"Libraries Change Lives" is rallying cry for 1993 campaign; Clinton voices support

The Rally for America's Libraries sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA) and Friends of Libraries USA (FOLUSA) continues in 1993 with a campaign to collect real life stories about how libraries make a difference.

President Bill Clinton was among the first to respond when ALA posed the question: "Did the library change your life?"

In a letter voicing his support, Clinton wrote:

"My love for learning was fostered and enhanced by all the resources I made use of in the libraries where I studied. . . Today the library is not only a special place for me but for my family as well. The library made a difference in my life. I hope others will discover the library and let it change their lives."

The 1993 campaign will urge members of the public to share, in 100 words or less, how the library "changed" or made a difference in their lives. This "testimony" will be used to support ALA's legislative and public awareness efforts. Petitions can also be circulated for those who wish simply to register their support.

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ALA President Marilyn Miller has appointed Patricia Glass Schuman, ALA immediate past president who led the highly successful 1992 Call for America's Libraries, to head the new campaign. Charles Beard, of West Georgia College, and Margo Crist, of the University of Michigan, are co-chairs.

More than 300,000 people registered their support for libraries during the Call for America's Libraries telephone/petition drive.

Miller said the goal now is to keep the momentum going. "Our mission is to move libraries to the top of the agenda. We must demonstrate to policy-makers that libraries and librarians are essential to the Information Age and must be fully supported."

"Radio rallies," with ALA leaders and members of the ALA Speakers Network conducting radio and other media interviews to rally public support, will be scheduled in connection with National Library Week, April 18-24. This year's theme is "Libraries Change Lives."

A poster tip-sheet with suggestions for how local libraries can take advantage of the campaign appears in the January issue of American Libraries magazine. Additional copies are available free from the ALA Public Information Office (Tel: 800-545-2433, ext. 5044/5041).

Miller is urging schools, libraries and other concerned organizations to join in collecting statements of support.

"The voice of libraries is stronger when we speak together," Miller said. "This is an ideal opportunity for all librarians to support each other and to promote public awareness and support in their communities."
"Libraries Change Lives" is rallying cry for 1993 campaign -- add two

A panel of distinguished judges will select three people who submit the most original and inspiring "Great Library Success Stories" to be honored June 26 at the Opening General Session of the association's annual conference in New Orleans. They will also join an ALA delegation to take the campaign results to Capitol Hill.

Microsoft Corporation will underwrite travel expenses for the winners and provide other rewards with total retail value of $35,000 for participating libraries. The new Microsoft Encarta (TM) Multimedia Encyclopedia and personal computer with CD-ROM hardware will be award to both the person whose testimonial is judged the best and the library where it is submitted. The two runners-up will receive the Encarta.

The first 500 libraries that submit 25 or more success stories will receive the Encarta if they indicate they have CD-ROM equipment and wish to receive a copy. All other libraries that submit stories will be entered in a drawing for a copy of the Encarta, one $500, two $250 and ten $100 gift certificates for ALA Graphics.

Success stories can be submitted at participating libraries or mailed directly to Rally for America's Libraries, American Library Association, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611. Petitions are also available.

The Rally for America's Libraries was launched at the 1991 ALA Annual Conference to rally support for America's libraries at a time of financial crisis.
"Libraries Change Lives" is rallying cry for 1993 campaign -- add three

The campaign has generated extensive media coverage, including the Washington Week in Review, CBS Sunday Morning with Charles Kuralt, the Larry King Radio Show, The New York Times, newspapers, radio and TV nationwide.

Library officials in New York credit the national campaign for convincing the mayor to restore five-day-a-week service at branch libraries. The ALA Washington Office reports significantly higher levels of awareness of libraries among Congressional staffs, and the President's proposed 76 percent cut in federal funding for libraries was reduced by Congress to 1 percent.

ALA's national effort has served as a model for library mobilization efforts at a time when many libraries across the country are reporting record circulation -- and budget cuts.

The Rally for America's Libraries has been made possible by generous contributions from corporate friends of ALA and libraries, including:

"Libraries Change Lives" is rallying cry for 1993 campaign -- add four Schuster; Social Issues Resources Series, Inc.; Telephone Express; Times Mirror; Waldenbooks; The H. W. Wilson Co.; World Book Educational Products.

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For more information, contact the ALA Public Information Office, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611.

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