

**TO:** ALA Executive Board

**RE:** National Women's History Museum (NWHM) National Coalition

**ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:**

**ACTION REQUESTED BY:**

Mary Callaghan "Cal" Zunt, COSWL Chair

**CONTACT PERSON:**

Mary Callaghan "Cal" Zunt, [cal.zunt@cpl.org](mailto:cal.zunt@cpl.org)  
Lorelle R. Swader, [lswader@ala.org](mailto:lswader@ala.org)

**DRAFT OF MOTION:**

Approval that ALA/Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship (COSWL) become members of the National Women's History Museum National Coalition (NWHM).

**DATE:**

October 1, 2008

**BACKGROUND:**

In June of 2008, COSWL received a request by the National Women's History Museum's (NWHM) project to join a coalition of organizations in support of the NWHM and their goals.

The NWHM raises public awareness and access to the historical contribution women have made in the United States and is advocating for the creation of a permanent national museum in Washington D.C. To date, over 33 other national women's organizations have officially expressed their support of the NWHM.

COSWL's endorsement is sought because of our mission to represent women's issues in the library profession. We seek approval from ALA's Executive Board to add our support to this project: since COSWL is a committee of the American Library Association and cannot speak for the association as a whole.

Attached is the official letter sent to immediate Past President, Loriene Roy, requesting COSWL's support which includes a history of the organization and a list of the 33 groups in support of the NWHM.

The National Women's History Museum (NWHM) in Washington, DC is a nonpartisan, non-profit, 501(c)(3) educational institution dedicated to preserving, interpreting and celebrating the diverse historic contributions of women and integrating this rich heritage fully into our nation's history. It engages in no other political advocacy activities and there is no financial obligation in joining the coalition, or any fees assessed.

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June 23, 2008

Lorlene Roy, Ph.D.  
President  
American Library Association  
50 East Huron Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60611

Dear President Roy:

We are delighted to learn that the **Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship (COSWL)** of the **American Library Association** has expressed an interest in joining the **National Women's History Museum's (NWHM) National Coalition**. Ms. Kathleen de la Pena – McCook has asked that this item be placed on the agenda of COSWL at its meeting during the **ALA National Conference** in Anaheim, CA. Ms. Lorelle Swader, **ALA Liaison** to the Committee, has suggested that due to the **ALA** structure, we send this official letter of invitation directly to you. We have also copied Ms. ShinJoung Yeo, **COSWL Chair**.

As President of the **National Women's History Museum (NWHM)**, I am extending this official invitation to the **American Library Association** and its **Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship** to become a member of the **NWHM National Coalition**.

In its larger sense, the **National Coalition** serves as a support to the overall goals of the **NWHM** as outlined in its mission statement:

*The National Women's History Museum affirms the importance of an accurate and complete understanding of the past. The Museum will fill in a missing part of history - women's history.*

The more immediate objectives of the Coalition are to:

**Support the efforts to acquire a permanent site near the National Mall in Washington, DC.**

Such activities might include:

- Provide access to key policy and decision makers on the Hill and in our community as appropriate.
- Develop acquisition strategies with **NWHM Board and Advisors**,
- Provide expertise on related issues and
- Encourage action by members as appropriate.

In conjunction with efforts to secure a site, **NWHM** seeks authorization to list the **ALA** and **COSWL** along with the other 33 national organizations that support the establishment of a permanent Museum site on or near the **National Mall** in Washington, DC. The **NWHM** is a non-partisan, educational organization that engages in no other political advocacy activities. There is no financial obligation in joining the **National Coalition** or fees assessed.

**Participate in two-way communication between NWHM and ALA-COSWL to increase the visibility of both organizations.** Such activities might include:

- Provide opportunities to share articles of interest in publications and on the Web site.
- Notify membership of certain events via e-mail lists with appropriate approval.
- Inform members of upcoming calendar events of mutual interest via the Web site or in publications and
- Link the organizational Web sites.

**Other Opportunities for Collaboration Resulting from NWHM and ALA-COSWL Partnerships**

Such activities might include:

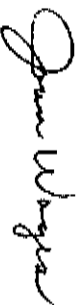
- Provide speakers in appropriate forums, conferences and other programs.
- Develop joint programs/exhibits on major contributions of women in the profession e.g. the recent *Women with a Deadline* with the National Federation of Press Women,
- Share historical materials such as those provided by Coalition members for the *NWHM Partners in Winning the War: American Women in World War II* exhibit as a part of the dedication of the WWI Memorial in Washington, DC on Memorial Day 2004 and
- Explore other joint ventures of mutual interest.

We have sent Ms. Swader a NWHM Overview of the National Coalition, which contains a summary of the NWHM National Coalition's work and a listing of the other National Coalition members. We are including this NWHM Overview with this letter for your information.

We would be honored to have the **American Library Association and its Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship** join the NWHM Coalition. Do call me directly at 703-461-1920 if you have more questions or if I can be of further assistance in any regard.

We hope to welcome you officially as a member of the NWHM Coalition in the very near future.

