

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Young Professionals Task Force Final Report

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

Review the final report of the Young Professionals Task Force and partner with the ALA Membership Committee to establish a new subcommittee that will pursue those recommendations; Approve the charge for the new group.

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

Laurel Bliss, Co-Chair, Young Professionals Task Force
Katherine O'Clair, Co-Chair, Young Professionals Task Force

CONTACT PERSON:

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DRAFT OF MOTION:

That a subcommittee of the ALA Membership Committee shall be established to advance the recommendations of the Young Professionals Task Force as described in this report, and that said subcommittee will be charged as described on page 3.

DATE:

June 8, 2011

BACKGROUND:

Final report on the work and recommendations of the Young Professionals Task Force.

Attachments: Final Report

Young Professionals Task Force Final Report

Introduction

As President-Elect in 2009, Camila Alire established the Young Librarians Working Group to investigate ways to focus the ALA Executive Board's attention on structural changes that could make the association more responsive to the needs of young members and future leaders, and to engage young librarians in the association early in their professional careers. Shortly thereafter, the ALA Executive Board expanded the Working Group to include membership from ALA's divisions, round tables, and ethnic caucuses under the name of the Young Librarians Task Force. This group was charged with identifying strategies and actions for ALA, its offices, committees, divisions and round tables to be more responsive to the young librarians who will be its members and future leaders with a goal of increasing retention rates.

The Task Force gathered data in 2009-10 and provided a series of recommendations, which were reported to the Executive Board at the 2010 ALA Annual Conference, on how to attract young members and retain them long-term in the organization. The Task Force was granted an extension for 2010-2011 to investigate the feasibility of these recommendations and work with ALA leadership to determine how to implement them. The Task Force also worked to increase the exposure of its work and the association's efforts on behalf of young members. At the 2011 Midwinter Conference, the Young Librarians Task Force was renamed the Young Professionals Task Force (hereafter Task Force) in an effort to represent the wide range of professionals who participate in ALA.

Members of the 2010-2011 Young Professionals Task Force include:

- Laurel Bliss (Co-Chair)
- Katherine O'Clair (Co-Chair)
- Sonia Alcantara-Antoine
- Xima Avalos
- Lizbeth Bishoff
- Karen E. Downing
- Emily Ford
- Eric Frierson
- Kim Leeder
- Patricia Smith
- Kelvin Watson
- Jen-chien Yu
- John Chrastka (ALA Staff Liaison)

Building upon the work completed in 2009-2010, the Task Force's work this year operated around two central themes: investigate the formation of a new group within ALA to continue and build upon the work of the Task Force, which includes identifying a "place" within the ALA organizational structure for this new group to be institutionalized; and explore realistic and achievable ways for ALA and its entities to attract and retain young members.

The Task Force also created a UserVoice page (<http://younglibrarians.uservoice.com/forums/95485-general>) to poll young professionals about what ALA can do to serve its young members better. This page also allowed respondents to post their own ideas, many of which became popular. The top ten ideas are listed in Appendix 1.

Part One – Future Directions

The Task Force is proud of its accomplishments over the past three years, but believes that there is more work to be done and recommends the creation of a standing committee to build upon and continue the efforts described in this report. The Task Force has considered a number of different ways to continue its work in the form of a new group. These options include: a subcommittee of the ALA Membership Committee; a subcommittee of the New Members Round Table; and a new committee of Council or ALA.

After considering these options, the Task Force has concluded that the most viable option is to create a new subcommittee of the Membership Committee. The focus of the Task Force has always been the recruitment and retention of young members through coordinated initiatives that cross all association boundaries, and this aligns precisely with the Membership Committee's mission to "establish general policies, programs, and procedures to secure new members; to be responsible for the implementation of these programs; to coordinate membership promotion activities of all units and chapters of the Association; to make recommendations concerning membership dues; and to serve the Association as a sounding board on membership." The Task Force strongly recommends the creation of an ALA Membership Committee subcommittee to continue this important work based upon the following:

