TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: First quarter 2009 Media Relations Activities Report

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:
Information Item – No Action Required

ACTION REQUESTED BY:
Cathleen Bourdon, Associate Executive Director, Communications and Member Relations

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Macey Morales, Media Relations Manager, 312-280-4393, mmorales@ala.org

DRAFT OF MOTION:
NA

DATE: March 30, 2009

BACKGROUND:
Media relations activities for the past quarter (January - mid March) have focused in several main areas:

- Library use during economic recession
- ALA Midwinter Meeting
- ALA Youth Media Awards
- Teen Tech Week
- ACRL National Conference

Since our last report to the Executive Board, the American Library Association’s (ALA) media analysis service of online news scans found more than 2,749 articles that mentioned ALA, representing a circulation of more than 1.5 billion with a publicity value of more than $1.4 million.

Summary
This quarter the increase in library use during economic downturn continued to make national headlines. The ALA Public Information Office (PIO) continued to facilitate interview opportunities for ALA members and leadership with national, regional and local media outlets. Coverage of this story appeared on CNN, CBS Nightly News, NBC Nightly News, NPR, and was covered by the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Chicago Tribune, and dozens of other newspapers and Web sites. Coverage on this issue continued to be extremely favorable and positioned libraries as trusted and valuable community resources. For a complete listing of
media coverage on libraries use during the economic downturn, please visit
http://www.ala.org/economynews.

The ALA Youth Media Awards received extensive national media coverage. Award results were
published in more than 300 newspapers and on-line news outlets through Associated Press
coverage, and in USA Today and the New York Times. National Public Radio also covered the
awards.

Additional media coverage included the Today Show. Coretta Scott King Book Award
Committee Chair Deborah Taylor appeared on the broadcast with 2009 Newbery Medal winner
Neil Gaiman and Caldecott Medalist Beth Krommes. To view the Today Show segment, please
visit http://tinyurl.com/ymatodayshow.

During the ALA Midwinter Meeting, ALA leadership participated in two local in-studio
television interviews. ALA President-Elect Camila Alire appeared on “Good Day Colorado,”
KDVR TV (FOX), and ALA Past President Dr. Loriene Roy was interviewed on “Colorado &
Company,” KUSA TV (NBC). Both discussed the value of libraries and the surge in usage
during the economic downturn.

The second round of Smart investing @ your library grants were announced during a joint press
conference on Saturday, January 24, during the ALA Midwinter Meeting. The program is
administered by the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) and funded by the FINRA
Investor Education Foundation. The program funds library efforts to provide patrons with
accurate financial education resources. The announcement was covered by American Libraries,
CogNotes, Visibility @your library, various RUSA publications and streamed live via Second
Life. ALA president Jim Rettig, FINRA Foundation President Jim Gannon, Dave Tyckoson,
past-president, RUSA, and Rebecca Teasdale, director of Reference Services, Schaumburg (Ill.)
Township District Library participated in the announcement.

The Smart investing @ your library announcements was also pitched to a variety of producers
and editors which resulted in placement with NPR and CNN Money. ALA leadership and
spokespersons from the FINRA Foundation discussed the increase in demand for free library
personal finance and consumer protection resources.

This year marked the third anniversary of Teen Tech Week (TTW), and more than 1,700
libraries across the United States offered special events and highlighted the many free tech
resources available to teens in their communities. PIO assisted YALSA with securing the
placement of TTW audio Public Service Announcements (PSAs) that featured Tom Kenny,
known as the voice of SpongeBob SquarePants. The PSAs were aired by Westwood One Radio
Network which has more than 5,000 affiliate stations throughout the United States. PIO also
produced a TTW Podcast which was posted on the TTW Web site and PIO’s Blog Visibility @
your library.

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) held their 14th national conference
in Seattle from March 12 – 15. The conference, entitle “Pushing the Edge: Explore, Engage,
Extend,” received record breaking attendance. More than 3,000 met to discuss the changing
nature of academic and research libraries. Attending press included The Chronicle of Higher
ACRL president Erika Linke and ACRL National Conference Committee Chair Betsy Wilson co-authored an op-ed titled, “Academic libraries foster key skills in next generation.” The opinion piece appeared in the March 4 edition of the Seattle Times Online, and highlighted the important role academic libraries and librarians play in a college student’s education. The Seattle Times Online receives 1,993,608 visitors per month.

ThePIO also managed overall media strategy and on-site media activities through reaching out to more than 180 journalists with library trade, higher education and Seattle press agencies. Outreach efforts fostered 17 press placements, which resulted in more than 17,972,817 impressions.

The ALA did receive minor negative coverage. Nat Hentoff wrote an opinion piece titled “Fear Still Rules Cuba, just ask the librarians if you can” that criticized ALA’s stand on the Cuban librarians. There was also some criticism of the Association for Library Service to Children’s Newbery and Caldecott Awards. Headlines such as “Concerns over diversity among Newbery elite,” and “Critics Debate Value of Newbery Medal for Children’s Literature” could be found on newswires.

To view a full report that lists media placements please visit the Public Information Office Press Center at http://tinyurl.com/piopresscenter.

Findings at a glimpse:

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<td>Total Clips</td>
<td>1,489</td>
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Total Clips: 2,748  
Total Circulation: 1,554,846,921  
Total Impressions: 3,887,117,302.5  
Total Publicity Value: $1,427,785.13 (*not including radio and television values)