Sincerely,



Joan Wages  
National President  
National Woman's History Museum

Cc: Ms. ShinJung Yeo, Chair, ALA-COSWL  
Ms. Lorelle Swader, Liaison to ALA-COSWL  
Ms. Ann Stone, Senior Vice President, NWHM  
Ms. Becky Schergens, National Advisor, NWHM

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MUSEUM  
NATIONAL COALITION

The National Women's History Museum in Washington, DC is a nonpartisan, non-profit, 501(c)(3) educational institution dedicated to preserving, interpreting and celebrating the diverse historic contributions of women and integrating this rich heritage fully into our nation's history. The Museum was founded in 1996 and has established an enviable record of accomplishment in just over a decade.

In 2002, the National Women's History Museum (NWHM) organized a National Coalition to support its mission and the acquisition of a permanent site in Washington, DC. This Coalition followed the highly successful NWHM- led coalition organized in 1996 to provide public support for moving the statue of Suffragists Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony from its 76-year confinement in the U.S. Capitol Crypt to the Rotunda of the Capitol.

As of June 2008, the NWHM Coalition currently consists of 33 leading national predominantly women's professional, education and service organizations. The Coalition represents over 8.5 million members of these organizations.

In its larger sense, the National Coalition serves as a support to the overall goals of the NWHM as outlined in its mission statement.

*The National Women's History Museum affirms the importance of an accurate and complete understanding of the past. The Museum will fill in a missing part of history - women's history.*

The more immediate objectives of the Coalition are to:

Support efforts to acquire a permanent site on or near the National Mall in Washington, DC

Such activities might include:

- Provide access to key policy and decision makers on the Hill and in our community as appropriate,
- Develop acquisition strategies with NWHM Board and Advisors,
- Provide expertise on related issues and
- Encourage action by members as appropriate.

**Status** – After reviewing 30 sites for the permanent site for the Museum, the NWHM leadership picked the Pavillion Annex, a failed commercial venture vacant for 12 years next to the Old Post Office Building on Pennsylvania Avenue, as a potential site. The plan was to lease the 100,000 Sq. Feet structure from the General Services Administration, which had taken possession of the building in 2001.

In both 2003 and 2005, Senator Susan Collins of Maine introduced *The National Women's History Museum Act*, which directed GSA to lease the Pavillion Annex to the Museum on a long-term lease. The legislation passed the Senate on both occasions by unanimous consent. The bill was referred to the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, where Committee leadership failed to bring the bill up for a vote.

In November 2007, the NWHM decided to respond to a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) from the Smithsonian Institution for the initial process of possible acquisition of its Arts & Industries Building ON the National Mall in Washington, DC. The NWHM proposal was submitted on January 7, 2008 to the Smithsonian. In May 2008, the Smithsonian Institution notified all RFQ respondents that its Board of Regents had decided to terminate the process as originally outlined. The NWHM is currently pursuing other appropriate sites for the Museum on or near the National Mall in Washington, DC.

The NWHM engages in no political advocacy other than actions with the U.S. Congress and the Executive Branch that may be appropriate and necessary to acquire the permanent Museum site in Washington, DC.

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Other Opportunities for Collaboration Resulting from NWHM- Organizational Partnerships

Such activities might include:

- Provide speakers in appropriate forums, conferences and other programs,
- Develop joint programs/exhibits on major contributions of women in the profession e.g. the recent *Women with a Deadline* with the National Federation of Press Women,
- Share historical materials such as those provided by Coalition members for the NWHM *Partners in Winning the War: American Women in World War II* exhibit as a part of the dedication of the WW II Memorial in 2004 and
- Seek opportunities to showcase women's contributions, particularly to new audiences of young men and women.

As of May 2008, the following organizations are members of the NWHM Coalition

- American Association of University Women
- American College of Nurse-Midwives
- American Society for Public Administration, Section for Women in Public Administration
- Association of Junior Leagues International
- Business and Professional Women/USA
- Delta Kappa Gamma Society International
- Federally Employed Women
- General Federation of Women's Clubs
- Hadassah – The Women's Zionist Organization of America
- League of Women Voters
- MANA - A National Latina Organization
- National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity
- National Association for Female Executives
- National Association of Commissions for Women
- National Association of Women Business Owners
- National Congress of Black Women
- National Council of Negro Women

- **National Education Association**
- **National Federation of Black Women Business Owners**
- **National Federation of Press Women**
- **National Foundation of Women Legislators, Inc**
- **National Society Daughters of the American Revolution**
- **Native American Women's Business Council**
- **OWL**
- **Sewall-Belmont House & Museum**
- **Soroptimist International of the Americas**
- **Susan B. Anthony House**
- **Women in Aerospace**
- **Women in Defense**
- **Women in Film and Video**
- **Women In Military Service For America Memorial Foundation**
- **Women Presidents' Organization**
- **Women's Business Enterprise National Council**

**The NWHM Coalition continues to grow. For further information about the NWHM, please visit [www.nwhm.org](http://www.nwhm.org) or contact **Becky Schergens, NWHM National Advisor**, directly at 703-525-7627 and [schergensb@aol.com](mailto:schergensb@aol.com).**

**June 2008**