- The Task Force has been strongly focused on increasing recruitment and retention of young and first-career members, whose professional styles and expectations may differ from previous generations. Although this Task Force has focused its work on younger generations, this work also benefits the membership overall.
- An important role of the Task Force has been to provide young member feedback to ALA Leadership, which is closely tied to the Membership Committee's mission to act "as a sounding board on membership."
- It is critical to the success of the this Task Force and the group in its future form to have direct access to the ALA Membership Committee in order to provide for the establishment and coordination of membership initiatives across the association.
- The nature and work of the Task Force is different from the New Members Round Table, which provides a "training ground" for new members to learn how to participate in the association as it exists. This Task Force emphasizes strategies for coordinated change across the association.
 - The Young Professionals Task Force was created to "Identify strategies and actions for ALA, its offices, committees, divisions and round tables to be more responsive to the young librarians who will be its *members* and *future leaders* with a goal of *increasing retention rates*." This work is dependent upon a big-picture approach to activities going on across ALA in various committees, divisions, and units.

- NMRT committees are created to accomplish Round Table goals, which are limited to work within the Round Table and do not address association-wide, structural, or policy implications.
- NMRT was established to “help those who have been association members less than ten years become actively involved in the association and the profession. The goals are fourfold: (1) to structure formal opportunities for involvement and/or training for professional association committee experiences on the national, state and local levels; (2) to provide a wide variety of programs to assist, encourage, and educate those new to the association and the profession; (3) to offer a variety of leadership training and opportunities to help those approaching the end of their NMRT eligibility make the transition to future positions in the association and the profession, and; (4) to develop and implement ongoing programs for library school students which encourage professional involvement and networking.”

In an effort to ensure a smooth transition from the Task Force to the new group, the Task Force has crafted a prospective charge to help guide the work of the new group:

To promote the recruitment and retention of young members, represent young librarians’ interests within ALA and ensure that the Association considers the needs of young professionals. To identify ways to engage young professional members within ALA. To help develop programs in cooperation with other ALA units designed to enhance the opportunities for young professionals in ALA. To help ALA and its units coordinate, collect, analyze and disseminate information on the status of young professionals in ALA. To provide information to help ALA better understand the intergenerational needs of its members. To provide the ALA Membership Committee and the ALA Executive Board with information and reports needed to create policies and determine actions to help improve the status of young professionals in ALA and in the field of librarianship.

Ideally, the membership of this group would include six to eight individuals representing as wide a demographic range within ALA as possible. Members would serve staggered two-year terms. Succession is an important consideration, and the Task Force recommends that at least one, but no more than three members of the current Task Force continue with the new group for a one-year term. A liaison from NMRT is also recommended, and participants in the ALA Emerging Leaders Program may be a potential source of members for this new group. The Chair of the Membership Committee will appoint all members of the subcommittee.

Part 2 – Final Recommendations of the Task Force

The Co-Chairs identified eight areas in which to focus the work of the Task Force during 2010-2011. These were derived from the Final Report presented to the Executive Board at the 2010 Annual Conference.

1. Work with ALA Membership to begin to collect birth-year information from its members. Disclosure will be voluntary, but it will help ALA strengthen its demographic information.
2. Encourage ALA to begin to track retention rates across age groups.
3. Determine guidelines for improved conference programming and activities for new/young members. These guidelines and recommendations can be distributed to divisions/round tables/interest groups.
4. Encourage divisions/round tables/interest groups to move to a virtual meeting/work model with auxiliary meetings at conference (i.e., minimize significant committee work at conference).
5. Allow members the option of a "paperless" membership (i.e., membership materials provided in electronic format only, so no *American Libraries* print edition, no conference mailings, no renewal mailings). There will be no reduction in the cost of the membership for the individual - the benefit will come in the form of social responsibility (ALA may also see savings from fewer printed materials and postage).
6. Increase promotion of ALA to library school students and improve partnerships with ALA-Accredited library schools.
7. Promote value-added services to new/young members (e.g., NMRT Resume Review Service).
8. Increase opportunities for young librarians to serve in elected positions within ALA and enhance the elections process with respect to transparency of the process and access to information about candidates.

The Co-Chairs created five sub-groups (Membership, Conference, Divisions/Round Tables, LIS Schools, and Elections) to investigate these options to determine what is already being done by ALA and its units in these areas, as well as to make recommendations for what might be possible in the future. The following sections outline strategies determined by each of these subgroups that might be employed to increase the recruitment and retention of young members.

