve as technology and access to information shift.

Throughout my MLIS candidacy, I sought out two career aspirations: to use my professional knowledge and learned skills on an audience abroad; and to always be of service to diverse communities. Given that I was a copy cataloger at a local university, I was chosen to represent the collection management team along with six other women. Being able to apply cataloging concepts learned in my studies and on the job solidified my longing for my skills to be transferable around the world. Not only was Quetzaltenango diverse in regards to race, but also in its language, food, transportation system, currency, education system, government, and much more. Professionally, I was met with a sense of gratification for this journey as a whole in just one week.

Aside from my professional reflection, I was awakened personally by my participation on this trip. I've gained a sense of appreciation for the opportunities around me (both personally and professionally); the desire to become completely bilingual is now in full effect to reach a broader audience; I've developed a "I CAN DO IT" mentality; and lastly, I never take for granted the power that service trips, selfless acts, and the exchange of education can have on an individual or community.

Now, as a librarian, I advocate to colleagues and MLIS candidates on the importance of participating in internships, conferences, abroad experiences, etc. that will allow them to put their passion for this career to the test; aid in changing how people perceive the work of librarians and information professionals; and to ultimately be of service to our communities. Jorge Chojolán and his family, the communities of Guatemala, the students and librarian of the academy, and my fellow service team representatives have changed my life forever. I hope that the outcome of my efforts as a librarian will reflect that of their aspirations that have unintentionally ignited my lifelong dedication to this field.

Joi Jackson

I applied for this trip to help children, learn more about libraries in other countries, and to volunteer for an excellent organization. As an academic librarian that worked as the International Student Outreach Coordinator, I knew this would be invaluable to my professional development. And it was – I learned that some international students come from countries that had little to no library culture. This helped inform my approach to instruction and reference. I no longer presumed that students understood that items were free in the library or

how to locate a book on a shelf. Removing these assumptions also helped my domestic students; they often had similar problems navigating the library.

I also noticed that travel for English speakers is much easier. On any international trip I've taken, I have never had to worry about getting through an airport. Signs are usually in the nation's official language and English. Even customs in other countries are bilingual. It empowers and encourages me to keep doing something that I love – traveling. The world is accommodating to me and other English speakers in ways that demonstrate the power imbalance between Global North and Global South countries. To address this, I suggested creating multilingual signage within my academic library system. Part of our goal was to help international students feel welcome and comfortable using our spaces and services. What better way to say "you're welcome" than in their native language?

Lastly, this trip also taught me about innovation. Everywhere I looked, I saw the manifestation of the adage "necessity is the mother of invention." From milk cartons used as outdoor lamps, to old jails repurposed as public libraries, everything could be reincarnated. This challenged my thinking on library funding in the U.S. Whenever I begin to lament limited budgets, I remember the ingenuity I saw all around me in Guatemala.

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Allinston Saulsberry, Joi Jackson, and Karen Garcia also discussed their experience in an IRRT webinar on 8 April 2019. A recording of the webinar is available [here](#).

Participating in service trips with LWB or any other organization? we want to hear about it—please share your experiences with your IRRT colleagues through International Leads.

Connect with IRRT

Email: ala.intl.leads@gmail.com

Web: <http://www.ala.org/rt/irrt>

Blog: <http://www.alairrt.blogspot.com>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/International-Relations-Round-Table-244416388965473/>

IRRT and ALA News Briefs

2019 State of America's Libraries

A recent email from Michael Dowling, Director, International and Chapter Relations Office of ALA, announced the release of the State of America's Libraries report:

The [State of America's Libraries](#) report is a summary of library trends released during National Library Week, 7-13 April, that outlines statistics and issues affecting all types of libraries.

Never have libraries played such a pivotal role in strengthening communities through education and life-long learning. Libraries are a microcosm of the larger society. They play an important and unique role in the communities that they serve and provide an inclusive environment where all are treated with respect and dignity. No longer just places for books, our public libraries serve as a lifeline for some of our nation's most vulnerable communities. From community-wide issues as illiteracy, homelessness and community silos, our nation's public libraries are acting as catalysts in fostering community-wide solutions that strengthen communities.

Free Passes for Guadalajara International Book Fair

ALA and the [Guadalajara International Book Fair](#) are partnering for the 19th year to provide support for ALA members to attend the 33rd Guadalajara International Book Fair (FIL) from 30 November to 4 December, 2019. This year's guest of honor is India.

Deadline for the application for a free pass is 6 September 2019. The application form is available [here](#).

