TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Status of Advocacy Initiatives

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:
Information only

ACTION REQUESTED BY:
Cathleen Bourdon, Communications and Member Relations AED
Marci Merola, Director, Office for Library Advocacy

CONTACT PERSON:
Marci Merola, Director, Office for Library Advocacy
312-280-2431, mmerola@ala.org

DRAFT OF MOTION:
N/A

DATE: 6-1-12

SUMMARY: Recent activity of the Office for Library Advocacy is featured, including Molly Raphael’s Presidential Initiative; Webinars and Trainings, Events at Annual Conference, COLA and related committees; and Ilovelibraries.org.

**ALA Office for Library Advocacy**

**Molly Raphael’s Presidential Initiative: Empowering Voices, Transforming Communities**

OLA worked with ALA President Molly Raphael to create a series of webinars on the Empowering Voices theme:

Engaging Communities through Controversy, May 10, featured two case histories. Diane McNutt and Jane Light, Silicon Valley Reads, described their library’s "one book-one community" program in Santa Clara (Calif.) County. Its 2012 program, "Muslim and American - Two Perspectives," featured two books written by American Muslims, ("The Muslim Next Door" by Sumbul Ali-Karamali and "The Butterfly Mosque" by G. Willow Wilson) and extensive programming and outreach to the community. J June Pinnell-Stephens, retired collection services manager, Fairbanks (Alaska) North Star Borough Public Library, shared success stories on how to get your community to “stop shouting and start talking” about intellectual freedom issues.

Passing the Community Engagement Baton: A Conversation with ALA President Molly Raphael and ALA President-elect Maureen Sullivan, will take Friday, June 8 at 11:30 a.m. Central. It will be moderated by 2013-2014 ALA President Barbara Stripling, and will feature an unprecedented conversation among ALA leadership in this format, focusing on the transition of presidential initiatives and a continued focus on civic engagement.

Other Webinars and Trainings

OLA moderated a webinar called “Creating Community Coalitions,” on May 2. It featured Lauren Comito of NY-based Urban Libraries Unite and Tara Seeley and Laura Johnson of the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library, sharing their stories on getting supporters involved in advocating for their libraries.

OLA is working with ORS to hold a webinar later this summer on how to use data from the Public Library Funding Technology Access Study. More details to come.

Sponsored by U.S. Embassy in Argentina and the Argentine Library Association, Marci Merola presented a range of advocacy trainings in conjunction with the 2012 Buenos Aires Book Fair in April. A follow-up webinar at the U.S. Embassy in Santiago brought in a 57 attendees from 13 countries in South America, Central America and the Caribbean.

Plans for Annual Conference

In lieu of the Advocacy Institute preconference, COLA has decided to present the Advocacy Corner during the ALA Annual Conference. It consists of 30-minute workshops, presentations, and Q&A sessions on advocacy issues and initiatives from around the association. It takes place on the afternoons of Saturday, June 23 and Sunday, June 24 at the ALA Membership Pavilion (#1939). The goals are to increase awareness
of advocacy efforts, to create opportunities for one-on-one discussions and to generate interest in the larger conference among “exhibit-only” attendees.


- Marci Merola will present at ALTAFF’s Nuts and Bolts program on Friday, 9:30 to 3:30 pm.

- COLA is working with the Staff Organization Round Table and SEIU to present a privatization program on privatization on Sunday, June 24, 2012, at 1:30 p.m. COLA chair Pat Tumulty will speak at this event, and OLA will provide attendees with the “Keeping Public Libraries Public Checklist” as well as information on the new ALA Editions Special Report on Privatization.

**Presidential Task Force on School Libraries**

ALA President-Elect Maureen Sullivan has asked that the 2011-2012 Presidential Task Force on School Libraries, be extended into her presidential year. Current co-chairs Pat Tumulty, Chair of the Committee for Library Advocacy, and Susan Ballard, President-Elect of AASL, have agreed to co-chair again. 2013-2014 ALA President Barbara Stripling has asked to take an active role in this task force, as well. The current goals of the Task Force are:

- To secure inclusion of school libraries with certified school librarians in the new federal ESEA legislation
- To galvanize school, public, academic and special librarians to address the crisis threatening school libraries
- To increase public awareness of the impact of the de-professionalization of school libraries on students and student achievement
- To help local advocates save school libraries at the local district level
- To support statewide advocacy efforts
**Ilovelibraries.org**

ALA’s advocacy website for the public, Ilovelibraries.org, continues to be published twice a month. OLA recently added a new school libraries section, as well as a ways for non-librarians to get involved.

Most recent data shows almost 10,000 hits daily, with over 3,000 subscribers to the e-newsletter. The Ilovelibraries.org Facebook page has more than 41,000 subscribers, and 900 Twitter followers.

**Funding Crisis Efforts**

The ALA Office for Library Advocacy has organized an “ALA Crisis Team,” aimed at the monitoring of and quick response to crisis situations affecting libraries around the country. The team consists of members of OLA, *American Libraries*, the Public Information Office, the Chapter Relations Office, ALTAFF and appropriate divisions. For the most current information, visit *American Libraries* at www.americanlibrariesmagazine.org.