A. Membership

The Membership subgroup focused its work on the following areas:

- Work with ALA Membership to begin to collect birth-year information from members.
- Encourage ALA to begin to track retention rates across age groups.
- Allow members the option of a "paperless" membership.

Results/Findings

The Membership Subgroup interviewed ALA staff concerning member data already being gathered, as well as initiatives taking place within the Membership Office.

- Member demographics are reported semi-annually at <http://www.ala.org/ala/research/initiatives/membershipsurveys/index.cfm>. According to the March 2011 data, 21.8% of ALA members are under 35, which is a significant percentage.

- The "e-pub only" membership would not be a discounted membership category. The incentive would be in the form of social responsibility. *American Libraries* is already reducing print delivery, which is a positive step.
- Currently about 19 states participate in an ALA/State Library Association dual membership program for students. Seven states offer this type of dual membership for support staff, and the Membership Office is considering a similar model for Trustee members.

Recommendations

- Investigate ways to track and publicize retention rates for young librarians, at the ALA level as well as within divisions and round tables.
- Continue working on ways for members to select e-publications instead of print, through a renewal form or new member registration form.
- Continue to explore ways for ALA to partner with state and regional chapters for discounted dual membership, heightening the value of membership and streamlining the dues process.

B. Conference

The Conference subgroup focused its work on the following areas:

- Determine guidelines for improved conference programming and activities for new/young members. These guidelines and recommendations can be distributed to divisions/round tables/interest groups.

Results/Findings

Since the Task Force's report to the Executive Board at Midwinter 2011, this subgroup surveyed librarians to identify positive conference experiences – at an ALA conference or elsewhere – to determine what makes conferences valuable (see Appendix 2). This survey was short and distributed through various outlets, including *American Libraries Direct*, the ALA Membership Blog, and the Facebook Group, ALA Think Tank. The survey gathered 136 responses. The results, which can be provided to future groups working to enact changes to the conference experience, led to the recommendations outlined below. The Task Force stresses the importance of providing a balance of session types at Annual Conference and promoting them equally, as well as facilitating and supporting member-created events at conference, including social events, library advocacy action, and unconferences.

Recommendations

- The Task Force in its future form could create a custom set of links to the ALA Conference Planner highlighting sessions of interest to young professionals in the profession.
 - For example, an ALA Connect page (<http://bit.ly/mEaP5e>; see Appendix 3) will link to all discussion and interest groups of interest to New Members. These could be included in first-time attendee communications.

- The Task Force in its future form might create session type descriptions that highlight the unique characteristics of the types of sessions that happen and provide specific guidance targeted at young professionals on how to participate in each type. These could be included in first-time attendee communications as well.
 - For example, in describing discussion and interest groups, the increased interactivity between attendees is a defining characteristic that would be attractive to many members. Young members should be encouraged to attend these and prepare to provide their own perspectives on the group’s topic. They should also be told that there are no membership requirements or prerequisites for attending these ‘groups.’ These sessions tend to be less formal, and there is usually an opportunity to network.
- The Task Force in its future form, and in collaboration with Conference Services, could explore the benefits and options available for those who disclose “First Time Attendee” status on the ALA Conference registration form.
- The Conference Programming Committee might investigate ways to highlight and promote a variety of session types that happen at the conference, particularly structured networking events, social events, discussion groups, lightning rounds and unconference events in the same way general sessions and traditional speakers
- The Conference Programming Committee might solicit moderators for structured networking events (e.g., speed networking sessions, dine-arounds, socials that include icebreakers).
- The Conference Programming Committee could consider more lightning rounds, Pecha Kucha, and other types of alternative presentation that allow for shorter lead time.
 - For example, ACRL’s IdeaPower Unconference could be a good model for an alternative approach to sessions (see Appendix 4).

C. Divisions/Round Tables

The Divisions/Round Tables subgroup focused its work on the following areas:

- Encourage divisions/round tables/interest groups to move to a virtual meeting/work model with auxiliary meetings at conference (i.e., minimize significant committee work at conference).
- Promote value-added services to new/young members (e.g., NMRT Resume Review Service).