The ALA-FIL FREE PASS Program provides:

- ◆ 3 nights at the Hotel Guadalajara Plaza López Mateos (six nights if you share a room with a colleague who is also part of the program)
- ◆ 3 continental breakfast
- ◆ FIL Registration, courtesy of FIL
- ◆ \$100 toward the cost of airfare, courtesy of ALA. The Guadalajara Book Fair is offering an additional \$100 to the first 100 applicants who submit a copy of their airfare confirmation by 30 September 2019.

FREE PASSES will be awarded to 150 librarians who work in the area of Spanish language acquisitions and/or are working to build their Spanish language collection to better serve their community and users. Applicants must be ALA Personal Members.

FIL, the most important exhibit of Spanish-language books in the world, will offer:

- ◆ firsthand access to the latest publications in Spanish;
- ◆ an exhibit of more than 300,000 titles;
- ◆ access to the complete catalogs of more than 1,500 publishers from over 35 countries;
- ◆ networking opportunities with 15,000 book professionals;
- ◆ literary programming with Latin American authors; and
- ◆ lectures on Mexican culture delivered by experts in the field.



IRRT Member News

Janet Lee, an active member of IRRT and frequent contributor to *International Leads*, has received the **Magis Medal** from Alpha Sigma Nu, the honor society of Jesuit colleges and universities, for her devoted service to literacy and libraries while working at Regis University. For more information: <https://www.alphasigmanu.org/news/2019-magis-medal-recipients>.

Do you have any news of your professional accomplishments? We would be happy to highlight the recognition.

Delegates visit from Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Library to ALA

By Wei Jin, Head of Scientific Research Management Division,
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Library

Mr. Wang Lan, the chief librarian of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) Library, visited the American Library Association with two other members of the delegation on 21 December 2018. Mr. Michael Dowling, Director of the International Relations Office of ALA, gave a warm reception and arranged a meaningful meeting. The open access of academic journals was discussed as the main topic. Mr. Wang introduced the National Social Sciences Database, an open access platform of humanities and social sciences in China, which contains more than 2,000 academic journals. At last, Mr. Wang authorized the ALA and ALA members to be institutional users of the database. Mr. Michael Dowling appreciated this generous behavior and would like to recommend the database to the 56,000 ALA members.

Who are we?

Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) Library is the research library and information center of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences that was established in 1957. CASS library provides comprehensive information services, such as traditional books and documents services, digital information services, and information infrastructure services.

What do we have?

CASS Library keeps track of the development of open access and plays a key role in the development of open access in Chinese humanities and social sciences. In 2013, supported by the National Social Science Fund, CASS library established National Social Sciences Database (NSSD). The database contains more than 2000 outstanding Chinese academic social science journals. There 600 core journals, which includes nearly 200 key journals funded by the National Social Science Foundation and more than 80 academic journals sponsored by CASS. For instance, Social Sciences in China, and Economic Research Journal are collected. More than 700 journals are dated back to the first issue, and the earliest one is published in 1920. All of the journals in the database are authorized by editorial offices; no copyright issues exist. The online full text articles are more than 10 million.

NSSD affords free online reading and free full-text download service all over the world. Users can browse journals and retrieve articles in various ways. Functions of statistical analysis and multi-modes sorting for retrieval results can be used in NSSD. At the same time, personal center provides looking up using records and deal with information subscription automatically.



Mr. Wang Lan authorized ALA and all members to be institutional members.

王岚先生授权美国图书馆协会成为国家哲学社会科学文献中心学术

中国社会科学院图书馆代表团到访 美国图书馆协会

2018年12月21日上午，中国社会科学院王岚馆长一行三人访问了美国图书馆协会，受到国际关系处负责人迈克道林先生热情友好地接待。双方就学术期刊开放获取进行了深入交流。王岚馆长介绍了中国人文社会科学领域最大的开放获取学术期刊平台——国家哲学社会科学文献中心学术期刊数据库。王岚馆长正式授权美国图书馆协会及成员使用国家哲学社会科学文献中心学术期刊数据库。迈克道林先生表示将向5.6万会员推介国家哲学社会科学文献中心学术期刊数据库。

中国社会科学院图书馆是中国社会科学院下属的专业图书馆和信息中心，成立于1957年，已经发展成

Continued on page 13

Delegate visit from CASS, continued

Join Us

At the present, both individual users and institutional users can use the database. For individuals, just access to www.nssd.org and register. For institutional users, provide IP range and use the database by IP access. We would like to build up cooperation relationship with institutional users for academic exchange and understandings.

We invite all the ALA members to use NSSD to get the research articles. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions. Last but not least, it is hoped that CASS Library and ALA will strengthen friendship and carry out relevant academic activities in the future.

