TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: First quarter 2010 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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DRAFT OF MOTION:
NA

DATE: March, 30, 2010

BACKGROUND:
Media relations activities for the past quarter (Mid December 2009 – March 22, 2010) have focused in several areas:

- ALA Midwinter Meeting
- ALA Youth Media Awards
- Teen Tech Week
- PLA National Conference
- National Library Week
- Library use, budget cuts

Since our last report to the Executive Board, the American Library Association’s (ALA) media analysis service of online news scans found more than 7,100 articles that mentioned ALA, representing a circulation of more than 139 million with a publicity value of more than $22.1 million.

According to the Newspaper Association of America, there are more than 1,400 daily newspapers and 6,700 weekly newspapers in the United States, so the following list of placements should be viewed as a snapshot of coverage achieved by the ALA.
Summary

Fourth quarter media coverage began with ALA Midwinter Meeting. The American Library Association’s (ALA) Public Information Office (PIO) began ALA Midwinter publicity efforts with the launch of two reports from the ALA’s Office for Research and Statistics. The reports detailed usage trends and national funding cut data. The Associated Press (AP) generated an article entitled “Libraries more wired, financially stressed.” The article was picked up by more than 165 publications including The New York Times, USA Today and appeared in multiple television mentions. Efforts resulted in more than $1.2 million dollars in publicity value. The article also fueled coverage from Wall Street Journal Radio.

During the meeting the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority (MCCA) and the ALA produced a joint donation of more than $27,000 dollars to directly support relief efforts in Haiti. ALA President Camila Alire participated in an onsite check presentation photo opportunity with James E. Rooney, executive director of the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority and Haitian-American State Representative Linda Dorcena Forry. The photo opportunity was attended by Boston’s WCVB-TV Channel 5 and Cognotes.

Other onsite Midwinter media included the Boston Globe, New York Times and a variety of library trade editors and reporters. More than 90 members of the media registered for advance media credentials while more than 100 actually attended.

The Midwinter Meeting’s Youth Media Awards received its usual national coverage. Camila Alire appeared on the NBC-TV’s “The Today Show” with Newbery Medal winner Rebecca Stead and Caldecott Medal winner Jerry Pinkney. Association of Library Service to Children (ALSC) member leaders were interviewed by the New York Times and a variety of high-level press. Associated Press (AP) national reporter Hillel Italie wrote about the awards and his article was picked up by more than 740 newspapers from around the country. Highly circulated publications such as the Houston Chronicle, Forbes, San Francisco Chronicle, Houston Chronicle, Palm Beach Post, Boston Globe, Miami Herald, Akron Beacon Journal and Fox News covered the awards.

Teen Tech Week, March 7 – 13, received more than 890 placements making it the second most covered issue during the first quarter. Teen Tech Week publicity efforts resulted in a circulation rate of more than 9.3 million and a publicity value of more than $620,000.

PIO pitched Teen Tech Week to a variety of reporters and editors and crafted several media materials including a Web press kit, radio PSAs which were distributed to contacts in all markets and a pitch letter which was distributed via e-mail to education, youth, teen and technology editors. PIO pitched to NPR stations in the top 10 markets as well as teen/parenting outlets in the top 10 markets.

PIO secured three interviews for YALSA President Linda Braun who spoke with School Library Journal, The Journal newspaper, KALW-FM radio (San Francisco NPR affiliate) and a byline article in Dallas Christian Family Magazine.
Nearly 8,000 library staffers and supporters attended the 13th Public Library Association (PLA) National Conference in Portland, Oregon. PIO worked with PLA to develop a Web press kit, press releases and op ed. Efforts resulted in 145 placements at a circulation rate of more than 2.5 million and a publicity value of more than $520,000.


Conference publicity highlights included an op ed entitled “We cannot afford to close the book on libraries,” which ran in the opinion section of the Oregonian Web site on March 23. The op ed was crafted by PIO and focused on how libraries are facing a perfect storm as usage increases and funding decreases. That same day, the print issue of the Oregonian ran a feature piece on the changing role of libraries. The article entitled “Libraries are making some noise,” appeared on the front page of the newspaper and featured a quote from PLA President Sari Feldman as well as information on the PLA National Conference.

Feldman participated in interviews with Portland Public Radio, China Daily and an in studio interview with KATU –TV’s (ABC Affiliate) AM Northwest. PIO also worked with conference guest Natalie Merchant to secure a live performance with KGW TV’s Live @ 7. While appearing on the program Merchant discussed her performance at the PLA National Conference and stated that the audience was one of the best she ever had.

As National Library Week, April 11 – 17, approaches, libraries throughout the country have taken advantage of PIO publicity tools, as dozens of calendar listings mirror the template offered through the National Library Week (NLW) Web site.

More than 25 blogs have posted NLW event information and more than 209 have tweeted about library contests or have re-tweeted NLW tweets from NLW Honorary Chair Neil Gaiman.

Throughout the quarter the surge in library use continued to generate coverage. San Francisco Public Library made headlines by adding services to aid the homeless. More than 200 newspapers picked up their story entitled “San Francisco Public Library Hires Social Worker to Help Homeless Patrons, First Library in U.S. to Offer Service.” The story illustrated how libraries mirror the needs of the communities that they serve.

Coverage also focused on libraries that are facing budget cuts and closures. Headlines such as “12 Libraries Closing, 148 People Laid Off,” “All LA city libraries to close on Sundays due to budget crunch” and “Shhh! That's the Sound of Public Libraries Closing,” detailed the many financial challenges libraries are facing. The trend of closures and budget cuts runs deep and will most likely continue to make headlines throughout the year.
**FINDINGS AT A GLANCE:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total Clips</td>
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<td>Publicity Value</td>
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Total Clips: 7,137  
Total Circulation: 139,411,315  
Total Publicity Value: $22,168,704.63  

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**SOCIAL MEDIA**

This quarter the ALA received 1,986 mentions via tweet or blog. The majority of social media coverage received focused on the ALA followed by Teen Tech Week and National Library Week.

The majority of Social Media Coverage was positive.  
[Positive: 1,800] [Neutral: 129] [Negative: 57]  
Total: 1,986
Twitter
The majority of first quarter social media coverage was from twitter with more than 1,890 tweets from members, ALA staff and outside groups. Tweets ranged in topic from ALA’s Youth Media Awards to tips on how to celebrate Teen Tech Week and National Library Week. The majority of coverage was positive.

Blogs
Most Blog coverage from the first quarter focused on American Library Association announcements and activities, followed by Teen Tech Week. Most Blog activity took place during Teen Tech Week and more than 80 percent of coverage was positive.

[Positive: 244] [Neutral: 56] [Negative: 2] Total:302