Results/Findings

The Divisions/Round Tables subgroup contacted the division executive directors and ALA staff liaisons with a brief survey on services that divisions and round tables provide to young librarians. They also researched existing practices and compiled an inventory spreadsheet (available at <http://connect.ala.org/node/143001>).

Recommendations

- Finalize the existing spreadsheet that outlines what divisions and round tables are doing for young librarians to use as a comparison tool. This data has been compiled from

ALA website and a survey that went out to division executive directors and staff liaisons to round tables.

- Identify an appropriate place to host the spreadsheet and determine who will maintain it.

D. LIS Schools

The LIS Schools subgroup focused its work on the following area:

- Increase promotion of ALA to library school students and improve partnerships with ALA-Accredited library schools.

Results/Findings

The LIS Schools subgroup has interviewed ALA staff about ALA outreach to library schools, student membership, and library schools without ALA chapters.

Recommendations

- Examine ALISE data about LIS schools, including student demographics.
- Look for strategies to increase face to face connections between ALA presidents/executive directors and LIS schools and students.
- Create a tool kit listing ALA services and funds that are available to students and student chapters.
- Investigate the feasibility of expanding student membership discounts to cover new grads (newly hired or non-salaried) up to 3 years, with the goal of prolonging and strengthening an individual's association with ALA.

E. Elections

The Elections subgroup focused its work on the following area:

- Increase opportunities for young librarians to serve in elected positions within ALA and enhance the elections process with respect to transparency of the process and access to information about candidates.

Results/Findings

This subgroup used data from the work that was done by the Task Force during 2009-2010 year, as well as information gathered from the UserVoice poll (see Appendix 1) to determine their recommendations. One of the highest ranking suggestions on the UserVoice poll was to create “young member” positions on Council. While the creation of such positions does not appear viable, it reflects the desire among young professionals for greater representation.

The subgroup also created a searchable and sortable spreadsheet of ALA Council candidates in ALA Connect (see Appendix 5) in an effort to make it easier to obtain information about the individuals on the ballot. This spreadsheet was viewed nearly 1400 times, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. This small, but significant, effort is one solution for making candidate election information more user-friendly.

While the below recommendations are likely to enhance the elections process for young librarians, the Task Force believes that there is still progress that can be made in this area. The Task Force stresses the importance of representation of young professionals on ALA Council and in other elected roles.

Recommendations

- The Task Force in its future form should create a searchable, sortable document or database of all candidates in ALA Elections and distribute widely among the membership annually.
- The Nominating Committee should strongly encourage all candidates to provide links to personal or professional profiles along with their candidate statements.
- The Young Professionals Task Force and the Nominating Committee might collaborate to increase communication about elections, possibly creating a simple guide to clarify elected positions and election processes for voters.
- Investigate the possibility of adopting a new elections software program that facilitates equal exposure for all candidates by providing candidate information in a user-friendly, searchable format.

Future Work

The Task Force strongly recommends the creation of a subgroup of the Membership Committee to work with ALA, its divisions, round tables and other units and expand on the work that has been done over the past several years. Clearly, the recommendations made by the Task Force in this document are aspirational and require the coordinated collaboration of multiple units within ALA. There is still significant work that can be done by the group in its future form, and this has been outlined in this document in the form of the recommendations.

Appendix 1

Top 10 UserVoice Results

1. Make it easier to be a virtual committee member (139 votes)

Participating in committees is a great way for young members to get involved in ALA and make connections, but most committees require that you travel to both Annual and Midwinter conferences every year. Those travel costs can be prohibitive. All librarians - not just young ones - should have the option to participate in committees virtually, without attending conferences.

2. Seek out ways to reduce membership costs through dual membership (96 votes)

Explore ways for ALA to partner with state and regional chapters for discounted dual membership, heightening the value of membership and streamlining the dues process. Currently about 19 states participate for students and 7 for support staff, and we might consider looking into a similar model for Trustee members.

3. Work to reduce mismatch between labor market supply and demand for new LIS grads (93 votes)

There's a huge oversupply of new ALA-accredited master's degree holders compared to the number of available jobs in the profession. ALA needs to work with library schools to ensure students can find paying jobs upon graduation and weed out the weakest applicants who are unlikely to be able to find paying work.