Visit us : www.nssd.org

Contact us: NSSDService@cass.org.cn

Tel:+86-010-85195335

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Thank you to Mr. Wang Lan and the colleagues at CASS for this generous offer. We encourage all ALA members looking for Chinese language research materials to contact the service.

Call for Submissions

Do you have news or stories about ...

- ◇ **International library activities?**
- ◇ **People in international librarianship?**
- ◇ **Upcoming international conferences?**

Why not submit to International Leads?
Email us at ala.intl.leads@gmail.com

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Exploring library services in Peru

By *Kenneth Schlesinger, Chief Librarian, Lehman College, City University of New York*
kenneth.schlesinger@lehman.cuny.edu

From 23 November to 2 December 2018, I participated in a Library and Information Services Journey to Peru, led by former American Library Association President Dr. Camila Alire. Our group of eight consisted of academic and public library directors and some guests. In addition to sightseeing and cultural immersion, our charge was to visit academic, public, and special libraries in Lima and Cusco to conduct facilitated discussions with our Peruvian library colleagues.

Lima is a bustling, cosmopolitan city of ten million located on the Pacific coast, serving as the country's commercial center. One-third of the population lives there. Combining restored Colonial buildings with modern architecture, its notorious traffic is reminiscent of Los Angeles. Our first stop was Biblioteca Municipal de Lima [Municipal Library of Peru], located on the main plaza, serving as an archival repository of historical records of the region.



Interior of Biblioteca Municipal de Lima

We had the opportunity to have an extended discussion with Maria Emma Mannarelli, Director of the Biblioteca Nacional de Peru [National Library of Peru]. The National Library is housed in an open, modern building celebrating the country's prominent writers. Committed to preserving Peru's cultural patrimony, the Library contains impressive labs for conservation of historical manuscripts and vintage photographs.

Not only does Sra. Mannarelli oversee the National Library, she is also responsible for the country's network of public libraries. She spoke candidly about the challenges of maintaining public library service throughout

the country, particularly since funding is dependent on the local mayor, who may have other priorities in resource allocation. Even a city as large as Lima only has in her estimation three functioning public library branches.

That afternoon we were able to visit one of these prime examples, the Public Library of Miraflores, considered the most attractive and vibrant in the city. Library Chief Beatriz Prieto gave us a tour, and informed us about their proactive outreach activities including bringing books to senior centers, low-income communities, and even the beach! This stimulated our perceptions about how we could more effectively serve our surrounding communities.

Perhaps the highlight of the trip was our meeting at



Reading room in Public Library of Miraflores

Pontifical Catholic University [PUCP], an elite private university founded in 1917. We engaged in a lively, interactive discussion with Library Director Kathia Hanza and her unit heads. Not surprisingly, they face similar challenges of U.S. academic libraries: how to most effectively embed library resources within the curriculum; build dynamic collections with limited resources; actively solicit the support of Deans and the Vice Rector [Provost]. One member of our group, Dean of Libraries at University of Nevada-Las Vegas, offered to send two of her faculty members to PUCP to advise on assessment and developing persuasive metrics. Through the efforts of Lehman College Library webmaster John DeLooper, we were able to advise PUCP how to incorporate LibGuides [Research Guides] into their course management system, a practice we had only recently developed.

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Pontifical Catholic resides on a beautifully landscaped campus with noteworthy modern architecture. Library colleagues showed us their brand new Engineering Library, an appealing, state-of-the-art edifice facilitating access to multimedia technologies and 3-D printing. Every seat was taken by students working at the end of the semester.



Engineering Library at the Pontifical Catholic University (PUCP)

From Lima we ventured to Cusco, the original Incan capital, a gem of Colonial architecture surrounded by the Andes with dazzling, ever-changing light. Cusco is situated at 11,000 feet. Unfortunately, our visit to Universidad San Antonio de Abad was cancelled due to a labor strike. However, we toured El Centro Bartolome de las Casas [CBC Library], a unique special library of 53,000 volumes documenting Andean culture featuring anthropological, cultural, demographic, linguistic, and literary monographs. We also visited the recently restored Convent of San Francisco de Asis, which has a manuscript library of 18th and 19th century tomes of ecclesiastical history undergoing preservation.



El Centro Bartolome de las Casas

And we pursued some leisure activities, including the Larco Museum in Lima, which has an outstanding archeological collection of pre-Columbian artifacts. On our final day, we visited a girls' orphanage in Cusco, which involved both meaningful interactions and community service. Dining was a consistent pleasure, partaking of Peru's extensive produce (3,000 kinds of potatoes!), and sampling ceviche, alpaca, octopus, and guinea pig. The Peruvian people, warm and gracious, were wonderful hosts.

No visit to Peru would be complete without a sojourn to Machu Picchu, the sacred remains of Incan civilization, located within a breathtaking setting. Justifiably one of the seven wonders of the world, this testament to Incan achievements in architecture, agriculture, and astronomy inspires awe, reflection, and sobriety. While the invading Spanish ultimately decimated this advanced community, they nevertheless documented it through their historical journals and narratives, contributing to our knowledge of the legacy of this unique civilization.



Machu Picchu

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Kenneth Schlesinger is Chief Librarian at Lehman College, part of City University of New York. He participated in the tour with [Nanda Journeys](#). A [tour to India](#) is planned for October.

*Have you participated in a tour of libraries in another country?
We invite you to share your experiences!*

A check in with Librarians from around the world

Raymond Pun is an IRRT member and an instruction/research librarian at Alder Graduate School of Education where he coordinates collection development and provides distance-learning services for graduate students in education. He is an active member of ALA, ACRL, SLA and IFLA. He coordinates interviews with international librarians for *International Leads*.

An Interview with Dr. Jonathan Hernández, National Autonomous University of Mexico

Ray: Thanks for interviewing with us! Can you briefly tell us about your role in the library institute?

Jonathan: Thanks to you Ray! Sure, I am working now as an associate researcher at the Library and Information Research Institute (IIBI) and most of my duties involve research, seminars, and conferences about my research fields: access to information, censorship, information diversity, and misinformation. Also I am President of the National College of Librarians of Mexico (CNB), which is the national voice representing professional librarians in Mexico. We are working on training courses, seminars, and conferences on many library issues such as libraries in the 2030 agenda, access to information, copyright, open access, and other emerging topics.

Ray: How did you get into librarianship and what (if any) formal education or training did you receive?

Jonathan: Libraries have been always part of my life. When I was 10 or 11 years old, I was in charge of the student society and we built a small library for our school because we didn't have one. I really enjoyed the process, but I guess the decision was in high school. I grew up in a small town in Mexico and I needed to make a choice for the university in the capital. I saw the "library and information studies" subject in the booklet and I was attracted by all the library issues I did not know about (management, marketing, databases, cataloging); so it was my first and unique choice. During my Bachelor studies I did many practica in university libraries, then I got a job in the library graduate program of my university and at the same time I started my master degree. I had the opportunity to attend conferences and get more involved in the library field, and I met wonderful colleagues who pushed me to continue my studies.

Ray: What is a library trend/library hot topic in your country currently?

Jonathan: We are facing many trending topics in the library environment in these days. I could say that the emergence of repositories as a part of a national policy is current one, and it is important because involves technical, economical and skills issues, but that would be particularly in academic libraries. Of course, the fake

news is the topic that is surrounding all kind of libraries; these months you can see many library conferences on this topic.

Ray: Why is international librarianship important in your work as a librarian?

Jonathan: I think that the collaborative efforts between libraries and librarians across the world can give very important results for society. As a community we have universal goals that need to be shared, and that is the importance of the international librarianship, but of course we need to maximize our efforts to get a greater collaboration with all the stakeholders in the information environment. In my job, it is fundamental because I have to be aware of the library trends around the world and of course there is an important need to build a strong library/librarian network to carry out international projects and programs to further the national goals.

Ray: Thanks for speaking with us! We appreciate your responses! One last question: if you are working on research projects, can you tell us more about it?

Jonathan: Sure, I'm working now in a project about the Misinformation Ecosystem from a library perspective. Since the fake news has become a complex problema, I believe that libraries should become warriors against misinformation, So I'm planning a series of conferences and articles about it, and involving library students and library associations.

###

Jonathan Hernández is an associate researcher in the Library and Information Institute (IIBI) at National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), also is a President of the National Association of Librarians (CNB). His research interests include: Internet censorship, privacy, and freedom of expression.



Dr. Jonathan Hernández

Camino Hacia el Exito Library, Namasique, Honduras - International library profile

The [December 2018 edition of IL LEADS](#) featured a story on Riecken Community Libraries and its networks in Honduras and Guatemala. The libraries in these networks provide quality books, access to technology and technology training, Internet access where possible, and dynamic programming. Open and free to all, each Riecken Library operates on a sustainability model that rests on three legs – the community, the municipal government and The Riecken Foundation.