4. Add "young member" position(s) on Council (90 votes)

Add "young member" position(s) on council, ideally 3-5 reserved for librarians under a certain age or years in ALA.

5. Create new ways to engage first-time attendees at conferences (65 votes)

Examine what happens when someone checks the "First Time Attendee" box when registering for a conference - what 'bonuses' does this get for them?

6. Create Council mentoring program (63 votes)

Have current Council members start mentoring and grooming new candidates. They have several opportunities from NMRT, Spectrum Scholars, ARL, etc.

7. Create regional ALA meetings (57 votes)

By creating smaller, regional ALA meetings, younger librarians that are lacking funding and hurting under student loan debt, would be able to attend meetings. ALA and other regional member groups like SLA, MLA etc. should take it upon themselves to cooperate and engage and aid new and young librarians.

8. Reduce costs for LIS students (37 votes)

Advocate that all divisions/round tables/interest groups to offer student membership discounts.

9. Gather info about all association activities for young librarians in one location (34 votes)

Put together a matrix to outline what divisions/round tables are doing for young librarians to use as a comparison tool. A spreadsheet format would be more useful than straight text.

10. Connect with library schools and student chapters (29 votes)

Conduct routine assessment on what LIS schools or student chapters need from ALA.

Full results are available online at <http://younglibrarians.uservice.com/forums/95485-general>.


Appendix 2

Conference Subgroup Survey Instrument

Thanks for taking the time to answer a few questions! This will only take a minute - we really appreciate your contributions to making better conference experiences for not only young librarians, but all ALA conference attendees! Your responses do not have to be about experiences at an ALA Annual Conference - they can be about experiences you've had at a division or state conferences, or even non-library conferences.

- Think of the most valuable conference experience you've had - a session, a social event, a discussion... anything. What made that experience so valuable to you? (e.g., the format of the session, the ability to connect with people with similar issues, etc.)
- What would you like to see more of at conferences you attend?
- How many conferences have you attended? This can be regional, state, or national conferences of any kind.
- Age (Optional)
- Years of Service Optional. How many years have you worked in libraries?

Appendix 3 ALA Connect Conference Scheduler



[ALA Home](#) | [About ALA Connect](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Help](#) | [Log In/Register](#)

Browse ALA Connect

GO
Advanced Search


USER LOGIN

Username: *

Password: *


- [Create new account](#)
- [Request new password](#)

2011 ALA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION



CONFERENCE LINKS

- [Register for Annual 2011](#)
- [2011 Annual website](#)
- [Contact info for Annual](#)
- [Guide to ALA & LIS Acronyms](#)



2011 ALA Annual Conference and Exhibition

All Sessions

• Showing *All Sessions* From *Thu Jun 23* To *Tue Jun 28* With search criteria on *Interests, Meeting Type*.

TIME	TITLE	TYPE	LOCATION
FRIDAY, JUNE 24 - 6:00 PM			
6:00pm - 7:30pm	All-Committee Meeting (ALA-APA)	Discussion/Interest group	Hilton New Orleans Riverside Cambridge
FRIDAY, JUNE 24 - 7:00 PM			
7:45pm - 9:00pm	ALCTS 101	Discussion/Interest group Social event	Convention Center Rm 245
SATURDAY, JUNE 25 - 9:00 AM			
9:30am - 12:00pm	Mega-Issue Discussion (PLA)	Discussion/Interest group Forum/Update Other Presentation/Session	Westin New Orleans Canal Place Magnolia BR Tbl 1
SATURDAY, JUNE 25 - 10:00 AM			
10:30am - 12:00pm	Balancing Baby and Book Discussion Group (ACRL)	Discussion/Interest group	Marriott New Orleans Iberville
SATURDAY, JUNE 25 - 1:00 PM			

CONFERENCE SCHEDULER

- [Conference Home](#)
- [Sessions](#)
- [Exhibitors](#)
- [Conference venues](#)
- [Community](#)
- [Help](#)

SEARCH SESSIONS

Search by keywords

Session Time

From day/time:
 |

To day/time:
 |

Sponsor

Interests

- Accessibility (ADA-compliance)
- Accreditation
- Acquisitions
- Administration and Management
- Adult Services
- Advocacy
- Archives
- Assessment and Evaluation
- Budget Planning and Finance

Meeting Type

Appendix 4

About the ACRL IdeaPower Unconference

IdeaPower Unconference – ACRL 2011

Each one hour session requires 4 presenters (each will have 6 mins to present) and 2 moderators (both will moderate up to four presentations in the hour).