From the very beginning, Riecken Community Libraries have served as hubs for learning, training, and workshops for everything from environmental sustainability to nutrition and early childhood development. Offering relative safety from the challenging everyday existence of life in the region, each library is instrumental in determining the programs offered in its community, making it relevant to the population that it serves.



Riecken Community Libraries serve all ages, from infants to the third generation, and with various functions from Internet searches for school projects to reading programs to health education. Often its space is converted temporarily into a clinic for vaccinations or other health services provided by visiting health brigades. In Honduras, the public educational day is divided, so afternoon students might use the library in the morning and morning students in the afternoon. Teachers use the library to prepare lessons.

One of the libraries in the Honduras library network is Camino Hacia el Exito Library (Path to Success) which opened in 2007 in Namasique, Choluteca, in the southwest of the country near the border of Nicaragua. Depending on the weather and its impact on the rough, rural roads typical of the region, Namasique is between six and eight hours away from the Honduras capitol of Tegucigalpa.

Namasique is a transient community of about 28,000

people, 11,000 of whom are under 18 years old. Its agricultural economy is based largely on sugar cane, melons, corn, sorghum, cotton and some ranching. Many in the area leave to work seasonally in Nicaragua for the coffee and tobacco plantations and El Salvador for the shrimp industry. Increasingly, many Hondurans migrate to the United States.

Many people are indigenous, members of racial and cultural groups historically excluded from access to higher education and high-paying jobs. Six out of ten families earn the equivalent of less than 100 US dollars a month. Homes are simple square structures with a dirt floor and an outhouse. Water is provided either directly from a nearby stream or from a well. Half of the outlying villages served by the library do not yet have electricity.

The realities of Namasique make operation and maintenance of any community asset an on-going struggle. Despite this municipality being quite large, it has limited health and security services, and is stretched to its resource limits serving 46 surrounding schools.

[Malnutrition is a huge issue in Namasique.](#) Learning and retention are affected when someone is suffering from it – whether adults or children – as is evident in the extra effort required for volunteers to absorb training. 80% of the youth in Namasique has some form of malnutrition, as in much of southern and eastern regions of the county. It is such a problem there, that Riecken has used the library in Namasique to demonstrate its support for all communities – not just those with more resources available to them.

Within this context, here is what a typical day at the Riecken Community Library in Namasique might look like – with up to 400 visitors per day. Namasique library is about 400 square meters in size and has a



Continued on page 18

International library profile, continued

main hall, a children's corner and meeting room for the community. The library has about 800 books in its collection and five computers available to users.

8:00 a.m.

The librarian, or in some cases the pair of librarians, opens the doors. The first students arrive, some finishing last minute details on homework, others using the internet, if it is working, or reference books to complete school projects.

9:00 a.m.

Story time for preschoolers is a time for the librarian to demonstrate the beauty of communicating the written word to young children, who sit in a circle and are encouraged to ask questions to clarify themes and storylines. Books include some written and illustrated by local people, published with the help of the Riecken Foundation, with topics important to the community.

Simultaneously in a separate room a group of new mothers gather with their infants to learn how to care for their new children with an early childhood development and nutrition program.



10:00 a.m.

Students arrive from various areas to conduct studies and do homework. Namasigue schools have a morning and an afternoon shift to accommodate the many students requiring education.

11:00 a.m.

Teachers prepare lessons for afternoon classes. Young people in large numbers read, socialize, and browse the Internet.

1:00 p.m.

Clinic is set up. Today it is a screening clinic for people with vision problems. Some will be given prescription glasses or reading glasses, while others with more serious

problems such as cataracts, will be referred to a mobile surgery clinic. Such clinics operate twice a month.



3:00 p.m.

The board room is in use, having been reserved today by a group of local coffee farmers who are discussing improvement in access to markets. Also at this time the youth book club gathers around donated Kindles to read and discuss the book of the week.

4:00 p.m.

The library's youth group, "Zona X" composed of young people from age 12 to age 18, is refining teaching points for its technology project on Internet safety for children and young people.

5:00 p.m.

Students are doing homework. The librarian asks students to start wrapping up their work.

The local volunteer board, the *junta directiva*, meets to discuss the offer of the Riecken Foundation to bring in two externally-funded projects, one expanding the early childhood development and nutrition program, the other a project focusing on educating teachers on how to instill in children a lifelong love of reading.

Children and library volunteers help the librarian clean the library for the next day's visitors.

6:00 p.m. Library doors close.

Today the library in Namasigue is thriving and considered one of the town's greatest resources. Volunteers always ask for more programs and expanded activity for the community – a very good sign of its perceived value the role it plays in empowering people to look toward a brighter future.

###