Presenters:

The IdeaPower Unconference is designed to be an exercise in the dynamic presentation of powerful ideas. We welcome you to present an idea that has the power to transform the academic libraries. Expect attendees to engage with presenters, offer feedback on the ideas and presentations, and initiate collaborative projects with like (or unlike) minds. Presenters have 6 minutes exactly to present and 6 minutes to get feedback on their idea. A computer and data projector will be provided.

Moderators:

Your roles are 1) make sure each of the four presentations in the hour slot gets feedback 2) engage the audience 3) keep the session running on time 4) general facilitation and trouble shooting. Please check in and pick up detailed instructions at the Volunteer Desk when you arrive onsite. Each presenter has 6 minutes to present, followed by 6 minutes for feedback/Q&A, and then 3 minutes to change presenters.

Adapted from 2011 ACRL IdeaPower Unconference at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/ideapower> (Accessed June 6, 2011)


Appendix 5 ALA Council Candidates Spreadsheet

USER LOGIN

Username: *

Password: *

- Create new account
- Request new password



WELCOME TO ALA CONNECT

Welcome to ALA Connect! If you are new, you might want to update your profile. Next, find friends and build your professional network. You can also browse through your groups or search for more communities and join in the conversation.

There are two kinds of groups:
1. Formal **ALA Groups** that carry out the work of the Association, and 2. **Member Communities** that are informal groups you can create yourself or join to build online communities around topics of interest.

Home » Groups » Young Professionals Working Group

Online Doc **An effort to equalize elections**

Last modified by Kim Leeder on Sat, 03/26/2011 - 10:14am

One of the subgroups in the Young Professionals Task Force has been exploring possibilities for equalizing elections to give young members a better chance at being elected to Council and other offices. It is a challenging topic, and we've realized that it might be easier to pilot an initiative ourselves than to simply pass it on to the ALA Executive Board with our recommendations.

So here it is: a sortable, searchable spreadsheet of all those running for ALA Councilor at Large in the current, Spring 2011 election. Please take a look, share it widely, and let us know what you think.

Want to sort it? Here's how:

- You may want to open the spreadsheet in "Full Screen View" before editing.
- Use "Click to Edit" button at upper right (note: your changes will not affect the original).
- Click upper left corner of sheet to highlight all.
- Right-click anywhere on sheet.
- Choose Sort > Custom sort.
- Ensure "Contains header" box is checked.
- Click "OK."

ALA Candidates for Councilor a... [Click to Edit](#) | [Save As Excel](#) | [Full Screen View](#)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	Candidate Last Name	Candidate First Name	Elected? Y/N	Job Title	Employer	Library Type	State	Region
2	Abdelwahid	Mustafa Abbas	N	Library Director	Abu Dhabi University	Academic	n/a	United Arab Emirates
3	Alaimo	Rosina	Y	School Librarian	Maple West Elementary School	School	NY	Northeast

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS WORKING GROUP

- You must register/login in order to post into this group.

GROUP CATEGORIES

Document Type

- Brainstorming docs (2)
- Draft docs (3)
- Meeting agendas/notes (1)
- Official docs (6)

Groups

- All (2)
- Group 1 (2)
- Group 2 (1)
- Group 3/4 (1)

GROUP CALENDAR

No upcoming events. [more](#)

POPULAR

- ALA Annual Meeting Notes, 7/14
- Brainstorming Category #4: Assess ALA divisions' efforts to involve and retain young librarians
- Brainstorming: None of the Above
- Meeting minutes, Midwinter 2010 Boston
- Subcommittees

RECENT COMMENTS

- list of candidates Peter Hepburn 8 weeks 6 days ago